



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-Alienating Parents

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. However, if you give up, if you cannot courageously face your own demons then it is unlikely the situation will change and it is likely that one day your children will see you in a clearer light and turn against you-permanently.

And yes, even alienating parents can change. You are not demons, you can change and consider your children ahead of your own issues.

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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Working with an Alienating Parent and the Possibility of Change

I saw this client in the context of her separation and while entering into complex shared care arrangements. As we progressed into dealing with issues of separation and managing young children, it became apparent that my client was thoroughly enjoying the discomfort she was causing her ex-partner. She did this by varying without notice the time and place of changeover, and by the behavioural issues exhibited by her young children after she denigrated their father consistently in front of them and demanded affirmations and exhibitions of their loyalty to her,. This occurred especially after noting how happy the children were to rush into their father's arms after spending shared care with their mother.

The children were quite young and clearly caught in an impossible loyalty conflict and caught up in the hostile aggressive behaviour between both parents. Although I was only seeing one side of the equation, it became clear from strategic questioning that her ex-partner was retaliating in his own way. And that their children were protesting and acting out against both of them.

My formulation of my client was that she was emotionally reactive, very hurt and very angry at the manner of separation. She was unable to deal with these emotions, and therefore played them out with her children through whom she attempted to alleviate her own powerlessness by attacking and punishing her ex-partner. Power over her children was the only control she felt that she had.

However, she was able to change her behaviour, once I represented to her, her children's voices and was able to put her in a position of experiencing what was it was like to be her children on her receiving end. The fact that she was able to tolerate this, said much of her capacity to change-and change she did. She is attended parenting courses where was able to receive more consistent group support on how to parent under complex shared care and high conflict situations. Counselling also helped her resolve past issues that led her to be so emotionally reactive. It was no surprise that her scenario was in fact a replay of her own family of origin.

When our consultations ended, shared care was continuing (albeit under complex and tense circumstances), my client was no longer reacting to her ex-partner and was more concerned with how her children were managing.

Some might use this case as an example as to why shared parenting does not work, particularly in high conflict circumstances. Yet, in reality, the children wanted to be with both parents and both parents would benefit from more intensive support than is currently available. The only other alternative is to delete a loving parent from the children's lives in order to stop the conflict. In reality, we simply create another problem; one that the children have to resolve later in life.



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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 21st 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.