

How Cults Work

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WARNING!

CONTAINS INFORMATION CULTS

DON'T WANT YOU TO KNOW!

Cults, wonderful on the outside but on the inside are very manipulating. Cult leaders are desperate to trick you into joining. They are after your obedience, your time and your money.

Cults use sophisticated mind control and recruitment techniques that have been refined over time. **Beware of thinking that you are immune from cult involvement; the cults have millions of members around the world who once thought they were immune, and still don't know they are in a cult!** To spot a cult you need to know how they work and you need to understand the techniques they use. Teaching you these things is what this article is all about.

This article exposes the secret techniques cults will use to try and trick and control you. Cult leaders will not want you to read this, but read it anyway. Once you understand **How Cults Work** you will be better able to spot and avoid cult recruiters, and protect your family and friends.

What is a Cult?

The modern definition of a mind control cult is any group which employs mind control and deceptive recruiting techniques. In other words cults trick people into joining and coerce them into staying. This is the definition that most people would agree with. Except the cults themselves of course!

Types of Cults

Religious

Cults that use a belief system as their base are very common. Their belief system could be standard Christianity, Hinduism, Islam or any other of the world religions, or they may have invented their own belief system. What makes them a cult is the fact that they use mind control, not what they believe.



Mind Control is a suite of psychological techniques that cult leaders attempt to control their members with.

Cultwatch does not consider Mind Control to be some magical device which can take away peoples' free will. In other words it does not turn people into some sort of remote control robot. Rather we see Mind Control as a dishonest influence placed covertly on cult members by the cult. So instead of Mind Control being some sort of irresistible force like the aliens in the movies that take over people's minds, rather it is more like a gun. The cult leader points the Mind Control "gun" at a member and says, "if you leave us then you will lose all of your friends and family", "if you don't conform then you will go to Hell", "if you don't give us money then you will fail in business".

We have broken Mind Control up into a series of techniques that the cults use. Together these techniques make up Mind Control.



Deception

A cult needs to recruit and operate using deception. Why?

Because if people knew their true practices and beliefs beforehand then they would not join. A cult needs to hide the truth from you until they think you are ready to accept it.

For example, imagine if the leader of Heavens Gate cult was open and honest about the group and had said to new recruits, "Join us, wear strange clothes, get castrated and then drink poison!" he would not have had many takers.

Key Point

No legitimate group needs to lie or mislead you about what they practice or believe.

A cult will have a slick well-rehearsed Public Relations front which hides what the group is really like. **You will hear how they help the poor, or support research, or peace, or the environment.** They will tell you how happy you will be in their group (and everyone in the cult will always seem very happy and enthusiastic, mainly because they have been told to act happy and will get in trouble if they don't). **But you will not be told what life is really like in the group, or what they really believe. These things will be introduced to you slowly, one at a time, so you will not notice the gradual change, until eventually you are practicing and believing things which at the start would have caused you to run a mile.**

Mind Control

Exclusivism

A normal religious organization would not have any trouble with you moving to another similar organization as long as you stayed in that same religion. **Because it is the belief system that matters, not membership in an organization. For example if you were a Christian then you could move from one church to another and still be a Christian.**

However cult leaders will tell you can only be "saved" (or can only be successful) in their organization alone. No other organization has the truth, all others miss the mark. So it is not the belief system that decides your future, but it the belief system AND your membership with that particular group.

Key Point

Any group which says you must belong to their organization to be saved is almost certainly a cult.

The cult leaders need to make you believe that there is nowhere else you can go and still be saved, and if you ever leave the "one true church" then you are going to hell. This is a fear based control mechanism designed to keep you in the cult. **It also gives the cult leaders tremendous power over you. If you really believe that leaving the group equals leaving God (or means you are leaving your only chance to succeed in life), then you will obey the cult leaders even when you disagree with them instead of risking being kicked out of the group. Exclusivism is used as a threat; it controls your behavior through fear.**

Note

Be very suspicious of any group that claims to be better than all the others. A religious group may say that other groups following the same religion are OK, but **they are the ones who have a better grasp of the truth and they are superior to the rest. This is often just a subtle version of exclusivism.**

Note

This is one of the practices that cults are often very deceptive about. For example, first off they may give you the impression that they think you are a true Christian, Buddhist or Muslim and it's not until later that their true position is revealed.

Mind Control

Fear & Intimidation

Cult leadership is feared. To disagree with leadership is the same as disagreeing with God. The cult leaders will claim to have direct authority from God to control almost all aspects of your life. If the cult is not a religious group then questioning the leaders or program will still be seen as a sign of rebellion and stupidity.

Guilt, Character Assassination and Breaking Sessions. Guilt will be used to control you. Maybe the reason you're not making money is because you're not "with the programme". Maybe the reason you're not able to convert new recruits is because "your heart is prideful and full of sin". It could never be that the programme isn't working, or those new recruits have valid reasons for not joining. **It's always your fault, you are always wrong, and so you must try harder! You will also be made to feel very guilty for disobeying any of the cult's written or unwritten rules.**

Character Assassination is used to help create the guilt in you. Character Assassination is a type of false reasoning used by people and groups who have no real arguments. The technical name for Character Assassination is "The Ad hominem Fallacy". This is how it works. Imagine if you will a conversation between two men, Ford and Arthur...

"One plus one equals three", says Ford.

"No I don't think so. You see when I have one thing, and I have another thing, then I have two things not three", replies Arthur.

"I see your point, but what you must realize is that one plus one when calculated in relation to this complex number domain, which I just invented, and then squared by the sum of the ninth tangent in the sequence of the Fibonacci series results in three!", stated Ford triumphantly.

Ok, Ford is wrong, but that is not the point. The point is that Ford tried to answer Arthur's reasoning with more reasoning of his own. This is the healthy way people and groups debate subjects. Now let's see what would have happened if Ford had used Character Assassination...

"Arthur I have been a mathematician longer than you. How dare you disagree with me! You are obviously a very smug and prideful person. I think you are disagreeing with me because you are jealous of me, and to be honest with you Arthur your rebellion has really hurt me and a lot of other people too", stated Ford his face intimidatingly close to Arthur's.

You see Ford didn't answer Arthur's argument, instead he attacked his character. If you are not aware of how Character Assassination works then it is a powerful way to exert control over you.



Key Point

Character Assassination is a sure sign of a cult.

Breaking sessions are when one, two or more cult members and leaders attack the character of another person, sometimes for hours on end. Some cults will not stop these sessions until their victim is crying uncontrollably.



Key Point

Cult members are usually very fearful of disobeying or disagreeing in anyway with their leadership. Healthy organizations however are not threatened by openly debating issues.

Mind Control

Love Bombing & Relationship Control

Cults know that if they can control your relationships then they can control you. Whether we like it or not we are all profoundly affected by those around us. **When you first go to a cult they will practice "love bombing", where they arrange instant friends for you. It will seem wonderful, how could such a loving group be wrong! But you soon learn that if you ever disagree with them, or ever leave the cult then you will lose all your new "friends"**. This unspoken threat influences your actions in the cult. Things that normally would have made you complain will pass by silently because you don't want to be ostracized. Like in an unhealthy relationship love is turned on and off to control.

Cults also try to cut you off from your friends and family because they hate others being able to influence you. A mind control cult will seek to manoeuvre your life so as to maximize your contact with cult members and minimize your contact with people outside

the group, especially those who oppose your involvement.



Key Point

Beware of "instant friends", remember true friendships develop over time.



Key Point

Beware of a group that tells you who you can and cannot see.

Mind Control

Information Control

Those who control the information control the person. **In a mind control cult any information from outside the cult is considered evil, especially if it is opposing the cult.** Members are told not to read it or believe it. Only information supplied by the cult is true. **One cult labels any information against it as "persecution"** or "spiritual pornography", another cult calls it "apostate literature" and will expel you from the group if you are caught with it. Cults train their members to instantly destroy any critical information given to them, and to not even entertain the thought that the information could be true.



Key Point

If you are instructed by a group not to read information critical of the group, then that is a sign of a cult.

Common sense tells us that a person who does not consider all information may make an unbalanced decision. Filtering the information available or trying to discredit it not on the basis of how true it is, but rather on the basis of how it supports the party line, is a common control method used throughout history.



Key Point

Legitimate groups have nothing to fear from their members reading critical information about them.

Mind Control

Reporting Structure

In a mind control cult like in Nazi Germany or Communist Russia you must be careful of what you say and do; "The walls have ears". **Everyone is encouraged to watch out for "struggling" brothers and sisters and report what they see to leadership.** Often information given in deepest confidence is automatically reported to leadership. Cult leaders will then use this information to convince their members that they have a supernatural link, the trusting member does not suspect the very natural mechanism behind the supernatural revelations they are given.

People in a mind control cult will also hide their true thoughts and feelings, and instead wear a mask which presents them as a perfect cult member. This mask is a defense against being reported to leadership and being punished for not measuring up (cult members never feel like they measure up to the cult's ideals, and yet often believe the other members around them do, when in reality the others feel the same as them). Hence cult members are trained not only to deceive outsiders, but also to deceive their fellow cult members. Rarely can close friendships form in cults, and if they do the cult's leaders may see them as a threat and move those people away from each other. Nothing is allowed that can be more powerful than the cult members' allegiance to the group and its leaders.

Key Point

Is information you expected to be kept confidential reported to leadership? If so then it's a cult.

Mind Control

Time Control

Mind control cults keep their members so busy with meetings and activities that they become too busy and too tired to think about their involvement.

Time control also helps the cult keep their members immersed in the manufactured cult environment.

And time control helps keep cult members away from friends and family.

 **Key Point**

Never-ending compulsory meetings and tasks is a sign of a cult.

Mind Control Techniques

Together they make Mind Control.

Remember, people are not perfect, but if they employ them constantly you are most likely dealing with a cult.

Pressure Selling

One of the most common forms of commercial cults is the pressure selling organization. These groups ostensibly make money by selling goods via their sales organization, but in reality they make their money by selling goods and motivational materials to their sales organization. **Using mind control they seek to enlarge and maintain their sales force, and hence their profits.**

Some names along with the bad reputations of these groups are well known to the general public, so their recruiters need to be very deceptive. They will call and ask to come and meet you to discuss a "business opportunity" or new "eCommerce venture", not once mentioning the organization behind it. In fact if asked they might mention a completely different name. Meeting with them will involve a long intense presentation carefully designed to convince you that you could make a lot of money by following their plan. Only near the end will they briefly mention the real organization behind it.

Here are some key warning signs to watch out for...

- **Deception. No valid business needs to use deception.**
- Super hyped meetings, books, tapes, videos, leaflets, products.
- Use of Mind control, refer to the earlier "Mind Control" section.

Here are some key questions to ask the recruiter...

- Is it XZY group? Ask them if they are, or are involved with any of the well known commercial cults. Often the recruiter will admit to some connection, and in fact the clever recruiter will plainly state their involvement rather than having their deception uncovered later on.

- **Could I see some properly certified audited accounts which demonstrate this business model working? Like any business they should be able to provide the hard numbers.** Not stories of other people making it big, or generalizations about six figure incomes, or more enthusiastic claims that you can make it if you work hard enough. If this is a new business then you want a business plan, profit and loss projections for the next year, two years and five years. If they claim it is a successful established business then demand to see the books. These are not unreasonable demands, no successful business person would ever touch a venture without this basic information. Tell the recruiter that you want to run them past your own accountant and perhaps your lawyer too. If it's for real then they will be more than happy to comply, otherwise watch them squirm and dodge with all manner of well rehearsed excuses. Of course if they do produce the information then go to your accountant, you're a fool if you don't.

Cult Recruiting Techniques

Here are some key warning signs that may indicate a cult is trying to recruit you.

Hyped Meetings

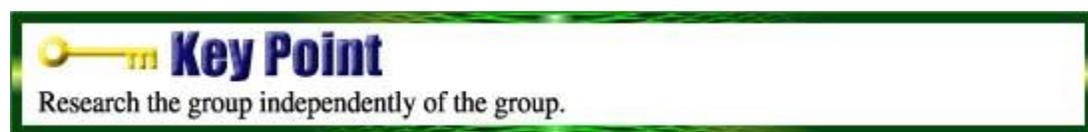
Rather than explain to you what the group believes or what their programme is up front, **they will instead insist that you can only understand it if you come to a group meeting. There everyone around you will seem so enthusiastic that you will start to think there is something wrong with you.** They create an environment where you will feel uncomfortable and the only way to become comfortable is to join them. This is an application of controlled peer pressure.

Intense Unrelenting Pressure

They call repeatedly. Meet you on campus or outside your work. Trick you into coming for only an hour and then lead you into a long study, meeting or talk. They have to keep the pressure on, otherwise you might snap out of the mind control environment they are trying to immerse you in.

They tell you that they are not a cult.

This is a preemptive strike against the warnings from friends and family members whom they know will come. In fact some cults go as far to tell you that Satan will try and dissuade you by sending family members and friends to tell you it is a cult. When this tactic is used then often a warped form of logic occurs in the recruits' mind, the "agents of Satan" do come and tell them that it is a cult. So since the group predicted that would happen, the group therefore must true! Basically if any group tells you that they are not a cult, or that some people call them a cult, then for goodness sake find out why!



- Times you are vulnerable.
- Experiential rather than logical.
- Fake friendship.
- End of world pressure.
- Pressure to do crazy things.
- Secret knowledge.

Key Warning Signs

- Single charismatic leader.
- People always seeming constantly happy and enthusiastic. Especially if you discover that they have been told to act that way for the potential new recruits.
- Instant friends.
- If you are told who you can or cannot talk to or associate with.
- They hide what they teach.
- Say they are the only true group, or the best so why go anywhere else.
- Hyped meetings, get you to meetings rather than share with you.
- Experiential rather than logical.
- Asking for money for the next level.
- Some cults travel door to door during times when women are home alone. They, and this is rather sexist, think that women are easier to recruit and once they have the woman then it will be easier to snare the husband or partner.
- Saying that they have to make people pay for it because otherwise they will not appreciate it. This is of course a very silly reason, plenty of people are able to appreciate things which they did not pay for.

Find Out More

The Internet should be your first stop if the group you are interested in or involved with has an international scope. Most of the larger cults will be mentioned by counter-cult organizations like Cultwatch, and commonly many ex-members will have posted their cult involvement stories on the net.

Key Point

Be especially eager to surf the net if your leaders have told you not to.

Many of the larger cults hate the net since it allows their member's access to information they

deem subversive or evil. A good place to start is www.CULTWATCH.com, there we have cult information and links to other counter-cult groups. Also go to the search engines and type in keywords associated with the group, like the name of the group, the leaders or founders name, the titles of books they use and any peculiar words that the group uses. If the group is new or too small to have been exposed on the net then read stories of other people who were in mind control cults. The patterns may seem familiar to you. If you are still unsure then email us your story at cultwatch@cultwatch.com, we will let you know of any thoughts we have.

Other ways...

Old publications by the group. Often the older cults have predicted the end of the world or changed their beliefs significantly, hence their older publications become a danger to them. For some of the older cults people have produced books of photo copies of these changes.



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