

# MICHAEL J. DiTOMASSO Ph.D., P.A. Ψ

Psychological Evaluations: Clinical, Forensic, and Psychoeducational  
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## PSYCHOLOGICAL EVALUATION (Confidential)

Case #: None

Name: Mario Alberto Jimenez

DOB: 10/22/1969

Age: 42

Ethnicity/Sex: Hispanic Male

Date of Testing: 08/01/2012

Date of Report: 08/05/2012

Location: Client's Home

Examiner: Michael J. DiTomasso, Ph.D.

### REASON FOR REFERRAL:

Mario Alberto Jimenez was referred by Theresa Hernandez o the Department of Children and Families for an evaluation of overall psychological functioning.

### THE EVALUATION CONSISTED OF:

Review of CPT Specialized Interviews, Children's therapy records with Dr. Vidal-Zas, Letter from Mario Jimenez to Mrs. Fuentes

Clinical Interview

Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory

Sentence Completion Test

Projective Drawings Test

### PSYCHOSOCIAL DATA:

Prior to the beginning of the interview and testing, Mario Alberto Jimenez was advised of the purpose of the evaluation and the limits of confidentiality.

**Background:** Mario Alberto Jimenez, M.D., is a 42 year old Hispanic male who was born and raised Nicaragua. His mother is Maria Leticia Jerez de Jimenez and his father is Mario Bruno Jimenez Blen. Mario has three brothers and two sisters. He is the oldest.

Mario left Nicaragua when he was 15, and spent a year in Honduras and El Salvador, before coming to the US when he was 16. He came here with his brother and his father. They settled in Miami. The rest of the family came over later on. Mario's family had some political roots and they were on the wrong side of the revolution that was occurring in Honduras in those years.

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Mario said that his childhood, before politics in his country got crazy, was very good. His parents took good care of him, and his family was well off financially. He used to spend some time on his grandfather's farm. But when the fighting started "It was the most horrible event in my life. You would see families killing each other, neighbors against neighbors. It was horrible." He used to have nightmares about bombs being thrown. He said that from that point on he was a pacifist, opposing wars under almost any circumstances."

Mario told me that when he was 15 years old he had a "Born Again experience, a personal encounter with Jesus," which he believed helped him to survive. He said he is still a Christian and his faith is the main driving force in his life.

Mario told me that he went to high school in Miami, and then he went to Miami Dade Community College, and then to Florida International University in a pre-medical program. He worked for a time as an electrical engineer. He was a digital communications specialist for a satellite communication company. Then he went back to school to study medicine. He has since completed medical school and earned his M.D. degree. He is presently in the third and last year of his residency at UM Jackson.

Mario married in Guatemala in 2001. His wife Karen Wizel was Guatemalan. He told me that he and Karen separated in 2009 and were legally divorced in 2010. He and his wife Karen had two children together, Mario Simon Jimenez-Wizel (9) and Karen Nicole Jimenez-Wizel (6). It was during his marriage to Karen that he went to Medical school. In 2007 he was in Medical School in Belize and in August of the same year he transferred to a medical school in Nicaragua.

I asked Mario why his marriage ended. He replied "Infidelity on her part." He explained "She was having an affair. I heard about it. She falsely accused me so I wouldn't take away the kids. She accused me of psychological and physical abuse. It was only because of a video that showed her to be lying that I was not put in prison (in Nicaragua)."

Mario said he did not know where his children were for two years. He said "My ex took away the kids. She was hiding (in Nicaragua) with the man she had met, Marcello. Mario was in Nicaragua at this time too, in medical school. But he did not know where Karen and his children were.

Mario has been back in Miami since May 2010, still not having found his children. When he came back, he met Giorgelina Rapiza, and they became a couple. She has given birth to his youngest child, Donatella Leticia Jimenez-Rapiza (11 months).

Mario does not know when his ex-wife Karen came back to Miami, but he thinks it was in 2011. The children were with her when she came back. Mario said he found out she and the children were here in Miami in August of 2011. He told me that when he became aware that she was here he petitioned the court "For what the court had ordered in Nicaragua, 50/50 equal custody of the kids." He said this was granted.

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He went on to say "But since that day she's filed four different reports with DCF." He complained that the investigator who followed up her last complaint "Believed everything she said." I noted that the children were assessed at CPT and what they said to the CPT investigators was taken into account. (Both children told CPT that their father hits the boy, that there was domestic violence, and that father said scary things to them about the devil and spirits.) Mario said yes, they said these things because the mother has influenced them to do so.

Mario said that the children's mother Karen complained that he had been telling the children that the devil was going to kill them. I said to him "Well, you did talk to them about God and Devil." He said yes, but he didn't threaten them about it. "She twisted the whole thing." He said he told the children not to be anxious because God is in control. "We should not fear the Devil, we should only fear God. Basically that was the message I conveyed to the kids. She twisted it all around."

I told him that I think he does not realize what he really said to them. I told him that it is no great comfort to be told that God will protect, after you have just been told that the Devil is out to kill you. He seemed to understand what I was saying, but he still felt it was more important that Karen "twisted" what he had said, rather than that he had put the idea of "the Devil" in their heads in the first place.

Mario told me that the last time he saw the children was two weeks ago when the mother filed an emergency motion against him.

**Child Abuse:** Mario said he was never abused as a child. He said that none of his own children were ever abused that he is aware of. He is clear in his denial of all allegations that he has abused his children, though he acknowledged that his talk with the children about the Devil and such was a mistake.

I questioned Mario about the allegations that he has hit his children, that his parents have hit his children, and that his brother threw Mario Jr. into a lake. He categorically denied all of this.

**Domestic Violence:** Mario said there was never domestic violence between himself and Giorgelina. He said there was domestic violence between himself and Karen "On her part, she used to hit me, and curse all the time."

I noted that in the CPT interviews both children said that their father hit their mother. Mario told me that these statements on the children's part arise from events that occurred in 2009. He said that he was charging his wife's phone and he found a message from her boyfriend. He said she attacked him in an effort to get the phone from him, and she later made contact with the police at which time she had injuries and bruises all over her. But she was uninjured the last he had seen of her. He feels that the bruises and injuries she appeared before the police with were inflicted by herself or by someone else at her request, in order to get him arrested. He went on to say that a security camera that happened to be active at the time of the alleged incident shows her attacking

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him, and this is what exonerated him. He said that if not for that video, he might have been an innocent man spending a couple of years in a Nicaraguan jail.

He makes the point that she had two years to be going over her version of this story with the children, and now they remember what she has been telling them. (He has a point. Repetition of childhood stories or accounts of events in the family can become set in place and seem like actual memories in the minds of children.)

**Substance Use/Abuse:** Mario said he never used drugs. He said he drinks alcohol socially. He said he does not get drunk.

**School:** Mario has a Bachelor's from Florida International University and an M.D. from Universidad Central de Nicaragua.

**Employment:** Mario is in his third year of residency at Jackson Memorial Hospital. This is his second career. His first career was in electronics.

**Arrest History:** Mario told me that he was investigated but not arrested in Nicaragua in regard to the allegations of domestic violence that his wife made.

He said he was arrested once in Miami Dade, for breaking curfew after Hurricane Andrew.

**Medical and Mental Health History:** Mario said he suffers from high cholesterol. He said he has never had mental health problems, though he added that in Nicaragua, he took citalopram (generic for Celexa, an SSRI antidepressant) while going through the divorce and during the time he did not know where his children were. He said he never had psychotherapy. He is not taking mental health medication at this time.

### CLINICAL FINDINGS:

**Behavioral Observations:** Mario was appropriately dressed and well groomed. His mood was unremarkable. Affect (expressed emotion) was appropriate in quality and range. He put a good effort into the formal testing, and was frank and open in response to interview questions.

**Mental Status:** Mario was oriented to person place and time. His speech was relevant, organized, and goal directed. He denied auditory or visual hallucinations. There were no signs of paranoid ideation or disordered thinking.

**Intellectual Functioning:** Formal IQ testing was not done. Mario is a college graduate and a physician. There is no doubt that he is intellectually and academically competent.

**Personality Functioning:** Mario is not suffering major psychiatric disease. He is a bright, competent, and successful man. He pursues goals in his life with a great deal of energy and

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determination. He is accustomed to accomplishing what he sets out to do. He tends to be persistent and tenacious. He can sometimes be rigid in his thinking.

Mario takes religion very seriously, and in my opinion he went overboard in regard to sharing his beliefs with his children by giving them more than they are developmentally prepared to process. He did this by telling his children about the Devil and evil entities that only God could save them from. If an adult's thinking is oriented around a personal faith in a beneficent God, then stories about Devils and evil spiritual forces provide a kind of argumentum ad baculum (appeal to force) that supports the religious belief system. It feels good to an adult who has deep faith in God, to know there is something scary around that he or she does not have to be scared of. But these stories do not have the same effect on little kids. Young children do not have sufficient ego structure to hold off the fear of Devils and evil spirits by the strength of their faith. The statements to CPT by the children that they fear their father, and that young Mario sleeps with a knife, are plausible when their exposure to these kinds of narratives are taken into account. I called this to Mario's attention during the assessment. He seemed to understand the point and acknowledged that communicating these ideas to the children may have been a mistake.

Mario has a good deal of ego strength and self-discipline at his disposal. But he is also under a great deal of stress. This stress has resulted in depression and anger. In the past Mario took antidepressant medication. At present, it is more anger than overt sadness that is building up in him. But the anger and the sadness are related. They are in fact, like two sides of a single coin because they share a common underlying set of causes. Mario is in an awful custody battle with his ex-wife and the allegations are flying on both sides. It is no revelation to say that these kinds of battles bring out the worst in people. And it is starting to make Mario ill.

Mario is diagnosed with Adjustment Disorder. This is not a mental illness per se. The diagnosis implies real emotional distress, but as normal negative emotional reaction to excessive environmental stressors. Not an intrinsic mental illness. Mario took the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory. His results were rendered invalid by defensive responding. He is in a battle and he is functioning in defensive mode. I guess a defensive approach to the test could have been expected. Unfortunately the results reveal little about his personality function other than he is in a defensive mode, and the results cannot be relied upon to rule out further psychopathology.

Mario denied present or past suicidality and he denied ideation relating to harming others

<b>Five Axis DSM-IV-TR Diagnostic Impression</b>			
Axis #	Axis Name	Code	Description of Client's Condition/Status
I	Clinical Disorder	309.9	Adjustment Disorder
II	Personality Disorder	799.9	Diagnosis Deferred
III	Medical Condition		None reported
IV	Situational Stressors		Custody battle, Child protective involvement
V	Global Assessment of Functioning	55	Moderate symptoms

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### **SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Mario does not appear to be suffering from major psychiatric disease. He is angry and there likely is underlying depression in reaction to the very difficult situation he finds himself in. Further psychopathology was not identified, but unfortunately cannot be ruled out either because Mario's approach to the MMPI was defensive and rendered his results invalid.

I am troubled by the children's statements that the paternal grandparents hit them and speak bad about their mother and their mother's baby. Mario is in a process of integrating his children back into his life. He does not need, and the children do not need, interference from the grandparents. If and when the children's relationships with Mario and his partner are resolved and progressing well, then it may be time to bring the grandparent's in, if they can keep their hands to themselves and refrain from commenting on the children's mother and the mother's family. For now, let's not complicate matters further than they need be.

I am troubled that both Mario and his ex-wife are making accusations in the present about domestic violence that purportedly occurred when they lived together, years ago, and in another country. For their children's sake, they need to put this behind them. Divorce is supposed to be the end of a relationship, but it seems that for Mario and Karen, the emotional relationship is still intense, the difference being that the valence of the emotion has changed from love to anger.

I cannot say whether or not Mario has been hitting his son. I see in the CPT report where the boy is reported to have said this has been happening. The court will weigh that as it sees fit. But I will not adopt that information at this point and accept it as substantiated fact. I would want to speak to the children myself before venturing an opinion on this matter.

Frankly, Mario and his ex-wife Karen are in a horrible child custody battle. It is no revelation to say that these kinds of battles bring out the worst in people. The war of the Roses is raging between Mario and Karen, and their children are the victims of the collateral damage. If the children are not going to muck through the rubble of their parent's war for the rest of their childhoods, a cease-fire will have to be called – and wanted and honored by both sides. Selfish yearnings for individual vindication by either of the parents, even by only one of them, will be sufficient to keep the children in a childhood purgatory of their parents making. It's time for the adults to start acting like adults.

Mario would probably benefit from psychotherapy to help him put what is happening in his live into perspective. He is embedded in the situation now, and he cannot see the way out from his position deep within it. An objective professional can help him. I recommend that Mario be given the liberty to choose a qualified Christian/pastoral counselor rather than a secular professional if he feels he might make better progress working with such a person.

The present evaluation is insufficient to fully answer safety and custody questions. (By saying that Mario needs a counselor I am certainly not implying that he has mental health problems and his ex-wife does not. I am in fact implying neither that Mario has mental health problems, nor

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that I know anything about his ex-wife's mental health strengths or possible weaknesses. I am recommending therapy for Mario because he is embedded in a bad situation and he needs professional help to find his way to the best decisions and actions for himself and his children. No comparison of Mario mental health functioning versus that of his ex-wife can be made on the bases of the present one-sided data.

There are a lot of cross accusations on the table that serve more to cloud issues than to inform them. Further information could be derived from psychological evaluations of the mother, the stepmother, and of the two children. With the rest of these pieces of psychological data in place, a more comprehensive formulation of the case and recommendation for future directions could be offered.

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I, Michael J. DiTomasso, Ph.D., hereby certify that I personally conducted this evaluation and prepared this report, and that all conclusions herein are my own and not those of any third party. I further certify that the preparation of this evaluation was performed consistent with Chapter 490, Florida Statutes, as well as with rules and regulations promulgated pursuant thereto.

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*Michael J. DiTomasso Ph.D.*

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