

Divorce

# 6 Major Signs Of Parental Alienation – It's More Common Than You'd Think

by Susie b Cross

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It's not often we hear about amicable divorces or breakups, and that makes sense, because the probability of both partners being on the same page at that point seems a bit too pie-in-the-sky.

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Of course, you do run across a few stories about successful co-parenting, and I heard one once when I was eavesdropping during spin class. That's one utopian breakup out of all the divorces I have known of or gossiped about. And that equals about .2% in my small world—a number that I'm sure is amazingly inflated compared to the actual percentage of "successful" divorces.

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But stories about hellish breakups? The clothes-thrown-out-the-window trope is as real as the myriad no-contact orders issued each year.

Leaked nudes? Destroying property? Nothing's off the table.

Unfortunately, a child is often thrown into the middle of the maelstrom. Sometimes it's a mutual tug-o-war, and sometimes one parent in particular uses the child as a pawn. In these cases, that parent (the alienating parent, or AP) is not concerned with what's best for the child—rather, their focus is on the ex-partner (the target parent, or TP). This is called parental alienation, and it is a “game with only one goal: to ‘win’ the exclusive love of the children by destroying the relationship the children have with their other parent.”

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The incidence of parental alienation is alarming. One study, conducted over a 12-year period, found that 86% of the 1000 cases included “some element of parental programming and brainwashing in an effort to implant false and negative ideas about the other parent, with the intention of turning the child against that other parent.”

New York divorce attorney and author Sandra Radna discusses the issue of parent alienation/alienated child in her book “You’re Getting a Divorce, Now What?” According to Radna, the alienator is often “manipulative during the marriage and may have started saying things to the children that are derogatory about the other parent while the parents were still together.”

Understandably, the deterioration of the relationship may exacerbate this abuse.

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The alienator's tactics, not too different from cult-like brainwashing , can be low-key and insidious or more direct and easy for an outsider to spot.

## **Badmouthing the TP.**

Some APs may say things as bold as “your mother’s crazy” or “your father’s a drunk.” According to Radna, however, badmouthing is often subtle and may sound very believable to the child, whether or not it is fabricated. Radna explains: “If the parent says, ‘I would love to buy this for you, but I can’t because your father doesn’t give us enough money,’ the child will likely become resentful against the father....The child has no reason to suspect that mom is not telling the truth.”

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## **Limiting contact between the child and the TP.**

The alienator will often make it difficult for the TP to spend time with the child. Sometimes they will defy custody orders and keep the child longer than their allotted time. They may schedule activities for the child while they are supposed to be with the TP. They may also interrupt the time the child spends with the TP with calls and texts to “check up on” the child. Some alienators will even limit the number of times the TP may be brought up in conversation or how many photographs the child may have of the TP. Predictably, the less time a child spends with the TP, the weaker their emotional bond.

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## **Confiding in the child.**

The AP will tell the child private information regarding the parents’ financial, legal or private relationship, painting themselves as the victim. According to Psychlaw.net, citing a 2013 study by Baker and Fine, this can make the child resent and feel anger toward the TP because they feel like they have to protect the AP.

ronstik/Getty

## **Expressing/insinuating that the TP is dangerous somehow.**

In her experience as an attorney, Radna has seen this specific strategy. “The wife would take innocent things and make it sound like my client was doing something improper,” says Radna, “When he was kissing one of his daughters good night on the forehead, one night she said ‘That’s inappropriate. Your father shouldn’t be kissing you like that.’ Or when he was tickling his other daughter who was 8 years old his wife said ‘that’s inappropriate touching. Daddy’s touching you inappropriately, you realize that, right?’ If my client attempted to say that what his wife was saying was not true, she would tell the children that their father was starting a fight with her when she was just trying to protect them.”

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## **Having the child spy.**

The child will be recruited to rifle through the AP’s phone or purse or anywhere else the AP directs. Often, the AP will link the information they’re seeking with the child’s wants. For instance, if the child wants a Nintendo Switch, the AP might say something along the lines of “I can’t afford that,

but maybe your mother can. I wish we knew how much money she had.” And, once the child betrays the TP, “they will likely feel guilty and uncomfortable being around that parent, thus furthering the alienation.”

## **Undermining the authority of the TP.**

While it’s normal that the parents’ rules for the child will not be 100% consistent from household to household, the AP will go out of their way to undermine the rules of the TP. They will call the TP by their first name (versus “mom” or “dad”) and prod the child to do so as well. For example, if the TP’s prescribed bedtime for the child is 9pm, the AP might say something like “Stacey thinks you’re still a baby. When you’re with me, you can stay up as late as you want.” In this way the TP is diminished in the eyes of the child and the AP becomes the alpha-parent.

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And what happens to the child who has been successfully manipulated by the AP? The child is indoctrinated and becomes the AP’s unwitting accomplice. joining in the campaign to punish the TP. This is called “parental alienation syndrome,” and within even months of coaching, the child comes to “hate, fear, and reject the targeted parent as someone unworthy of having a relationship with them.”

The effects of parental alienation syndrome last a lifetime and are almost too many to chronicle. Not only does the child miss out on memories they could have made with the TP, they actually mourn the loss of that parent and, according to Sharie Stines, Psy.D in her article for The New England Psychologist, they develop some “serious pathological behaviors and attitudes that carry in to their adult lives.” They struggle with maintaining relationships because they have been trained to dispose of people, they tend to panic when they are exposed to any sort of anger, and they seldom accept any blame when in conflict with someone else.

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Tragically, parental alienation syndrome can be a predictor of future depression and substance abuse. Ultimately, they may become like the alienating parent, lacking empathy and thinking only in black and white terms; in the end, they will very well repeat, with their own child, the mistakes of the parent alienator.

It makes you wonder: would the alienator ever have sought to sever the child-TP relationship if they could have anticipated the negative effects on their adult child? If, later in life, they realized how they had damaged their child, would they sorely regret how they taught their child to unnaturally hate and distrust? Would they blame themselves, or would their actions still be the fault of the TP?

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In the end, in the alienator's mind, will it all have been worth it?

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Entertainment

# People Have Thoughts About Jennifer Aniston Eating One Single Chip

by Arielle Tschinkel | August 10, 2021

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Scary Mommy and Gregg DeGuire/Chris Clor/Getty

**In a recent interview, Jennifer Aniston admitted to eating just one chip when she's stressed, and the internet has feelings**

Nestled among the many interesting tidbits in [Jennifer Aniston's recent interview](#) with [InStyle](#) sat the admission that she eats a single chip or a single M&M – yes, just one – when she's stressed. Of course, Aniston has long been open about her lifestyle habits, including [diet and exercise](#), for years, but for some reason, this particular tidbit has struck a chord with people on the internet.



When asked what she eats when she's stressed, Aniston replied, "A chip. Crunch, crunch, crunch." She then clarified that yes, she did mean "just one chip," adding, "Usually. I'm good at that. I can have one M&M, one chip. I know, that's so annoying."

While some find it refreshingly real that a celeb is copping to the strict lifestyle they lead (even if said lifestyle leaves room only for a single chip or M&M), others are baffled by Aniston's admission, wondering how long it must take for her to finish an entire bag of chips if she's only eating one at a time.

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**Jennifer Aniston says she eats just one potato chip when she's stressed <https://t.co/4im1dVotlz>**

**– The Independent (@Independent) [August 4, 2021](#)**

Some made hilarious jokes about the single-chip habit, which honestly leaves us with more questions than answers – including why and how when chips and M&Ms are both *so good* and deserve to be eaten in abundance.

**I had a friend who kept a chocolate brownie in the freezer and took a little nibble when she was stressed. She could obsessively make a brownie last a whole winter. She died, so...**

**– Maggie Might (but probably won't) (@Maggie247) [August 4, 2021](#)**

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**It takes her three years to finish a bag of Baked Lay's**  
**<https://t.co/z38kqno2oq>**

**– Gawker (@Gawker) [August 4, 2021](#)**

**Good Morning to Jennifer Aniston's one stress chip.**

**– Jeremiah Ripley (he/they) (@JereRipley) [August 5, 2021](#)**

**I sit down to dinner with Jennifer Aniston. a perfect moonlit night. she lifts a single, crisp, still-warm potato chip to her mouth and the sound of her nearly perfect incisors crunching through it rings through the dining room, startling the other guests. "check, please," I say**

**– ray (@nraymz) [August 5, 2021](#)**

**An important piece of context that got left out of the article about how Jennifer Aniston eats one single potato chip when she's stressed is that Jennifer Aniston is nine inches tall.**

**– Sonnet the Hedgehog (@germyradin) [August 9, 2021](#)**

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Others pointed to the very valid (and maddening) beauty standards imposed on women in general, but especially in the public eye, who feel pressure to remain on restrictive diets in order to fall into the narrow (and often times impossible) societal ideals. Though, of course, it's worth noting that Aniston herself has not shared whether she's experienced an eating disorder, it is proven that **restrictive diets often lead to eating disorders.**

**Because the next time there is a Look at Jennifer Aniston's Abs in This Bikini Can You Believe She is 50 article, I will remember this article and remind myself that when she is stressed she eats ONE**

**POTATO CHIP.**

When I'm stressed, I eat a bag of potato chips.

– Sarah Klem (@ThatSarahKlem) August 5, 2021

**TW: ED**

excuse me but how the fuck is Jennifer Aniston's disordered eating behaviors of "I can have one M&M and one chip" mentality relatable in the slightest.

– saksh (@newsakshee) August 8, 2021

I just read an interview where Jennifer Aniston says that when she gets stressed, she eats 1 chip, or 1 M&M.

This is why women my age develop eating disorders, myself included. 2021 is not the time for her humblebragging.

– Amy (@farty115) August 4, 2021

And others simply feel bad for Aniston, hoping that she'll come around and enjoy as many M&Ms and chips as she wants, if she does want more than one, of course.

Girl, only allowing yourself to eat ONE chip or ONE M&M like that is what gives you stress in the 1st place.

[pic.twitter.com/FQDt1309c6](https://pic.twitter.com/FQDt1309c6)

– Manny Vu (@mannyvu89) August 6, 2021

She washes regularly and is pro vaccine, let her eat her one crisp in peace! <https://t.co/dc9FSOOhuS>

– Freedom Littleseal (@TheShiftyShadow) August 7, 2021

However Aniston’s single-chip habit came about, the TL:DR is that shaming or judging others for their dietary choices is never cool. We’re hopeful that perhaps Aniston was actually joking and that she’s enjoying all the salty and sugary snacks she wants to on the reg, but ultimately whatever works for her works for her. As for us, we’re more than happy to scoop up the snacks left behind in the Aniston household if she’d like to share them with us. Jen, we’ll send you our address.

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