

Our cover story, "A Close Call," opened a floodgate of letters that expose the raw pain experienced by those who are suffering because their children have cut off from them. While each saga has its own history and reasons for happening, the pain is universally searing. Unfortunately, there is no magic wand to solve this problem, but perhaps by continuing to cast a light upon this tragedy, those who can will work to end this crisis.

A Close Call

Addiction to therapy

In reference to Cover Feature, Issue 457

Dear Editor:

What an outstanding job you did on "A Close Call"! I just finished reading the article for the second time. In addition to being a most informative article, I also want to give you credit for covering so many different angles that contribute to the trauma of alienation. You tackled the root of the problem. There was a tremendous need for this, because parents are losing their minds from the shocking events affecting their lives.

You clearly portrayed alienation as resulting from two powerful factors: a false sense of empowerment as well as the addiction factor. Tragically, these two components form a hard core "I know better" personality in the child. It gives them the power to see themselves above their own parents as well as a feeling of being privileged, entitled, and, at the same time, de-

prived. These children are essentially flying high, similar to the way addicts feel when they are on drugs. You expressed this so clearly by mentioning how the protagonist in the story felt her therapist empowered her and left her feeling dependent on him.

I also want to thank you for mentioning some powerful pointers. One of your messages in the article is the power of control that therapists have over our children. Our parents will be happy to realize that damage can be done to the relationship to the total exclusion of any of their actions. I also love the line where you write, "which parent hasn't sometimes crossed a boundary?" Yet, sadly, our parents walk around on eggshells with their children, fearing their every move. Another important line was "my first therapist made me believe I wasn't loved." Hundreds of parents are unfortunately dealing with the painful reality of children claiming they weren't loved.

I hope when parents read this they will be able to step back from their intense suffering and realize that other powers are at play. I further hope that their love for their children will be ignited in a form of understanding and that they will realize that their child is now under the spell of a third party and not in control of their own behavior.

I can only pray that each and every alienated child will read this brilliant article and realize that they have loving parents waiting for them back home with open arms!

Thank you again.

G.W.
Director, Broken Ties

A Victim of Therapy

Shares her story

In reference to Cover Feature, Issue 457

Dear Editor:

I have no doubt that you have received an overload of letters in reference to this article. My intention is not only to validate what has been written there, but also to bring additional awareness to those who are still stuck in the clutches of ill-guided therapy.

I too have been a victim to such a therapist, and I am still healing from the aftereffects. I was "healing" in the hands of a well-known community therapist. I was drawn by her dynamic personality and amazing confidence.

To make a long story short, I got to know some of her other clients, and together we formed a strong group of followers who were committed to recovery and healing. We adored our therapist and even if the red flags of danger, lack of boundaries, lack of confidentiality and inappropriate behavior were waving wildly, we simply didn't see them.

Thinking back, if I would've read this article a few months ago, I would've simply laughed it off, thinking that the people involved just don't get it—of course you need strong boundaries!

And that is why I'm writing this letter. To all of those who are in therapy (and I'm a big fan of that!), please check in with

Spring...

DESIGNER
ITALIAN &
EUROPEAN
COLLECTIONS

4617 13TH AVENUE
BROOKLYN, NY
TEL: 718-851-9111

Novella
FINE DESIGNER ITALIAN LADIES WEAR & ACCESSORIES

yourself. Is your stomach turning during the session because of what your therapist suggests? Is she letting you speak and willing to hear you out? Is she respecting boundaries or oversharing her own life? Is she focused on *you*? Are you left feeling confused by her behavior? Is there open communication?

As crazy as it sounds, manipulative therapists have you think that what you are feeling comes from your transference issues. They blame you for anything. I am here to tell you to *run for your life!* With much courage, I have since found a very professional, self-aware, honest therapist, and to my great relief, I learned what good therapy feels like.

It was hard to leave the first one—she had me wrapped under her spell, but I'm here to say that it is possible.

I'm putting forth a suggestion that maybe there is a professional out there who is willing to put out a checklist of what to look for in a client-therapist relationship and what red flags to look for.

May those who need to heal find the therapist and guidance they need easily, and may Moshiach come quickly so we will all feel the wholeness and beauty that is ours.

N.W.

Alienated Parents

Due to therapists

In reference to Cover Feature, Issue 457

Dear Editor:

Thank you for publishing the article interviewing the woman who gave up her relationship with her parents due to the negative influence of her therapist. Unfortunately, my husband and I have lost our relationship with our three children and 15 grandchildren. My daughter was going through something (we still don't know what), so she went to a rabbi who told her she should just have a relationship with her father and not her mother. When she called her father to propose this idea he said that he could not have a relationship with her without me. She then went to a therapist who encouraged her to set boundaries with both of us and that we were "toxic," etc. My husband and I asked our other children what was going on. They asked us to leave them out of it, because, they said, this was her deal, not theirs.

My daughter worked and worked on her two siblings for a year and a half until they joined her, so now they are all in this together. This disaster has been going on for almost eight years now. We have tried *rabbanim*, therapists, friends, and even the

principal of their children's school, all to no avail. We tried calling and writing letters, but the door was slammed shut. No matter what we say or do, it is all twisted around and perverted.

When this started happening, we felt ashamed and tried to keep it from going public, but it became public when we were excluded from their *simchahs*. Also, unfortunately, our daughter was diagnosed with breast cancer, but even that didn't cause anything to change. We were asked not to call, not to visit, not to help with the children, even though she had months of chemotherapy and recovery from surgery.

All our friends and family who witnessed our children growing up are in shock at what has transpired. Our children saw the *kavod* that my husband and I gave our parents, their grandparents. We both come from Eastern European backgrounds and did not have the privilege of having grandparents. We were very close to our children and grandchildren until this happened. We had what we believed to be a loving and normal family. We also loved our children-in-law and even had close relationships with our *mechutanim*.

A friend of mine put me in touch with Broken Ties. I am shocked at how many people are experiencing this nightmare.

I live in Los Angeles; there aren't any



Monsey
59 Route 59
845.459.6290

Williamsburg
517 Park Ave
718.708.6108

Flatbush
1411 Avenue M
718.336.9090

Lakewood
256 Cedar Bridge Ave
732.901.6441

Jerusalem
Rechov Paran 15
02.966.3996



COMING WITH FULL LINE OF
MAXI DRESSES AND DAY WEAR
FROM PASHMINA, JACKIO,
EGO AND MORE



bring in style

ROBES NIGHTWEAR BRIDALWEAR



LINGERIE BOUTIQUE

4603 16 AVE BROOKLYN
718.438.3454

LAKWOOD KIMONO (FORMERLY LINGERIE BOUTIQUE)

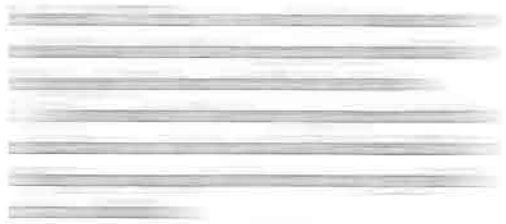
6693 RT 9 NORTH HOWELL
732.526.4477
(NEXT TO ELISHEVA'S WIGS)

LETTERS

support groups here that I am aware of. I find some comfort in knowing there are other people out there who are experiencing similar situations and it is not that we were horrible parents, just people whose children got very misdirected advice.

For what it's worth, I will add that I am a therapist myself.

Thanks again,
M.



AMI MAGAZINE
1575 50th St., Brooklyn, NY 11219
Phone: 718-534-8800 Fax: 718-484-7731
letters@amimagazine.org