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Parental Alienation Syndrome (PAS): Is there any possibility that you are the victim of Parental Alienation or could you be the Alienator? Parental Alienation develops out of High Conflict Divorces where there is a protracted period of conflict and hostility between the parents

Parental Alienation: Parent Alienation takes a while to develop and must be differentiated from Alignment and Estrangement. This was initially likened it to "The Stockholm Syndrome." The Stockholm Syndrome is when someone who has been kidnapped or abducted and held for a long period of time begins to identify with his/her abductors. A perfect example of this was the case of Patty Hearst

A telling characteristic of Parental Alienation is a noticeable, enmeshed alignment with one parent. Alignment is when one child or more than one child expresses a preference for one parent. This can be due to age, gender identification, and possibly after divorce it could be a reaction to the circumstances of the divorce. The child could be angry or hurt at the other parent's decision to divorce, or the child could feel enormous loyalty to the parent left behind. However, in cases of Alignment, they tend to be time-limited if they are handled appropriately by a warm non-defensive parent or can be resolved by brief counseling.

Tactics of alienation include the following five tactics that are most prevalent in the alienation process:

Rejection: The alienating parent rejects the child's need for both parents. The child feels abandoned and rejected by the alienating parent whenever she or he expresses positive feelings about the other parent.

Terrorizing: The alienating parent bullies the child into being terrified of the other parent and punished the child if the child expresses any questions or disagreements about this.

Ignoring: The alienating parent withholds love and affection from the child to create such desperate feelings of abandonment that the child begins the campaign of rejection and denigration against the other parent.

Corrupting: The alienating parent encourages the child to lie about and be aggressive to the other parent. In very serious cases, the alienating parent will actually recruit the child to assist in deceptions and manipulative behavior intended to harm the other parent.

Vulnerability in Attachment: One of the most important factors as to why these tactics work so well in some children is that they are starting off with certain vulnerabilities in the areas of attachment, object constancy, fears of abandonment, being victims of emotional abuse (or physical abuse), and living in a chaotic family where they do not feel safe or protected

[Parental Alienation Syndrome](#) is dangerous to the emotional well-being of children and the continued parental bond with a parent. It is too often used as an excuse by bad parents to justify to themselves the results of that bad parenting and hurtful behaviors toward their children. If you feel that your family is experiencing any of these signs of trauma, contact a mental health specialist who is skilled in working with children and families, to include the clinical knowledge and experience about Parental Alienation Syndrome.

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