



# C A L I F O R N I A C h i l d A b d u c t i o n T A S K F O R C E

## Tips for Adults Parentally Abducted as Children

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1. You might have confused feelings about being parentally abducted. You may experience torn loyalties, anger, guilt or love toward your abducting or recovering parent.
2. You have a right to your own feelings. Do not allow anyone to tell you how, and what, you should feel, think, or believe.
3. You have a right to talk about your own feelings and ask questions. Take time to get to know your recovering parent. Be kind. Information you may have received about them from the abducting parent or their associates, may not be accurate.
4. As an adult you can establish boundaries on how you allow others to treat you. Let your parent(s) know what you are not willing to talk or hear about and what behaviors are not acceptable around you.
5. Your experience was different from that of your parents. No one can totally understand the motives, actions, and feelings of another. Listening, however, is the supreme act of caring.
6. You are a unique person. You are not predestined to be like one, or both, of your parents. While they have influence on you, as an adult you make independent choices, thus you are ultimately responsible for what you do and who you are.
7. You might feel different than others around you because of your abduction experience; however, hundreds of thousands of children have been victims of family abductions. Even more children have, in some way, been harmed by their parents. While it is natural to feel different when you don’t know other victims, the reality is there are many who have endured something similar.
8. Do not allow the abduction event to define who you are. You are a multi-faceted person with great potential and power. Do not give your personal power away to a past event that cannot be changed.
9. Work with a credible professional to resolve inner conflict. Dealing directly and appropriately with these issues takes strength and is the most effective for your ongoing mental health.
10. Give back. You have experienced pain because of a childhood experience, so do something to help other children that could be, or are, hurt. Volunteer your time, acquire and utilize skills, make a donation. Doing will not only help others but it will also help you in your own healing.
11. Rebuilding a life and relationships takes time. Take one day at a time. Expect setbacks and roadblocks but keep pursuing that which is important to you. With persistence and courage you might be amazed with the positive long.