

Hello,

It starts by the judge requesting that my sister and I show up when she announces her decision. I had heard from my dad that being sent away to Family Bridges was a possibility, and had made preparations such as letting my employers at the time know that I may be MIA for a period of time, but we all were doubtful such a crazy thing would actually happen. When I heard that I had to show up in court, it still seemed unbelievable that Family Bridges was something I could be involved in. I had looked at their website, and the website said that they do not take cases where children have a legitimate reason to dislike one parent, or cases of abuse. Both of those conditions apply to me and my mother, and my dislike of my mother had nothing to do with my father's so-called 'influences' or 'brainwashing'.

So, I show up in the courtroom, wait outside for a bit until the judge says my sister and I are allowed to come in. She doesn't want to let us speak, but we do- a short statement about how my mother and her boyfriend are abusive and unsafe and it is a bad idea to give my mother custody, seeing as how she doesn't seem to like us and doesn't like providing for us. If a parent is abusive and refuses to keep agreements around providing necessities, then you would think they don't get custody, right?

Wrong. The judge told us "The world is not black and white, and you guys need to stop seeing it that way." She also told us to stop being disrespectful towards her, before announcing that she had heard enough from us. Her decision was that we would be sent to Family Bridges. She then asked everyone to clear the courtroom.

She was rude and disrespectful towards both me and members of my family. At this point, 3 people from a company called Adolescent Transport Services came in to take me and my sister away. I lay down on the ground, crying, and refused to go. I explained that my dad had done nothing wrong, had not bad mouthed my mom, that my mom was abusive and that I was refusing to go. (Another part on their website states that if a child refuses to go then they don't want to accept the case.) The transport people told me if I didn't go, my dad would go to jail and I would be sent somewhere else instead. They hinted at jail, a residential stay, etc. There were sheriff's officers standing right there watching this whole scene, and they ended up escorting us out the back to where the transport people had a van waiting.

We were told we were to be taken to Ontario. We were driven to the airport. I told multiple TSA officers that I was being kidnapped against my will- they said that there was nothing that they could do, because they weren't the police. I asked them to get the police. They refused. So, as I am standing next to the security scanner, I refuse to take off my shoes, walk up to a TSA officer, and say "I have a bomb in my shoe, please arrest me." One of the transport officers was holding onto my arm this whole time. She said to the TSA officer, "No she doesn't, she's just trying to avoid going with us. She's just a crazy teenager." The TSA officer then tells her that no ma'am, in fact he does have to call the police, he has to take this kind of thing seriously. The transport

lady, still holding onto me, starts leading me through the scanner. I begin screaming bloody murder for about two minutes straight. Screaming at the top of my lung, hurling insults at her such as "Fuck you bitch! Fuck you! Mother fucking bitch!" In order to make a scene to get the police to actually come. At this point, two police officers show up. She is still holding on to me, and the police officers keep trying to talk to me. I am refusing to talk, continuing to scream and curse, and finally tell them to handcuff me to get this fucking lady off of me.

They do, and lead me to sit down in a chair, handcuffed. They ask me what's going on, and I say that I would like to report abuse at the hands of my mother and her boyfriend. They refuse to believe me, refuse to take my report, asking me "Why did you not report this earlier? Why are you only reporting this after there is a court order?" And assuming that I am lying. They tell me that I can make an official report in a minute. At this point, there are about 7 police officers surrounding us. They ask me if I really had a bomb in my shoe, and I say no, but saying that was the only way that I could get police to come. I am crying and begging them to help me, begging them to not let me get kidnapped. The transport people show the police the paperwork showing that they have temporary custody under a judges order. We are all led to go sit down while the police and TSA figure everything out.

My sister and I are talking to the police, two of the officers say that they were beat as a kid and look how they turned out, that child abuse is legal and they don't know why I'm putting up such a fight. They tell me that there is nothing that they can do, that I will get through it and being beaten and threatened and called names is good for me, and oh look you have a judges order so go with these nice people. We are finally released to leave, and the transport people put me in handcuffs and put me into the car. We are to be driving down to Ontario, California. My sister has to use the bathroom. The transport lady has gone in the stall with her each time, so my sister has not been able to use the bathroom due to her stress and the violation of her privacy. We drove for 24 hours straight down to California. I heard them talking about how Randy Rand was urging me to be charged with a felony crime and put in federal prison to "teach me a lesson" for my actions at the airport. We explained to them that my mom and her boyfriend had been abusive, that we didn't consent to this. At which point, one of the agents told us that a boy had gone and not consented, refused to talk to his abusers or participate in brainwashing, and had been sent first to a residential treatment facility, then a wilderness camp, before finally having to go back through the program all over again.

That was a threat. And that was the longest and most horrible 24 hours of my entire life. I will never forget that. Finally we get there, and are led up to a hotel room with my mom, her boyfriend, and 3 psychologists. They introduce themselves as Randy Rand, administrator, Jane Schatz, psychologist, and Julie Verner, psychologist. I am crying and upset. I explain to them about the abuse. Schatz explains to me that everything before I got there is to be forgotten, and if I bring up anything negative or that happened before I got there, there will be consequences. We watch a slideshow filled with optical illusions, about 'Perception vs. Perspective'. We analyze each one and talk about it as a group. We watch the short film 'The Butterfly Circus' and talk about themes as a group. Then we break for lunch, and the psychologists leave. We go to

an Indian restaurant, and while there, I am rude to my mother and Brian. I ask them why they are doing this, and tell them that I will never forgive them. Then, I walk outside and sit there. We are supposed to stay within eye contact of my mother and Brian is one of the rules of Family Bridges.

When we get back, my mother tells the psychologists what happened. They say, "If you continue that behavior, you will be sent somewhere else. You seem like you need more help than we can give you." We continue watching videos on psychology experiments such as elevator experiment, an experiment with conformity. The experiment where participants give electric shocks to a fake person whenever they get the wrong answer. Many more experiments, all of which I had already seen while taking a General Psychology class. At the end of each little blurb, we were given words and asked to make examples and analyze the videos. Then, the psychologists left. We went for dinner, and took an uber. The uber driver asked what had brought us to California, and I said that we were kidnapped by the horrible people in the car. At the restaurant, I asked how my mom could be doing this, and lying, because my dad had never alienated us. I asked why she had done this. I called her a bitch and walked outside to take a break. She immediately called Randy Rand, who told her that if I did not start listening to her and go with her right that instant, to call 911 and have the police arrest me.

Went back to the hotel. Next morning, psychologists all came, and more videos. Growth mindset vs fixed mindset Ted talk. Another Ted talk on grit. A very long video of children who had falsely accused their parents of abuse after going through Freudian repressed memory therapy apologizing to their parents. Many videos on false memories, the power of suggestion, and experiments/videos such as 'count the number of times people pass the ball. Did you see the gorilla walking through?' That particular video, as well as a couple others similar to it, was to explain to us that all may not be as it seems. Then more analyzing with words.

Next day. A series called Welcome Home Pluto, made by Dr. Richard Warshak, specifically about parental alienation. They listed things that parents do to alienate kids from their other parent, and I said "Hey, my dad doesn't do any of those things." The psychologists again told me not to think in black and white and that if I continued to say such things I may need 'extra help'. Their suggestions that my sister and I needed 'extra help' continued throughout the whole 4 days that we were there. Extra help to them meant a treatment facility and a wilderness camp, which are things reserved for juvenile offenders. We started talking to my mother and Brian, having a structured family meeting that ended with each member giving another person an 'appreciation'. An appreciation is "Mommy, when you did X it made me feel X (good feeling). I appreciate you for that." They forced us to call my mother 'mommy' because calling her otherwise was a continuation of our alienation.

Next day, final day. We learned 'communication techniques' such as the pen technique, listening and repeating so the other person feels genuinely heard, and others. Many family meetings. Second to last family meeting, my mother was talking and my sister looked at me. My mom said she didn't like that. The psychologists threatened my sister with 'extra help' and not passing the

program, which means extra help. My sister began to cry, and we broke for lunch. During this whole experience, there were many times where my sister came to me and confessed that she couldn't breathe. That her stomach was hurting. Again that she couldn't breathe. My mother and Brian got to dictate the whole process, including the threatening. They were totally on board, the whole time.

So, it had come time to leave. I had been keeping a journal the whole time of what we watched, what happened, and just writing my thoughts. They forced me to throw out the journal because 'Your mindset when you came was the old mindset. Since you've been here, you've gone through a paradigm shift, and if you read your old negative thoughts you may revert to that. Additionally, we don't want any of the material leaking out.' So, then we left, and we went on a court ordered minimum 5 day vacation to Palm Springs with my mother and Brian. We were to do fun activities as a family, not bring up the past, not be mean or disrespectful, stay within eye contact, and do multiple family meetings a day. My mother was in constant contact with Randy Rand, and still actively threatened us. Brian left, my sister, mother and I went to LA to finish our vacation.

A couple vital things I should add.

During the whole experience, we were not allowed any outside contact. No phones, no computers, no calling family, no calling friends, nothing. Before we left, my mother and Brian made a list together with the psychologists that was to be people we were not allowed to talk to. On that list was my boyfriend, until my mom could talk to him in order explain the brainwashing. Also on that list was my entire father's family. This 'no-contact list' was to be enforced after we went home, in order to keep my sister and I isolated and brainwashed. During our Palm Springs forced vacation, my mother texted my boyfriend to ask if she could talk to him, per my request. He said maybe, he would see. On our last day at the workshop, she also requested that she know where he live and meet his parents. I said no, and the Family Bridges people again threatened me with 'extra help' because I was trying to 'isolate her from my life'.

When we got home, my mother installed monitoring software on our phones. She wouldn't let us go anywhere without her. We had family meetings every night and then once a week, and we had to continue watching videos. On my prom day, I was not allowed out until 1 because my mother and her boyfriend forced me to watch more brainwashing videos to get my mind right before I was allowed to leave. The threats continued. My mother and her boyfriend are a controlling bitch and a controlling creepy asshole, respectively. Family Bridges enforced rules that we had to have family dinner every night with no distractions, my mother and her boyfriend added onto that 'we must sit at the dinner table for a minimum of 20 minutes. You must not eat like a farm animal.' And of course, the consequence for breaking these rules was being sent to a facility indefinitely. But it was always posed as a choice- "If you think you need to go to the facility, you can continue acting up."

One night, Brian touched my sister's butt.

My sister told me later, and we went to the police station 2 days later, on Saturday morning. We

were hanging out with my mom and her boyfriend and just left. My mom called and texted me, threatening to report me missing and 'there will be consequences if you don't text me back right now.' We went to the police station to report the unwanted touching, and they promptly showed up and said we were lying. The police officer did not take us seriously, told me specifically that I only have 1 year left, I should just stick it out and stop worrying about my sister, and that I need help for my untreated mental health issues because crying is inappropriate. He could not understand why I was crying at 17 and afraid to go home, he just told me I should see a counselor to deal with my issues. We go home, and my mother refuses to let me leave the house to volunteer or babysit, both of which I was supposed to do that day. I ran away by jumping out of my window, and never went back. That was in early June. On August 16th, I got emancipated, and both my parents agreed.

If you have any further questions about what happened during Family Bridges or about the material, I would be happy to answer them. If you have any questions about how the police acted (horridly), I would also be happy to answer those. After this experience, I truly believe that the whole justice system needs to be reformed, especially police.

Sincerely,
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