# What is PA-A?

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**How do people recover?**

We recover by sharing our experience (what it was like) our strengths. (what we are doing to take care of ourselves emotionally, spiritually and physically) and hope (our actions and intentions for the future). As we learn to address the stress, fear, anxiety, powerlessness and hopelessness that parental alienation causes, we slowly start to regain our balance and learn how to embrace life under these incredible trying circumstances. It is a process, not an event

Recovery means living life on life’s terms, facing pains and fears. In our alienation, we sometimes felt like helpless victims. Recovery means gaining or regaining the power to see our options, to make careful choices in our lives. Recovery means rebuilding trust with ourselves, a gradual process that requires much motivation and support. There are bound to be setbacks and moments of fear and frustration. Support – professional, group, and family

– helps us get through such trials safely, when we are honest about them. Support groups such as PA-A provide inspiration and opportunity for turning the most deeply painful and humbling experiences to useful purpose. As we learn and practice careful self- honesty, self-care, and self-expression, we gain

authenticity, perspective, peace and empowerment.

 **What are PA-A meetings like?**

Please see “Suggested Meeting Format” under the Literature tab and the Online Meetings tab found at www.PA-A.org

To find a meeting or publications, or get information on how to start a meeting, please visit our website or email:parentalalienationanonymous@gmail.com

Parental Alienation Anonymous (PA-A) is a fellowship of individuals who share their experience, strength and hope with each other. We share our common struggles and resources to help others navigate this debilitating disease. The only requirement for membership is that alienation is affecting your life. Our primary purpose is to share our stories, support each other and carry this message of recovery to others struggling with alienation.

# Are there sponsors in PA-A like in other 12-Step groups?

Yes. In PA-A, a sponsor helps sponsees work the Twelve Steps. A sponsor’s also shares their experience, strength and hope can provide the insight and inspiration needed to successfully work a Twelve Step program of recovery. Sponsorship is an integral part of receiving support as you navigate the steps, life and meetings. Sponsors are generally someone you meet at meetings.

# Are there dues or fees for PAA membership?

There are no dues or fees for PA-A membership. We are self-supporting through our own contributions. PA-A is not allied with any sect, denomination, political organization or institution. PA-A does not wish to engage in any controversy. We neither endorse nor oppose any cause.

# Identifying Ourselves in PA-A Meetings

In PA-A meetings, identifying as “alienated”, “estranged,” etc., is optional. Some of us say, “Hi, I’m Jane” and leave it at that. Others say, “Hi. I’m Jane. I am an alienated parent/grandparent/relative or friend.” There are good arguments for and against “identifying.” We want to encourage everyone to follow their conscience in deciding what is right for them.

# Reasons Why Some of Us Identify

* Doing so reminds us of who we are and what we are struggling with. It is honest, and honesty is the foundation of recovery.
* Identifying reminds us of our continuing commitment to recovery. It helps reinforce our commitment to embracing the attitudes and behaviors of recovery.
* When we “identify” we help the newcomer relate to us and give them a sense of security and connection to the group.
* Identifying reduces the shame and stigma of having an alienated or estranged family member.

# Reasons Why Some of Us Do Not Identify

* We are scared, maybe feel unsafe and are not ready to have our voice heard in the group. This is wonderful self-care and perfectly acceptable.
* It is too painful to label ourselves and alienators.
* Labels can promote black and white thinking. I am alienated so I will always be alienated is a common though and fear. Accepting and countering negative thoughts with careful inquiry, deliberation, and self-care is what recovery is all about, and it is what normal people do.
* Prehaps the word alienated does not resonate with our experience and we might feel inclined to use another word to identify such as estranged, not in contact etc.
* Labels focus on the problem, not the solution.

**In PA-A, we are committed to support one another in our personal search for truth and meaning.**

**May you find peace with your choices.**

**What’s the Difference Between PA-A and other 12-Step Programs**

Unlike AA, OA, and ABA, PA-A does not endorse abstaining from anything. Our organization is devoted to helping our members develop more resilient relationships with ourselves, with others and mostly with our alienated family member.

Rather than recognizing periods of continuous abstinence, we in PA-A celebrate self-defined milestones of recovery. These milestones, which take myriad – and often surprising – forms, are bright spots in our meetings that inspire us with their honesty and reality.

Many PA-A members also attend other 12-Step groups. In PA-A meetings, we discuss our catastrophic thinking and feelings, we might also discuss how to work a solution, which has to do with our recognizing life choices and how to make them responsibly. We need to develop better (and more effective) coping mechanisms. As we come to rely on a perspective that confers peace and power, our new methods of dealing with life issues gradually replace the negative judgmental voice that rules our thoughts about “what if” and “if only”.

We encourage our members to seek counsel with qualified therapists and experts who work with the parental alienation if needed.

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*Frequently Asked Questions*

For more information please visit our website at:

www.PA-A.org

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