

ELEVEN CATALYSTS FOR REUNIFICATION

- 1. Maturation – The child has increasing number of opportunities to observe the ways that people in other families behave and begins to slowly question the story of his or her own family, especially as – in the addition to life experience – the child has increased cognitive maturity and capacity to question his or her own upbringing and the capacity to tolerate psychological distance from his or her parents.**
 - 2. Alienating Parent Turned on the Child – The favored parent becomes overly and unnecessarily controlling and harsh with the child, showing him /herself to be the mean and vindictive person he or she really is.**
 - 3. Experiencing Parental Alienation as a Parent – The grown alienated child marries and alienating parent and experiences parental alienation from the perspective of the targeted parent. That child comes to realize that his or her own childhood may have not been as it seemed.**
 - 4. The Targeted Parent Returned – The child has the opportunity to experience the rejected parent due to enforcement of court orders, and in the process finds out that the rejected parent is not the monster he or she was made out to be.**
 - 5. Attaining a Milestone – Becoming a parent, graduating from college, getting married, and similar lifetime milestones create an emotional desire to reconnect with the targeted parent or create the impetus to reexamine the narrative from a new perspective.**
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- 1. Therapy – Discussions with a neutral and caring third party may lead to questioning the assumptions and the narrative from the family and can result in a desire to rethink the past and be open to a different future.**
 - 2. Intervention of Extended Family Member – A trusted relative encourages the child to question and rethink his or her harsh stance toward the rejected parent.**

3. **Intervention of a Significant Other – An important and trusted significant other encourages the child to question and rethink his or her harsh stance toward the rejected parent.**
4. **Seeing the Alienating Parent Mistreat Others – The child witnesses the alienating parent’s harsh and cruel treatment of other people and comes to realize that the targeted parent may have been a victim in the family drama**

10. Discovering that the Alienating Parent was Dishonest – The alienated child has the opportunity to witness unambiguously dishonest behavior on the part of the favored parent, which creates a crack in the armor of that parent’s supposed perfection.

11. Becoming a Parent – Having one’s own child allows the alienated child (as an adult) to realize the importance of both parents for the health and well-being of a child and questions why the favored parent insisted on the child’s rejection of the other parent.

What the Targeted Parents did Right:

1. They became educated and Informed

1. **They never gave up**
2. **They saw the alienation from the child’s perspective**
3. **They respected the child’s pace**
4. **They didn’t expect an apology**

Amy J. L. Baker and Paul R. Fine, editors, Surviving Parental Alienation, a journey of hope and healing (Lanham, Maryland: Rowan & Littlefield, 2014) pgs. 120 to 127.

LOOKING FOR THE THREADS OF CONNECTION