



Dialogue In Growth (D.I.G) Pty. Ltd  
ABN :83 151 471 742

Men's Action in Open Thinking  
Counselling and Coaching for Men



## ***SpeakEASY* Counselling and Psychotherapy**

### **Testimonials and Success Stories in Working against Parental Alienation**

The following are summaries and vignettes of cases and clients I have worked with. It is important for you to draw your own conclusions as to what is relevant to you. All I will say is that change is possible if you stick with it, if you let go. However, if you give up, if you cannot courageously face your own demons then it is unlikely the situation will change and it is unlikely that your children will see you in any other way than what the alienating parent has imposed upon them or what they have formed themselves based upon your behaviour.

Bear in mind that this is one side of the story-the target parent's story. We cannot be arbiters of the truth but we can be circumspect, mindful that there are always other perspectives.

Another important point that stood out was being prepared to take a stand against false allegations and not to give in to any presumption of guilt.

And yes, even alienating parents can change. However, if we demonise them and make them evil, they are unlikely to seek help.

For the purposes of confidentiality and the provisions of family law, no names have been used and case details have been changed. If you see yourself here in these examples, then it is possible it is a coincidence and that I have dealt with many cases like yours before.

On the other hand, it is possible that you really do see yourself here-if you know what I mean.



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#### **Example 1-A Case for Covert Parenting as a Strategy to Dissolve Parental Alienation**

A parent subjected to a "parentectomy" who had engaged me for coaching and counselling on parental alienation has re-engaged in a relationship with his child. This child had been moved interstate by the other parent and enrolled in a new school under an assumed name (an example of one of worst forms of parental alienation). My client established a covert parenting relationship with their child because he recognised that their child did not feel safe revealing their relationship to the other parent. My client and their child had a history of strong loving relationship. There was no reason or basis for the relationship to be cut off.

#### **Example 2-A Case for Taking a Stand against Parental Alienation and False Allegations**

I was engaged by a partner of a father who had been cut off from his child from a previous relationship on the basis of accusations of abuse made against him that were also repeated by the child. In the course of our engagement, we identified evidence of coaching and indoctrination, especially in the use of adult concepts that were not age and stage appropriate. The child and father had a previous strong loving relationship and therefore no basis for what had turned out to be a sudden break without notice or reason. My client represented to me the fact that her partner had almost given up because he was convinced that he was presumed guilty of an allegation of assault that had never taken place. However, based on our work together in identifying the harm caused to the child by several parental alienation tactics (especially the coaching and use of adult concepts) my client and her partner returned the matter to court. My client reported that her partner had achieved even better contact arrangements than had previously been ordered.

#### **Example 2A- A Case for Taking a Stand against Parental Alienation in a Shared Care Step-Family.**

A parent engaged after their long-term relationship in a step-family dissolved under high-conflict circumstances. The client's partner had children from her previous relationship who had treated my client as their parent and there were children between my client and their now ex-partner. My client left the family home and attempted a shared care arrangement. In a high conflict situation in which both partners were implicated, the step-children joined their biological mother in pursuing a false allegation against my client.



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My client subsequently lost contact with his children because of intervention orders. We identified how my client's ex-partner made repeated attempts to breach the intervention order and to entrap my client into breaching them. We also identified the basis of false accusations that resulted in the other party and the police abandoning their case and left them facing a possible charge of perjury. We also identified further parental alienation in the form of interference with contact.

My client took the matter to the family court. My client lost contact with his step-children but their biological children now live with them.

### **Example 3-Re-Establishing a Relationship and Status Quo via Covert Channels**

A distraught mother, who previously had shared care of the adolescent son and daughter engaged me after her ex-partner withdrew the children's mobile phones and stopped facilitating contact. She lost contact with her children. We identified that her ex-partner was tenacious in interfering with, and preventing contact in any form. However, I encouraged her to explore other, covert channels of communication especially those involving social networking. She was able to find her children on a social networking forum and received an invitation to join their group. She has re-established relationship with her children, by using covert channels. There was no basis for severing the mother-child relationship, as the relationships were very sound. The matter is awaiting determination in the family court. My client is confident of the outcome because based on our work. She is able to demonstrate interference of ex-partner and that the relationship between her and her children is in the best interests of the children.

### **Example 4-A Case for Family Law Coaching for Parental Alienation**

A client engaged me after he had become enmeshed in family law. He said that he was not making any progress with seeking a change of residence. However, the client said that the family report ordered by the family court had not been conclusive about parental alienation although overall favourable to him. However, it identified areas of parenting that caused the children to be aligned with their mother.

The harder my client tried with the children, the less time they wanted to spend with him and the more this was reflected in interim orders. The children had been assessed as being very vulnerable.

I worked with my client to implement changes in his parenting and in the manner with which he engaged practitioners ordered by the court. Over time as he



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implemented these changes, reports about him became more favourable. Practitioners began disclosing useful information about the children's situation. He changed his previously adversarial approach and was more able to integrate interventions with his parenting. We developed a strategy to develop realistic expectations and work toward obtaining a more favourable family report that might lead to a more equal shared care arrangement.

The matter remains before the family court but hearings have been deferred to allow the changes he is making to consolidate. His ex-partner is a passive alienator; she does not actively interfere nor actively support the children to have contact with their father. My client did not receive this advice from his legal counsel.

### **Example 5- A Case for Letting Go**

A client engaged me for a short period. This client had divorced and separated more 20 years ago when their children were young. She had not seen them since. Her now adult children held her responsible for breaking up the family and were resistant to any contact with my client. My client said that she had been trying for many years in many different ways but without success.

We established that her adult children maintained relationships with extended family on her side and with whom she maintained relationships.

My client and I worked together on what letting go would entail and how she could acknowledge that her children had grown up to be fine adults and how she could respect their choice, even without giving her a hearing, even though this was unfair. Over time, my client fed these messages back indirectly through extended family along with information about my client's own independent life. My client then advised her extended family that she would cease any further attempts at contact but would be available whenever the children were ready.

Some months after she ceased her attempts, her adult children made contact with her.



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#### **Example 6-What Happens When You Give Up**

A client engaged me after he had moved interstate to follow his children in order to maintain and improve his relationships with them. It was unclear as to why the children's mother had moved to another state.

From the very outset, it was clear the situation is made more complicated by the hostile relationship between my client and his ex-partner that at times played out as hostile aggressive behaviour in front of the children. Mutual intervention orders were now in place.

My client also presented evidence to show that there had been active interference and a reduction in contact in violation of court orders, and that the children had been encouraged to make their own decisions and an age when they were too young to do so. This parentification tactic is a common form of parental alienation and is often in the form of 'I can't make him or her do what they don't want to do'. Nevertheless, my client presented evidence to show that the relationship between him and his children was very loving and that they wanted to be with him.

It became clear that my client had been traumatised by the circumstances of his family splitting up. We identified how he was emotionally reactive to the circumstances into which his ex-partner was now manipulating him. Unfortunately, his children became wary of being in his company because of his reactivity to situations to which silence and indifference are the best defence.

In fact, my client required trauma counselling and a resolution of his own issues activated by his current circumstances. This was not a path that he was prepared to take at this time.

The last I heard from him was that he had returned to his home state. I do not know what happened in relation to the children. We can only guess at how they might interpret his departure.



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**Stan Korosi is an independent counsellor and psychotherapist with post-graduate qualifications in counselling and human services, Emotion Focused Therapy and Existential Therapy. He works in community and private practice, and has a special interest in:**

### **Parental Alienation**

Stan works with stepfamilies, parents and children whose relationships are affected and in some cases severed by high conflict separation and divorce. He has a deep appreciation of these issues from his personal experience, and from research driven by his insider perspective and counselling experience. In particular, Stan is interested in working with parents and step-parents to defuse high conflict relationships with ex-partners, to foster the needs of their children for a relationship with both parents and to reunite parents and children where that bond has been ruptured.

### **Stepfamilies, 'Blended' and 'Patchwork' Families**

Stan is a facilitator with the Step Families Association of Australia (now Drummond Street Family Services). He works with groups and individuals to help them appreciate the unique family and relationship dynamics of the 21<sup>st</sup> century family system-the stepfamily.

### **Sex, Intimacy and the Fragility of Life**

Stan and his associate have developed a differentiated model for relationships based on a dynamic balance between sex and intimacy as proxies for differentiation and fusion. In this model, the client is the client-not the relationship. Approaches to relationship therapy are oriented towards defusing negative interactional patterns and facilitating Bowenian notions of being oneself in a relationship. Stan explores how practitioners' anxiety can limit relationship therapy rather than anxiety between partners enabling new relationship possibilities.

### **Working with Men**

Stan's private practice has a distinct theme for engaging men. Many men can be notoriously reluctant to engage with contemporary counselling services, especially those that tend to rake over old emotional coals and ignore the profound sense of failure and shame that can infuse men. However, not all men are alike and Stan has developed approaches that respond to the unique way in which men engage in their emotional, experiential and spiritual domains. He attracts and engages men in their hyper-individuality and mythic themes of the heroes journey.