

Exploring Life & Business with Aileen Herlinda Sandoval of Neuropsychological & Forensic Consultations, Inc.

August 2025

TODAY WE'D LIKE TO INTRODUCE YOU TO AILEEN HERLINDA SANDOVAL.

Hi Aileen Herlinda, it's an honor to have you on the platform. Thanks for taking the time to share your story with us – to start maybe you can share some of your backstory with our readers?

I was always interested in the sciences, discovery, and helping others since I was a young child. My family of origin was very influential in my belief that we should discover our talents and intrinsic motivations to serve others. My Abuelos Rodolfo and Socorro Sandoval were especially influential in this. I saw them use their artistic talents and give what little they had to others. My parents didn't have a lot financially, but they worked several blue-collar jobs and encouraged us to persevere without contemplating the financial restrictions. My parents are some of the hardest working and persevering people I know. They too were also semi-jokingly called "Los Hermanos de la Caridad" for seemingly coming to the rescue of others despite our own challenges. I was fortunate to go to a Catholic High School where the values and motivation was consistent with my own family's values. I continue to strive to do all of which woman is capable.

In college, I studied psychology with a brain-behavior emphasis. I also studied theology, and dance (my other passions). I was a competitive dancer and choreographer for several years. I sang and played the trumpet in a couple Mariachi bands. I was fortunate enough to be accepted to a graduate program that maintained a program in neuropsychology and another focused on service (psychologists without borders). I took advantage of both.

Postgraduate, I have been an advocate, expert witness and researcher on what are considered controversial topics such as Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) and the so-called "Parental Alienation Syndrome/Disorder" (PAS/D). My training, personal beliefs, and invaluable experiences working at non-profits such as Autism Treatment Strategy Center (ATSC), and The Institute on Violence, Abuse & Trauma (IVAT), have led to my involvement and publications in what my colleagues call "provocative topics."

Over the last 5 or so years I found, a need for those formally trained in neuropsychology in the forensic setting. I received formal training in neuropsychology from several brilliant minds, to include Dr. Michael Kabat. However, I saw that most of these professionals' work in the forensic arena were limited to civil cases (e.g., worker's comp, motor vehicle accidents, etc.), and sometimes criminal cases. But there are children with various neurodevelopmental conditions that go underserved and unnoticed when it comes to ethical compliance and treatment which often includes the forensic arena (e.g., child custody, conservatorship, education rights, etc.). I am now among an extremely small group of professionals with my expertise who maneuver family law and probate court in addition to education rights and other civil matters. Currently, I fight for the ethical treatment, healthcare, and educational rights for families with children with various neurodevelopmental conditions. In family court, during child custody battles, I fight for the children to be seen and their needs to be met, most especially for neurodivergent children

because these children's needs are often not included in the custody conversation. In probate courts, I fight against the state, for families to care for their own children, and for individuals on the spectrum to have a voice and a sense of autonomy. I also fight against other psychologists who have evidently forgotten the first oath we take is to do no harm.

*Aileen
Herlinda
Sandoval*



I wear several hats, and they are all very intrinsically motivating for me. Much of my work is pro bono and/or at lower rates than individuals with my credentials. I do not have investors or stakeholders, which allows me to stay even more congruent with my values and ethical obligations, and not to be swayed by million- and billion-dollar interests (e.g., ABA, insurance, etc.).

We all face challenges, but looking back would you describe it as a relatively smooth road?

Saying it has not been a smooth road would be an understatement... I worked several jobs (simultaneously) throughout college, graduate school and postdoc to make ends meet. I took out several loans, pawned several items, and sold my blood plasma weekly. In addition to financial struggles, I had psychological stress of balancing what seemed like individualistic goals within a collectivistic culture. I even had some family members spread lies, and try to negatively influence my work and dedication.

I also had some difficulty initially maneuvering the professional field and would regrettably choose not to speak up in fear of coming off as emotional, or unprofessional. I didn't have mentors in this arena until almost the end of my education and training. Dr. Gimel Rogers especially helped me figure out how to find my voice and stick to my values and ethics, all the while presenting professionally and demonstrating my knowledge and expertise. I am now passionate about being this type of mentor for my students. And ironically, a lot of my work is confrontational and can be very emotive. I have been told I do very well, especially during cross examination.

Was it worth it? 100%

My professional degrees and licenses are one thing that can never be repossessed. While they may look like pieces of paper to some, they are my ability to do at least some of what I love. They are my ability to provide for my family. While the psychological stress of it all was very challenging, I think the financial aspect was a no-brainer for me. I often think, if you take out loans for material things like cars and houses, why wouldn't you do it for you? For your livelihood, your genuine interests, your freedom, and your future.

More recently, the struggles have presented differently. I have been adjusting to motherhood and maneuvering various challenges. I opened a practice, serve as a full-time professor at Pepperdine University, studied and passed the QME requirements, all the while responding to life's challenges (e.g., kidney stones, fatal dog attack, loss of loved ones, financial strain/debt, cornea abrasion, house flood, etc.). I hope to be an example to my students that life doesn't stop for you. Everyone is going through something, and so we must have enough introspection and humility to delegate, to ask for help, to say no, or to take a break. Blaming others and the world or attempting to elicit sympathy to bypass commitments or expectations is not a solution. I personally believe that we should focus less on making the road "smooth" and focus more on learning how to drive off-road.

We've been impressed with Neuropsychological & Forensic Consultations, Inc., but for folks who might not be as familiar, what can you share with them about what you do and what sets you apart from others?

Woman run, formally trained in neuropsychology. What sets us apart from other psychologists and neuropsychologists is our involvement in aspects of the forensic arena, and our dedication to ethical treatment and practices for the underserved special needs population. We do not shy away from being a voice or putting up a fight that benefits today's children and the neurodivergent, even if there is risk of being attacked by the very same field.

Is there anything else you'd like to share with our readers?

There are certain transcripts and publications that families throughout the country have used in legal proceedings to support their case. It truly is an honor to be able to help in some small way, a number of families I have never met. If you're reading this, you have a gift, you have interests, you can make an impact even if you're not always aware of it as it happens. The growing pains are often worth it. Timing may not be ideal, you might not feel strong or anchored enough, but your faith can be.

