**WHY REUNIFICATION THERAPY IS DOOMED TO FAIL**

This is my serious objection with the traditional form of reunification therapy: the emphasis for treatment is in the wrong place in that it focuses on the alleged “misdeeds” of the alienated parent, generally recommending parenting skills for the alienated parent in addition to some sort of interactive therapy between the child and the alienated parent. Nor is placing the child alone in some sort of cognitive therapy the answer. To approach therapy in this limited manner is akin to giving a patient who has an infection antibiotics for the infection and then returning the patient to the germ infested environment which had caused infection. The environment of the child living with the alienating parent is akin to the germ infested environment.

It is the alienating parent who is in most of need therapy. Alienators are extremely destructive and are clueless as to what they do---even what they do to their children. It defies logic to believe that one hour a week of reunification therapy is going to overcome the ongoing brainwashing of the child by the alienating parent during the rest of the week. It is therefore essential that the order for therapy mandate the alienating parent into therapy and that the parent must cooperate with any and all requirements by the selected therapist.

I further strongly recommend that there be a provision in the court order to return the case to court in anticipation of the alienating parent’s failure to cooperate with the therapy and reunification process, and this is a high probability.

Regarding the selection of a therapist, the therapist of choice must be a highly skilled and experienced family therapist or another mental health professional who has had extensive continuing education in family dynamics. Additionally, it would be virtually essential for this therapist to have a grounding in parental alienation.