

How is this group helping you? What have you gained from it?

- I used to think that I'm alone, that others don't understand me, and that other people simply judge me. When I walked into this group, I discovered that other people were finishing my sentences. They knew exactly what I was going through!
- I'm walking around with my head higher. I tell people that parental alienation is quite common, and I'm spreading the word to others.
- The Brokenties chat (Alienated Grandparents group by Guli) has been very helpful, including the simple ideas I read there.
- I'm learning to respect myself, treat myself well, and take care of myself.
- Someone else can finish my sentences. Someone has experienced the same exact experiences that I have. I can't be *that* crazy if others have gone through the same thing.
- One woman in the group mentioned that her child threatened her, saying "if you won't accept my opinion of you (that you're unstable), then you will lose the love of all your children." My child said the same exact thing. I couldn't believe it when I heard it, but I realized that maybe our kids getting these ideas from somewhere... especially since they're saying and doing the same thing as other kids. (Apparently, there are online groups for children who have alienated themselves from their parents.)
- My kids make it sound like their situation is different from others, and that I deserve what happened to me because I was *way worse* than any other parent in the world. But then I hear that other mothers are saying the same thing...
- I first thought that I must be *very* insane based on the way my kids described me. But at these meetings, I met so many other amazing women who had the same issues with their kids. I figured that I can't be *that* insane. Maybe I'm not insane at all!
- I have friends who are way more strict and tough on their kids, but their kids are super respectful. So it's not about the parenting style. In these groups, I've met mothers who were strict, relaxed, totally chilled, basically the entire parenting spectrum, etc. And we all ended up with kids who have complaints about us... It must be a gezeirah (decree) ☹
- I have friends who complain that their kids make a mess when they come. However, I'm low maintenance. I just want contact. I'd tell my kids "Come, make a mess. I'll clean up afterwards."
- I won't do a pity party. It's not healthy. It's good for my kids to see that I've moved on with my life and I'm being as productive as possible.
- I wasn't identifying myself with my other successful parts in my life. I only associated myself with the part of me that has lost my kids. But I need to learn that there are other important things I can accomplish in this world that have nothing to do with my children.
- What ONE child can do....! (That particular child was the leader and dragged the others along...)
- Most of us were gaslighted – made to doubt ourselves, be anxious, not trust ourselves. We then realized too late that something terrible was done to us.
- In group, I heard the idea of writing weekly letters to my kid. I tried it. Although my son didn't thank me all along, when I visited him in Israel recently, he asked where his new batch of letters were. He said that he loved the letters and wanted them again!
- Another idea mentioned in an earlier group: write letters to your son (if he won't accept them now), put them in a box, and one day you'll give the box to him.
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- I remember the good things I have: I have a good husband, I have a nice relationship with my stepkids, I am a yoga teacher, I'm a good friend, I am a stepmom, I have good things in my life. I try to focus on the good things in my life. But sometimes it's not enough (to be grateful). I'm still in too much pain.
- I got myself a therapist just to deal with losing my son to alienation.
- When my son's therapist asked him why he doesn't want to talk to me, my son said, "Because my mother is annoying, she doesn't always give me space, and sometimes she repeats herself." The therapist said, "Welcome to moms." His therapist is supportive of me and is getting my son to question why he's staying away from me.
- Even though I'm not a gevir (rich man), my rich Father (in Heaven) has plenty of money he can shower upon me. I still give money monthly to some of my kids even though I don't have a relationship with them right now. I realize that one of my kids was totally controlled by another child of mine, and he is equally a victim. I haven't spoken to him in years and he lives in Israel, but I still send him money.
- Our children are not the only area in our lives that we can identify ourselves with. We are more than just mothers of children. We need to expand the other areas in our lives and make them a strong part of our identity. For example, I'm a successful teacher for so many years and I should learn to identify with that part of me.
- A part of us identifies ourselves with our children, but another part of us can and *should* identify with our other strengths. We are resilient, successful, accomplished women!
- It's unfortunate that when one sibling alienates themselves from a parent, they often pull the other children along. They might do this because they don't want to be alone and lonely, so they need to shlep along other siblings to have company in their loneliness.

What else do you wish to get out of this group?

- Find solutions for our challenges
- There should be someone with courage to write letters to magazines about the tragedies we're hearing about in these groups and sign off with their real name.
- These letters need to take into account that most kids will say, "But my mother is different. These letters don't mean *my* mother. She was a truly terrible mother who never did this.. or that....for me, and therefore *SHE* deserves the alienation. Unlike the other kids who have alienated themselves from their mother, my mother deserves not to have contact with me."

What do you wish could change in this group?

- Perhaps other subjects should be covered, such as human suffering. We are judged for being alienated and we're expected to move on no matter what. But we're suffering intensely.