## **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about Reunification Therapy**

### **1. What is reunification therapy?**

Reunification therapy is a therapeutic process designed to help restore and strengthen the relationship between a parent and child after a period of estrangement, conflict, or limited contact. It typically occurs in situations involving divorce, separation, high-conflict custody disputes, or other family breakdowns.

### **2. When is reunification therapy recommended?**

It is often recommended when:

* A child has had little or no contact with a parent for an extended period.
* There has been a breakdown in communication or trust.
* A court has ordered therapy as part of a parenting plan.
* There are unresolved emotional wounds between a parent and child.

### **3. Who participates in reunification therapy?**

Usually, it involves the child and the parent they are reconnecting with, but it may also include:

* The other parent (in separate sessions).
* Stepparents or other significant family members.
* Mental health professionals working collaboratively.

### **4. Is reunification therapy the same as regular family therapy?**

Not exactly. While both focus on relationships, reunification therapy has a specific goal: reestablishing a healthy parent-child bond after separation or estrangement. The process often requires a careful, structured approach tailored to court orders, child safety, and the emotional needs of everyone involved.

### **5. How long does reunification therapy take?**

There’s no set timeline—it depends on:

* The child’s readiness.
* The history and severity of the conflict.
* Court requirements (if applicable).
* Progress made during sessions.  
   Some cases take weeks; others take months or longer.

### **6. What happens during the sessions?**

Sessions may include:

* Individual therapy for the child.
* Individual therapy for the parent(s).
* Gradually introduced joint sessions.
* Structured activities to rebuild trust and positive memories.
* Communication coaching and conflict resolution strategies.

**7. Is reunification therapy always court-ordered?**

No. While many cases are court-ordered, some families choose to pursue it voluntarily if they see the benefit in repairing the relationship for the child’s well-being.

### **8. Will the therapist take sides?**

A reunification therapist’s role is **neutral**. Their primary responsibility is to support the child’s emotional health and facilitate safe, healthy contact—without judging either parent.

### **9. What if the child resists participating?**

Resistance is common, especially if there has been conflict or mistrust. The therapist will move at the child’s pace, using age-appropriate strategies to reduce anxiety and build comfort.

### **10. Does reunification therapy guarantee success?**

No therapy can guarantee a specific outcome. The success of reunification therapy depends on the commitment, openness, and cooperation of everyone involved.

### **11. Can reunification therapy address abuse concerns?**

If there are credible safety concerns or abuse allegations, the therapist will follow legal and ethical guidelines, including mandatory reporting. In such cases, therapy may be paused until a safety plan is established.

### **12. How can parents support the process?**

* Avoid speaking negatively about the other parent in front of the child.
* Follow the therapist’s recommendations between sessions.
* Communicate respectfully and consistently.
* Keep the child’s emotional needs at the center of all decisions.