

For now, I'm heartened that this essay was published. Just knowing there are others like me out there, who have reached out, been hurt, and nevertheless persevered and are still looking for answers, gives me knowledge I'm not alone.

An Appreciative Reader

When Therapists Take Away Your Child

I read your article by C. Saphir, "This Isn't the Therapy Generation of 2010," with much interest. Like many others, I am hurting greatly from a child of mine who has turned away from me as a result of a therapist's guidance. I pray she will see your brilliant writing.

What I have learned over the years is that in many instances, for parental alienation to occur, all it takes is for a high-schooler/seminary student to walk into her counselor's office and say, "My mother/father

doesn't understand me." Dr. Richard Warshak, a noted parental alienation expert, has documented that young adults commonly make this statement.

Nonetheless, inexperienced mentors, therapists, and educators have stepped in to "rescue" the child. Sadly, once one child in the home is alienated, the strong chain that held the home is broken. It often doesn't take long for the other children to second-guess their overworked and harried parents and join that bandwagon.

Some of these children have been approached by mediators at the request of shocked and horrified parents. Most of the feedback they have received revolves around normal everyday interactions — an uncomplimentary statement made under huge stress, parents requesting help in the house when they are out working, or asking children to use their own allowance for extras. Are these truly reasons to walk off and eventually take the grand-

children with them?

While parents are pleading to be heard, their children stand tall and powerful with the therapist's/mentor's backing their claims that their parents have failed them. These parents are experiencing a pain and grief that is inconceivable to comprehend. Can anyone imagine a torment greater than losing the child you cherished and loved to the mind-numbing guidance of both licensed and self-appointed counselors?

Who will hear our stories? Who will stand behind these precious Yiddishe parents who have sacrificed a lifetime to raise these children? Who will speak to our children and tell them we are loving and stable parents? Or will everyone sit back and wait for us to crack from the sheer anguish we are suffering and then say, "We told you so. Just look at her. She's so broken... it's her nature."

A grieving mother

Adoption Proposal

[Outlook / Issue 790]

I was very happy to see Yonoson Rosenblum's column about Shlavim. It was very eye-opening to hear from the head of this organization the issues they see in new *baalei teshuvah*. I thought his assessment was very deep and really cut straight to the crux of their problems. I also enjoyed hearing about the goals they have and how they are trying to fix these issues. I see firsthand the work Shlavim does, as my wife works for this organization and she sees definite issues that are getting addressed by Shlavim.

I started thinking what we can do as a Klal to help our returning brothers. They work very hard and sacrifice more than we do to be *shomrei Torah*. How can we all help them acclimate and transition into

the *frum* world?

Maybe there is something we can do. If every *frum* family were to, so to speak, adopt *baalei teshuvah*, invite them to their simchahs, and share Shabbosim with them — not just as friends but as family — I would hope the benefit would be palpable and the new *baalei teshuvah* would be able to acclimate and become part of the FFB world and be much more balanced in their new lives.

I think the families who adopt these *baalei teshuvah* would also benefit immensely from their openness to accepting others into their family, giving themselves a more balanced and centered view of the world. This would also give their family unit a lot of skills they would not have had access to otherwise, as *baalei teshuvah* come from very different

backgrounds and know a lot that can be beneficial. And for all you know, they are your lost brothers.

S.Y.G., Jerusalem

Do It Without Alcohol

[That's the Spirit / Double Take - Issue 789]

In response to "That's the Spirit," a well-written fictional account meant to get our dander up, please allow me to say: My dander is up!

As a parent and addiction counselor, I have been on both sides of this particular story. Of course the Reb Hillels of this world are doing a tremendous service for the boys; they might be the difference between the boys who make it and the boys who don't.

However, it does not follow that