

THE GREY ROCK RECOVERY™

The Bait & Lure Recognition Guide

Spot the hook before you bite.

A fish doesn't bite a bare hook, it's disguised as something worth moving toward. High-conflict messages work the same way. This guide walks through the most common lures so you can recognise them on sight instead of getting hooked fresh every time.

It doesn't matter whether a lure was used deliberately or is just part of an established pattern. Your task is the same either way: recognise what activates you before you respond to it.

Keep this guide somewhere you'll see it when you're reading messages. Over time, you won't need to reach for it, you'll just recognise the lure the moment it lands.

Guilt · *"A good parent would..."*

What it sounds like: *"You clearly don't care how this affects the children."*

How to spot it: It questions your commitment as a parent, and makes you feel that silence means accepting the accusation.

The shift: Ask: is there something my child genuinely needs from me here? Or is this an invitation to defend my worth as a parent?

Anger · *"You've always been..."*

What it sounds like: *"You've always been selfish. You're impossible."*

How to spot it: It's a character judgement with no practical information attached.

The shift: Ask: what practical parenting information is actually present? If none, that tells you something on its own.

Fear · *A threat or warning*

What it sounds like: "You'll regret this." "I'm going to make sure people know what you've done."

How to spot it: It's designed to make everything feel urgent and threatening, whether or not it actually is.

The shift: This course never asks you to ignore real threats or safety concerns. But separate feeling frightened from automatically deciding you must respond right now.

Urgency · *"NOW" / "immediately"*

What it sounds like: "ANSWER ME NOW." "I need a decision immediately."

How to spot it: Capital letters, repeated messages, or a countdown, when the actual issue often isn't time-sensitive at all.

The shift: Ask: is the situation urgent, or am I feeling urgency because of how the message was written?

Jealousy · *Comments about your life*

What it sounds like: Comments about a new relationship, your social life, or where you've been.

How to spot it: It pulls you into defending your personal life instead of addressing an actual parenting issue, if there is one.

The shift: Separate any real parenting issue from the invitation to defend your private life.

Hope · *Sudden warmth*

What it sounds like: A friendly, warm message after a stretch of conflict.

How to spot it: It can feel like things are finally changing, which lowers your guard before a pattern has actually shifted.

The shift: There's nothing wrong with hoping for a better relationship. Just observe the pattern before changing your boundaries based on one message.

Character Attacks · *"You're a terrible parent"*

What it sounds like: "You're selfish." "You're unstable." "You're a terrible parent."

How to spot it: It attacks who you are rather than addressing anything practical.

The shift: Ask: does defending my entire character help resolve the parenting matter in front of me?

Legal Threats · *"My solicitor says..."*

What it sounds like: *"I'll take you to court." "My solicitor will be in touch."*

How to spot it: Legal language used inside an ordinary argument, not necessarily a genuine legal matter.

The shift: Don't assume it's an emergency. Don't assume it's empty either. If there's a genuine legal issue, get real advice, don't rely on this course to interpret it.

Third-Party Pressure · *"Everyone agrees..."*

What it sounds like: *"My family agrees with me." "Even your friends know."*

How to spot it: It can feel like you're suddenly arguing with a crowd instead of one person.

The shift: Come back to what's actually relevant to you and your children. A crowd's opinion doesn't change the facts of the situation.

Children Drawn Into Adult Communication · *"Your son agrees with me"*

What it sounds like: *"Your son agrees with me." "The kids know exactly whose fault this is."*

How to spot it: It uses your child as a messenger, witness, or piece of evidence in an adult disagreement.

The shift: Grey Rock the conflict, not the child. Don't question your child for evidence or defend yourself through them.

The Two-Layer Split

Every activating message has two layers: information and emotional material. Your job is to separate them, not to decide whether the emotional material is true.

Try it now with a message that's stayed with you recently:

The message (or what you remember of it):

LURE: the words that pulled your attention:

INFORMATION: the actual practical issue, if any:

Does the lure itself require a response? (Not: is it true. Just: does it need answering.)

Which lure am I most likely to bite?

Remember: you haven't excused the behaviour, agreed with the accusation, or decided it's acceptable, by choosing not to respond to the lure. You've simply stopped requiring certainty about motive before choosing your own response.