IS THIS GASLIGHTING?

A Reality-Check Workbook for High-Conflict Divorce. *Recognize the patterns. Reclaim your clarity. Protect yourself — emotionally and financially.*

WHAT IS GASLIGHTING?

Gaslighting is an insidious form of psychological abuse — a form of mind control in which someone causes you to question your own memory, perception, and reality. The word is widely used, but as Tracy Malone explains: *"Everyone knows the word. But they don't necessarily understand — oh, that was gaslighting?"*

It's not just a lie. It's a lie with a purpose — to confuse you, overwhelm your emotional system, and strip away your power. Gaslighting is also a gateway to abuse: once someone learns you won't name it, they know they can use it as a weapon.

THE 4 CORE MECHANICS

Denial	"That never happened." "I never said that." Your lived experience is flatly contradicted.
Repetition	It's not said once. It's repeated until you wear down and acquiesce — even when you know the truth.
Targeting your strengths	They attack the very things you're best at. Organized? You "lost" things. Great parent? Criticized constantly. Goal: dismantle confidence where you're strongest.
Escalation in divorce	When you file, it doesn't stop — it intensifies. Children, attorneys, therapists, and judges become targets of the same campaign.

KNOW THIS ACRONYM: DARVO

Tracy Malone calls DARVO "the love language of a narcissist." It stands for: Deny, Attack, Reverse Victim and Offender.

D — DENY	"I didn't do that. I never said that."
A — ATTACK	"How dare you accuse me. You're the problem here."
R/V/O — REVERSE VICTIM & OFFENDER	Suddenly they are the one who has been wronged — and you are the abuser.

FINANCIAL GASLIGHTING

- *"There is no money."*
- *"You wouldn't understand."*
- *"I'm not hiding anything."*
- *"I already paid that."*

The antidote: "Can you show me the statement that supports that?" Documents don't gaslight.

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10 SIGNS TO RECOGNIZE

- [ ] *"That never happened."*
- [ ] *"You're too sensitive."*
- [ ] *"Everyone agrees with me."*
- [ ] *"Don't worry, I'll be fair."*
- [ ] *"You're always imagining things."*
- [ ] *"You'd never understand the finances."*
- [ ] *Attacking your greatest strengths*
- [ ] *Gaslighting the children, attorneys, judge*
- [ ] *Feeling like a shell of who you were*
- [ ] *Confusion after conversations you expected to be clear*

QUICK SELF-CHECK

Check any that resonate:

- [ ] *I often second-guess my own memory*
- [ ] *I've apologized when I did nothing wrong*
- [ ] *I stopped raising issues to avoid the blowback*
- [ ] *I was told asking about money is "aggressive"*
- [ ] *I feel worse about myself after conversations*
- [ ] *I've been told "there's no money" but can't verify*

⚠ **Even 2–3 of these consistently is worth talking to your attorney about.**

DOCUMENT YOUR REALITY + PROTECT YOURSELF

Your Reality Anchor — Incident Log

- Date
- What Was Said
- Your Reality
- Their Reframe

Phrases That Protect You

- Memory challenged: *"I have that documented. My attorney has a copy."*
- Pressured to agree: *"I need to review that with my financial advisor first."*
- Finances withheld: *"Can you show me the statement that supports that?"*
- Made to feel crazy: *"Asking for documentation is a normal part of this process."*

Judges love patterns. Start documenting now. "By the 45th time, your notes will show you exactly what's happening." — Tracy Malone

YOUR NEXT STEPS

This Week

- Start your incident log: Date + what happened, even from memory
- Gather financial documents: Statements, tax returns — store securely
- Tell your attorney: Describe the pattern. Share this guide.
- Name what's happening: For yourself. You don't need to prove it yet.

Ongoing

- Keep documenting: Dates, quotes, witnesses. Factual.
- Find a therapist: Someone who understands coercive control
- Verify finances with documents: Not conversations — documentation
- Trust what you write down: Your notes are your anchor

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