



## Characteristics of Children of Dysfunctional Families

| <b>The name of the game or the mode of survival:</b> | <b>What you see, or visible traits outside story. Behaviors.</b>                       | <b>What you don't see, or the inside story. Feelings.</b> | <b>What he/she represents to the family and why they play along:</b> | <b>As an adult WITHOUT help, this is very possible:</b>                   | <b>As an adult WITH help, this is also very possible:</b> |
|--|--|---|--|---|---|
| <b>The Family Hero or Super Kid</b>                  | Always does what's right, overachiever, overly responsible, needs everyone's approval. | Inadequate, guilt, fear, low self-esteem.                 | Provides someone to be proud of.                                     | Workaholic, need to control and manipulate, can't say no, and can't fail. | Competent, organized, responsible.                        |
| <b>The Scapegoat or Problem Kid</b>                  | Hostility and defiance, withdrawn and sullen.  | Anger and rejection, no/low self-worth.                   | Takes the heat.  | Alcoholic or addict, unplanned pregnancy, TROUBLE.                        | Good under pressure can see reality, can take risks.      |
| <b>The Lost Child</b>                                | Loner, withdrawn, not missed for days, quiet, shy and ignored.                         | Unimportant, loneliness, abandoned, defeated.             | Relief, at least one kid no one worries about.                       | Indecisive, alone or promiscuous.   | Independent, talented and creative.                       |
| <b>The Mascot or Family Clown</b>                    | Anything for laugh or attention, fragile, short attention span                         | Low self-esteem, lonely, and unimportant.                 | Comic relief.  | Compulsive clown, can't handle stress.                                    | Charming host, quick wit, good sense of humor.            |