Mind Control Manual

Vital concepts about mind control, cults and psychopaths

Dr. David Mc Dermott

Mind Control Manual:

Vital concepts about mind control, cults and psychopaths

by Dr. David Mc Dermott

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Table of Contents

Introduction

Part 1 - Mind Control

1. What Is Mind Control?

2. Basic Mind Control Tools And How They Are Used

3. Mind Control Tactics And Pseudopersonalities

4. Mind Control Methods Used To Change The Personality

5. How Psychopaths Use Basic Mind Control Techniques

6. The Mind Control Trick

7. Overt And Covert Hypnotic Mind Control

8. Mind Control Techniques In Cult Recruiting

9. Sex And Mind Control - A Powerful Combination

10. A Selection of Mind Control Movies

11. Mind Control Videos

12. Mind Control Fiction That's Both Entertaining And Educational!

Part 2 - Cults And Sects

13. What is a cult?

14. Destructive Cults - How To Spot Them

15. Destructive Sects - What Are They? How Do I Recognize Them?

16. Understanding Cult Psychology

17. Common Cult Tactics

18. Cult Control - How It Happens

19. A List Of Cult Contradictions

20. Yoga Cults - How To Spot Them

Part 3 – Psychopaths

21. Definition Of Psychopath And What It All Means

22. Sociopath Definition And Explanation

23. Sociopath vs Psychopath - Are The Differences Important?

24. If You Recognize These Sociopath Symptoms And Traits You Need To Take Action!

25. What Are The Essential Symptoms and Characteristics Of A Psychopath?

26. Notes On The Robert Hare Psychopathy Checklist - Revised

27. Other Psychopath Tests

28. Particular Characteristics of Female Sociopaths Vs Males

29. Sexual Psychopaths

30. What Makes A Socialized Psychopath So Dangerous?

31. Characteristics Of A Sociopath Shown By Cult Leaders

32. Do You Think You May Be In A Relationship With A Sociopath?

Part 4 - How To Protect Yourself

33. Understanding Weapons Of Influence

34. Mind Control Victims: What Are The Vulnerabilities That Make Any Of Us Susceptible?

35. What To Look Out For To Stop Mind Control

36. How do you know if you are in a destructive cult?

37. Checklist for abusive relationships

38. Dealing With A Sociopath - 9 Important Rules To Follow

39. What to do if you think a friend or family member is in a cult

40. Important Things To Consider To Undo Mind Control

Author's Note

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Bibliography

Introduction

Destructive cults thrive in difficult times. They offer simple answers to life's complexities and they capture people for this reason. Cults are typically 'anti-system' and when the system seems to be failing, they offer what, on the surface, appears to be potentially viable alternatives.

In 2012, we are experiencing a world-wide crisis, a failure of the system on a huge scale. Through no fault of their own, many people are desperate. They are seeking help. Many will be captured by cults. Perhaps even whole nations will succumb to mind control.

I have put together this information in the hope that it will be easily accessible to people. I have written about mind control, cults and psychopaths, including vital elements that people need to understand in order to protect themselves from the abuse and havoc that cults and psychopaths cause.

The best protection from mind control and psychopaths is education, knowing how they work. The best way to undo mind control is education, understanding what happened, how it happened and the motivation behind what happened. Only then does it lose its hold on the individual. The best way to help someone who may be in a cult is to educate yourself first in order to know how best to help the victim.

I know many don't like the term 'victim', but victims they are. Cult members have been tricked, deceived and lied to, because the manipulators want to abuse them emotionally, psychologically, financially, physically and sexually. It does not mean that they need be victims forever, because mind control can be undone.

I have tried to write this manual in a way that is easy to read and understand, both for those not in a cult and for those who may be doubting their group or who have left a group and want to understand what happened.

So if you are reading this simply to protect yourself, I hope you find enough useful information to avoid being caught up in destructive groups or relationships.

And if you are reading this because you have been in a destructive group, I hope you find enough explanations and examples here that you can relate to your own experience, so that you have many insights that allow you to perceive the group in a very different way.

It may not be easy doing this, but it is well worth it to get your life back, to be free of the mental chains imposed upon you and to make your own decisions again, even if you make mistakes!

I know there is a lot of information here, and it often helps to read this kind of material more than once, after some weeks or even months… you may be surprised what you pick up the second time around!

Regards,

David.

Part 1 - Mind Control

1. What Is Mind Control?

Terminology

Mind control is also known as manipulation, thought reform, brainwashing, mental control, coercive persuasion, malignant use of group dynamics, and many others. The fact that there are so many names indicates a lack of agreement which allows for confusion and distortion (especially by those using it covertly for their own benefit!!)

Let's agree that mind control comes under the umbrella of persuasion and influence - how to change people's beliefs and behaviors.

Some will argue that everything is manipulation (very often cult members, whose leader is trying to hide it from them!) But in saying this, important distinctions are lost. It's much more useful to think of influence as a continuum, at one end we have ethical and respectful influences which respect the individual and his or her rights. At the other end we have destructive influences which strip the person of their identity, independence, and ability to think critically or logically.

It is at this end that we find destructive cults and sects. These groups use deception and mind control tactics to take advantage of the weaknesses, as well as the strengths, of the members, to satisfy the needs and desires of the cult leaders themselves.

A one-on-one cult is an intimate relationship where one person abuses their power to manipulate and exploit the other, e.g., teacher'/student, therapist/client, pastor/worshipper, wife/husband. This cultic relationship is a version of the larger groups, and may be even more destructive because all the time and attention is directed towards only one person.

So what is mind control?

It's best to think of it as a system of influences that significantly disrupts an individual at their very core, at the level of their identity (their values, beliefs, preferences, decisions, behaviors, relationships etc.) creating a new pseudo-identity or pseudopersonality.

It can of course be used in beneficial ways, for example with addicts, but here we are talking about situations that are inherently bad or unethical.

Philip Zimbardo, a psychologist and university professor, says that mind control is a "process by which individual or collective freedom of choice and action is compromised by agents or agencies that modify or distort perception, motivation, affect, cognition and/

or behavioral outcomes" and he suggests that everyone is susceptible to such manipulation.

It is not some ancient mystery known to a few, it is words and group pressures, packaged in such a way that it allows a manipulator to create dependency in his or her followers, making their decisions for them while allowing them to think that they are independent and free to decide. That is, the person is not aware of the influence process, nor of the changes occurring within themselves.

Important distinctions!

There are some important points that need to be made very clear.

First of all, it is a subtle process. Subtle, meaning that the individual is not aware of the extent of the influence being imposed upon them. In this way they make small changes over time, often believing that they are making decisions for themselves, when, in fact, all the decisions are being made for them.

And it is a process, in that it does not happen abruptly. It takes time, although the length of time will depend on such factors as the methods used, the duration of exposure to the techniques and other social and personal factors.

There is force involved. There may or may not be physical force, but there definitely is psychological and social force and pressure.

Mind control vs. Brainwashing

Steve Hassan, who has treated cult victims for more than 30 years, makes an interesting distinction between mental control and brainwashing. He says that in brainwashing the victim knows that the aggressor is an enemy.

For example, prisoners of war know that the person doing the brainwashing and/or torture is an enemy and often they understand that remaining alive depends on changing their belief system. They are coerced, often with physical force, into doing things they would not normally do.

However, when the victim escapes from the influence of the enemy, the effects of the brainwashing frequently disappear.

Mind control is more subtle and sophisticated because the person doing the manipulations is often considered a friend or a teacher, so the victim is not actually trying to defend themselves. In fact, he or she may be a willing participant, and believing that the manipulator has their best interests in mind, they often providing private information willingly, which is then used against them, to continue the mind control.

This makes mind control as dangerous, if not more so, than physical coercion. In other words, it can be even more effective than torture, physical abuse, drugs etc.

That's worth repeating. In mind control, there may be no physical coercion or violence, but it can actually be much more effective in controlling a person.

That's because coercion can change behavior, but coercive persuasion (mind control) will change attitude and behavior. And the 'victim' is happily and actively participates in the changes, believing it is best for them!

So, later, to accept that someone they trusted and liked has deceived and manipulated them is very difficult, and is one of the reasons that is not easy for people to recognize mind control.

Even when the person is free of the influence of the manipulator, the attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors persist, in large part because the person believes they have made these decisions themselves (the effects of decisions we make ourselves are stronger and more long lasting than decisions we know we have been pushed to make), and in part because the person does not want to admit that they have been manipulated without their knowing, that they have been tricked by a 'friend'.

A gun to the head

Manipulators are fond of saying that no-one is holding a gun to the manipulated person's head, and this is powerful in two ways. To the outsider who does not understand mind control, it is difficult to argue with.

For the manipulated person, they know that this is true, no-one has actually held a gun to their head, so it reinforces the idea that they have decided for themselves. And decisions we have made ourselves are much more powerful and the effects last longer, so it further propels the manipulated person deeper into the reality created by the mind control.

Who uses it?

Who would use these techniques, destroying the lives of others for their own selfish benefits? Or manipulating others simply because they can or because they want the control? The answer is psychopaths (or sociopaths). Probably the vast majority of extreme manipulators who use mind control fit the profile of psychopath. And the reason they can do it is because they have no conscience!

Susceptibility

Every person is susceptible. That includes you!

It is a myth that only weak and vulnerable people are susceptible, or that there is something wrong with them. In fact, the belief that "it would never happen to me" makes a person particularly susceptible to mind control, simply because they're not on the lookout for it!

The best way to protect yourself from being recruited by a cult (it is a myth that people join cults, they are actually recruited) and being subjected to mind control is to understand how it functions as well as the cult tactics that are used to attract and keep members.

For example, Robert Cialdini has described six principles of influence that he describes as weapons of influence. It seems that these function in all societies in the world, and they are actually useful in terms of allowing society to remain stable and prosper.

He talks about reciprocity, commitment and consistency, social proof, likeability, authority and scarcity. He calls them weapons of influence because they work outside of the normal consciousness of most people and for this reason cults take advantage of them to manipulate and influence their members.

Cult experts

Cult psychology has been studied by various cult experts and while many have their own descriptions and models of how these groups function, there are many similarities.

Robert Lifton, who originally coined the term 'thought reform' after studying American prisoners of war in China, describes his eight principles that are present in a thought reform program, such as in destructive cults. He says each has a totalistic quality in that they depend on absolute assumptions and the combination of these 'poses the gravest of human threats'.

- Milieu Control: Control of the environment so that the individual's communication with those outside the group is restricted and eventually the individual's communication with himself becomes limited. (This can be as severe as not allowing members outside a compound or as subtle as directing the reading materials of members. Basically the person has less external information and less time for reflection on it which means he cannot test realities.

- Mystical Manipulation: Behaviors and emotions are evoked but it seems as if they are spontaneous. To the cult members it may seem mystical and the leaders have skills or powers to which the members often subordinate themselves.

- Demand for Purity: The group is good and everything else is bad. Any contact or resemblance to that outside the group becomes a reason for guilt and shame. And, of course, only the leadership can forgive. Manipulating the guilt and shame gives the

leadership tremendous power over the group. And guilt can be relieved by denouncing the outside world.

- Cult of Confession: People tell the group about their private memories supposedly to purge the impurities. It is also a symbolic self-surrender, a merging with the environment as well as an exposure of self to the group. Both of these obviously cause a loss of self or loss of separation from other. And if a person is afraid to admit doubts about the group itself, this can create even more guilt!

- Sacred Science: The dogma or doctrine is sacred, and so it cannot be questioned. It is also all encompassing, covering every eventuality and can offer comfort and security in that there are seemingly easy answers to life's complex problems. "There is no thought or action which cannot be related to the sacred science."

- Loading the Language: Thought-terminating clichés go beyond the normal jargon of other groups. Catchy phrases are used to condense complex ideas so that the members' language becomes constricted. Frequently, words are redefined to 'further the cause'. All this limits the thinking and feeling of the members. Like the other factors, this may initially provide security and safety, but later creates uneasiness.

- Doctrine over Person: The doctrine trumps human experience every time. This means that personal histories are rewritten to fit the doctrine, character and identity have to change to fit the doctrine and actual experience is interpreted to fit the doctrine. Should the world be in conflict or move outside the doctrine, the doctrine is changed (with rationalizations why!) so that once again it is correct, it maintains its status as 'The Way'. Any personal doubt or conflict about the doctrine is considered a personal problem.

- Dispensing of Existence: The group decides who lives or dies, who is with them or against them. There is a conviction that their path is the only one and everyone else is wrong, inferior, a sinner, false etc. Group members develop a fear of a poor future unless they stay with the group.

Steven Hassan, an ex-member of a destructive cult has his own four-point system which he describes in depth in his book Combatting Cult Mind Control.

He explains how dangerous cults use mental control tactics to change the identity of the members by controlling the Behaviors, Emotions, and Thoughts of its members and how it further increases its influence by also restricting access to Information (his BITE model)

Margaret Singer in her book Cults In Our Midst describes her six-point system, where

- the person is unaware that there is a system controlling them,
- their time and environment is controlled,
- they're made fearful and dependent,
- previous behaviors and attitudes are repressed,
- new behaviors and attitudes are installed and
- they are presented with a doctrine which actually has a closed logic.

Factors affecting effectiveness

The destructive effects of mind control are proportional to:

- the techniques used
- the number of techniques
- whether there is hypnosis and/or hypnotic mind control used,
- how often the person is exposed to it and for how long
- how close they are to the cult leader, how much direct contact there is
- how much exposure to the outside world is allowed
- presence of sexual abuse
- whether the member continues to have support from family and friends outside the group.

For example, a person who has lived and worked in a cult environment for 5 years where the members live together, who rarely leaves the group compound and who has frequent, direct contact with the cult leader will have suffered much more from the effects of cult control than someone who attends a 2 hour class given by the cult leader once a week for 2 months.

In one-on-one cults, in an intimate relationship with a sociopath, for example, a husband and wife situation, where all the attention is given to one victim, the results can be very disturbing.

Who's doing the decision making?

Cult members typically believe that they have made their own decisions and are continuing to do so - even when to outsiders their beliefs and their logic seem very strange and almost unreal! But their volition, their free-will, has been severely limited.

Cult members have been led to believe all sorts of things, they are part of an elite group, having special or important information that can change or save the world, their leader is the messiah, and so on.

Remember that mental control is a process and that cult members have reached where they are one step at a time. Their reality has been shifted because of their membership

of the group, and within this reality they believe they are making their own decisions, even though these decisions are often designed to keep them trapped in the group.

Even when they are presented with contradictions, unreasonableness and incongruencies in what they say and do, they will often argue to maintain their belief systems intact, for the very reason that they believe that they have chosen and have made their own decisions about it.

And indeed, in their new, imposed reality, very often there are no contradictions or incongruencies for them! (Remember their critical thinking abilities have been repressed).

A growing problem

With the state of the world as it is today, it seems that more and more people are turning to fundamentalist ideas to try to find order or safety or security in today's chaos.

It also means they are more susceptible to being recruited by cults because cults offer simple solutions to life's difficult problems, and cults thrive in difficult times. And today there are cults in many different spheres besides religion. There are political, financial, psychological, UFO, yoga, health and fitness, and personal development cults.

It also seems that there are more and more cult films being made today, and that doesn't mean films with a cult following. There are more and more films about mental control, destructive cults and psychopaths, if you know what you're looking for!

There are lots of mind control videos available, with explanations of some of the techniques, as well as fictional books demonstrating the effects, and we will have a closer look at some of these later.

But first, let's consider the tools used in destructive mind control…

2. Basic Mind Control Tools And How They Are Used

Let's have a look at some of the most basic mind control tools, remembering, however, that they are tools. And tools themselves are neither good nor bad, but... they can be used for good or evil. Later we will examine in more detail how they are used in combination to create the particular changes that occur in destructive mind control.

The particular mind control tools we will examine here are

- Words
- Tools to control emotions
- Hypnosis
- NLP
- Meditation
- Body manipulations

Words

It might seem strange to mention words as one of the mind control tools, but they are probably the most basic tools used by manipulators. Not many people find themselves under the influence of mind control without having heard a few words that have influenced their decision making and beliefs!

A very important point to remember here is that con artists, psychopaths, cult leaders, and other manipulators do not necessarily use fancy or convoluted language. They will typically use common, everyday words and if you listen to them it usually sounds like a normal conversation. This is what makes them so dangerous. They don't sound like snake oil salesmen, they sound like normal people.

As an aside, psychopaths do often come up with strange words, or strange combinations of words, but most people will not notice these because psychopaths are often creating a display, a show, for their victims, and the combination of mind control tools they are using distract their victims so they don't notice slight irregularities in the language. If you do spot odd things in someone's language it may be an indicator that all is not right!

So basically, it's a myth that mind control uses special, secret words known only to a few.

Mind control tools to control emotions

Emotional manipulation is a vital aspect to any mind control or thought reform program. Changing our emotions changes our thinking and our decision making. Therefore manipulators make use of whatever they can to control and manipulate emotions in others. Obviously, words are important here.

But psychological studies have shown that such things as tone of voice, gestures and other non-verbal aspects play an important role in communication.

So what happens when someone talks to us as if they were a parent, in a 'fatherly' tone of voice? Chances are it will affect our attitude, our sense of liking the person, and our emotions!

And what about how adults physically touch children? The relatives who pinch the kids' cheeks, the friend of the parents who meets the family in the street and tousles the child's hair. The parent who cups the child's chin in their hand while talking lovingly into their face. Or the way a father rests his hand on the back of his young son's neck.

Manipulators may be very aware of these things and in an instant can transport another adult back to childhood with the associated emotions of love and security, simply by replicating these gestures.

Robert Cialdini studied professional manipulators (salesmen, advertisers etc.) and he describes six "weapons of influence" that he believes work in every society in the world. They are reciprocity, commitment and consistency, social proof, likeability, authority and scarcity.

He realized that these manipulators were doing things to control others emotions, for example, create a sense of obligation in others, or create a fear of loss, or make people feel a sense of subservience to authority. The important thing here is that most people are unaware of what was going on. These weapons of influence work outside of people's normal consciousness. This makes them incredibly powerful.

Unethical manipulators make full use of these mind control tools to influence and control their victims. Again, we're not talking about ancient, mystical techniques here. Information about controlling emotions is freely available on the Internet. And you can be sure that manipulators the world over are reading it!

Another way to change somebody's emotions is to change your own first. If you're happy, it will have an influence. If you are angry, it has a different effect. Psychopaths, who have very shallow emotions, if it all, (for example, they never experience guilt or remorse) often have no trouble feigning emotions. For them, it's one of their mind control tools that they will use to create emotional bonds with others.

This is by no means a complete list, and any other methods you can think of to control emotions have the potential to be used as mind control tools.

NLP

NLP is defined as the study of the structure of subjective human experience. Basically, it studies how people make pictures in their minds eye, talk to themselves, and have feelings. What it gives us is a set of tools that we can use in communication.

For example, people make different mental pictures for the following phrases, "I have to…", "I must…", "I need to…" and "I should…". NLP explains how some people are predominantly visual, and they will use phrases like 'I see', 'It looks to me…', 'I can't picture it…'.

Others are more auditory, using phrases such as 'Talk to me about…' 'I hear you' and 'I told myself…' and so on. Using similar phrases with someone builds rapport. Using different phrases, for example, visual words with a predominantly auditory person, can impede communication.

In terms of influence, it offers a very powerful set of tools. It is possible to directly influence beliefs and decision making as well as change personal history with NLP.

There is no suggestion here that "NLP is a sect". However, many sects use the tools available in NLP as mind control tools. Why? Because they work!

Many authors have noted that sects are more sophisticated nowadays because they are using the technologies that have been developed in recent decades. NLP is one of those technologies. And, like mind control, the best way to protect yourself from it is to understand something about how it works.

Hypnosis

Hypnosis is another of the mind control tools used frequently in sects. In fact, NLP has models and descriptions of how hypnosis works, and thanks to NLP, hypnosis is readily learnable and usable by almost anybody nowadays.

It's useful to know what hypnosis is and how cults use hypnotic mind control and we will cover this in detail later.

Meditation

In the East meditation was originally done with the master closely supervising the student, watching for side effects and providing tailored routines to avoid any damage. In cults and sects, such supervision is usually non-existent. In fact, any unpleasant side-effects are often reinterpreted and the person is told to meditate even more to overcome them.

Relaxation induced anxiety is a recognized phenomenon today, and it occurs in some people who try to meditate. The symptoms include distressing sensations such as feeling heavy, light, hot or cold; numbness; muscle jerks, spasms and restlessness; palpitations; sudden bursts of sadness, rage, joy or sexual feelings. Relaxation induced anxiety often occurs in beginners of meditation.

People who meditate for longer periods, months or years, may suffer from a different range of symptoms including blackouts, anxiety attacks, memory difficulties, altered states where they lose contact with reality or with themselves, seizures, visual hallucinations and also inappropriate bursts of emotion. It seems that the severity of these symptoms is often related to the duration of meditation.

Remember, meditation itself is not good or bad. Many people do benefit in many ways from meditation. Cults use it as one of their mind control tools because

- it is a great way to stop independent critical thinking
- advanced practitioners are very suggestible
- and are unable to make their own decisions
- cults can sell a never-ending stream of ever more expensive courses.

Body manipulations

This is one of the mind control tools that is often overlooked, and it comes in various forms.

For example, any pain caused by manipulating different parts of the body can be reinterpreted so that the person comes to believe they have to change to get rid of the pain in that area. One ex-member was told that the pain in his lower back that occurred when somebody pressed their elbow hard into the area was due to the attachment to his family and he should distance himself from them.

Pressing on somebody's eyeballs create sensations of flashing lights. This may be interpreted as "seeing the light" or "divine light". Plugging your ears with your fingers causes a buzzing sound which can be similarly reinterpreted.

Repetitive body movements, swaying, clapping with chanting, and spinning will alter states of consciousness. Being dizzy is a good way to stop somebody from thinking critically and making decisions for themselves! Adding a bit of hyperventilation from prolonged exercise means they can think even less and may feel euphoric about it!!

Even dancing and singing along with current popular songs has been used as one of many mind control tools in many cults. When people are singing and dancing, they are not thinking critically.

These are the most common tools used for mind control and obviously not all tools are used in every cult. Each cult will use the tools in different ways, for example, they may use different words to describe the same practice. While the wards may be different, it is surprising when you look at different cults how many similarities there are in what goes on. More about this later!

Let's examine what the mind control techniques do at the most basic level.

3. Mind Control Tactics And Pseudopersonalities

Purpose

What our mind control tactics designed to do? Obviously it is to control somebody's mind, to control their thoughts and in this way to control their emotions and behaviors.

In George Orwell's 1984, a member of the totalitarian regime says "… the thought is all we care about. We do not merely destroy our enemies, we change them. It is intolerable to us that an erroneous thought should exist anywhere in the world, however secret and powerless it may be. Even in the instant of death we cannot permit any deviation."

More specifically…

The best description for the result of mind control tactics is Edward Schein's three-step process of unfreezing, changing and refreezing of the identity or personality. He wrote about this in his book coercive persuasion after studying brainwashing programs in China in the 1950s.

- Unfreezing is literally breaking a person down, getting him to doubt himself and his reality.

- Changing is the indoctrination process, installing new beliefs, values, ideas, etc. and

- Refreezing is the strengthening and solidification of the new identity, the pseudoidentity, or sometimes called a pseudopersonality.

The pseudo-personality is best thought of as a personality that represses and dominates the pre-cult personality. It is not, and should not be confused with, multiple personality. To a large extent, it is a clone of the cult leader, with the same ideas, beliefs, values and behaviors.

These are often very different from those the person had before!

Janja Lalich describes it this way:

"*A person's core self is developed over a lifetime -it encompasses all of the ways in which the person approaches, reacts to, and copes with the emotions, relationships, and events. Each person develops psychological defense mechanisms that she uses to perceive, interpret, and deal with reality. A systematic attack on the central self tears apart the person's inner equilibrium and perception of reality.*

For some, Margaret Singer notes, the "easiest way to reconstitute the self and obtain a new equilibrium is to 'identify with the aggressor' and accept the ideology of the authority figure who has reduced the person to a state of profound confusion. In effect, the new ideology (psychological theory, spiritual system, etc.) functions as a defense

mechanism… and protects the individual from having to further directly inspect emotions from the past that are overwhelming."

Recognition of this attack on a person's psychological stability and defense mechanisms is critical to understanding why some cults achieve such a rapid and dramatic acceptance of ideology, and why cults may engender psychological difficulties and other adjustment problems.

The goal of a thought reform program is to change a human being at the very core so that he will believe in a certain ideology, doctrine, or a leader - and adapt and behave accordingly. Once that feat is established, the compliance or obedience of the follower or intimate partner (in the case of abusive relationships) is usually guaranteed."

These ideas that are 'installed' using mind control tactics can lead the member to do such radical things as break off relationships with family and friends, leave their job, donate their finances to the group, and even commit murder or suicide. The degree of change usually depends on the time in the group, the number and intensity of mind control techniques and tools used, the members' activities in the cult, how much hypnosis is used, among others.

So, for example, many destructive cults nowadays have members who live in their own homes and continue in their jobs. However, their beliefs may have changed considerably and along with this their attitude and behaviors. The mind control tactics work 'at a distance', so to speak.

Characteristics

One of the common features is an attitude of superiority, members believe they are better, or know more, than those around them. This makes sense when you consider they are actually imitating a psychopath!

However, it is one of the contradictions of cults, because the member's reality has actually been narrowed, and their decision-making takes place within this bounded reality. Their ability to reason and think critically has been severely reduced by the mind control tactics.

Nor will they tolerate any criticism of the group or the leader, and they may sound like a tape recording when giving information about the group or defending the leader or their own actions.

Typically, group members will insist that they're happy, even saying that they've never been happier! They will usually refuse help of any kind, especially from psychologists or psychiatrists because the groups have indoctrinated them against these people.

In the worst case scenarios, their memory and comprehension is reduced, the vocabulary is minimal, they lose their sense of humor and are unable to make decisions or sort out problems. Their behavior comes very childlike and they blindly do whatever the leader tells them to.

The inner world

Internally, there is often a lot of mental conflict for cult members. First of all, they're made to feel responsible for everything wrong in their lives. They blame themselves if anything goes wrong, or they feel bad, or if they've done something they shouldn't have and so on. They are also typically hyper-alert in terms of trying to please the group and the leader.

As well as this, Steve Hassan says that cult members are at war with themselves. The pseudo-personality may be doing things that the real personality would never do. Anything from lies to criticizing fellow members to the leadership, sexual promiscuity, to murder. Or the person is witnessing other things going on in the group that they don't agree with, but the pseudo-personality provides reasons, excuses and justifications for why it's ok.

We will see some examples of this in the section on videos about cults.

What happens afterwards...

Even after a person leaves a group, and is free of the mind control tactics, the personality persists. Remember the group member believes that he has made his or her own decisions about adopting these ideas and beliefs so they tend to last a long time. They don't realize they have a pseudo-personality. Cults don't exactly advertise the fact when they recruit people!

In some cases members have such severe symptoms due to this that they may be diagnosed as schizophrenic, psychotic, multiple personality, personality disorder and so on. The symptoms may mimic very closely post-traumatic stress disorder.

Very often ex-cult members have difficulty holding down a job outside the group, or maintaining relationships or even being in social groups. These difficulties may last for years and may never be resolved.

Not until they realize that they have been in a cult and subjected to mind control tactics can they begin to undo the pseudo-personality, and very often it requires the help of professionals.

Next, let's examine some of the most common mind control tactics used in the stages of unfreezing, changing and refreezing next...

4. Mind Control Methods Used To Change The Personality

A new personality

The mind control methods used in cults (or in one-on-one cultic relationships) are designed to create a pseudopersonality in the members, a clone of the leader, that thinks and makes decisions in the same way.

Remember that cult leaders often have a grandiose sense of self, think they are above everyone else (and the law), and have a huge sense of entitlement. And they are always right. So if they are the best, they believe that everyone should copy them!

We've seen how this is achieved by unfreezing the new recruit's personality, making changes (indoctrination), and freezing the new pseudopersonality (or pseudoidentity).

The cult leader, often a psychopath, will typically build emotional bonds quickly with his victims using basic mind control techniques in order to befriend the cult victims before applying the following mind control methods.

Unfreezing

People can arrive in a cult 'unfrozen'. When people have a major trauma in their life, a move away from home, loss of a loved one, loss of a job, a change from school to university, their reality has changed significantly. They may be questioning their lives, they may be wondering how God can allow such things to happen, they may distrust the system, and in some cases the things they've depended on up to now, are no longer trustworthy. They may distrust themselves and they may distrust the world. They are looking for answers, reassurance or help to relieve their misery.

This puts them in a very vulnerable position. Remember, people do not join cults. They are recruited using mind control methods!

Cults are actively looking for people at vulnerable times in their lives because it makes their task so much easier. A person whose world has just fallen apart is very susceptible to compliments, offers of help and the possibility of easy solutions to their enormous problems. Cult members are trained to be on the lookout for people in such situations because they are easy targets.

The process

Those who are conned or deceived into joining a cult will be put through an unfreezing process. Every group has their own manner and particular tools for doing this but there are many common mind control methods to achieve it.

The basic idea is to distance people from their past, to make their past bad, or evil, or the source of all their problems.

Frames of reference for understanding the world must be broken down so that the person's sense of reality is changed and he or she has no way of defending himself against new ideas or concepts.

Some mind control methods

It's very common to take new members to seminars and courses in remote areas. In their time off, there's no place to go and so they literally spend 24 hours a day in the cult environment. This gives the leader strict control over the person's environment.

Seminars running late at night means there is little time for sleep, and a tired person is a more compliant person, less able to think critically. Control of mealtimes and control of the food is another way to alter somebody's physiology. Some cults don't feed their members enough, or use low-protein (vegetarian), high sugar diets to weaken people physically.

Hypnosis and hypnotic mind control methods are particularly effective tools for limiting a person's ability to think critically and make their own decisions. Confusion and sensory overload are also very effective for creating suggestible states in people and their use is described in the linked articles on hypnosis.

Public confessions are frequently used and are a very powerful method of unfreezing somebody. Particularly when used in conjunction with humiliation and insults. A person who publicly confesses things that they would not normally admit to, loses his sense of privacy and begins to merge in an unhealthy way with the group, and becomes even more susceptible to other mind control methods.

Other tactics

The other important aspect of confession is that any information divulged can and will be used against a member by a psychopathic group leader. Such private information as weaknesses or past sins can be used to humiliate and insult a person so as to break them down incredibly quickly. This can occur even more rapidly in a public forum. The person is left doubting themselves, in a state of emotional turmoil, looking for any way out of the misery they find themselves in.

The constant presence of other group members means a lack of privacy. More specifically, it means lack of time to think, ponder and rationalize.

On top of all this, cults tell the new members that they are defective in some way, their lives are not working, they are sinners in the eyes of God, they're poor, they're worthless, useless or even mentally ill. Self-confidence is undermined and they begin to look to the environment for clues about how to think and act.

The problems they have in their lives are put in the spotlight and magnified. Some groups even use age regression to have members find experiences in the past where there were upset, frustrated and angry and so on, and then blame the parents for these experiences, saying the parents were/are incapable of loving them. How's that for distancing somebody from their past?!?

The next bit… changing

Remember that mind control is a process. It takes time. There will be overlap between unfreezing, changing and freezing. Some of the same mind control methods used for unfreezing will also be used for changing. Hypnosis is an obvious example. Insults and humiliation may also be used at this time to abort the critical thinking if a person questions or criticizes the doctrine.

Repetition, repetition, repetition, repetition, repetition, is very important in indoctrination. It's the same message over and over and over again. In some groups they may sound like different stories, different teachings, but it's always the same basic idea. The cult leaders are basically 'one trick ponies'.

We have THE Way...

The old values, old ideas, old beliefs, are criticized and blamed for life's problems, but now new solutions are offered. The message is: Accept the groups ideas, take on the new beliefs and values and everything will be okay. It will all work out the way you want.

People who continue to question or doubt or criticize are dealt with severely. They may be thrown out of the group straight away. They may be isolated (and indoctrinated individually) so they have no impact on other new members, or they are made an example of, such that other members don't dare to speak out against the group.

Sometimes they're treated so harshly, that they just leave of their own accord. Of course, the cult leader's explanation is that these people are not ready to do the work, they are not evolved or spiritual enough, or they are stupid or mentally ill. This mind control method has the added bonus (for the cult leader!) that the members who do stay and tolerate the abuse think that they are ready or evolved or spiritual or intelligent etc.

The emotional stuff

At every stage emotional manipulation is used extensively. When people are experiencing very strong emotions their ability to think critically is almost zero.

If the group leader can generate misery and tears in the group and later a sense of euphoria, the members believe they are doing profound change work.

Social pressure is also used extensively. You can read more about this in the chapter on Robert Cialdini's weapons of influence.

Peer pressure

Peer pressure in such environments works this way:

- If you say it in front of others you will do it.

- Having done it, you will think it.

- Having thought it (in an environment you do not think is coercive), you will believe that you thought of it yourself.

And when we think we have decided things for ourselves, the decision is stronger and the effects last longer!

Time to refreeze

The new pseudo-identity is forming. More and more it represses and dominates the pre-cult identity. (It never fully destroys the pre-cult identity, and very often the conflicts and contradictions in the member are due to an ongoing struggle between the two identities).

There is an age old method that is used here as part of the mind control methods. Reward good behavior and punish bad behavior! A reward can be something as simple as spending time with the leader, a kind word or a compliment from him, especially in public. Or it can be something more powerful, like permission to leave the group and go and visit family, or even permission to make a phone call to family.

Punishments are usually swift and harsh. Being ostracized by the group, not being allowed to speak for weeks on end, losing leadership positions, actually being thrown out of the group, public insults, even physical beatings are used in some groups for members who break the rules.

The punishments are often harsher then the rewards are pleasant. But this is often only obvious to people outside the group. Remember mind control is about controlling the thoughts of the members. The psychopathic cult leader wants to create clones of

himself. So the members have been trained to think like him or her, so the rewards and punishments are accepted as they are.

There are nice examples of this aspect in the mind control fiction available.

Modeling

One way to create clones is to have them model, or act, like the leader. Or to act like older members, who of course, are acting like the leader.

Destructive cults have two main aims, earn money and recruit members. Therefore, as soon as possible, the new members have to go out and recruit new members. What better way to solidify new beliefs and ideas then to have to sell them to others? If you've ever had the experience of talking to a cult member you'll recognize how strongly they believe in what they are doing.

Reindoctrination

A favorite mind control method used in cults to maintain the pseudo-personality in place, is to put the members through the indoctrination process again and again. Some do it every few months, or every few years but certainly within five years because they've realized that after five years the pre-cult personality begins to appear again.

Some groups, for example, insist that the members attend a workshop once a year to 'keep up to date' with the group ideas and/or to maintain the 'qualifications' awarded by the group. This simply means the leader gets to indoctrinate them again.

Fortunately, it is usually possible to undo mind control and the pseudopersonality with professional help.

5. How Psychopaths Use Basic Mind Control Techniques

Who uses them?

Basic mind control techniques are used extensively by cults and sects to recruit, indoctrinate, and keep members, and the majority of the leaders are psychopaths. So here we have a look at what Robert Hare, an expert in psychopathy, says about the techniques used by psychopaths to start a relationship with somebody in order to be able to dominate and control them.

These ideas about basic mind control techniques can just as easily be applied to one-on-one relationships as to groups.

Understanding people

First of all, psychopaths can very effectively read people. Probably because they work very hard at it! Their main motivator is to control and dominate people and they have worked out an effective strategy to do just that.

They can size people up very quickly, assessing their strengths as well as their weaknesses. And the more information that have about someone, the more leverage they have in terms of being able to manipulate the person.

Who's vulnerable?

So who do these basic mind control techniques work with? Unfortunately, the answer is... everyone! We will examine specific vulnerabilities more closely in a later chapter.

Hare explains that there are three aspects of personality we need to consider.

We have our private personality which is how we experience ourselves inside. It includes our thoughts and attitudes, preferences, values, emotions, hopes, ambitions and our positive traits. We also have negative traits which we may try to hide, sometimes we try and improve, and sometimes we simply try to forget or ignore them.

The public self, or persona, is how you want other people to think of you. It's what you reveal of yourself to others in the hope that they will see you in a good light. We try to maximize the good bits, and minimize the bad bits.

The third aspect is reputation, how others actually see us. Despite our best efforts, people form impressions of us based on their own opinions, beliefs and values. All this filtering and distorting of information causes more changes in how other people see us.

An important point here is that people form first impressions very quickly, often within seconds of meeting somebody. As time goes by people look for information to confirm their initial impressions and tend to ignore information that contradicts their first impressions. It's a natural bias in human decision making.

So if we like someone from the beginning, they become more likeable. Robert Cialdini lists this as one of the six weapons of influence. It's important because if we like someone, we're more likely to be influenced by them.

Hare also talks about consistency, another one of Cialdini's weapons of influence. When a person's words and actions seem to be consistent, we trust them.

We can have huge problems if our first impressions are wrong!

"*The fellow that agrees with everything you say is either a fool or he is getting ready to skin you*." - Kin Hubbard

So how does this work?

When a psychopath meets new people, he or she assesses them for their value or usability. Then they assess personality. For them, your face, words and body language are your autobiography, written in large type!

Based on your personality, the psychopath then begins to project a persona that allows him or her to create a close intimate bond. This bond then becomes the basis for further manipulation and mind control.

The psychopath assesses your weaknesses and strengths, looking for insecurities, needs and the things you value. His actions and his words will then convey four important messages to you.

1. I like who you are
2. I am just like you
3. Your secrets are safe with me
4. I am the perfect friend/ partner/companion/ lover… for you!

These basic mind control techniques may not occur in a strict sequence, there may be some overlap, or jumping from one to the other. However, they work to influence our decision making. Let's see why…

6. The Mind Control Trick

What is it?

The mind control trick that distinguishes mind control from brainwashing is in how the manipulator is perceived by the 'victim'. In brainwashing, the manipulator is an obvious enemy. Often physical force is involved. The person may be in a position where their life depends on conforming to the wishes of the manipulator.

The mind control trick is that the victim thinks the manipulator is a friend, or a teacher, someone who has their best interests at heart.

This means the manipulated person is a willing participant, they believe they are being helped and taken care of. They believe they are making their own decisions. This makes it more dangerous than holding a gun to someone's head!!

We explained here how a psychopath will very rapidly create an intimate bond by assessing their victim's personality and creating a persona that will be attractive to that personality.

The psychopath gives 4 messages.

1. I like who you are
2. I am just like you
3. Your secrets are safe with me
4. I am the perfect friend, partner, companion, lover… for you!

Let's have a closer look at how and why these messages deceive the victim into thinking the psychopath is a friend.

I like who you are

We all want to be liked. We want to be noticed and we want to be accepted. We all like compliments. Having someone notice us (when most people are preoccupied with themselves) is flattering in and of itself.

Accepting and reinforcing someone's persona is an incredibly powerful method to get them to like you. And psychopaths will do it in a very charming, and disarming, manner! They are experts in this mind control trick.

I am just like you

Based on what the psychopath knows about you, from what you said, but more importantly from his assessment of you, the psychopath begins to share details about his own life. It seems like he's letting down his guard. However, frequently it's just lies. Because the things he shares with you are issues that are important to you. This begins to strengthen the bond.

Your secrets are safe with me

Because they are sharing 'intimate details' with you, it's easy for you to let down your guard and to begin to talk about yourself. After all, you feel that you're in the company of somebody who actually understands you, who understands you at a deeper level than most people do. You trust that this person is different and you get further sucked in by this mind control trick.

The psychopath is fulfilling another one of our basic psychophysical needs, safety and security.

I am the perfect friend, partner, companion, lover… for you!

So you think you found somebody who really understands you and accepts you for who you are, 'warts and all'. The more information you give the psychopath, the more the persona he projects seems to be a good match for you.

He builds a strong reputation of him in your mind, perhaps with similar weaknesses, perhaps with abilities that you would like to have. The relationship is different and special in many ways.

The psychopath has done his work to get to this point, and now your fate is linked to this psychopathic bond.

As mentioned, this can occur in one-to-one relationships, or in group settings.

Is this not normal?

So why are these considered basic mind control techniques? Don't these things occur between husband and wife, for example? Of course they do.

The difference is that the psychopathic relationship is not real. The persona of the psychopath is manufactured. As far as the psychopath is concerned, there is no such relationship. He has simply manufactured it to manipulate you. He has told whatever lies necessary to convince you of one thing, while he is organizing something else.

One psychopath said "(In a relationship…) if you don't know who is leading, you are being led by the nose."

That means there was no informed choice on your part. The psychopath chose you deliberately because of the benefits to him. You have no idea what's actually happening.

It won't last...

These relationships don't last, in two ways. As soon as you're hooked, the psychopath changes and does only the bare minimum to maintain the relationship. All the initial ' supposed' care, attention and love may disappear. For example, if a psychopath builds such a relationship with a man and then marries him, her behavior towards him can change dramatically, to manipulative and abusive.

The second manner in which it does not last is when the psychopath has no further use for the person and discards them. Literally. The person is left bewildered, not understanding what happened, and even wanting the psychopath back!

It's all about power!

These relationships have a power imbalance, with the power obviously being with the psychopath. This is the objective of this mind control trick - to win and keep the power and control over others.

(The power imbalance means that there is no informed consent in sexual relationships where one party is under mind control. This means it is legally sexual aggression or sexual abuse)

Most people like to think that there is some good in everyone. Remember how we form first impressions based on our beliefs and values? Most people expect others to be good, respectful and honest in their relationships, and this is what they look for in others.

One of the reasons socialized psychopaths are so successful is that normal people don't believe that such evil exists. Evil is a common word in the description of psychopaths, because it's not simply a matter of taking advantage of other people, these are social predators hunting for victims. Like reptiles, they have no conscience!

There are quite happy to use this mind control trick to abuse people psychologically, emotionally, sexually, physically and financially, all without guilt or remorse, or the slightest consideration for their victims!

Beware!

If you feel that you are in a relationship that is almost perfect, and it has happened very fast, use this as a signal that you need to stop and re-evaluate what is happening. This is an opportunity to stop any mind control before you are badly affected.

7. Overt And Covert Hypnotic Mind Control

To amplify and speed up the effects of mind control, hypnosis is often used. Before we consider how, let's be clear about what hypnosis is so that you can better protect yourself against its unethical use. Later we will uncover the specific ways cults and sects use hypnosis to manipulate members.

What is hypnosis?

Many people think of swinging watches and hypnotists on stage getting people to do weird things like barking like a chicken!

It's more useful to think of hypnosis in terms of states of consciousness. Everybody has a waking state, a state when they know they're awake, they're alert, alive and in the world. And we have different states of consciousness throughout the day.

For example, if you are lying in a warm bath you feel a little bit sleepy, your mind might begin to wander, drifting lazily from one idea to another. This is an altered state of

consciousness, or a trance state. Another example is staring at the movements of fish in a big fish tank. What happens is your attention becomes more and more focused and your awareness of your surroundings diminishes.

This is typical of hypnotic trance states, more and more of your attention becomes focused on what's happening inside and less on what's happening outside. So you become much more aware of your own thoughts, internal images and feelings, and less aware of things going on in your environment.

Normally, it is very pleasant for most people, very relaxing and enjoyable.

Effects

One important factor here is that in trance states people's ability to think logically and critically diminishes. They tend to simply accept any information that is given to them, without thinking if it is rational and reasonable or not. This means that people in hypnotic trance are suggestible; they accept uncritically any suggestions given to them. This means that even strong willed people can be hypnotized and made to do things that they would not normally do.

Rational analysis, conscious decision making and independent judgment are suspended. This is a bonus for cult leaders who, after all, do not want the members thinking for themselves!

Add to mind control hypnosis and its effects, and you have an incredibly powerful set of tools to manipulate others, even to manipulate them to do things that violate their own morals and ethics.

What the manipulators say...

It's interesting that many cult leaders will often claim that people cannot be made to do things against their will, even using mind control hypnosis. There are two important issues here.

First of all, the members of the group are programmed to accept whatever the leader says. Therefore they will tend to accept this idea. Secondly, implicit in the idea is that if the person does something they are doing it of their own volition; it is their own decision to do so. When we make our own decisions, we believe more firmly and are more committed to the result, and the actions and effects of our decisions last longer. This is a very subtle but potent idea.

Other myths about hypnosis

Another thing to keep in mind is that hypnosis is not always a closed eye process. It is not necessary to have your eyes closed to be in a trance. For example, have you ever

driven somewhere and when you reach your destination you don't remember much of the journey? You were in a trance! People often drive in trance states, where their eyes are fully open and functioning! If they see someone in front of them braking, there is no difficulty braking themselves and doing what is necessary to prevent accidents.

People often have the idea that there are special hypnotic words to induce trance. Hypnosis can be induced in normal sounding conversations, using everyday words, without ever saying 'relax', 'deeper' or 'sleep'. But that's for another article.

And it is even possible to induce hypnosis without words. For example, if you've ever had a massage, it was not necessary for the therapist to speak, simply rubbing your muscles and manipulating your limbs allows you to relax more and more with your attention drifting inwards.

Other naturally occurring trances

When people are bored or tired, they will often find their attention drifting internally, away from the outside world. It is often easier to induce hypnosis in people like this, or for the unscrupulous hypnotist or cult leader to utilize these naturally occurring trances to implant suggestions in people. And remember, in cults and sects the suggestions given using the combination of mind control hypnosis are for the leaders benefit!

Group pressure is another powerful force for getting people into trance states. If everyone around you is doing the same thing, it can be very difficult not to follow along, especially if the group leader is berating anyone for being different!

Important points

So the important things to remember are that:

- hypnosis is simply an altered state
- we naturally enter lots of altered states or trances ourselves every day
- it's not necessary to have your eyes closed
- hypnosis can be induced without words, and
- most importantly it reduces critical faculties and the ability to evaluate information.

So how and when do cults and cult leaders use mind control hypnosis to control their members.

Overt and covert uses

These are some of the ways that destructive groups use hypnosis, both overtly and covertly, to increase the effects of the mind control techniques being used. Obviously there will be variations from group to group.

The first and most obvious is to say they are using hypnosis. They are openly using formal hypnosis techniques to induce trance states and group members may even be learning how to use hypnosis with others. Where better to hide a secret than out in the open!

Next is to use naturally occurring trance states. Storytelling and guided imagery are situations where someone need have no formal hypnosis training to induce trance states. People tend to like listening to stories and guided imagery is something that is offered to help people relax. Both induce trance states without having to use formal techniques.

Simply by becoming engaged in a story, people tend to alter their state of consciousness. While many cult leaders and manipulators may not have formal hypnosis training, they usually understand the power of storytelling and take advantage of it to implant suggestions (which are typically for their own benefit!).

Nonverbal hypnosis

And remember the idea about words not being necessary? Think about dancing, repetitive body movements, swaying, clapping, spinning, drumming etc... They will all alter your state of consciousness. Especially if there is rhythmic music added, or flashing lights.

And there are various cults that also use bodywork as part of their teachings, and manipulations of the body can be used to induce trance states.

Meditation

What can you say? Instant trance!

Covert destructive manipulation

Destructive groups and individuals will use hypnotic mind control in a variety of little known ways too.

Long seminars and lengthy speeches, especially if they go on late at night, are a way to induce trance, sometimes because of boredom, sometimes because of tiredness, or both! Again, cult leaders may not know they are doing hypnosis but they are smart enough to recognize the benefits of such techniques for themselves.

A variation on this is to talk for long periods of time with very few pauses. What happens is the listeners do not have time to think and process the information, so they lose their ability to judge and criticize any incoming information. So they begin to simply accept what the speaker is saying... and when the same message is repeated over and over and over again, it can very difficult not to accept it.

Another tactic that is very often used by cult leaders is to present conflicting or contradictory information as if it is totally logical. When contradictory pieces of information are presented as being reasonable with enough authority (something psychopaths find very easy to do!), very quickly trance is induced, a person's critical faculties shut down and they simply accept whatever is being said.

Creating links between unrelated items will often cause confusion in people. Normally they have to stop and think to work out if the items are connected or not.

Stacking techniques

However, add in the previous two factors, where the person is bombarded with information, there is no time to think and the speaker is talking with much authority, and there is potent hypnotic mind control where very quickly people find themselves defenseless and accepting whatever they are told.

Remember that these tools and techniques are not used one at a time. There are several factors at play at any one time.

And the cult leader has nothing better to do than manipulate. It is what he does. So he is constantly using whatever techniques are available to continue the mind control.

And they depend on the fact that the members do not suspect that they are using hypnotic mind control. So people need to learn about it to protect themselves.

Educate yourself

Hypnosis and mind control combined give very powerful tools to influence decision making. This is why sects and cults use them! Because they work!!

Therefore it often very useful for members and ex-members of cults to learn about hypnosis in order to undo the effects of hypnotic mind control. And it is useful for their friends and family to understand something about it to understand what the ex/member is experiencing, and indeed, to avoid being recruited themselves!!

8. Mind Control Techniques In Cult Recruiting

For ex-members of cults, understanding the mind control techniques used to recruit them and keep them in the group is an important part of their recuperation.

Remember people do not deliberately join cults. They are recruited!

It takes time

The recruitment process is exactly that, a process, new members are recruited step-by-step. Cult membership has been likened to a marriage, with the initial seduction, increasing commitment, falling in love, and fully committing.

Here we have a look at the recruitment process and the mind control techniques used to deceive and trick members into joining the group.

Choosing who...

The first thing to consider are the potential members. Cults do not want mentally ill people, drug addicts, troublemakers etc.

They want intelligent, articulate, healthy workers who can get stuff done. Some groups want young people, some groups want families and other groups target the elderly - 'the gold is with the old', they target old people for their money.

There is no particular 'personality' that is susceptible to mind control techniques. However there are certain characteristics that make people more vulnerable. For example, people who are dependent, unassertive or have a low tolerance for ambiguity (they don't like to feel uncertain, they want answers and the sooner the better). People who are idealistic or have a strong desire for spiritual meaning are also somewhat susceptible. An impaired ability to criticize what one is told or hears also puts a person at a disadvantage.

Most people will find, on reflection, that there have been times in their lives when they have experienced several or all of these things themselves. This means that everyone is susceptible to being recruited into a cult, if they happen to meet a cult member at the wrong time - a time when they are vulnerable and the cult member is offering exactly what they want!!

A very important point that makes people incredibly susceptible is an ignorance of how mind control works and the fact that cults use mind control techniques to recruit…

The belief that 'it would never happen to me!' compounds the problem…

Large cults even have training manuals which teach the members what kind of people to recruit. For example, a cult may want 'pay-as-you-go' members, i.e., people who are earning money and can afford to pay for courses (there may be a series of courses which get more and more expensive).

The manual will them explain how and where to find recruits, how to assess the recruits, and based on the assessment what story to tell them to attract them to a course.

First contact

Cults recruit in ads in magazines and newspapers, public exhibitions, trade fairs, universities, night classes, sports clubs, hairdressers, and the list goes on.

About 60% of ex-members say they were actually recruited by a family member or friend!

Personalizing...

Let's consider the interaction between a cult member and a potential recruit and the mind control techniques that are used.

The first thing the cult member will want to do is gather information about the potential new member. This information is used in two ways. First, the member can pretend to have similar interests and values to pretend to be like the potential member. This is a very powerful way to create an intimate bond. You can read more about how psychopaths (most cult leaders are psychopaths) rapidly create powerful relationships here.

Secondly, the cult member uses the information to make the potential new member an offer they cannot refuse. The offer may be an invitation to coffee, dinner, a free talk, a seminar and so on. The topic, of course, would be exactly what the new recruit is looking for…

Deception and lies are present from the word go in the recruitment process and are designed to influence decision making.

The relationship itself is false, it is manufactured. The talk or seminar may actually be only vaguely related to what the recruiter is offering, and the potential new member is deceived into coming along because they like the person making the invite.

It's appropriate to mention Robert Cialdini's weapons of influence here. These are unconscious psychological motivators that we use as shortcuts in our day-to-day living, such things as reciprocity, liking, commitment and consistency, and scarcity. Cialdini says that these things allow our society to function well, but can be used to manipulate and control people.

For example, in our situation above, the recruiter is making a friend of the potential member. We allow ourselves to be influenced by friends and people we like. So the potential member is already at a disadvantage. They don't understand how mind control works and they like the person they're talking to.

We all like to be seen to be consistent. So if the potential member has said they are very interested in politics, it's very difficult to turn down an invitation to free talk on the

current political situation. Or if they have admitted that they are struggling financially, it does not make sense to not want to go to a free seminar on how to make more money in your spare time.

If we add to this the fact that the recruiter has done the potential new member a favor, e.g., paid for coffee or lunch, (reciprocity is the idea that if I do you a favor you will feel obliged to do me a favor in return), the odds are stacking up for the recruiter!

And then the recruiter mentions that this is a one-off seminar, with a big discount for people who sign up now, the scarcity pushes the potential new recruit into deciding to make a commitment.

But again we have deception. The new recruit believes that are going to a seminar on politics or making money or whatever, but they're actually joining a cult where eventually all their attention will focus on being liked by the group and the leader, on pleasing the leader and ignoring their own wants and needs because the needs and wants of the leader are much more important.

Double ethics

This is the double agenda of cults. There is a facade or a mask presented to the general public while what actually goes on in the group is something totally different.

People may join groups thinking that they're going to get communication skills, spiritual teachings, relief from stress, a money making job and the solutions to their problems.

They would never join if they knew that they would end up working long hours for nothing, drug dealing, selling flowers on the street with the money going to the leader, prostituting themselves, giving all their wealth to the group and other such things. The new recruits don't learn the full story until much later - one of the expected control techniques used in destructive sects.

Another form of deception is front groups for various large cults. There may be a small political society in a university, for example, which is channeling members into a larger religious cult. Or a yoga group in a small town where members are recruited into an international destructive sect. People join the front group expecting one thing, whereas the hidden agenda of the group is cult recruitment.

Smooth talkers

Many people believe that calls use harassment and arguments to pressure people into joining. Nothing could be further from the truth. The mind control techniques used by cults nowadays have evolved and frequently soft talk, charm and appealing topics are used to flatter, entice and even seduce people into making commitments.

But the combination of mind control techniques means that the seduction can cause bonds and commitments that are even more powerful than normal relationships.

Ok, so let's say the person agrees to go to a weekend course. Let's discuss the mind control techniques they can expect to encounter…

Let's have a look at how some groups are using mind control in their seminars, courses and workshops to indoctrinate the new recruits into their way of thinking.

The story so far...

To continue our story, our new recruit arrives at the place where the weekend seminar is to be held on Friday night. The member who invited her has very graciously driven her to this remote location in the countryside. When she registers, she is handed a disclaimer and she's told it's just a formality, to confirm she is fit and healthy and has no mental illness and so on.

After signing the form, and paying for the course, she enters the seminar room and immediately surrounded by three of four smiling, happy people. She was made to feel incredibly welcome, lots of hugs and touching with the introductions, she is flattered about the fact that she was brave enough to come to the course, she's open to new ideas, she's intelligent and will do very well on the course, and so on.

These happy people have all done the course before and say they have benefited hugely from it. They seem to have their own jargon and the new recruit asks what the words mean.

She is quickly reassured did she will learn all this on the weekend and that she shouldn't worry.

So what's actually going on?

The isolation in the countryside is a common way of using mind control techniques. The person is taken out of the normal environment into a strange place to separate them from their normal reality. It also means it's difficult to leave because she is dependent on the person who drove her there. There is nowhere to go during the rest periods, so she is subjected to the cult environment 24 hours a day.

The disclaimer? More commitment. Very often, people won't have fully read it. However, during the course, if anyone thinks of leaving they will be 'reminded' that they have committed themselves, in writing, to stay for the full duration of the course.

And all the initial love and attention? This is called love bombing and it makes the person feel extra special. They feel that people care, people are interested in them and

there's a great sense of companionship in the group. This may continue during the seminar with frequent breaks to 'say thanks' and hug other people.

The jargon is called loaded language. Initially the new recruits don't understand it and feel a bit left out. They want to know what it means. Very soon, when they start using it, they will get compliments and approval for doing so. However, it's called loaded language because complex ideas have been condensed into simple phrases. Using the phrases means the members don't have to think, all the thinking has been done for them. It's used as a way to shut down critical thinking.

No thinking allowed!

And this is exactly what the group leaders want on these weekends. They are using mind control tactics so that the new members listen and absorb the doctrine, without complaining and without questioning. Doubting is not allowed either. And the leaders will be continually using mind control techniques in a variety of ways to achieve just this.

They may also control the environment by not having any natural daylight in the room and having members remove their watches. This can be quite disorienting. They will keep the members busy throughout every moment of the day, and even late into the night. When their heads hit the pillow, they won't have time to think, they will be straight off to sleep.

During the day new members will never be left alone. There will always be older members with them. They may even be accompanied to the bathroom! Reflection, critical thinking and reasoning will not be allowed. The older members will continually talk, reinforcing the messages of the group leaders. Frequently they are using mind control techniques with the new members without realizing it. They are simply repeating the formulas that were used against them when they were 'newbies'.

Repetition, repetition and repetition will be a common theme of the weekend, again and again, over and over and over...

Group pressures

The older members have been instructed to be on their best behavior. They have learned how to behave in the presence of new recruits. They may have been warned that if they cannot maintain their state, or do the things they should be doing, they should leave the room, sort themselves out, and only then return.

The older members, of course, are the models for the new recruits. The new recruits will be learning things during the weekend, and initially there are small changes. As the changes get bigger, or when the activities seem a little weird, and the new recruits are not sure what to do, they will look for what Robert Cialdini calls 'social proof'. They will

look around to see what other people are doing. For the older members this stuff is all normal, and the new recruits think 'well if everyone else is doing it, it must be okay'. So they join in. And they start to change their behavior… bit by bit… insidiously…

And the leaders may say that having 'experienced' members present is a bonus for the new members because they will learn and progress faster. What actually happens is that they develop their pseudo-identity faster!

The emotional cornerstones for using mind control

Guilt and fear are induced. Guilt over their weaknesses, their problems, past sins, the fact that there is hunger in the world, guilt over having put their needs ahead of the group… whatever the leader can think of. And fears, fear of God, fear of being poor, fear of not doing well in life, fear of the devil, fear of leaving the group because if they do they won't get the benefits and this is the only group with these benefits!

Guilt and fear are central to using mind control in a destructive way. Interestingly, the members are not aware of how much fear and guilt they are experiencing!

Members also learn that the love shown at the very start of the program is actually conditional. Only if they continue obeying the rules of the group, continue making decisions that the leader approves of, does the 'love' continue. So they may fear losing this as well.

Emotional highs and lows

Destructive cults using mind control typically manipulate emotions so the group members are literally on an emotional roller coaster. That's because when there are very strong emotions, there is little rational thinking going on!

So they start with love bombing, then fear and guilt. Very often they will be led to re-experience other negative emotions from the past, followed by happiness, excitement and euphoria. All this leads to an enforced dependency on the group and especially on the leader/s. The members become dependent on the leader to know how they are doing, how they are feeling and even who they are.

They end up being in awe of the leader. It seems the leader is so much more advanced than they are. The leader seems to have all the answers. A wonderful person, clever, enlightened, caring, charming etc. etc.

Cult leaders are very often psychopaths, and their aim is to dominate and control people. So they're constantly using mind control tactics (without ever feeling guilt or remorse!) in whatever way they like to maintain their grandiosity and power.

For them, the end justifies the means. They have no 'conscience'. Think of the possibilities that that allows them! It's frightening!!

Euphoric!

The members (new and old) typically finish the weekend on an emotional high, even feeling grateful that they have this new information, and many are ready and more than willing to make the decision to sign up for the next program. They have been hooked!

So let's look at other proven mind control techniques used to maintain the manipulation.

9. Sex And Mind Control - A Powerful Combination

When we talk about sex and mind control there are those who would like to be able to use mind control to get more sex and those actually using mind control for this purpose.

The first group is a reflection of the poor state of our society when people have to deceive and trick others into having sex with them. Fortunately, most of them are not very successful.

The second group is much more dangerous. The people to whom mind control and manipulation comes naturally are often psychopaths and they are often very good at it.

So good, in fact, that even when they are abusing people, these people cannot recognize it or cannot get out of the relationship because they have become so dependent.

The details of sexual mind control

So how does the sex and mind control thing work?

Psychopaths have been compared to chameleons in that they blend in with the people they are with. They very quickly make friends, pretending to be like the person or people they are with, having the same interests, being very understanding etc. You can read more about the details of how they build intimate relationships quickly here.

Whether this is in groups (as in cults) or in a one-to-one relationship, the results are similar. There is idealization of the psychopath by the victims. The psychopath encourages this adoration and the victims often consider that the person is a fantastic partner, enlightened, superhuman and so on.

Psychopaths manipulate people's emotions and recognize that sex and mind control are a powerful combination. If they can convert the relationship into a sexual one they begin

to have much more control, because the person has opened themselves up in a much more intimate way.

A sexual relationship is also a more committed relationship and whatever about deciding on a first date that you have made a mistake, it's much more difficult when you are in a sexual relationship that you have make a mistake in your choice of partner.

Blinded by emotion

Sex and mind control are a potent mixture used by psychopaths to build strong bonds with their victims and frequently the victims report that after a 'honeymoon' period, things change. The psychopath knows that their control of their victim is sufficient that they can now begin to do whatever they like. Their 'real' nature begins to show up, everything from heavy drinking, extramarital affairs, emotional abuse, physical violence, rape. The sex becomes for their gratification only, or to demonstrate their superiority.

Sex is also used in many cults to maintain control and manipulate the members. Remember that many cult leaders are psychopaths and the doctrine and rules are a reflection of them, and they typically have 'irregularities' in their sex lives.

Cult leaders realize that controlling people's sexuality can give them a lot of power. Changing the beliefs and values about sex is another way to destroy an individual's limits and boundaries and keep them within the group.

Sex Cults

The sexual mind control in these destructive groups is very varied. Some groups advocate chastity. And even if they offer this as a way out of the stress of having to decide about sex, it is just another combination of sex and mind control that is used to manipulate the members.

The other extreme in sex cults is the idea of 'free love' where the members are supposed to have lots of partners, including the leader of course. Other groups control such details as who a member dates, who gets married, when and how the members have sex, how much 'power' the men have over their wives, and so on.

Sex and mind control often allows the leaders to prostitute the women (and men) to earn money, recruit new members, earn favors with politicians and influential people and even to blackmail powerful people if it's useful for the leader!

Psychopaths have also been compared to reptiles because they are predators without a conscience. They don't care what they do to people. They want power, control and sex and mind control gives them easy access to these things, so they just take them. In fact, sexual submission is often the last step in the objectification of the victim, the treating of a person as an object to be used.

The results of sex and mind control

The combination of sexual mind control is never good for the victims, whether it's in a cult or a one-to-one relationship such as therapist-client, or teacher-student. The imbalance of power means that there is no informed consent and therefore it constitutes sexual abuse. Any benefits that may have existed at the start of the relationship are contaminated. Sexual relationships between those with power and those in their care are never justified.

When undoing mind control, those who have suffered sexual abuse have special considerations. They may have amnesia for traumatic events, they may initially deny it or not want to discuss it. It is often only after some period of recuperation that they are ready to deal with it.

Some researchers suggest that people who have suffered sexual mind control may suffer from the following effects and that they may be acute, delayed or chronic.

- Ambivalence - contradictory feelings towards the abuser e.g., rage and thinking they are nice people

- Guilt - about betraying or exposing the abuser as well as taking all the blame for the abuse.

- Emptiness and isolation - they are so dependent that they feel a loss when no longer with the abuser

- Sexual confusion - contradictory thoughts and feelings and beliefs

- Difficulty in trusting others - they got it very wrong once, how will they know in future?

- Identity and role reversal - the victim's identity and wellbeing may be entangled with that of the abuser

- Emotional lability - sudden, unexpected emotions which can be very intense,

- Suppressed rage - victims of sex and mind control may have had to deny or hide their anger. There may be deep seated rage which has been suppressed for a long period.

- Depression and suicidal risk - irrational guilt and shame, and anger at the abuser turned against the self can lead to depression and suicidal thoughts.

- Cognitive dysfunction - poor attention, concentration and memory as well as flashbacks and intrusive thoughts are very common in those recovering from sexual mind control.

This is why working with professionals to undo the effects of mind control and sex abuse is useful. Confronting the experiences and working through them is important to re-establish one's own identity and develop the ability to have intimate and sexual relationships once again.

Don't be caught!

Sex and mind control are a powerful combination. The mind control allows a sexual relationship to develop and once it becomes sexual mind control, the level of power and domination by the abuser increases tremendously.

How can you protect yourself from this? By learning how mind control works and being vigilant!

10. A Selection of Mind Control Movies

Mind control movies on the increase?

It seems that there are more and more mind control movies nowadays. It's probably a reflection of the growing awareness of the damage being done by psychopaths and manipulators in our society today. And of course, the more extreme psychopaths, the serial killers and rapists, sell tickets at cinemas.

Some movies demonstrate very well the nature of psychopaths, others demonstrate the effects of mind control and still others illustrate how life is for the members of a destructive sect. Here are some examples of each.

Mind control movies - psychopaths

Edward Norton plays a psychopath in "Stone", who manipulates the prison psychologist (Robert DeNiro) into making mistakes and letting him go free, He even gets his wife to seduce the psychologist!

Terrence Malick's "Badlands" has Martin Sheen playing the role of a psychopath, killing his girlfriend's father and then going on the run. Of particular interest, however, is Sissy Spacek's role of the girlfriend. Notice in particular the lack of emotion after the death of father and frequently, while she is commenting in the background, she talks about all sorts of highly emotional things without the faintest emotion in her voice.

"I, Psychopath" is a great movie about a self-proclaimed psychopath who wants to be tested to confirm if he's a psychopath or not. You will learn a lot about how psychopaths think and function from this film. He's even caught on camera insulting and abusing the

interviewer, one of the typical methods used in mind control. You can watch the movie for free here http://topdocumentaryfilms.com/i-psychopath/

Another free movie is "Fishead" which examines the role psychopathy plays in the current financial crisis in the world. There are two issues here. One is the psychopaths themselves who are in positions of leadership. The second is the role of antidepressants in causing a lack of empathy in decision makers. You can watch it here (sign up is free). http://www.fisheadmovie.com/watch-the-movie

In "American Psycho" Christian Bale excels as a wealthy executive who kills to amuse himself.

"The Devils Double" is another great movie about a man who was forced to be the double of Hussein's son. In this you can see the childish, impetuous nature of a psychopath, with the desire for instant gratification. Also obvious is the sudden temper, the viciousness, the sexual delinquency and the total lack of respect for others that is typical of psychopaths.

"The Last King of Scotland" is another fantastic portrayal of a psychopath by Forest Whitaker. There are a lot of examples of the sudden changes of mood, one moment being friendly, the next moment aggressive and threatening, in order to control and manipulate. Highly recommended!

Mind control movies - sects

"Red State" is about three teens looking for sex who get caught up in a fundamentalist religious sect who kill sexual deviants. A lot of interesting things here about the mind-set of group members including the conflicts they sometimes have. The FBI's handling of this sect is also of interest in this movie!

"Los Esclavos Felices" is a movie that was supervised by Alfredo Silletta, a well-known anti-sect journalist. This is a brilliant portrayal of the recruitment and indoctrination in a sect. It is a Spanish movie, but it's well worth a look if you want to understand how sects function. To someone who has not been in a sect it may seem a bit far-fetched, but ex-members of sects will recognize a lot of what happens in the movie.

"The Island" is about people in a sheltered environment waiting for their turn in a lottery to be able to go to the island. It turns out that they are clones grown for the organ spares of their 'owners'. The bounded reality of the sect is depicted here very well.

In a similar vein there is "The Village" 2004, "Demolition Man" 1993, "The Truman Show" 1998 and "The 13th Floor", 1999. In Demolition Man, pay special attention to the language and how it has been curtailed in order to limit the thinking and actions of the people. This is called 'loaded language' in cults.

Mind control movies - the effects

"The Wave" is a German movie where a teacher tries to create the experience of life in a dictatorship for his students. It demonstrates nicely the effects of group pressure on individuals and how quickly people can change their beliefs and ideals.

"Dogville" is a brutal demonstration of firstly, how people can be manipulated to treat others badly, and secondly, how somebody in a vulnerable position can be captured by a group and subjected to all sorts of horrors. This movie is not recommended for people in a very sensitive state of mind.

"1984" George Orwell's classic tale of life in a totalitarian environment. Timeless!

"Bridesmaids" (2011). Not strictly a movie about mind control but it displays the isolation that can occur as a result of mind control. The main character is the chief bridesmaid organizing a friend's wedding. Another friend wants the job and sets about to discredit the main character, and does so as well as any good psychopath!

(It turns out she's not actually a psychopath, she does feel guilt and remorse. However, the first half of the movie is a good demonstration of the devastating effects of a psychopath at work.)

Martha Marcy May Marlene (2011) is an excellent portrayal of the potential problems cult members have when they leave a sect without realizing they were in a sect. The heroine was actually in a live-in commune, but many of the problems she has later may also be experienced by those who were not in a commune. 2 things are of particular interest. First is the total lack of awareness or understanding of her family of her situation, and secondly is the fact that some of her symptoms will potentially be labeled as mental illness and may even be treated as such, when what she needs is professional help and those symptoms would naturally just disappear.

Anthony Hopkins deserves a mention in any list of mind control movies. In "The Road to Wellville" he plays the eccentric leader of a health spa, which is essentially a parody of a health and fitness sect. He also plays the lead role in the famous Hannibal Lecter series, which is about a psychopathic serial killer.

And the recent TV series "Homeland" is not only very entertaining, it demonstrates many of the aspects of emotional manipulation used by psychopaths to control others, as well as the extent to which victims of mind control can be manipulated (I will say no more in order not to spoil it!)

Entertainment and education

This is just a short list and there are many other mind control movies being turned out today. The manipulators seem to have captured even the interest of movie makers and

theatre goers! The simultaneous disgust and fascination with horror and abuses keeps people coming back for more!

We are going to have to find a way to deal with the damage and destruction that psychopaths cause. At the moment society and the legal system are not sufficiently organized to deal with what is happening. Mind control movies are not only entertaining but they help to increase awareness of the problem and shows people that psychopath does not always mean 'serial killer'. In fact, it is estimated that between 1 and 4% of the population today are psychopaths!

11. Mind Control Videos

Educational videos

Below is a collection of mind control videos demonstrating the extremes people can be taken to by the use of mind control. If you are learning about cults because you think a family member or friend may be involved, or you have left a cult or a cultic relationship (one-to-one) and are educating yourself as part of your recuperation, hopefully these mind control videos will be educational for you!

Note: Web pages may change for various reasons (including cult leaders using the law to have incriminating videos of themselves removed!). If any of the links here no longer work, you can check my web site at http://www.decision-making-confidence.com/mind-control-videos.html for updated links.

End of the world cult

This documentary about a doomsday cult is very well done. The leader has allowed a camera crew to enter the compound and speak to the members. They believe the world is going to end soon on a particular date.

Listen carefully to what the interviewer says, because not only does he express the thoughts of the general public about cults, but he also asks some very interesting questions.

Before each of these mind control videos, I will make some comments as to what to look out for while you watch it. Of course, there may be other things that catch your attention, too!

Notice in the first video the unquestioning devotion and gratitude expressed by the members to their leader. Typically the cult doctrine is such that members are programmed to accept whatever the leaders say.

And as for the leader himself, the usual story is that they've managed to overcome terrible hardships in their childhood. In fact, they become superhuman. It's interesting, too, that he admits that he finds humans disgusting. This is a common trait in cult leaders. They consider themselves superior and those around them are simply objects to be used.

Notice the mask-like appearance of the two 'devoted' women. And the leader explains that they simply left their home, he did not order it. We'll see more of this later in the other mind control videos in this series.

His having sex with other people's wives was not his fault. It's god's responsibility! Shifting the blame outside themselves is a constant in cult leaders.

And he has such control over some of the teenagers that they are prepared to leave their parents.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CvytVhqiO6E

In this second movie, note that the leaders son will not discuss difficult issues without consulting with his leader. Notice the unwavering conviction of the cult members that what they are doing is right. And the 'us versus them' mentality. Even an ex-member has become like the devil.

Remember that mind control is a process. It takes time and it goes one step at a time. The interviewer points out that these people spent 10 years with the leader before he announced he was the Messiah. To have said this at the start of the 10 years would probably have been too much. But 10 years of daily mind control and they will accept whatever he says.

When the issue of being naked with the teenagers comes up, the leader is very quick to want to give his side and even puts the responsibility on the interviewer for not having mentioned it previously.

Notice what happens from 6.20 onwards. We'll talk about this after you've seen the video.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wjQjcNrY1_A

This girl's explanation of what happened is a great example of an indirect directive. Cult leaders may not give direct orders. They can always say later on they were not telling

people what to do. However they make suggestions or implications, in this case written in a particular way.

Remember that for cult members, the doctrine acts as the master program directing their thinking and decision making. And of course the doctrine is a reflection of the thinking of the leader. The young girl reads what he has written and 'somehow' just knows what she needs to do.

She believes that she has decided. Nobody forced her to do it. And when we believe we are making our own decisions they last longer and have a more profound effect on our behavior.

And even the part where she says the leader paused to think about her question, she interprets this as his listening for the answer of God. It was actually quite a slick move on his part. Simple but powerful in the context of mind control.

The interview with the leader in the next of these mind control videos demonstrates many of the characteristics of such people. The egocentricity, the superiority, the lies and changing the rules as they go along.

The reality of cult members is narrowed by the doctrine. The ability to think critically is seriously curtailed. The unfortunate young boy in this video is a prime example of this. In fact, not only can he not think critically, sometimes it seems that he can't even think!

http://www.youtube.com/v/x4O7A1jJw3U

The leader needs to explain himself again! Watch the son in this video. He seems to be desperate, unable to reconcile what his father is doing. (Psychopaths have no concern for anybody, including family.)

When people leave a cult, and do not undo the mind control (preferably with the help of a professional), it leaves them very vulnerable. They may end up back in the cult, or very commonly, end up in another destructive group (of course they don't realize that's a cult either!)

Of interest, too, is how the leader begins to redefine what's going to happen on the appointed date. He also redefines what brainwashed means.

Notice the attitude of the youngsters sitting on the bench with him. Yes they are young, but the behavior is very childlike. This is very often seen in adults who are very manipulated when they are around their leader.

http://www.youtube.com/v/0nXkTDIbJ_4

More of the complete devotion of the members as well as a firm belief that they're making their own decisions.

Cult leaders are typically 'anti-system'. Likewise here in these mind control videos.

Typical, too, is the belief of the members that the cult leader is doing it for them together with his claim of self-sacrifice.

Notice the stare when the leader is being challenged. It has been compared to a reptile staring at its prey. Remember, no conscience!

And then the date and time of the prophecy arrives…

http://www.youtube.com/v/c4KDGgaO5Bo

We don't find out how the leader reframed what happened but it's not unusual in these types of cults for the members to continue to remain devoted to their leader afterwards.

This is a marvelous series of mind control videos that demonstrate very nicely some of the horrific things that happen inside destructive groups.

Shortly after the documentary aired on TV, the leader's son put this video up on the internet. It is another nice example of the bounded reality of cult members. And what an interesting way to keep his father away from his wife.

http://www.youtube.com/v/N6A8rn07jis

Children born in cults

This series of mind control videos contain the video suicide note of Ricky Rodriguez. He was born in the cult and was being groomed to take over as the leader. He tried to kill the leaders before taking his own life.

They include interviews with other ex-members and explain very well the abuse going on in this cult. And now and then there are clues that Ricky is still 'manipulated' and has not totally undone the mind control that he experienced.

(With this video and the next, I have placed the link to the first one in the series. If you want to watch more of them, when you are on the youtube page, you can then select the second in the series and so on.)

http://www.youtube.com/v/4wPjpx-9goA

22 years

This Irishman spent 22 years in his destructive group. In this series of 16 mind control videos he explains in detail how he was recruited, the mind control tactics the group use and how eventually he managed to leave. Well worth the time.

http://www.youtube.com/v/ScVBJPGeEio

Jesus Camp

This shocking documentary about an evangelical church shows the effects of mind control on a group of children. After the documentary aired, the leader announced she was closing the camp because of negative public reaction. She was afraid of vandalism to the premises. However, she is apparently looking for another site to continue her 'work'.

http://topdocumentaryfilms.com/jesus-camp/

You may have to search for this video but it's well worth the effort!

God's Next Army

Public commitments, public confessions, double agendas, redefinition of words, loaded language, control of behavior, information, thoughts and emotions, it's all here.

The full documentary can be seen here (starts at 2.30)

http://watchdocumentary.com/watch/gods-next-army-video_c79b86078.html

Or you can watch on youtube, this is the first of 6 parts...

http://www.youtube.com/v/jfdFZG8lYJE

A whole country

And this video shows that it's possible to have a whole country under the influence of mind control and what it's like. (Again, there is a link to the first one in the series. When you have watched the first one, there will be links on the right of the page to the rest of the series.)

http://www.youtube.com/v/4E4LOI1TIAc

One more

How to become a cult leader. This is a quick sketch of how it actually happens!

http://www.youtube.com/v/V4-Hms7bHqY

Others...

There are many other mind control videos available on video sites on the internet. I have chosen these ones because they demonstrate very nicely a lot of the important aspects of mind control.

12. Mind Control Fiction That's Both Entertaining And Educational!

Here are some suggestions for mind control fiction if you want to learn more about how it works, what is possible with it and to develop a deeper understanding of mind control if you are in the process of undoing the manipulations that you have been subjected to.

Mind control here means the destructive belief changes and deliberately brought about by unscrupulous manipulators to control decision making and has nothing to do with aliens, microwaves or secret drugs or devices.

I will add to the list as I find more mind control fiction that fits this criteria. Read reviews of text books here.

Sun Storm by Asa Larsson

Where the author does not mention the word cult in the book, there are so many lovely examples of mind control that the book could be used as a teaching text.

The main character has been living apart from the cult for years but is still very affected by their ideas. This is typical of people who do not deliberately undo the mind control, preferably with the help of a specialist.

The group pressures, the hyper vigilance, maintaining outward appearances, the power imbalances, sexual abuse and the blaming of the victims, the breaking down of the personalities of the members, breaking the law, manipulation of members by the leadership, it's all here.

And it's a very entertaining thriller, too! I haven't read her other works so I won't comment yet.

1984 by George Orwell

This brilliant piece of mind control fiction is a must for anyone who wants to understand how cults work.

It's a brilliant description of a totalitarian society and how fear and guilt are used to control. The main characters, of course, are trying to break free and the book is about what happens to them.

The interchange between the hero and his torturer is very explicit about how mind control works and what the manipulators want.

Make sure you read the appendix too! Here Orwell talks about language, or more specifically the principles of Newspeak.

He gives an exquisite description of how changing somebody's language will change how they think and act. This is exactly what destructive groups do with the loaded language. Orwell explains precisely how limiting one's vocabulary limits one's ability to think.

The Hannibal Lecter series by Thomas Harris

This is a famous portrayal of a serial killer. Harris supposedly based his character on a number of different killers he covered as a crime reporter in the 1960s.

At different times the main character is said to fit no known psychological profile and that he is a pure sociopath.

Regardless, it's interesting to note the attitudes and activities of this character. He is a brilliant psychiatrist who was consulted by the police about murders of which he was the culprit! He is always calm and collected even when he is doing things with a high risk of getting caught. He eats people if they are rude and obnoxious to him.

There is little or no emotion about anything he does but rather it seems like everything is a game that he controls by giving hints and clues to help them on their way.

The Talented Mr. Ripley by Patricia Highsmith

I have to admit I haven't read this piece of mind control fiction yet, I've only seen the film. But I have been told that the book does a far superior job of describing the inner world of the psychopath, although perhaps it overdoes the level of emotion.

But here's a psychopath who kills and takes over the life of another person, with never any guilt or remorse. Much of his time is spent organizing the manipulation and deceit, all the time honing his skills.

I believe it's a very well written and entertaining story.

Catch Me If You Can by Frank W. Abagnale

Yes, I know it's not actual mind control fiction. But it's a book and it involves mind control. It's well worth the read to get a sense of what's possible when an expert con artist gets to work on his marks and manipulates their emotions, their weaknesses and their habits.

Mind control drugs, weapons...

Lots of the mind control fiction available is about the idea of governments and agencies using combinations of drugs, hypnosis and secret methods to create killing machines, people who become robot-like on hearing a special phrase and follow preprogrammed instructions, and the like.

Examples include The Manchurian Candidate by Richard Condon and the Bourne trilogy by Robert Ludlum.

Much time and effort has been spent by various groups studying mind control drugs and processes and apparently they haven't found them very successful. They have been able to destroy people's personalities very rapidly and create all sorts of psychotic breakdowns, but in terms of creating new beliefs and value systems, they probably don't come anywhere near the ability of some of the psychopaths on the planet today.

Back to top

Part 2 - Cults And Sects

13. What is a cult?

Defining cult?

We can define a cult as:

1. A particular system of religious worship, especially with reference to its rites and ceremonies

2. A group bound together by veneration of the same thing, person, ideal, etc.

3. An instance of great veneration of a person, ideal, or thing, especially as manifested by a body of admirers.

It has its origin in the Latin 'cultus', which means habitation, refinement or worship.

It is also used as 'cult band' or 'cult film' which indicates that the band or film has a small group of devoted followers.

So far, so good! People have a right to be allowed to believe in whatever they like.

The difficulty arises when people are being manipulated/brainwashed to believe in an idea, a person, a religion etc. and they do not realize that they're decisions are being manipulated. This is what happens in destructive cults.

What's a destructive cult?

At a large International Cultic Studies Association conference in 1985, they first had to answer the question 'what is a cult?' and they settled on the following definition:

"A group or movement exhibiting great or excessive devotion or dedication to some person, idea, or thing, and employing unethical manipulative or coercive techniques of persuasion and control (for example, isolation from former friends and family, debilitation, use of special methods to heighten suggestibility and subservience, powerful group pressures, information management, suspension of individuality or critical judgment, the motion of total dependency on the group and fear of leaving it), designed to advance the goals of the group's leaders, to the actual or possible detriment of members, their families, or the community."

Note the difference here. This is a definition of a destructive cult. Whether a group is destructive or not depends on whether mind control is used or not.

People should have the freedom to believe in whatever they like. So we do not examine the beliefs or ideology of a group to determine if is dangerous or not. We have to check out the behaviors and practices, i.e., are they using coercive persuasion (mind control/brainwashing) to affect members identities, their decision making etc. or not?

14. Destructive Cults - How To Spot Them

What the experts say

Margaret Singer, clinical psychologist and cult researcher, says of destructive groups that:

They are authoritarian in their power structure - the all-powerful leader is answerable to no-one. Any power the subordinates have is usually to allow them to keep the members in line and doing the bidding of the leader.

They tend to be totalitarian in the control of the behavior of members - members are expected to devote more and more of their time, energy, skills, money and resources to the (professed!) aims of the group. The idea is that only those completely committed will attain the ultimate goal.

Members end up doing more courses, making bigger donations, working for free for the group leader, who is happy to have free web sites built, business cards designed for free, free legal and medical advice, free massages and so on! In some groups the leader dictates what the members wear, eat, work at, spend their money on, who they have relationships with, who they marry or have sex with, often in incredible detail.

The ideology of destructive cults tends to be totalitarian too, with black and white thinking. And the members' decision making abilities have been significantly changed by the doctrine. See cult psychology for more details of this.

They have double sets of ethics - there is one set of rules for the leader and another set of rules for the members. For example, the members are celibate but the leader has sex with everyone. The members cannot criticize the leader but the leader criticizes them frequently. Members confess everything honestly in the group, but lie to outsiders to recruit them.

Plus, there is typically one philosophy for outsiders and a different philosophy for the 'inner circle', the latter being hidden until members are indoctrinated, and they are 'ready' to understand it.

Non-destructive groups, on the other hand are open and honest about their ideologies and beliefs.

For cult leaders, the ends justify the means. That allows them to basically do what they like, with no morals or ethics. Remember that many leaders are psychopaths, with all that entails!

Cult leaders are self-appointed and typically have a special mission in life with special information for the followers. They have discovered, or been given by other-worldly powers, such things as new methods of healing, of earning money and great riches, communing with god, achieving success in every aspect of life, accessing profound personal power, political power etc.

Cult leaders are charismatic and domineering - they have enough charm or attraction to attract, manipulate and control their followers. They persuade their devotees to give up their families, jobs, etc. in order to follow them or their doctrines. And overtly or covertly, they eventually take control of the possessions, money and lives of these unsuspecting people.

They center the worship of members on themselves - In non-destructive groups, the leaders keep the veneration and attention on the groups aims, whether that aim in political, religious, education or something else. In destructive cults, the leaders keep the attention directed towards themselves. They may disguise this, humbly pretending that they do not want or need praise, but secretly using mind control to create dependency and obedience in the followers to the extent that typically the well-being of the members is tied to the well-being of the leader.

When you consider that many leaders are psychopaths, this makes sense in that often the psychopath needs this kind of attention. What they want is power, power over others.

Cults appear to be innovative and exclusive - Cult leaders claim to be 'anti-system' and anti-tradition, they have new and different ways of living that they claim are the only way to successfully survive today's world of problems and difficulties. And this is only available to group members who stick with the leaders.

Destructive cults typically have two purposes - recruiting new members and fund raising. Other groups do this, too, of course, in order to better the members' lives or contribute to society. The difference is that in destructive cults, all work and funds serve the cult, or more specifically, the leaders.

Differences

These various aspects will be seen to differing degrees in different destructive cults. Some are very controlling with live in communes, same dress code, controlled relationships etc., while others have members who continue living in their own homes and say in their own jobs.

Some destructive cults want members to stay for life; others aim to have members take their courses for 2 or 3 years, knowing that they will drift off after this time. Some groups have small numbers who each pay a lot of money; others have bigger numbers who each pay a smaller sum.

There are groups with a lot of sexual abuse (where mind control is involved, it is always sexual abuse because of the power difference involved plus the fact that there cannot be 'informed' consent due to the manipulation) and in other groups it seems there is little or none.

Or it is hidden. Manipulators and psychopaths know that sexually intimacy with someone is an incredibly powerful way to control them, and often it is the last step in the 'objectification' of a person (no longer treating them as a person but treating them as an object to be used).

Similarities

The language or jargon used in dangerous cults will differ from other groups as well. After all, they need something to differentiate themselves from outsiders! The language allows them to feel superior, confirming that they know stuff the outsiders do not.

However, closer inspection often reveals that groups have the same ideas but just put different words around them. 'Heavenly deception' and 'transcendental trickery' allow 2 different groups to lie and cheat to outsiders to recruit them, or as the members believe, 'to influence them for their own good'.

One group says it operates at the level of ontology (the study of being) while another offers the chance to find the 'authentic self', another offering the 'ideal you'. It's the same ephemeral doctrine with different words to describe it.

Evolution

Cultic groups have evolved in recent years such that the standard idea of dangerous cults with people dressing the same, living in a commune, being vegetarian, no longer applies. There are a huge variety of different types of cults nowadays - commercial cults, religious cults, therapeutic cults, martial arts cults, weight lifting cults, horse cults, hair dressing cults, and so on.

And nowadays cults themselves will evolve. If it is in the interest of a group leader to change (because it will attract more members or make more money, or because someone has exposed him for the psychopath that he is!) he will change in whatever manner suits him.

For example, a leader says his teachings are not spiritual, but later it becomes obvious that many people in his neighborhood are talking of spirituality, then all of a sudden his teachings are spiritual! Or it becomes advantageous for a leader to move his group elsewhere, or to change from a psychotherapy to an NLP group, or to move from working in the personal development field to expand into the business world.

And these changes are reinterpreted for the followers as beneficial for them, so they are quickly accepted.

Robert Lifton

Robert Lifton says he is happy to use the term cult when there are three conditions present:

- there is a totalistic or thought reform set of practices

- there is a shift from worship of broad spiritual practices to worship of the leader

- a genuine spiritual quest from below (the members are genuinely seeking something) exploited from above (i.e., by the leadership).

So while dangerous cults may have very different belief systems, and may appear different, they all have a central theme. And the theme is that the belief system is being used and abused by the leader to satisfy his own desires, needs and hidden agendas.

The belief system can be sufficiently worthwhile or noble to keep the members united, at the same time the leader is using it as a tool for his own benefit, at the cost of the individual members.

What else happens?

In destructive cults, members are manipulated and exploited, they may distance themselves from their family and friends and even leave their careers to work in the cult, often for little or no pay. Their own beliefs and values have been changed to those of the group, and they identify with the group and the leader. They suffer psychological and emotional abuse, and there may be physical or sexual abuse.

And very often, at the same time, they believe that they've never been happier in their lives. Such is the power of mind control!

Usually there is an elitist mentality because they have access to information or their leader in a way that outsiders do not. They become very defensive of their leader and in a way their identity and their well-being becomes linked the well-being of the leader.

Hence, they will usually be very quick to defend him/her, often aggressively!

In the most obvious cases, family and friends notice that there has been a significant change since the person joined the group. A change in their beliefs, attitudes, behaviors and values. They often say it's like dealing with a different person.

Pseudo-identity

And in some ways this is true, because the member has a new pseudo-identity which represses and dominates their old identity. This pseudo-identity is typically a clone of the leader that has been imposed over time using mind control tactics.

Occasionally the real identity can appear, the person may seem as before, and then the pseudo-identity reasserts itself and the cult person reappears. This can happen very suddenly and is very disconcerting for the family member or friend witnessing it!

This new pseudo-identity lives in a different reality, a reality narrowed by the doctrine of the group, and so the decision making has been limited to things that make sense within that reality. So when we hear about cults and the things that they do, remember that

while things may not make sense to outsiders, what the group members do and think is reasonable and rational... to them!

Impact on society

When we think about cults in this way, it is obvious that they are detrimental to society in many ways. Nowadays, young and old alike are susceptible to being recruited. When people think about cults they do not often consider older people, but nowadays old people are targets because they have money, and may be extremely vulnerable, for example, they find themselves living alone after the recent death of their spouse.

When and if members manage to leave, they may need an extensive period of recuperation before they can integrate themselves usefully into society again.

Some cults are so large that they have extraordinary (and frightening!) influence in the media, in politics, and in lawmaking. They may dominate whole communities.

Some cults are violent, leading to suicides and murders.

Destructive cults thrive on conspiracy and fraud, and the legal system is often ill-equipped to deal with them.

Cults deny people their freedom. They take away their possessions.

Frequently there is sexual abuse.

It's possible that many mentally ill people have been in cults, and don't know it. The symptoms they have after leaving a cult are interpreted as mental illness (yes, post-cult symptoms can be that severe!) And they are treated as such, instead of getting the advice and counseling from experts who understand their situation, and can actually help them to undo the harmful effects of cult mind control.

Cults are using mind control techniques to indoctrinate their members with the beliefs and values of their leaders who are often psychopaths/sociopaths. Even after the members leave a cult, if they do not receive appropriate treatment and counseling, these beliefs and values persist.

The effect of this on the individual can be disastrous. The effect on society has not been given enough consideration… yet!!

15. Destructive Sects - What Are They? How Do I Recognize Them?

Definition of a sect

In today's world, 'what is a sect?' is an important question. A sect can be defined as:

1 A body of persons adhering to a particular religious faith.

2 A dissenting or schismatic religious body, especially one regarded as extreme or heretical.

3 Religious denomination characterized by insistence on strict qualifications for membership, as distinguished from the more inclusive groups called churches.

4 Any group, party, or faction united by a specific doctrine or under a doctrinal leader.

It has its origin in the Latin word 'secta', which means a course of action or a way of life, and this is probably derived from the Latin word 'sectari', which means to pursue or to follow.

The term was first used in 1931 to describe newly formed religious groups that have broken away from their parent religion because of disagreements over beliefs or ideology. Nowadays, it is often used interchangeably with cult, especially in the context of a destructive group.

When is a sect destructive?

Steven Hassan, in his book Breaking The Bonds, is very clear that destructive sects are not defined by their ideology or beliefs. People should be allowed the freedom to choose what they believe in.

Instead a sect is said to be destructive when it uses deception and mind control techniques to undermine a person's free will, limit their critical thinking and decision making abilities and make him or her dependent on the group's leader.

Steve Hassan, an ex-sect member who has been treating ex-cult members for over 30 years, says that destructive sects have authoritarian leadership, deception and destructive mind control.

A destructive sect is an authoritarian group with an all-powerful leader, who claims to have special information or power that is available only from him. Again, there is nothing wrong with being a powerful leader. The difficulty arises when this power is abused to deceive members, making them dependent on him and incapable of thinking critically and making their own decisions. Most leaders are actually psychopaths.

Destructive sects use deception to attract and recruit members. Potential members are offered all sorts of things to get them to come along to group meetings, meals, weekends away and the like. Communication skills, a way to make money quickly, a way to understand the Bible, the offer of new friends, better relationships, better health, etc. etc.

But what they end up getting can be very different - a different set of values, a pseudo-identity or a pseudo-personality, loss of friends, breaking up of family relationships, spending their time working for nothing, while any income they do generate goes to the leader, and so on.

The members making the offers can be very convincing, firstly because they have been deceived themselves (having been exposed to the same mind control techniques they themselves are now using to recruit), and secondly because they may actually believe completely in what they are offering.

And thirdly, the use of destructive mind control, which is a system of influence designed to unfreeze the person's identity, make changes, and freeze a new identity, a pseudo-identity in place. By using a rigidly controlled, high-pressure social environment, destructive cults change people's Behaviors, Emotions and Thoughts and controls their access to Information. (This is Hassan's BITE model). In essence, they take over and control their minds.

A sect for everyone!

Destructive sects are no longer confined to religious groups, and today we have all sorts of destructive sects, political sects, therapy/large group awareness training sects, commercial sects, martial arts sects, yoga sects, and many others.

In fact, the experts say that there is a sect for everybody! What they mean is that nowadays there is such a variety of sects, that literally any person can be recruited. Whatever any person is looking for, there is a sect offering that. And therein lies the danger. We are all more susceptible to compliments, lures, deception and enticements when we are lonely, sad or upset. And if someone friendly is offering an easy solution to the problems we are facing in a particular moment, well…

It is a mistake to believe that only stupid, crazy or weird people join destructive sects. Nobody joins a sect. Sects recruit people. If a person knew what they were really getting into in a destructive, sect they would never go near it!

Studies have shown that most members of sects are from good backgrounds, are healthy (or at least were healthy when they joined!) and have no previous mental problems.

In fact, sects are actively looking for people who are healthy, ambitious, idealistic and who get stuff done. Who better than these types to earn money and attract new members!

Sects do not want the hassle of having to deal with drug addicts, psychiatric patients and others who are going to cause them problems.

In fact, cults and sects as part of the cult psychology offer utopias, the answer to people's problems… the lure is that if you just come along, follow us, everything will be ok.

Size

One other important aspect is the size of cults and sects. Some destructive sects have hundreds of thousands of members and some have only two. For example, a therapist and his patient can be considered a cult if there is destructive mind control involved. A psychopath and her husband can also be considered a cult. (With all the attention on one person, the results can be devastating!)

For this reason Margaret Singer prefers to talk about cultic relationships, because the same process of mind control can work between two people with similar results as between a personal development guru and the hundreds of people in one of his courses.

The one person, or the hundreds, have their reality modified and narrowed for them, and then make their decisions based on this 'bounded reality' which is totally dependent on the manipulator/guru/partner/therapist etc.

16. Understanding Cult Psychology

Introduction

Obviously every destructive sect is different with a different cult psychology, but when you examine different groups, it's startling the similarities that can be found. If you're an ex-cult member, you will recognize many of the following aspects of cult thinking, and if you're looking for information about someone you know who may be in a cult, the following information about cult psychology will help you to understand what's going on for them.

Doctrine is reality

Cult's doctrine is considered the 'Truth' with a capital T, it covers every eventuality and members are expected to except it completely, even if they don't understand it. Eric Hoffer says that the best cult doctrines are unverifiable and un-evaluable. This means they cannot be proven or disproved, they have to be accepted on faith.

A fundamental aspect of cult psychology is to get the person to distrust themselves, and to develop a new identity where the doctrine is the master program for all thoughts, feelings and actions. This pseudo-identity (see later) does not need to be in the presence of the group leader to know what to do. In any given situation, the program tells them how they should act, think or feel, (in order to satisfy the cult leader!)

Black and white, good versus evil

Cults typically reduce things to black and white. Shades of grey are not allowed. After all if they have the ultimate Truth, (with a capital T) then every other group must be wrong, which leads to an 'us versus them' mentality. You're either with the group or you're an outsider. (This is often as aspect of the paranoia of cult leaders, too)

This goes part of the way to explaining how group members end up distancing themselves from family and friends. They are made to believe that outsiders (i.e., those not in the group) are a bad influence and are stopping them from growing, evolving, progressing in some way.

The cult psychology of black and white thinking extends to many other areas, too. You are fully committed or not, you accept everything the leader says or not. You are sexually liberated or you are not (how's that for powerful manipulation?!?).

Words like 'never', 'always', 'everyone' are used frequently.

Modeling the leader

One reason that destructive sects seem very weird or strange is that every member seems to have common habits or mannerisms. They have their own jargon. They may dress the same. This is because the members believe that they should be modeling or copying their leader, or the people higher up in the organization, (who of course have been modeling the leader).

Obedience and loyalty are highly regarded in destructive cults and copying the leader is a way for members to show these values.

Very often the members don't just want to be like the leader, they want to be this person. (They may want to be the leader or have a leadership role, but very, very few actually do!) And, of course, they are urged to give up who they are in order to be

someone else. Hence it is often said of cult members that ' they are not the same person' or 'they're not who they used to be'.

Pseudo-identity or pseudo-personality.

Edgar Schein described the process of coercive persuasion as a 3 stage process.

- an unfreezing of the identity - breaking the person down,

- changing - the indoctrination process, and

- refreezing - which is reinforcing the new identity.

There are many techniques used in the process (it is important to be aware that it is a process and occurs over time), and in the end what remains is for all intents and purposes a clone of the cult leader. The cult psychology is, after all, that of the leader, and the leader typically wants people devoted to him and thinking as he or she does.

Family and friends notice radical changes in the person and the changes can be very difficult to undo, partially because the pseudo-identity is designed to protect itself. Arguing with reason and logic is usually hopeless and often counterproductive because it only serves to isolate the person further.

Very often in destructive groups they teach that family and friends will not understand, are not evolved enough, are evil, and will try to hamper the person's attempts to better themselves. Consequently when the family does try to intervene, the leader's warnings are confirmed and the pseudo-identity feels a need to protect itself. Fortunately, with expert care, these effects of cult psychology can usually be undone.

Impossibilities

Very often the doctrine of cults creates impossibilities and the members are urged to try and obtain these. The members, of course, don't see these as impossibilities. Typically the leader claims to have these abilities and the members are simply trying to be as good as the leader. For example, working without emotions, never making judgments, having perfect days whenever you want them, never breaking the rules, never sinning (notice the black-and-white thinking!)

Another form is the use of double binds, the damned-if-you-do, damned-if-you-don't situation. Two opposing messages are given and if you follow one, you are disobeying the other. But the leader insists that both are obeyed at the same time, which leaves members caught in a closed loop - but unable to recognize the contradiction. Therefore manipulators can use these to create guilt and confusion to augment control and dependency. For example, a member may not be able to choose between the two

alternatives and has to ask the leadership which to do, making them dependent on the leader.

In some cults members learn to access a particular state, in which they can experience all the emotions. But if they are experiencing negative emotions, they are not in their state! (Negative emotions are typically not allowed in cults, especially towards the leadership. Any such emotions are typically directed at outsiders.)

Other cults say they are teaching members to be independent, but when they do things on their own, there are negative consequences (punishments, isolation, not allowed access to the leader etc.)

Or it can be more subtle. For example the decision making process they learn to 'make their own decisions' may actually propel them further into the doctrine and mindset of the pseudo-identity. If they don't use this model, there are negative consequences. They lose. If they do use the model, they are more caught up in the sect. They lose!

Combinations

These various aspects of cult psychology do not occur in isolation. Keep in mind that all these things are stacked one upon the other, in different ways in different groups, and to different extents depending on the leader, too, and you begin to get an idea of the forces and pressures that cult psychology applies to its members.

And although there may be no physical coercion or force, the pressures are enormous. The interesting thing is that the members may not experience it as such. They think they are making their own decisions and choices.

17. Common Cult Tactics

Manipulation through fear and guilt.

Fear and guilt are central to any thought reform/mind control program. A fearful person is one who cannot think critically and who's ability to make decisions is reduced. Cult tactics include inducing fears and phobias (strong, irrational fears) in group members to allow the leadership to maintain control. Members can believe that all sorts of horrible things may happen if they don't follow the rules, if they don't earn more money, if they leave the group or even think of leaving the group etc.

Guilt is introduced in many ways, too. Guilt because of their weaknesses, their mistakes, weak faith, inability to understand, evil spirits, in fact, anything the leadership decides!

Add fear and guilt and you get dependency. The members come to depend on the leader to know who they are, how they are, how they're doing. In many destructive groups the members are on an emotional roller coaster.

Emotional highs and lows

Cult tactics include creating many emotional highs in destructive cults, from knowing the Truth (with a capital T) to group exercises designed to create euphoria, compliments from the leader, especially in public, and sometimes just believing that what they're doing is changing the world.

There are also many lows, any problems being attributed to the member's inadequacies, punishments for doing things or not doing things, being ostracized by the group for not following the rules, plus the guilt, fear and shame heaped on the members by the leader.

These emotional extremes place a huge burden on the member, psychologically and physically. It also makes it very difficult to think critically and make decisions when there is such an emotional overload.

Loaded language

The jargon in cults has multiple effects.

1 The group members feel understood because they all use the same words and it generates a sense of camaraderie (and elitism - see below).

2 New people may feel left out and often want to learn what the words and phrases mean, drawing them deeper into the mindset of the cult.

3 Complex situations are often reduced to a few words, and this begins to shut down the critical thinking of the members.

4 The words and phrases can dictate how the members should act in certain situations without having to make decisions. For example, one group had a phrase that meant that seniors in the hierarchy of the group were always right. So if there were any problems or disagreements, the phrase sorted everything out!

5 When the jargon is second nature, talking to outsiders may become tedious and awkward and this keeps group members isolated from outside influences.

Elitist mentality

As part of cult tactics, members are made to feel special. They are part of an elite group that is going to, for example, change history, save the world, change humankind in some way or be saved by god. They have a strong sense of mission or purpose which binds them together and keeps them working hard and giving of themselves - in other words, slaving and sacrificing!

This sense of elitism makes them feel more important or superior to those outside the group, especially to people in other cults, which they can easily spot!

This gives rise to one of the many contradictions in cults. While members are obedient and humble before the leadership, they can be arrogant to outsiders.

This elitism also brings responsibility, because they feel more responsible for saving the world. And of course, this sense of responsibility can be used by the leaders to manipulate them even further, inducing guilt if they don't properly perform their duties, earn enough money, recruit enough people, and so on.

The end justifies the means

Because they are doing very important things like god's work, or saving the earth, rescuing mankind, or simply doing 'The Work, members are led to believe that lying, cheating, and deceiving outsiders for money or getting them to come along to the group is justified.

And remember that many group leaders are psychopaths. This means they have no empathy, guilt or remorse. Ever!

Add to this their inflated sense of self-worth, grandiosity and sense of entitlement, and they believe they can do whatever they like, take what they want, abuse whoever they please etc., etc. without any consideration for others. For them the end always justifies the means.

And then consider that the leader is creating clones of himself...!!!

18. Cult Control - How It Happens

Group dominates individual

In destructive groups, the group comes first. Loyalty and obedience to the leadership are very highly regarded parts of the cult psychology.

Members learn with to distrust themselves and trust the authoritative leader, looking to him or her for direction and meaning in their lives. They put aside their own wants and needs in favor of those of the group. To a large extent, cult control causes their own well-being to become enmeshed with the well-being of the leader.

Sense of community

When a new member first joins a destructive group, there is a very strong sense of community, unconditional love, joy, happiness etc. Later, when the member is indoctrinated, he or she learns that this sense of belonging very much depends on good behavior.

If they break the rules, criticize the leadership, express negative emotions such as anger or distrust of the leader, they quickly find themselves ostracized by the group until they sort out the 'problem' (any problem is usually the fault or responsibility of the member, not the leader!)

It's another contradiction in groups that while everybody is encouraged to be equal and the same, competition is used to shame members who are not working hard enough, and to spur the hard work workers on even more.

The members feel quite close to each other, in fact, they may feel closer to people in this group than to anyone ever before in their lives. However, closer examination shows that the relationships are quite shallow (they tell on each other; they can be hyper-critical of mistakes; members may know little or nothing about each other's pasts, families or friends; there is often little or no consideration for the problems or needs of others, unless there is a benefit in it for themselves; and when members leave a group, it is often as if the remaining members simply forget about them; and in reality all they know is the pseudopersonality, they have little real contact with the real identity!)

Besides, true friendships are discouraged because the leader wants all the adoration and attention for himself.

On top of this, if one person leaves he may bring his friends with him. Of course, if someone does leave, the anger, frustration, disgust and hatred are directed towards them. (In these situations, anger and hatred are encouraged, of course!) A supposedly close bond between ' friends' can change in an instant if one person becomes a nonbeliever or a traitor!

Changes in sense of time

The group members sense of time changes radically. Cult control extends to how members consider the past, present and future.

Typically there is a distancing from their past, that is, a distancing from the former identity. Under mind control past memories are distorted, the negative ones being amplified and the positive minimized or denied. Members often talk about their past being black or greyed.

The sense of present typically becomes all-important. There is a sense of urgency and importance about the things a person is doing right now. After all, the task at hand can potentially change the world!

The future is a time when there will be great rewards, or punishments! The leaders typically create visions of the future in a way that allows further manipulation of the members and maintains cult control.

Some leaders claim to be able to foretell the future or even predict the end of the world. There are even groups where after a failed prediction of the end of the world the members became even more convinced of the leaders powers because of the reinterpretation of the events by the leader.

In most groups what happens is that there is a sense of an 'eternal present' where members are simply doing what they're doing without much critical thinking. And of course, what they're doing is determined by the master program, or doctrine that is controlling them.

Confessions

Public confessions are often used to maintain cult control. Such things erode the sense of self and destroy any privacy members might have.

Another type of confession is where members monitor each other, overtly or covertly. In some groups members have to report to their monitors to check their 'progress' or they have to report any problems or wrong doings during each day.

It is very common in most groups that members talk 'covertly' to the leadership about wrongdoings that others commit, because they feel they should (the master program running again!); they want to be in the good books with the leaders, or any number of reasons. This information can be used against the wrong doer, sometimes to punish, sometimes to make it seem like the leader can read their mind or is all-seeing etc. as a means of increasing cult control.

No exit

Part of the destructive cult tactics is to induce phobias about leaving the group. Members believe that they will die, or that their family will die, or they will be miserable for the rest of their lives, or they won't be able to evolve, develop, grow, find a partner to be happy with etc.

Cult leaders will say that the door is open if people want to leave, they are free to choose. Nothing could be further from the truth!

They have been indoctrinated to believe that if they do leave it is because they are weak, not ready to learn, not willing to do the work and so on, as well as the phobias above.

Add to this the fact that the people are committed to their beliefs (especially beliefs they think they have chosen for themselves), a respect for authority, the fact that they may have broken off all connections from the past, financial dependence on the group, exhaustion, and other factors, and it is incredibly difficult for people to overcome cult control and leave the group. In fact, it said that people don't stay in cults; they just keep putting off the decision to leave.

19. A List Of Cult Contradictions

There are contradictions in how destructive cults work, in what the leaders say, and because the doctrine is totalitarian in nature, typically there are contradictions here as well. They are usually a product of the leaders thinking and are used by the cult leaders to justify their own actions, to manipulate the members, or both.

Here are some of them.

Freedom

Many cults offer freedom in different forms, freedom from sin, financial freedom, personal freedom and so on. And, of course, this is one of the first things that people actually lose! They lose the freedom to think and choose for themselves, the freedom to do what they want, and sometimes even the liberty to go where they want, have the relationships they want or even eat what they like.

The interesting thing however, is that the members continue to think that they are free, even more free than at any other time in their lives. Such is the nature of mind control!

Truth

Typically cults are offering the Truth, with a capital T. They have THE way, THE knowledge, THE method for living life. The leader makes himself out to be a person with special knowledge for his followers.

Of course, the truth of what is actually happening, the mind control, is totally hidden from the members.

A second aspect is that lies are frequent in cults and in cult leaders. In fact, one psychopath says of psychopaths "they lie as easily as they breathe". The doctrine, the ideas of the leader, are an invention or a distortion of other ideas. That is to say, they are frequently lies!

Another aspect of the cult contradictions is that the members are expected to be honest and open (especially with the leaders), and particularly if confession is common in the group. At the same time, they are told it's okay to lie to outsiders to collect funds or recruit new members. The members are taught that, after all, it's for their own good.

Elitism

Members in destructive cults come to believe that they are elite. They have knowledge or abilities that outsiders do not. In many ways they feel special and different, more evolved or more developed, than people who are not in their group.

Outsiders often consider that cult members are weak, easily controlled, stupid, mad, fanatics, full of nonsense, and a host of other names that you could say exist at the opposite end of the spectrum to elite.

Invulnerability

Members of destructive sects often believe that they are invulnerable in the sense that the problems of the outside world do not apply to them. They're very healthy and not prone to illness. They are happier and can overcome any problem much more easily than outsiders. They may take more risks than before because bad things won't happen to them.

The reality, of course, is that they are extremely vulnerable to the whims and desires of the leadership. Whenever the leadership says, they do or follow. Whatever the leader wants, they provide.

They may spend a lot of time trying to please the leaders, to earn brownie points, and especially trying to avoid upsetting the leader because they are very vulnerable to his or her mood changes.

Criticism

The leaders of destructive sects are typically very critical of outsiders. They have to be, because, after all, this group has the Truth. The other groups are wrong.

(The criticism may also be due to the paranoia of the leader)

The leaders will also be very critical of group members, as a way to control them and motivate them to do more for the group.

However, criticism of the leaders is not tolerated. Even if the group members think they are learning how to think for themselves, make their own decisions, be independent etc., they cannot and must not criticize the leaders. Any criticism from the members is directed at outsiders.

Decisions

'Learn how to think for yourself',' make your own decisions',' liberate yourself from the tyranny of society', choose your own life' are the offerings of many personal development cults.

The closed doctrine of cults creates what has been called a bounded reality. It's as if the members have blinkers on and have a very particular way of seeing the world. Within this narrow field of view, they know what decision to make because the doctrine tells them how to think and act. The doctrine is like a master program, controlling thoughts and actions, and if a member has any doubts he or she simply has too remember the doctrine and the decision becomes obvious.

Even if the group is teaching them how to make their own decisions, the process will typically push the members deeper and deeper into the doctrine of the cult.

Time

Join our group and learn rapidly, earn money quickly, fast-track your way to XYZ...

And then members spend years involved with the group, giving their money, energy, their bodies if there is sexual abuse, their souls and, of course, their time.

Arrogance

Cult leaders typically have a huge ego, an enormous sense of entitlement, and believe they are better than everybody else. The members model the leaders, or model people who have modeled leaders, and so develop many of the same attitudes. They too can be arrogant, always right, pushy and act superior. This attitude is often very obvious to outsiders, and especially to family members and friends of newly indoctrinated members.

However, the members are expected to be humble with, you guessed it, the leader!

Independence

Cult members believe that they are becoming more and more independent the more time they spend in the group. After all, they are learning how to make their own decisions, do their own thing in the world, break free from the chains of the past, no longer be influenced by others, and on and on.

It's another one of the cult contradictions that the cult leader has created a dependence on him or herself that is typically invisible to the cult members. They have no sense that they are dependent on him or on the group. In fact, they will argue for the opposite. It's another one of the interesting effects of mind control.

Control

Tied in with this is a sense that they have control over their lives, they control their destiny, they have a sense of generally being in control.

And yet to family and friends, it's glaringly obvious that the group is controlling practically every facet of their life.

The real you

Lots of personal development cults offer programs where you can learn to be the real you, the ideal you. They will teach you how to access your real identity, how to get rid of all the layers/masks that you have accumulated over years.

And with mind control, the person actually develops a pseudo-identity, they become a clone of the leader. And when you consider the leader is often a psychopath, this new pseudo-identity may have nothing to do with who the person really is!

Sex

Sex is one of the common cult contradictions because it is used as a very powerful way to control and dominate. For example, in many groups that propose celibacy, the leader is often having a sexual relationship with many of the members (sexual abuse actually, when mind control is involved.)

Or the leader says: "It's ok to have sex with me because my wife and I have an open relationship. Just don't say anything to her about it.

The group

Many destructive sects offer friendship, companionship, and the option to make new friends with like-minded people. And indeed, the new recruits are often exposed to what is called 'love bombing', where they are showered with affection, pleasantries and made to feel special. Note that this is how psychopaths typically build artificial relationships with their intended victims.

However, there are few, if any, true friendships in cults. For example, when somebody leaves a group, the friendship typically dissolves and they are quickly forgotten, no matter how 'strong' a bond there was with other members within the group.

Or if somebody commits a 'sin' within a group or breaks the rules in some way, very quickly they may find themselves ostracized by the group. It may even have been their best friend who informed the leadership of their misdeed!

The leader does not want friendships, he or she wants the attention for himself.

The leader does not want adoration

At least that's what he says. In reality, he is cultivating an environment in which he is all powerful, all knowing, a supreme being, and anyone who does not demonstrate adoration may be punished. Or more commonly, they are not giving benefits or rewards. And a reward may simply be getting to spend time with the leader!

Family

In particular groups, the group expects the member to treat the rest of the group as family.

The cult contradiction here is that they typically also have to distance themselves from their real family.

Competition

Everyone in this group is equal, says the leader. We're all special, we believe in the cause, and we are better than outsiders.

And at the same time people who follow the rules or gather most money or recruit most members are praised publicly. This sets up competition, because they all want praise and recognition from the leader. The cult contradictions are that they believe that they are equal but are trying to be the best.

Typically the members are not aware of this or any of the cult contradictions.

Saving the world

The vast majority of destructive cults have some idea about saving the world or changing the world in some way. The members come to believe that the work they are doing is of vital importance.

At the same time most of the world has no idea this group even exists.

Even if the members believe that they are donating money to charities, helping others in a variety of ways, changing the world one person at a time, oftentimes even the group that is supposed to be being helped, doesn't know the group exists!

(This is not to say that cults are not influential. Some cults control political parties, newspapers, television and radio stations and so on.)

Scarcity

Each group offers something different. Unique. That you can't get anywhere else. The leader is special, different. He has special abilities, you can learn things from him that you can't learn anywhere else, no-one works at the level he works at… Etc. etc. etc.

When you begin to look at different groups and leaders there are remarkable similarities. In fact, you could say there are more similarities than differences! Each group may have its own jargon. But very often it's the same ideas as other groups, just with different words.

This page is as an example of the similarities in the groups, or more specifically, the similarities in the cult contradictions. Anyone who is just leaving, or has left a destructive cult will be able to recognize most if not all the cult contradictions on this page. In your group it may simply have been described differently, or called something else. The important thing is to recognize them for what they are - ways to control and manipulate.

More cult contradictions

This is list of the more common cult contradictions that are present in many destructive cults. Within any particular group there may be cult contradictions specific to that group because of the particular doctrine.

For example, there are frequently cult contradictions with respect to the emotions that are allowed or not. In some groups you learn how to access best states or peak states and supposedly within this state you can experience all the emotions. But if you are experiencing a bad emotion, then you are not in your best state.

20. Yoga Cults - How To Spot Them

Today it seems that there are so many yoga cults around that before you commit to a yoga class, it makes sense to investigate the group and the leader. But how is it that something as seemingly simple as yoga can be used by unscrupulous psychopaths to create sects?

A bit of history

In the documentary "Gods of the New Age" from 1984, various people express their concerns that yoga was actually a means of deceiving people into accepting the ideas of Hinduism. Yoga was being sold to relieve stress, offering personal integrity, freedom, the ability to reach your potential and even as an alternative to the narrow Christian way of thinking.

Western people who went to the East to learn to be yoga teachers were given instructions that they should teach the yoga philosophy at the same time as the physical exercises. This is important for three reasons.

Firstly, the philosophy is actually based on Hinduism. The yoga teachers were spreading the ideas of Hinduism, often without even realizing it themselves. Secondly, this particular aspect was typically spoken about at the end of a session, when people were lying relaxed after a guided meditation.

That is to say, when they were in a hypnotic trance. This means they are in a suggestive state and not thinking particularly critically or logically. They get it whether they want it or not! Thirdly, people got used to the idea of listening to new ideas when they went for an exercise class.

This third aspect means that an unscrupulous group leader can simply begin to introduce his own ideas and doctrine and not necessarily that of yoga. Instant yoga cults!

Exercise groups versus yoga cults

So how do you know which are the yoga cults?

If everybody is walking around in saffron colored robes and shaved heads, they have sold their houses to live together in this commune, they adore the teacher more than the yoga and every single person you meet tells you that you are fantastic and you will really benefit from this group, then it's pretty obvious.

Unfortunately, most destructive groups nowadays are not like this. They are more sophisticated, with people living apparently normal lives, but usually paying lots of money to the group or leader for various courses.

Mind control?

What makes a group a destructive group is the presence of authoritarian leadership, deception and mind control.

Is the group teacher leader the only one who makes decisions? Are they answerable to anyone? Do they actually have the titles they claim to have? Do they tolerate criticism or allow questions in class? What kind of relationship do they have with the people around them? What do they call themselves? Master? Guru? Has he created his own form of yoga?

Is the group offering exactly what they say? Are the actions and words of the leader and the members congruent? Or are they saying one thing and doing another? For example, is the leader talking about living a simple life but spending a lot of money? Did people

originally go along for a 1 or 2 hour yoga session once a week and are now spending five days a week in the place?

Mind control is evidenced by the fact that everybody in the group thinks the same as the leader. Whatever he or she says, goes. People are doing more and more things for the group instead of following their own interests. They may be working for free for the group. There is more adoration of the leader than of yoga itself.

Warning signs of yoga cults

Destructive yoga cults have the same two aims as any destructive group, recruiting members and making money. Of course many normal yoga teachers would like to have more members and a bit more money. But if you think it's excessive, be very careful.

With the attention on the body and the fact that yoga classes are often hands on, sexual abuse is common in yoga cults.

To have sex with the leader is said to be an honor. Or a way to change a person's energy vibrations. Or the only way to progress spiritually. Or helping the leader in some way. Or divine meditation. Or necessary to awaken kundalini, etc., etc.

Remember, when there is mind control involved, any sexual relationship is never between equals because of the imbalance of power. Nor is the victim making informed decisions because of the deception. This qualifies it as sexual abuse. If you know that any of the members are sexually involved with the leader, you should be seeing warning lights and hearing alarm bells!

One of the most important signals, and one that is frequently overridden, is your own instincts. What is your sense of the group? How did you feel when you first met the leader?

When people first meet a psychopath (many yoga cults are led by a psychopath) there is often revulsion. However, because this person has been recommended by friends, you give them the benefit of the doubt. This is something you can never afford to do with a psychopath!

Did you go along for some stretching and now you find that you are taking advice from the leader on your diet, your attitudes, your values in life, your relationships, your job, your children?

Are you spending more and more money on more and more courses?

Still unsure?

If you're still not sure, take your time. Don't be pushed into joining the group by people who are already members.

If you're already in the group learn more about destructive cults and mind control and be on the lookout for evidence.

If you feel uncomfortable, don't join, or leave. Find another group. It's your life, your body, and your money. Don't waste them in yoga cults.

Back to top

Part 3 – Psychopaths

21. Definition Of Psychopath And What It All Means

If you ask people in the street what is a psychopath, they will answer that it's a serial killer or a serial rapist, someone who is mad, crazy, foolish, a criminal. But these ideas have usually been developed from movies and books that are designed to entertain and are not very accurate.

And it benefits psychopaths because the general public is unable to spot a psychopath even if they are living next door, or working in the same office with them.

Personality disorder

The standard definition of psychopath is:

- A person with an antisocial personality disorder, manifested in aggressive, perverted, criminal, or amoral behavior without empathy or remorse.

- A person afflicted with a personality disorder characterized by a tendency to commit antisocial and sometimes violent acts and a failure to feel guilt for such acts

- An individual with a mental disorder in which they manifest amoral and antisocial behavior, lack of ability to love or establish meaningful personal relationships, extreme egocentricity, failure to learn from experience, etc.

Notice that each definition of psychopath refers to "antisocial" and the inability to feel certain emotions. So what's the link?

No inner policeman

Imagine if you never felt guilt, or embarrassment, or remorse for anything you did, ever! And there is no emotional attachment to other people and their emotions have no effect on you. In other words, you have no "conscience", no inner policeman telling you what you should and should not do. And never any regrets either.

What could you do? More importantly, what could you not do? The range of possibilities is endless. You would just go for what you want, regardless of anybody else. You would take what you want, treat people the way you want, manipulate them or abuse them simply for the sake of dominating them.

'Socializing' emotions are those that allow society to function well, with benefits for all concerned. For example, empathy, love, guilt, shame, remorse. Having these emotions means that we treat others well, we treat them fairly and we look out for and help others. If you lacked these socializing emotions, of course your behavior would be antisocial!

People usually think well of each other

This idea is practically impossible for most normal people to understand. And this is what makes the psychopath so dangerous. Normal people are not expecting others to be evil or deliberately doing harm, and so they justify the initial bad behaviors of the psychopath. They give them the benefit of the doubt, and this is something you can never do with psychopaths.

What is a psychopath - emotionally?

Psychopaths have very few emotions and these are often very shallow. They are incapable of putting themselves in someone else's shoes and understanding what is going on for the other person. This makes them indifferent to the pain and suffering of others. In fact, they will often feel superior because they think that they are not 'burdened' with or limited by emotions!

A huge ego, a strong sense of entitlement, thinking they are superior and better than others, makes them very selfish and often means they will do whatever they like to get what they want. For them, the end justifies the means.

That may not sound so bad but remember they have no conscience, so they will make decisions to mentally, emotionally, physically and sexually abuse others, sometimes because they can.

They want to control and dominate others and they will lie, cheat, deceive, trick and fool others into doing their bidding. (This is the antisocial behavior part!)

They will take people's money, possessions, houses, bodies, time, energy and even lives. Because they want these things. And without feeling the least bit of pity, or remorse or guilt, no matter how much suffering they have caused.

For normal people, who do have a conscience, this is practically impossible to understand. It is even difficult to think about what it would be like to not have a conscience. When we do wrong, however intentionally, we know it's wrong and there are feelings associated with it. For psychopaths, they know they are doing wrong, but there are no feelings associated with it!!

There are 2 important things here. They know they are doing wrong and they do not feel bad in any way.

What is a psychopath - legally?

Nowadays, the legal systems recognize that psychopaths are not mentally ill in a way where they are not responsible for their actions. If, or more commonly when, they are caught in criminal activities, they are held responsible for the actions and typically end up in prison rather than in mental hospitals. In the past they often went from prisons to mental institutions and back again.

Different decisions

The decision making of people who fit the definition of psychopathy is very different from yours or mine. They can decide to do things that we would never do. For example, if they were making the decision to steal somebody's money, or sexually abuse them, or manipulate them into doing something against their beliefs, they would have the same emotion as when they're deciding about what to watch on the television!

Psychopathy versus sociopathy

Psychopath, sociopath and antisocial personality disorder are often used interchangeably. Even in the definition of psychopath above one is used to describe the other. However, some people consider that there are differences, but among lay people (and even some professionals) psychopath is often used interchangeably with sociopath. They are thought to be the same thing. We will examine this idea later.

Characteristics

No definition of psychopath will typically list all the characteristics of the psychopath. In his book "The Mask Of Sanity" (1941) Harvey Cleckley lists 16 characteristics. However, Robert Hare's psychopathy checklist is commonly used today for diagnosis. This is a complex clinical tool used by professionals to examine the characteristics of an individual to determine if they have a sufficient number of the symptoms to warrant a label of psychopath.

This is important, because there is no solid definition of psychopath that says that somebody definitely is, or is not, a psychopath. Instead it comes down to a clinical judgment based on an interview with the person and an examination of their past history.

His checklist is divided into two broad categories, the emotional and interpersonal traits of the personality disorder and typically antisocial lifestyle of the psychopath. For example, they can be witty and articulate, charming, but superficial, with enormous egos and a huge sense of entitlement. And because they have no empathy, guilt or remorse they lie very easily and manipulate and deceive practically everybody they come into contact with.

They can be very impulsive, frequently looking for stimulation, often sexual, and they don't take responsibility for their actions. It's always somebody else's fault! And there may be a history of antisocial behavior as children although the usual story is that nobody knows much of (or it's impossible to verify) the past history of the psychopath that is manipulating them.

More of them?

It seems nowadays that there are either more psychopaths among us, or we are becoming more aware of them. There are various tests available to determine if somebody might be a psychopath. I say 'might be' because the diagnosis has to be made by a qualified professional. Be careful of labeling somebody a psychopath on the basis that they have some tendencies. You may be right, of course, but be careful!

Power hungry predators

Of particular importance are psychopaths operating in positions of power. Remember that they like to control and manipulate people for their own benefit. It makes sense then, that they will try to put themselves in positions of power, using whatever tricks, deceit and manipulations they can. Remember for them, the end justifies the means.

Politicians, heads of companies, doctors, therapists, bankers, investors often have tremendous power and it is no surprise that psychopaths will try to work their way into these positions. And interestingly, a lot of the traits that the psychopath has are actively sought out in these positions.

A good CEO needs to be able to take charge, make decisions, and get other people to do what he or she wants. These are often considered to be the signs of a good leader. They are also the skills a psychopath has practiced to control, manipulation and dominate others!

Controlling others decisions

This is the second aspect of decision making that is important in relation to psychopaths. Remember that their own decision making process is not dominated by emotions, so their decisions are organized around their own selfish motives. The second aspect is the effect they have on other people's decision making. Someone in a position of influence will obviously affect the decision making of the people who report to him. Lawmakers will have an effect on the decisions made by those who follow those laws (Consider the changes in the laws affecting major corporations.)

And it is particularly obvious in the effects that psychopathic cult leaders have on their followers, with the creation of pseudo-identities, or clones of themselves, and the impact that has on the decision making of the cult members. (Any close relationship with a psychopath, whether in a cult or in a relationship of 2, can result in a pseudopersonality!)

Changing awareness

Through watching films and reading books, many people are beginning to realize that the standard definition of psychopath as serial killer or serial rapist is incomplete. They are beginning to learn the symptoms of psychopathy and are learning how to spot the psychopath in the workplace.

Or unfortunately for some, by the time they ask themselves 'what is a psychopath?' they have been a victim of a psychopath or are in a relationship with a sociopath and are trying to escape from the mind control and undo the damage. Their definition of psychopath is someone who uses mind control, intimidation, sex and violence to control others and satisfy their personal needs and wants, without any consideration for others whatsoever.

(It is thought that psychopaths are deeply insecure and often paranoid, living in a cold emotional inner world and that they control others to offset these things.)

Incidence

It is thought that 1% of the population are psychopaths. This may not seem like a big number but the damage they inflict on society and on individuals, emotionally, physically, sexually, mentally and psychologically is enormous.

20% of prison inmates fit the definition of psychopath and about 50% of major crimes are committed by psychopaths. 1 in 7 is female.

Although many of them end up in jail. Most do not. Some experts say that if they have not committed a crime, it's only because they have not been found out yet. They use

their charm to disarm. The use mind control to manipulate people, and when in trouble they use guilt and fear so that people do not talk out against them.

If 1% of the population are psychopaths, that means that some of your neighbors, work colleagues, people in your sports clubs etc. are psychopaths.

They may not have emotions but they learn to fake them, to blend in, in order to create relationships with people and manipulate their emotions, and some of them are very good at it… This is why it is so difficult to spot them.

Protecting ourselves

The only way to protect yourself from psychopaths is to know that they exist, understand how they manipulate and be on the lookout for it. Those involved in the law, those involved in keeping the law, social workers, medics, therapists and those dealing with abuse cases need to understand the definition of psychopath, and more importantly need to be able to recognize the handiwork of psychopaths.

The term psychopath is often used interchangeably with sociopath.

22. Sociopath Definition And Explanation

Medical Dictionary

A sociopath definition in a medical dictionary is something like:

- a personality disorder characterized by a lack of social responsibility and failure to adapt to ethical and social standards of the community, or

- a former term for antisocial personality disorder.

But that doesn't tell us very much!

The best way to think about a sociopath is somebody who does not have any conscience. That means they don't feel any guilt, shame, remorse or embarrassment about anything they do. This may seem very strange to those people who do live with a conscience because it's incredibly difficult to imagine what it would be like.

Sociopath definition: No conscience

It means that sociopaths can do bad or evil things and feel no regrets whatsoever. This explains how some serial killers or serial rapists can do what they do. They feel nothing for their victims. Absolutely nothing!

Such extreme sociopaths are very rare, however. Much more common are the sociopaths who live seemingly normal lives, but who are lying, cheating, swindling and manipulating everybody around them for their own selfish gains.

They can be incredibly difficult to spot because they are charming, friendly and witty and make friends easily. They like to make friends because friends trust each other. And it's easier to get friends to do what you want.

They have an ability to spot the needs, desires and weaknesses of others and will use them to control and dominate for personal benefit.

The relationships they build are totally fabricated, deliberately designed to manipulate the emotions of their victims in order to be able to take advantage of them. And they may do it really well! So well, in fact, that even when they are abusing people, stealing from them and lying, the victim still wants to maintain the relationship with them!

This can occur within a husband wife relationship, in a business setting or even large group settings such as destructive cults, or you may have a sociopath next door!

The wife who treats her husband badly, having many affairs, spending a lot of money, having him look after the house and children when she's out socializing, may be a sociopath.

That high-powered exec who has climbed the corporate ladder very rapidly, walking all over everybody else, who never quite gets the job done on time, or ends up tricking somebody else to do it for him, but somehow is always in the good graces of his superiors, may be a sociopath.

And that group or cult leader, with his adoring acolytes who sound just like him and carry out his every wish, is usually a sociopath using mind control techniques on his unsuspecting victims.

The important thing to recognize is that these monsters want to control, manipulate and dominate others. For some that is the end game. Sometimes the seemingly stupid things they do can be understood only if you consider that the aim of their game is control.

Perhaps we should add something about this to our sociopath definition - "No conscience and wants to dominate.'

Antisocial personality disorder

A third group of sociopaths are those with overtly antisocial behavior.

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders describes the criteria for antisocial personality disorder as follows:

- the person must be over 18 with a history of conduct disorder before age 15 (This is defined as repetitive and persistent behaviors in which the basic rights of others or societal norms are violated)

- they may repeatedly perform acts that are grounds for arrest (whether they are arrested or not)

- they disregard the wishes, rights or feelings of others

- they will deceive and manipulate to obtain money, sex or power, basically for their own profit or pleasure.

- they may repeatedly lie, use an alias, con others, or malinger.

- they may be impulsive and fail to plan ahead

- they make decisions without consideration for the consequences to self or others

- very frequently they change jobs, residences or relationships

- they tend to be irritable and aggressive and physical fights or physical assaults are common.

- there is a reckless disregard for the safety of themselves or others. For example, reckless driving, substance abuse, or failure to care for children in a way that puts them in danger

- they tend to be very irresponsible, at work, in their financial dealings, and in their relationships

- they may show little or no remorse for the consequences of their actions. They typically blame their victims for being foolish or helpless

Obviously not every one of the sociopathic symptoms needs to be present to make a diagnosis of antisocial personality disorder!

Any sociopath definition includes a spectrum

You could say that in any sociopath definition there is a spectrum in the symptoms that sociopaths display, from serial killers on the one end, to those with obvious illegal and destructive antisocial behaviors, to those who are 'socialized' or integrated into the community but who nevertheless are destroying people's lives but in a way that is more difficult to recognize.

And it seems that they are all controlling and domineering.

And psychologists who work with clients to undo the mind control of sociopaths suggest that if a sociopath has not had problems with the law, it's only because they haven't been found out yet!

Terminology of sociopath definition

Whatever sociopath definition you use, these people are sometimes also known as psychopaths. In the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders they say that antisocial personality disorder is also known as sociopathy or as psychopathy.

Dr. Robert Hare, a psychologist who has studied psychopaths for many years, believes that most sociopaths/psychopaths have antisocial personality disorder, but not everybody with an antisocial personality disorder is a sociopath.

For example people can engage in antisocial behavior for a variety of reasons including traumas in childhood, childhood abuse or neglect and so on. Sociopaths, however, do it because they have no conscience. They know they're doing wrong or evil, and it doesn't bother them.

Some people believe there is a difference between sociopathy and psychopathy but there is often disagreement about what the differences are.

23. Sociopath vs. Psychopath - Are The Differences Important?

Long-standing sociopath psychopath debate

It seems there has been debate about the difference between sociopath vs. psychopath from the time the terms were coined. The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders lists psychopathy and sociology under antisocial personality. Indeed, they share more similarities than there are differences.

Even lots of professionals use the terms psychopath, sociopath and antisocial personality disorder interchangeably.

But what about the differences? Some professionals believe there is no difference, and even among those who do except there is a difference, there is debate over what those differences are!

A quick scan of the Internet can be confusing because one page that has the characteristics of a sociopath is contradicted by another page that claims that those characteristics are actually those of a psychopath!

Basically the differences between sociopath vs. psychopath fall into three categories, differences in characteristics, nurture versus nature and personal preference.

Sociopath vs. psychopath: different characteristics

The lists of the characteristics of a psychopath and the psychopath symptoms apply to both groups and the differences are said to be as follows:

- The sociopath is said to be more disorganized in his life. It's more difficult for them to maintain relationships, finish their academic studies or keep a steady job. They are said to live on the fringes of society and rarely have regular income.

- While sociopaths may lack empathy and won't feel guilty about breaking the law and taking advantage of strangers, they may actually form bonds with those they have close relationships with. It is said that they can make decisions not to direct their crimes against those people that they care about, unlike psychopaths who will make decisions to abuse their families just as quickly as strangers.

- The sociopath is said to have less emotional control than psychopaths, and may be very quick to express agitation or rage. The psychopath may display little emotion even under extreme threat.

- The crimes of a sociopath are spontaneous and therefore quite disorganized. Those of a psychopath can be carefully thought out.

When many people think of sociopath vs. psychopath, they tend to believe that psychopaths have the skills to hide themselves in society, to blend in. Even their families may not recognize a psychopath. Sociopaths on the other hand, are seen as wild, a bit dangerous, somewhat disturbed and/or frequently in trouble with the law.

Adding to the difficulty of distinguishing is that a particular psychopath may have one or more characteristics of the sociopath, and vice versa!

Sociopath vs. psychopath: nurture versus nature

The difference here is that basically some people think that psychopaths are born and sociopaths are the result of poor social conditions in childhood. Such things as parental neglect, delinquent peers, childhood trauma or abuse may cause difficulties in relating to others but does allow the sociopath to have some empathy with those close to him.

Psychopaths, who are completely incapable of empathy, are believed to be born with a defect in the brain in the part that controls impulses and emotions.

Sociologists and criminologists, for example, who believe in the nurture aspect, will use the term sociopath, while other clinicians prefer psychopath.

Sociopath vs. psychopath: personal preference

Some people prefer one term to another for a variety of reasons.

- Some people fear that 'psychopath' will be confused with 'psychotic' and prefer to use the term sociopath. (Psychopaths and sociopaths are not considered mentally ill in legal terms and are held responsible for their actions.)

- Some talk about psychopathic personality and sociopathic behavior

- The word sociopath may be used to describe someone socialized in an antisocial subculture such as a gang.

- Some people think a psychopath is an extreme sociopath

- Others think a sociopath is an extreme psychopath

Sociopath vs. psychopath: a psychopath's view

Robert Hare gives this amusing example in his book "Without Conscience".

A psychologist (P) is interviewing an offender (O) who is a psychopath:

P: "Did you get any feedback from the prison psychiatrist who assessed you?"

O: "She told me I was a… not a sociopath… a psychopath. This was comical. She said not to worry about it because you can have a doctor or lawyer who is a psychopath. I said, 'Yeah, I understand that. If you were sitting on a plane that was hijacked would you rather be sitting next to me or some sociopath or neurotic who shits his pants and gets us all killed?' She just about fell off her chair. If someone wants to diagnose me I'd rather be a psychopath than a sociopath."

P: "Aren't they the same thing?"

O: "No, they're not. You see, a sociopath misbehaves because he's been brought up wrong. Maybe he's got a beef with society. I'm not harboring hostility. It's just the way I am. Yeah, I guess I'd be a psychopath."

Sociopath Psychopath: What's important?

So one professional can diagnose a person as a sociopath and another may diagnose him as a psychopath.

Regardless of any differences in sociopath vs. psychopath, these parasites cause a huge amount of damage in society and the most important thing is to be aware that they exist and to begin to recognize the characteristics and to learn how they create relationships and use mind control, so you don't fall victim to these social predators.

24. If You Recognize These Sociopath Symptoms And Traits You Need To Take Action!

Hervey Cleckley

In 1941 Hervey Cleckley described 16 sociopath symptoms in his book 'The Mask of Sanity". He had been studying male adult psychopaths who were hospitalized in a closed institution. Over the next decade he had the opportunity to study a wider range of psychopaths (he uses the terms sociopath, psychopath and antisocial personality interchangeably) and he says he made some significant changes in the second edition of the book.

He starts the book with lots of case histories demonstrating sociopath symptoms in actual situations. He then does a comparison with other disorders such as psychosis, the ordinary criminal, sexually deviant behavior and the alcoholic before talking about the psychopath in history.

Sociopath traits

He then consolidates the information into the following 16 sociopath symptoms:

1. Superficial charm and good "intelligence"

2. Absence of delusions and other signs of irrational thinking

3. Absence of "nervousness" or psychoneurotic manifestations

4. Unreliability

5. Untruthfulness and insincerity

6. Lack of remorse or shame

7. Inadequately motivated antisocial behavior

8. Poor judgment and failure to learn by experience

9. Pathologic egocentricity and incapacity for love

10. General poverty in major affective reactions

11. Specific loss of insight

12. Unresponsiveness in general interpersonal relations

13. Fantastic and uninviting behavior with drink and sometimes without

14. Suicide rarely carried out

15. Sex life impersonal, trivial, and poorly integrated

16. Failure to follow any life plan

Let's have a look at each in turn.

1. Superficial charm and good "intelligence"

Sociopaths appear normal and often talk a lot. They may seem to have a lot of genuine interests and seem to be very intelligent. Careful observation will reveal that he has less social or emotional impediments than the average person. That is, they are usually not shy or awkward or embarrassed in any way. They give the impression that they have desirable and superior human qualities.

2. Absence of delusions and other signs of irrational thinking

There is no evidence of mental illness or delusions. He seems to be able to reason logically, understands past mistakes, and takes them into account when organizing his future. He also appears to respond with normal emotions and is convincing about his beliefs.

3. Absence of "nervousness" or psychoneurotic manifestations

They seem to be immune from anxiety and worry that would be normal for people in disturbing situations. They easily maintain their poise and confidence. In situations when normal people would be embarrassed, confused or insecure, it is noteworthy how they are able to remain calm.

In jails or psychiatric hospitals it's often somewhat different. They may be vexed or restless (probably because they've lost their freedom and control, something that is very important for them). Hervey Cleckley points out that this uneasiness seems to be provoked entirely by external circumstances and never by guilt or remorse.

4. Unreliability

While giving the impression of being reliable, it very quickly becomes obvious that they have no sense of responsibility whatsoever. No matter how often they have promised,

or how important, they don't take responsibility. And when confronted about it their attitude or their decision making does not change either.

However, he notes that they can actually do what it takes to appear reliable. They turn up to study or to work for weeks or months. They get elected as president of the club. They win a scholarship. What they are doing is creating an impression. This makes it more difficult to deal with them, because if they were unreliable from day one, people would know what to expect.

The sociopath will be unreliable in trivial and serious matters. It's impossible to determine when they will be reliable and when not. Hervey Cleckley says this is not even a consistency in inconsistency, but an inconsistency in inconsistency!

5. Untruthfulness and insincerity

This is one of the more important sociopath symptoms because they show such a remarkable disregard for truth that you cannot trust what they say happened, what they promise will happen or what they say their intentions are now.

They lie very convincingly. Whether they think they won't be caught out in a lie, or whether there's a high probability that they will be caught, they do the same impressive job. They can look trustworthy and look somebody in the eye and tell barefaced lies.

"He will lie about any matter, under any circumstances, and often for no good reason…"

Cleckley says it is difficult to explain how thoroughly straightforward some sociopaths can appear. They can be disarming not only to strangers but also to people who know that they are liars.

And despite being found out in lies and breaking serious promises, the sociopath will continue to talk about his word of honor and will appear surprised and upset if somebody questions it.

It seems they will lie to avoid unpleasantness or to gain something, even if this something is small and insignificant.

6. Lack of remorse or shame

One of the very common sociopath symptoms is that the sociopath does not accept blame for his problems or problems he causes to others. The typical response is to blame everybody else and put himself in the role of victim.

If he does accept responsibility it is with the same amount of conviction as the person who finishes a letter with "your humble and obedient servant". However his manner can

indicate that he is genuinely serious and he can be deceptive enough to recreate the broken trust!

But closer questioning about what he is accepting responsibility for may show that not only is he not serious, but the idea is inconceivable to him.

Nor is there shame, humiliation or regret. Not even for the most horrible things he may have done. He says "If Santayana is correct in saying that 'perhaps the true dignity of man is his ability to despise himself,' the psychopath is without a means to acquire true dignity."

7. Inadequately motivated antisocial behavior

Sociopaths cheat, swindle, fail, brawl, desert, steel, forge, defraud for surprisingly small stakes even if the risks of being discovered are great. They will even do such things in the absence of any goal whatsoever.

The antisocial behavior is not circumscribed, for example, only kleptomania or only fighting. They typically engage in a whole range of anti-social activities.

8. Poor judgment and failure to learn by experience

Despite seemingly rational powers, one of the common sociopath symptoms is that they often throw away great opportunities to, for example, make money or improve personal relationships.

And at the same time, despite punishments for wrongdoings, the sociopath will often continue with the same behavior, knowing that if they are caught they will be punished again. The classic example is the rapist who leaves jail and rapes again.

Cleckley believes that no punishment is likely to make a sociopath change their ways.

He also notes that in theoretical situations he can offer sensible advice for life situations for others and for himself. However when it comes time for action, there is lots of evidence for the deficiency in his decision making.

9. Pathologic egocentricity and incapacity for love

The degree of egocentricity can be astonishing. Sometimes they can hide it but careful observation shows it to be unmodifiable and complete. Hervey Cleckley says it can best be expressed by saying that it is an incapacity to love, and in Cleckley's experience with well-marked psychopaths, this incapacity is absolute.

He carefully explains that sociopaths are capable of casual fondness and reactions that cause others to matter to them. But these are limited in degree and don't last very long in comparison to normal people.

The word 'absolute' is appropriate, he says, if we're talking about any affective attitude that is strong enough for us to call it love, by which he means anything that is sufficiently strong and lasts long enough to exert a major influence on behavior.

Certainly, sociopaths can be skillful enough to pretend to love a woman or to be devoted to their children And there are a group of people who seem to be concerned for others only in so far as it enhances themselves (for example, the parent who gives money and attention to a child in order to bask in the child's successes), but psychopaths appear not to even do this.

Even when they say they love someone, their actions in relation to the financial, emotional and physical problems they cause for this person, exposes their true attitude.

10. General poverty in major affective reactions

Another of the sociopath traits is a general lack of emotions. Any verbal descriptions are more likely to have been learnt then to come from a strength of feeling.

They may exhibit rage, or shallow moods of self-pity and shallow poses of indignation, but wholehearted anger, deep joy and genuine despair are not available. Humor they can feign, but they never have.

11. Specific loss of insight

By this Hervey Cleckley means that the sociopath has no ability to see himself as others see him. Or rather, he has no ability to know how others feel when they see him. Again, this is something that he can pretend, because he has read about it. He can use all the words, and define all the words, but remains blind to what they mean.

It shows up in his belief, for example, that he has committed no crime or that the punishment should not apply to him. Or he asks for a psychologist's report about himself when he should know that such a negative report would be detrimental to his plans.

12. Unresponsiveness in general interpersonal relations

Sociopaths don't respond normally to kindness or trust. No matter how well he is treated there is never any consistent response of appreciation. "One good turn deserves another" is not something the sociopath feels any obligation over.

However, they will often do small courtesies and favors for others, typically to create a sense of obligation in the person receiving the favor, or to create a favorable impression in those who witness it. For example, the 'good neighbor' who cuts the lawn for the widow on the corner, but beats his wife when he arrives home.

13. Fantastic and uninviting behavior with drink and sometimes without

While some sociopaths don't drink, others overindulge frequently. Sometimes there is "shocking, fantastic, uninviting, or relatively inexplicable behavior which emerges when he drinks".

There is vulgarity, a domineering rudeness, petty bickering or buffoonish quasi-maulings of wife, mistress or children and quick shifts between maudlin and vainglorious moods which he says are one of the sociopath traits specific to the psychopath. There is seldom real gaiety or conviviality or any evidence of pleasurable reaction. The alcohol, however, may numb any inhibitions and give rise to outlandish behaviors.

They may need little alcohol for this to start, and before the drink they know what they have done in the past and they drink anyway. They may do things that have no appeal for normal people and they may do things that normal people would never dream of!

Mask Of Sanity - Download a free pdf copy of the book here

http://www.decision-making-confidence.com/support-files/mask-of-sanity.pdf

14. Suicide rarely carried out

They may threaten it to control and manipulate others. Occasional bogus attempts are made but again they are often premeditated and designed to control and manipulate others.

15. Sex life impersonal, trivial, and poorly integrated

Invariably there are peculiarities in the sociopath's sex life. As in other areas, it only takes the slightest impulse for them to engage in deviant sexual behavior. There is little repugnance or other inhibitions to stop them from trying out different things.

Remember that they cannot love, so sexual aims don't seem to include any important personality relations or any great desire to share an intimate experience. Sex is limited to literal physical contact with none of the emotional aspects that make adult love relations so thrilling and indescribable.

One of the sociopath traits in the group Hervey Cleckley's studied was that they never seemed to find anything emotionally meaningful or personal in the relationships, there were simply localized and temporary sensations.

He believes their sexual promiscuity is probably due to a lack of self-restraint rather than to any strong passions or drives.

It's very likely nowadays that many psychopaths have realized intimate sexual contact is a great way to control others. Once a person has given up their intimacy, they have surrendered everything.

16. Failure to follow any life plan

The last of his sociopath traits is about the inability to follow any sort of like plan consistently. They may have lots of big ideas but have severe difficulty in carrying through on any of them. Often trivial impulses are enough to distract his attention.

In the first of the sociopath traits there was the impression of somebody with above-average intelligence and desirable human attributes. When you examine the whole of a psychopath's life, we see that mental competency is sorely lacking. Harvey Cleckley writes that "it's like a spectacle that suggests madness in excelsis, despite the absence of all those symptoms that enable us, to some degree, to account for irrational conduct in the psychotic".

25. What Are The Essential Symptoms and Characteristics Of A Psychopath?

Hare psychopathy checklist

Robert Hare, in his book 'Without Conscience', builds on the work of Cleckley and he lists the characteristics of a psychopath that he uses as part of his checklist. This Hare Psychopathy Checklist is a complex clinical tool used in the clinical evaluation to determine if someone is a psychopath or not. Just because somebody has some of these traits does not make them a psychopath!

Psychopathy, he says, is best thought of as a syndrome, a cluster of characteristics.

Hare divides the characteristics into two groups. Firstly are the personal and emotional characteristics of a psychopath, and secondly are the features of the antisocial lifestyle.

Let's have a look at the first group.

Glib and superficial

Psychopaths tend to talk a lot. They know how to read people and can be funny and entertaining and they are often boasting, telling stories about how good they are. The stories may be unconvincing but they somehow manage to present themselves as likeable and charming. For some people, however, the psychopath is too smooth, or is simply playing a role.

The psychopath can often talk about any subject as if he were an expert, often even using the jargon. Some of them do it so well, and with such confidence, that they can even fool psychologists, experts in this field, who know they're talking to a psychopath!

And at the same time, some of the serial killers talk about their crimes in gory detail with almost no emotion. People who experience this find it very unnerving.

It's all about Me

Psychopaths tend to have enormous egos, an incredible sense of entitlement and an overinflated sense of their own self-worth and importance. They are arrogant and cocky, they have an opinion on everything and they are always right. They have incredible confidence but often without the competence. They typically have lots of grandiose plans for the future. "I want the world to be the way I want it to be" said one psychopath.

In their role as guru or maestro, they often claim to have magic powers, or to be able to do things that other people cannot. This enhances their prestige among their followers. And if anyone questions them about why they're not using their gift right now, they always have a good story to excuse themselves.

Absence of guilt and remorse

One of the most stunning characteristics of a psychopath is the total lack of guilt or remorse that they experience, regardless of the effect of their actions on others. From serial killers to cult leaders to corporate psychopaths to the child psychopath, they all typically have a justification for the decisions they have made and for what they have done.

Interviews with psychopaths reveal that for them, people are simply objects, things to be used. Even family members have the same value as other things they own, such as a mobile phone or a coat.

And use people they do. They will take their money, their possessions, their time, their expertise, their efforts, their bodies, and their souls. (People who have been duped by psychopaths for religious reasons have said that it's like being raped spiritually.) And all this without the slightest care in the world for the victims.

The absence of remorse is evidenced by the fact that many psychopaths, even after being caught and punished for some crime, continue to do the same thing.

When caught out, psychopaths will often deny or minimize the effect of their actions on others. In fact, they typically make out that they are the victim! And they can play the victim role very well. For them it's simply another one of the masks that they present to the world.

Lack of empathy

Another one of the important characteristics of a psychopath is the inability to understand what other people are feeling or experiencing. They don't know what it's like to be in somebody else's shoes.

What they do is to learn about emotions. They learn from other people what emotions feel like, what they experience, and what is expected in certain situations. Therefore they can appear to be very caring and loving. But it's all a charade, a show, playacting, in order to manipulate the emotions of others.

Being incapable of empathy means they are incapable of love. The emotional world of a psychopath is indeed shallow and dark. This can be difficult to understand when dealing with a sociopath.

Deceit and manipulation

"I lie like I breathe, one as much as the other" explained one psychopath. But even when they are caught out in a lie, they simply carry on. Remember, no guilt or remorse! They simply change the story to try and fit in with the lie.

Sometimes they lie so much that it's difficult to know if they know themselves that they're lying. The answer is usually yes, and typically they are proud of the fact that they are good liars. That big ego again! And it is one of the extraordinary characteristics of a psychopath that they are totally unfazed by being cut out in a lie.

Why do they lie? To manipulate and control others. They are all the time trying to dominate and control. They believe that the world is full of predators and prey. And they are definitely predators. Other people are weak, stupid and deserve to be taken advantage of. In fact, the psychopath is doing them a favor, teaching them lessons.

When you consider the characteristics of a psychopath we've looked at so far, it's no wonder that they swindle, cheat, con and defraud others. They play by different rules than normal people, rules that normal people are totally unaware of.

Normally people do not consider that others willfully do evil and harm because they have no conscience. They are simply unaware of how psychopaths work. This puts them at a tremendous disadvantage when in a relationship with a sociopath.

Shallow emotions

Psychopaths are unable to describe the intricacies of different emotions because they don't experience them. They may mistake sexual arousal for love, or anger for irritability.

One thing that is common is that many of them say they can make themselves angry. They say they can turn it on and off. But they don't know how fear feels. They can

certainly notice the signs of fear in other people but they are unable to describe any bodily sensations.

For many people fear is a motivator in that they may do things or not do things because of fear of the consequences. Not so in psychopaths, because they don't experience the unpleasant sensations of fear. This obviously has far reaching effects on the decisions they make. They do, however, know how to manipulate others through fear.

A world apart...

These characteristics of a psychopath may seem unreal to normal people. But for those who have been victims, understanding the inner world of a psychopath may be the only way to make sense of the torment and distress they have experienced.

The second group of psychopath symptoms that Robert Hare talks about in his book "Without Conscience" have to do with social deviance in the lifestyle of a psychopath, which is often unstable and somewhat aimless.

Remember that some normal people may exhibit some of these characteristics and it's only careful consideration of the first group of psychopath symptoms along with this group that allows a diagnosis of psychopathy to be made.

Impulsive

The decision making process of psychopaths is not complicated. They do things because they feel like it. They want satisfaction and gratification and they want it now. By the age of two we are learning to delay gratification. Psychopaths seem to never learn this. They don't seem to spend a lot of time thinking about consequences, and we've already seen that they don't consider others in their decisions, apart from how best to manipulate them!

They often have big plans for the future, but rarely carry them out. For those who do 'stick at things' it's often a spouse or partner of some sort that takes responsibility for this aspect of their lives.

Explosive temper

Psychopath may 'lose it' at the slightest provocation. They can react badly to what they perceive as an insult or a threat. Other people may perceive it as something minor, but if they perceive it as important, they can explode. The explosion may even involve severe physical violence.

However, this one of the psychopath symptoms is typically short lived. And then the psychopath carries on as if nothing had happened. They will also typically maintain that

they have control over their temper and what they did was a natural response to other people's provocation. (It's never their fault!)

Need for speed

Psychopaths seek excitement. They don't like to be bored. Sometimes they will break the law just for the excitement of it.

A question that is often asked is whether psychopaths know they are doing wrong or not. The answer is yes they do. For this reason, at least in the US, they are legally responsible for their actions. They are not considered mad or to have a mental illness.

Their victims, especially those who have been subject to mind control, have difficulty accepting at the start that somebody would do them such harm. It's safe to assume that psychopaths know exactly what they are doing when they are breaking the law, manipulating others or otherwise causing harm. They just don't care!

When a psychopath realizes he can no longer manipulate the people around him he may get bored and disappear and go elsewhere looking for fresh 'prey'.

No responsibility whatsoever

One of the typical psychopath symptoms is the complete lack of responsibility in all areas of their life. Anything a psychopath says needs to be taken with a pinch of salt. Do not expect them to honor their commitments. No matter how much they promise, they never seem to feel in the least bit obliged.

They cannot be depended on to do the job. Their children may be poorly cared for. They may borrow money and never feel the need to have to pay it back. Even court orders mean nothing to the psychopaths.

And any problems or difficulties they have? They always manage to blame it on other people, bad luck, unfortunate circumstances or the fact that they are victims of 'the system'. It's never their fault or their responsibility. They are the victims.

Childhood history

Included in the psychopath symptoms is a history of antisocial behavior as children. Everything from lying, stealing, fire setting, truancy, bullying, drug abuse and early sexual encounters. Many children, of course, are involved in such things but when it's a psychopath it tends to be much more severe.

Cruelty to animals and to siblings is particularly worrying.

When the media report on some serious crime, and the neighbors talk about the criminal being such a nice, quiet person they typically don't know about the childhood

history, plus the criminal has usually done a good job of manipulating their impressions of him!

The child becomes an adult

When the self-serving child who has the preceding symptoms of psychopath becomes an adult he or she will continue with their antisocial behavior. Any obvious illegal activities will be noticed and may be punished.

However, lots of activities which are unethical or amoral or 'on the edge of the law' are much more difficult to pin down. Questionable business practices, being unfaithful in relationships, child abuse, emotional abuse of family and coworkers, sexual abuse of clients and students, all of these things can be difficult to verify.

This one of the psychopath symptoms suggests that the psychopath is playing by his own rules. He makes the rules up as he goes along. He changes them when it suits him. The people around him are playing by different rules and don't know the first thing about his rules. And he who makes the rules, wins.

All the symptoms...

Remember that having such a lifestyle is not enough to diagnose somebody as a psychopath. It is the combination of lifestyle and the emotional characteristics that need to be present to make such a diagnosis.

26. Notes On The Robert Hare Psychopathy Checklist - Revised

The Robert Hare Psychopathy Checklist - Revised is considered by clinicians and researchers worldwide to be the 'gold standard' in assessing psychopathy. It is a complex clinical tool that is only used by experts in the field.

It is also considered to be the most accurate predictor of violent behavior that we have. Therefore, it is also being used to assess the probability of a criminal re-offending as well as determining the length of sentence and whether or not treatment is advised.

Who can use it?

The results of this test have far-reaching implications for the patient, and so its use is confined to a small group of people. These people should have degrees in medical or behavioral science, be certified to diagnose mental disorders (e.g., psychiatrists and psychologists) and be experienced in working with criminal populations. As well as this they need to be trained in the use of the Hare Psychopathy Checklist - Revised.

The results are considered sufficiently important that it is recommended that two clinicians perform the test independently and the results averaged in order to give a more reliable assessment.

Different versions

Originally having 16 items, the Hare Psychopathy Checklist - Revised has 20 and it is divided into two broad categories. The first is about the selfish, unfeeling use of others and assesses interpersonal relationships and affect or mood. The second category is about the antisocial, deviant lifestyle and it assesses the impulsive lifestyle and antisocial behavior.

There is a Screening Version where the 20 items are scaled down to 12. This can be done in about an hour and a half and can be used by people who don't necessarily have the full training in how to use the full checklist. It is used for psychiatric evaluations as well as for personnel selection. It is considered a reliable indicator of psychopathy and it indicates when a full evaluation would be useful.

The Hare P-Scan is used as a rough screen and is used in law enforcement and other areas to detect the possible presence of psychopathy and to manage risk for criminal or violent behavior.

The Hare Psychopathy Checklist - Revised was initially developed when dealing with adult males. But because psychopathy symptoms show up in childhood as well, Robert Hare developed the Hare Psychopathy Checklist: Youth Version.

It also has 20 items and is used by experts to assess the interpersonal, behavioral and affective aspects of psychopathy in 12 to 18-year-olds. Like the full checklist, it uses an interview as well as background information (psychopaths are expert liars) to complete the assessment.

There is also an Antisocial Process Screening Device to detect such things in young populations with the aim of taking preventative measures and averting problems later. The parents fill out a form, as well as the teacher and other relevant people who have sufficient knowledge of the child.

The 20 items

The Hare Psychopathy Checklist - Revised consists of 20 items which are rated 0 to 2, zero meaning 'does not apply', one 'applies somewhat' and two 'applies fully'. The Hare Psychopathy Checklist - Revised is completed on the basis of firstly, an interview with the subject, and secondly, corroborating information such as criminal history, medical history, school history etc.

The 20 items of the Hare Psychopathy Checklist - Revised are

1. GLIB and SUPERFICIAL CHARM - smooth talking, verbally agile, a psychopath is rarely stuck for something to say. They are not in the least bit shy. In fact, they are not afraid to say anything!

2. GRANDIOSE SELF-WORTH - they have an opinion on everything, they boast and brag about the things they have done, their skills and abilities. They have enormous egos, plenty of confidence and arrogance and consider themselves superior. One psychopath said that he preferred to hear himself talk, because what he said was more interesting than what other people had to say.

3. SEEK STIMULATION or PRONE TO BOREDOM - they like to be doing new and different things, always looking for excitement and entertainment. They take risks in what they do as well as what they say. For example, cult leaders, in a subtle way, may explain to their victims how exactly they are manipulating them. They rarely engage in activities that they find boring, or they don't finish the job.

4. PATHOLOGICAL LYING - their ability to lie is stunning, even when they know there is a high probability of being caught. Lies can be cunning and sly or unscrupulously manipulative.

5. CONNING AND MANIPULATIVENESS - they deceive, cheat, con, bilk, trick or defraud others for personal gain. This is separated from no. 4 to the extent that the subject shows 'callous ruthlessness', that is, a lack of concern or pity for the suffering and feelings of their victims.

6. LACK OF REMORSE OR GUILT - despite their words they experience little emotion or concern for the pain and suffering of their victims. They are unfazed, dispassionate, coldhearted, and unempathic. There is often a disdain for the victims, and they may even say the victims deserved it.

7. SHALLOW AFFECT - emotional poverty or very shallow feelings, coldness towards others despite seeming very friendly.

8. CALLOUSNESS and LACK OF EMPATHY - a general lack of feelings towards other people. They tend to be heartless, contemptuous, indifferent and tactless.

9. PARASITIC LIFESTYLE - they will intentionally manipulate and exploit others for financial gain. This goes along with poor motivation and little self-discipline and no sense of responsibility in terms of earning their own living.

10. POOR BEHAVIORAL CONTROLS - there may be sudden expressions of annoyance, irritability, aggression and verbal abuse. There may be sudden outbursts of anger and temper and they may act hastily.

11. PROMISCUOUS SEXUAL BEHAVIOR - they may have many brief encounters, many affairs while married, and may be indiscriminate in selecting partners (heterosexual and homosexual relationships) and even maintain several relationships at the same time. There is often a history of attempting to coerce many people into sexual relationships and they may take great pride in discussing their sexual conquests.

12. EARLY BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS - there is often a history of antisocial behavior before age 13, including lying, stealing, cheating, vandalism, bullying, truancy, sexual activity, fire-setting, substance abuse, and running away from home. Cruelty to animals or siblings is particularly ominous.

13. LACK OF REALISTIC, LONG-TERM GOALS - while they talk about big plans, they show an inability or persistent failure to execute long-term goals; then may drift from one place to another lacking any real direction in life.

14. IMPULSIVITY - many of their behaviors are not premeditated and seem to be unplanned. They seem unable to resist temptation and urges or to delay gratification. They may not consider the consequences and so they appear reckless, foolhardy and unpredictable.

15. IRRESPONSIBILITY - they will repeatedly fail to honor commitments or obligations, in school, work, family or social situations. The fail to turn up, don't pay bills, fail to honor contracts etc.

16. FAILURE TO ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR OWN ACTIONS - it seems like it's never their fault or their responsibility. They have little or no sense of duty or conscientiousness and often deny their responsibility. And in denying, they will even try and manipulate others!

17. MANY SHORT-TERM MARITAL RELATIONSHIPS - inability to maintain a long-term relationship because they are inconsistent and unreliable.

18. JUVENILE DELINQUENCY - behavioral difficulties between the ages of 13-18. Typically behaviors that are crimes or are clearly manipulative, aggressive and callous.

19. REVOCATION OF CONDITION RELEASE - they may have had their probation revoked for technical reasons such as failing to appear, carelessness and so on.

20. CRIMINAL VERSATILITY - unlike other criminals who may specialize in one area they are often involved in diverse activities, taking great pride at getting away with crimes.

Results

On the Hare Psychopathy Checklist - Revised subjects score between 0 and 40, zero being no psychopathy symptoms and 40 being a full-blown psychopath.

Normal individuals typically score less than five and many non-psychopathic criminals (who do actually have symptoms of antisocial personality disorder) may score 20 to 22.

A score over 30 on the Hare Psychopathy Checklist - Revised is used to diagnose the presence of psychopathy.

Read more about the characteristics of a psychopath and how they use mind control to manipulate

27. Other Psychopath Tests

There is no definitive psychopath test to diagnose somebody as psychopathic. Robert Hare's Psychopathy Checklist is currently the 'gold standard' for diagnosing sociopaths and psychopaths. This is a complex clinical test that involves an interview with the person concerned as well as access to records of his or her previous history.

There is, however, some use in using a simple sociopath test to determine if you or a family member may be involved with a sociopath. Sociopaths cause tremendous destruction and harm and because of the mind control it can be incredibly difficult for a person in a relationship with them to recognize them for what they are. Therefore any clues about their true nature may save a lot of hardship and grief.

With caution

If you use the following sociopath test to decide if somebody close to you is a sociopath or psychopath, please remember the following.

- To make a formal diagnosis of sociopathy or psychopathy requires a trained professional with experience in this field.

- This psychopath test will give you clues as to whether you need to do something about your relationship with this person or not. It is not intended to diagnose somebody as a sociopath.

- Sociopaths are dangerous. Being in a relationship with one can cause serious harm to you and those around you.

- If you suspect you're in a relationship with a sociopath, seek expert help. Find somebody who deals specifically with sociopaths, psychopaths and mind control to help you.

It is vital to remember that somebody under mind control may not give accurate answers to the questions. For example, they may not know that the sociopath is lying. They may think the sociopath actually is sympathetic, loving, caring etc.

Because of the nature of mind control, and the effect it has on their decision making, it's almost impossible for them to see the truth.

Of course, some people will use a sociopath test for fun. There's no harm in this but be wary of labeling somebody as sociopathic just because you think they score highly in the test.

First psychopath test

This sociopath test was extracted from an article by Robert Matthews in the Sunday Telegraph Review, May 4th 1997. It is useful because it is based on research and experiences of socialized psychopaths. For each trait, decide if it applies to the person you suspect may be a socialized psychopath, fully (2 points), partially (1 point) or not at all (0 points).

1 Do they have problems sustaining stable relationships, personally and in business?

2 Do they frequently manipulate others to achieve selfish goals, with no consideration of the effects on those manipulated?

3 Are they cavalier about the truth, and capable of telling lies to your face?

4 Do they have an air of self-importance, regardless of their true standing in society?

5 Have they no apparent sense of remorse, shame or guilt?

6 Is their charm superficial, and capable of being switched on to suit immediate ends?

7 Are they easily bored and demand constant stimulation?

8 Are their displays of human emotion unconvincing?

9 Do they enjoy taking risks, and acting on reckless impulse?

10 Are they quick to blame others for their mistakes?

11 As teenagers, did they resent authority, play truant and/or steal?

12 Do they have no qualms about sponging off others?

13 Are they quick to lose their temper?

14 Are they sexually promiscuous?

15 Do they have a belligerent, bullying manner?

16 Are they unrealistic about their long-term aims?

17 Do they lack any ability to empathize with others?

18 Would you regard them as essentially irresponsible?

A score of 25 or above suggests strong psychopathic tendencies.

This does not mean the person is a potential mass-murderer: socialized psychopaths are not mad, nor do they have to resort to violence. Even so, a close professional or emotional relationship with a socialized psychopath is likely to prove a damaging experience.

Second psychopath test that is useful

At fisheadmovie.com a group of people have produced a movie about the impact psychopathy has had in creation the financial crisis that 'started' in 2007. It's a fantastic movie and explains many of the traits of sociopaths/ psychopaths. It also looks at the role antidepressants play in suppressing empathy and how this affects decision making too.

Of particular interest to us here is that they also have created a psychopath test. This particular sociopath test is based on Dr. Hare / Dr. Babiak's B-Scan 360 Psychopathy Test and is available through Facebook. There is also a free application available for the iPhone and iPad available through the iTunes store.

It's a series of questions to which you answer yes or no about somebody you think may be a psychopath and can be quite accurate if you know a bit about the person's background.

Remember that people under the 'spell' of a psychopath may not see reality the way concerned friends or family might!

Accurate

The test can be very accurate if the questions are answered with reasonable knowledge of the person in question. I say reasonable knowledge because if somebody is still in a relationship with the psychopath, they may not be able to recognize what is actually happening.

Let me explain a bit more about this.

How psychopaths manipulate

Psychopaths will typically build a false relationship with their victim. Then step-by-step they begin to manipulate the beliefs and values of the victim so that they are aligned with their own.

Now remember that psychopaths have narcissistic traits with a huge ego and believe they are superior to everybody else. Therefore, their victims will begin to believe this as well. The victims also accept any reasons and justifications given to them while under the influence of mind control.

In many cults, for example, the members believe that the leader is helping them. The leader (often a psychopath) encourages this often saying that he is making sacrifices on their behalf.

In this psychopath test there is a question about whether the person operates from a power network of friends for personal gain. People who are manipulated by the leader will typically answer no.

They are unable to see the power plays that are occurring. They believe they are making their own decisions, and they believe that the people around them in the group are also making their own decisions. If they want to work for free for the leader, they think they are doing it willingly.

This same kind of dynamic also functions in one-to-one relationships, for example husband-and-wife. If the man has been deceived 'romantically' by his psychopathic wife, he may be unable to notice the lies, he certainly won't think this new woman in his life is cold and calculating, he won't know that she is playing ruthlessly to win.

Therefore the answers given in the psychopath test may not be accurate. That's why I suggest caution!

Where to get it

You can get the application for the iPhone and iPad in the iTunes store.

http://itunes.apple.com/app/fishead/id413521650?mt=8

It's also available on Facebook.

http://apps.facebook.com/fhmovie/index.php

And while you're at it, go and visit the people who made this available. Their website is http://www.fisheadmovie.com/ and they have also made a fantastic movie available for free.

In it they examine the financial crisis from the point of view of a lack of empathy in some of the major players. They point out that psychopaths have no empathy, and they also raise the possibility that antidepressants are reducing empathy in people taking them. It's very entertaining!

Professional help

I will say it again. If you think you are being manipulated by a sociopath or a psychopath, doing a sociopath test is not enough. To undo the effects of mind control, it makes sense to enlist the help of a specialist in this area, a psychologist or psychiatrist who understands mind control.

28. Particular Characteristics of Female Sociopaths Vs. Males

Incidence

How many female sociopaths are there? Robert Hare believes that about 1% of the population fits the profile of psychopath, and male psychopaths are 7 times more common than female psychopaths.

But there are some things to keep in mind here. When most people think of 'sociopath' they typically think 'male' and 'serial killer'. They do not generally think of women psychopaths. This can lead to a situation where they are dealing with a psychopath in their life but do not realize who they are dealing with.

Add to this the fact that sociopaths have been called chameleons for their ability to blend into society and it adds to the difficulty in counting them.

Plus, whether you consider it sexist or not, the female aspect needs to be considered when talking about manipulation. Women have been known to 'bat their eyelids' and show their cleavage or 'show a bit of leg', for example, to good effect.

How female sociopaths show up in society

The most obvious group is the serial killers. And yes, there have been lots of female serial killers as well as males!

Unlike the males however, there is usually not a sexual element to their crimes. It's much more usual to be money or power related. And the female sociopaths typically know their victims; it's rare for them to kill strangers. An interesting group are the female sociopaths who become nurses or doctors. These cold-blooded killers hide themselves where nobody would suspect them, in a caring profession!

And then they set to work. For example, Beverley Allitt, a 23-year-old nurse in the UK killed 4 and attacked 9 other children within a couple of months before she was caught. A Texas nurse Genene Jones is believed to have killed between 11 and 46. It's of this group that people usually say "But they seemed like such nice people!"

Another subset are those who kill one or several husbands for the inheritance and life assurance.

Obvious Delinquents

Some female sociopaths demonstrate antisocial behavior as children and as adolescents. Lying, stealing, truancy, cruelty to animals and siblings, drug abuse, early sexual activity. Of course, there may be frequent run-ins with the law. Their parents are very often distraught because there is so little they can do. As adults, these female sociopaths may end up abusing alcohol and drugs and end up in and out of prison.

Some therapists believe that there is such a disregard for society among them that a sociopath that has not broken the law just hasn't been found out yet!

Cult leaders

Many of the women who lead destructive cults are sociopaths.

There seems to be two themes among female sociopaths that are not so prevalent in male led groups, one being the avoidance of sex and the other being food.

The women psychopaths may target women who want to get away from sex for whatever reason. Instead they offer female nurturing and support.

As well as offering meals when potential 'clients' have none, there are cults based on eating healthily or losing weight. This is typical of cults, they offer something people want but behind the outer facade is a second set of ideas or principles. People enter for one thing and end up having the leader control their lives.

Socialized sociopaths

These are the ones that are so difficult to count! Despite their sociopath symptoms, they manage to integrate themselves into society to varying degrees. Everything from solitary lives where they live on the money they make from crimes for which they are not caught, to getting married, settling down and having children.

It's interesting to read or listen to the stories of some of these female sociopaths. Typically, they realize as children that they are different in some way. They think differently and make different decisions. Then they begin to understand that they are not so 'affected' by emotions. It's seems that it's common for them to think that this is because they are smarter than those around them.

They begin from an early age to look for clues to recognize the emotions that others are actually having. They learn to mimic the emotions so as not to stand out, or to please others. They learn to create relationships that are beneficial for them.

Female sociopaths have all the symptoms of sociopaths. The lying, the parasitic lifestyle, the need for excitement and the desire to control. It's possible that there are many female sociopaths who live, for all intents and purposes, what looks like a normal life from the outside. They are content to just blend in and do what "normal" people do.

Others however, want more. More money, more power, more control, more excitement. And they get themselves into trouble because of the impulsivity or the failure to control their emotions, or the irresponsibility.

One of the ways this shows up is in problems in their marriage. In true sociopath style, they attract a man, create an intimate relationship, influence his decision making and get married. It's common for them to isolate the man from his friends and family to varying degrees. They can be very domineering and controlling, using sex as a means to manipulate. The man may suffer verbal abuse, psychological abuse, emotional abuse and even physical abuse.

When there are children involved it gets infinitely more complicated. Especially in separations and divorces. The female sociopaths have no difficulty (remember no remorse, guilt or pity for anybody) in using the children as pawns or objects to try to continue to manipulate the man.

They will extract information from the children about the father to use against him, they will influence how and what the children think about the father, and they may prevent the father from having any contact with the children. The welfare of the children is not considered. What's important is that they continue to maintain control and power.

In family matters where the police or the courts involved, they have no difficulty in lying, inventing stories and doing whatever is necessary to get what they want. They can play the victim role very well, as most sociopaths do, and will use society's preferences towards women and mothers to their advantage.

Some female sociopaths simply go from one relationship to another. They use their sociopathic charm, good looks and female wiles to create a relationship, take what they want and then disappear, leaving a trail of brokenhearted and confused men behind them. Men who are somewhat poorer after the experience!

This piece was originally written about a male but I think it works equally well like this!

She will choose you, charm you with her words, and control you with this presence. She will delight you with her wit and her plans. She will show you a good time, but you will

always get the bill. She will smile and deceive you, and she will scare you with her eyes. And when she is through with you, and she will be through with you, she will desert you and take with her your innocence and your pride. You will be left much sadder but not a lot wiser, and for a long time you will wonder what you did wrong.

From an essay signed, "A psychopath in prison".

Testosterone

Apparently both male and female psychopaths have high levels of testosterone. It has been found that in normal populations, higher levels of testosterone are associated with higher sex drive, more sexual activity and more attractiveness to the opposite sex.

This will make female sociopaths more appealing to males. Add to this the lack of inhibition, and the grandiose sense of self and you have a lethal combination! Think femme fatale!

It may also explain the lack of desire to have children and the failure to look after them if they do. It's not uncommon for female sociopaths to leave young children unattended, for example, because they have other more important things to do.

How we perceive women

We normally think women are empathic and nurturing and don't expect to see cold-hearted, uncaring, callous behaviors in women.

We don't consider that they could be more devious, manipulative, destructive, vindictive and downright nasty than their male counterparts.

But just ask any man who has been a victim of female sociopaths...!

29. Sexual Psychopaths

Sexual Psychopath = Pleonasm?

It could be said that 'sexual psychopaths' is like 'unexpected surprise', '12 noon' or 'advanced warning'. These are known as pleonasms, or redundant expressions, and the first part can be removed without changing the significance. Surprise is by definition unexpected, and noon means 12 o'clock.

Hervey Cleckley in his 1941 book "The Mask of Sanity" says that the psychopath's sex life invariably shows peculiarities. This makes sense when you consider that

- they are incapable of love

- they don't experience guilt or remorse

- and they can be very impulsive without much consideration of the consequences of their actions.

Their inability to love means that their sex life is trivial and impersonal. The pleasure of the sex act seems to be limited to local sensations only. While there are physiological changes that may give rise to emotions that are labeled sexual psychopaths have no shared emotional experience with their partners, nor any emotion that would lead to a sense of commitment or loyalty.

Cleckley says that for psychopaths there are none of the "emotional concomitants and the complex potentialities that make adult love relations an experience so thrilling and indescribable".

He also points out that sexual psychopaths

- will often act on the slightest of their urges

- they are typically not put off by things that normal people would find repulsive or repugnant

- and they often engage in a whole range of unsatisfactory behaviors in every field. (For example, they don't specialize in just one type of crime, they are often involved in all sorts of illegal things.)

This leads them to try out deviant sexual behaviors, sometimes just for the hell of it! They may be involved in homosexual relationships, they will abuse children, pay prostitutes, seduce friends' spouses, and, of course, rape and sexually abuse others.

Robert Hare on sexual psychopaths

More recently in his book "Without Conscience" Robert Hare adds more ideas on the nature of the sexual psychopath.

He points out that rape is a good example of the callous, selfish use of violence by psychopaths.

He thinks that maybe half of serial rapists are psychopaths and that it results from a potent combination of:

- Uninhibited expression of their sexual desires and fantasies

- A desire for power and control

- and perception of the victims as objects of pleasure and satisfaction

This idea of control is very important. When a person is involved in a sexual relationship, you could say they are revealing themselves, they are giving of the most intimate aspect of themselves.

And many psychopaths realize this and make use of it. When a relationship becomes sexual psychopaths understand that have the potential for complete control. In fact, sexual submission is often the final step in the objectification of the victim.

Remember too, that psychopaths use the tools and techniques of mind control to influence others. A sexual relationship in this situation means that there is neither informed consent on the part of the victim, nor a relationship of equals because the power is with the deceiver. This makes it a situation of sexual abuse.

A psychopath will often create an intimate relationship which in turn leads to a sexual relationship. The psychological abuse makes the sexual abuse possible and the sexual abuse amplifies the effects of the psychological abuse.

Margaret Singer on sexual psychopaths

Clinical psychologist Margaret Singer suggests that this type of abuse is very different from sexual abuse without mind control. The latter, she says is more random, furtive, and associated with guilt, whereas when mind control is involved (either in one-to-one relationships, or in cults) the sexual abuse has been integrated with the belief system of the victim and the interplay of these two things has a huge effect on the recovery process.

Janja Lalich in a paper entitled "Domination and Submission: Psychosexual Exploitations of Women in Cults" published in Cultic Studies Journal, Vol. 14, No. 1, (http://www.decision-making-confidence.com/support-files/janjalalich.pdf) also points out that the cult doctrine is a reflection of the cult leader and his preferences. As we have seen, the sexual preferences of sexual psychopaths can be many and varied.

So in some cults, there is abstinence from sex, and sometimes even castration of males to ensure this. It is often the case that where the members are to abstain from sex, the leader is sexually abusing a lot of them.

In other situations, cults will insist on 'sexual liberty' and there may be group sex, marriages of lots of women to the leader, partner swapping, child abuse and so on. One idea behind proposing sexual liberty is that the members are sexually available for the leader. (Another is to push the members beyond their personal boundaries in order to manipulate them.) Some groups even dictate when and how the members have sex.

Cult leaders, who are often (male) psychopaths, may deceive women into thinking it is a matter of honor to have sex with him, that it's necessary for his spirituality, or for her spirituality, or personal growth or whatever. Or sexual relationships may be expected as a test of loyalty to the leader. In some cults women are drawn in and then simply enslaved.

The victims of sexual abuse talk about how initially the sex may seem to be loving and caring but after a while it changes to something cold, without emotion, very dominating, sometimes aggressive and is usually solely about the physical pleasure of the abuser.

Female cult leaders may actually offer freedom from sex as a way to entice women to join.

Psychopathic therapists also dupe their clients into sexual abuse situations in a variety of ways. One particularly insidious way is for the therapist to massage near the groin and then invite the client to do the same to the therapist, 'to practice'. The client is then deceived into initiating sexual contact. This is particularly destructive as the client believes they have initiated the sexual intimacy.

Sexual psychopaths - the damage

Sexual psychopaths who have learned how to use sex to control and manipulate are particularly destructive.

A typical occurrence is that initially people don't want to talk about it. Without understanding what happened, the victims may blame themselves, they may consider that they deserved the abuse, or be so full of shame at what happened to them in the hands of the sexual psychopaths, that it often seems easier to try and forget the whole thing. (This is a big mistake!)

They may also have been sworn to secrecy by their manipulator, or believe they will be revealing sacred secrets or will be betraying the leader if they speak out. This may be built into the mind control and can make it tricky to undo.

When they do start talking about it, it can be difficult for people to realize and accept that they have been sexually abused by somebody that they were in love with, or that they adored and respected.

As well as having to undo the mind control they have to deal with the fact that they were in an abusive relationship and may also have to re-establish their own sexuality, undo any confusion they have about sex and sexual relationships and learn to build intimate relationships again.

30. What Makes A Socialized Psychopath So Dangerous?

A socialized psychopath is in many ways more dangerous than an overtly criminal psychopath.

Why? Because it's easier to spot a psychopath that is continually involved with the law. If we consider that 1% of the population fits the profile of a psychopath, then chances are that there are a few in the people that you know, but you simply don't recognize them…

Socialized or integrated psychopaths are like chameleons in that they blend into their surroundings in such a way that they are not noticed. When I say blend in, I mean that they establish relationships with people around them so that they are able to influence and manipulate others, often without being detected.

Here we have 2 reasons that they are so dangerous. Firstly, they are hidden, and secondly, people do not expect 'friends' to deliberately do them harm or to be so evil.

Understanding a psychopath

Robert Hare and Paul Babiak in their book 'Snakes in Suits' describes how the socialized psychopath will present themselves as the perfect partner by noticing the victim's needs, insecurities, and strengths as well as weaknesses in order to create a persona that seems ideal to the victim. The victim quickly likes and then trusts the psychopath and so the mind control begins.

They can be charming, witty and seem intelligent, talking easily about a range of topics. They seem friendly and understanding and may be the life and soul of a party.

But for them it's all about impression management. They are creating impressions, knowing that first impressions count.

Once they have established the relationship and feel they have created the level of control or dependency they want, they start to take what they want, do what they want and behave as they want. This can range from spending others money, stealing (possessions or information), demeaning others simply to demonstrate superiority, emotional and mental abuse, to physical and sexual abuse.

Characteristics of a psychopath

They lie very easily to continue the deceit and manipulation. Nothing is ever their fault. They will argue, justify and/or blame others for things that go wrong.

They may have the ability to seem genuinely sorry when caught out and can apologize and make promises that it will never happen again. But it's all an act. They have no sense of responsibility or obligation and typically repeat the same actions time and again.

The corporate psychopath

In business settings, the characteristics of a psychopath can be attractive, the ability to quickly make decisions, the ability to get others to do things, the sense of confidence and lack of fear in risky situations. The smooth talking and agility in lying can often get them through job interviews straight into positions of considerable power and influence within an organization.

The socialized psychopath then begins to build a network of people that are useful for him (or her!), while at the same time undermining the authority of the competition or those who may be able to expose them.

They use people like game pieces in a game, where they are making up the rules as they go along. Unfortunately, the people involved are often not aware of this game, and are playing by 'normal' rules, which means they typically lose.

Lack of empathy, guilt or remorse

The socialized psychopath understands people frighteningly well; it's what allows them to stay hidden. They know how to press people's buttons, how to create fear and how to use it against others. They are cold and heartless with no pity or concern for the damage that they do to their victims.

When a person is no longer useful for them they will discard them like used objects. In romantic relationships, for example, the victim may be left alone and broken hearted, wondering what they did wrong. They may be considerably poorer, too!

More than once a socialized psychopath has disappeared from an organization, leaving a trail of destruction and chaos and severe problems in the accounting department.

These psychopaths then move on to another town or city and start over again.

Criminals?

The socialized psychopath is more or less hidden in society but that does not mean that they are not breaking the law. It just means that they have not been caught yet. They do steal, defraud, physically abuse and mentally torture their victims.

But because of the nature of mind control, the adoration by the victim as well as the dependency the psychopath creates, frequently their victims cannot or are afraid to

speak up. They may feel they would be betraying their 'friend' or "wife', or they are afraid of further abuse.

It is difficult for those who have never been in the situation to understand this but that's how it is for the victims. This is often why a wife will stay in an abusive relationship for years, or a man allows an ex-girlfriend back into his life when she has stolen money from him several times in the past.

Another aspect is that the actions of a socialized psychopath may be 'borderline' illegal. With the state of the legal system in many places today it can be difficult to demonstrate (in legal form) emotional abuse or personality changes due to mind control.

Either way, the problems caused by socialized psychopaths in the world today are increasing. Until the laws change it is your responsibility to protect yourself from them. How do you do this?

The best way is to learn more about the characteristics of psychopaths and to understand what mind control is and how to notice it so you can stop it before you get caught in the web of lies and deceit.

31. Characteristics Of A Sociopath Shown By Cult Leaders

Here we will examine the characteristics of a sociopath as they show up in cult leaders.

Cult leaders

Cult leaders are considered to be authoritarian personalities who have intense feelings of inferiority, insecurity, and hostility and to compensate for this they form a group of people around them with whom they can use thought reform techniques to dominate them and to use them for financial gain.

When people leave a cult, it is important that they demystify the supposed power the leader had in order to take control of one's life again. When people walk away from a group, they may be confused and disenchanted, but typically they continue to believe that the cult leader is good, kind and even godlike.

This even occurs in battered wives and abused children.

To fully heal, it's important to understand who this all-powerful person was, what their motivations and real purpose were, and the techniques they were using to maintain dependency and submission in the group.

Cult leaders' needs

Typically in cults, the group serves the power, financial, emotional and sexual needs of the leader. The leaders are power hungry, charming, and seemingly all knowing. And when members of different groups get together and discuss their leaders, whom they consider to be different, special and unique, they are amazed at the similarities. Why are they so alike? Because frequently their profile fits that of a sociopath, and their traits are actually a personality disorder!

So let's have a look at what Janja Lalich and Madeline Tobias say about the characteristics of a sociopath that are so common among these social parasites, or 'trust bandits' as they have been called.

Glibness and superficial charm

One of the common characteristics of a sociopath is agility with words. Cult leaders are charming, persuasive and not usually stuck for words. They can be excellent storytellers captivating people in the show that they put on. They use language effortlessly to convince and confuse as well as to combat any criticism.

Deceiving and conning

Cult leaders will manipulate emotions to create relationships in which they can dominate. For them, the world is full of suckers and sinners and they have the right to take advantage of this. For them, the end justifies the means. In other words, anything goes. Literally anything! (Remember they have no guilt or conscience).

Typically, other people are seen as competitors or aggressors, and if the cult leader does not dominate them, they will try to dominate him. It is thought that dominating others becomes their escape valve for the terror and rage they experience. If they can make friends with them first, and then dominate them, all the better.

Grandiose sense of self

This one of the characteristics of a sociopath is typically very strong in cult leaders. There's a huge sense of entitlement. They crave attention and adoration even when they say they don't. The present themselves as geniuses, enlightened, or leading humankind in a particular direction.

However, behind the grandiosity may be an inner emptiness and a sense of insignificance. Remember that another of the characteristics of a sociopath is the inability to experience emotions such as love or compassion. This means their inner world is very grey and bleak.

The grandiosity it is often accompanied by paranoia and this becomes part of the basis of the 'us versus them' mentality in cultic groups.

Pathological liars

Sociopaths lie as easily as they breathe! When confronted with their lies they may simply change the story to try and fit in. There is never any guilt or embarrassment.

'Pseudologica fantastica' is an extension of pathological lying. This is where cult leaders create a complex system of beliefs and ideas, sometimes about their own powers and abilities, in which they themselves often get caught up. It is very difficult to know if they actually believe it or whether it's just a fabrication to con and deceive others.

They are rarely original thinkers, instead gathering up ideas from other people and packaging them together. While they may not give credit to others, they certainly want that their minions give them credit.

One of the characteristics of a sociopath is that truth for them is whatever works in the moment. If a lie helps to convince or manipulate somebody, that's what they do. This is almost incomprehensible to somebody with a conscience, so what happens is that the victims rationalize and justify away the inconsistencies in the cult leader, "What my leader did hurt me, but there must be a good reason for it…"

Complete lack of guilt or remorse

Not having a conscience, never feeling guilt or remorse, means that cult leaders can typically do whatever they like. People are treated as objects to be manipulated and controlled for whatever reason.

Sociopaths may decide if they cannot have the intelligence, good looks, or skills of somebody else then that person is not going to enjoy the benefits of those talents either and destroying that person's life becomes the goal.

Sociopaths do not have friends, there are victims and accomplices. And if need be, the accomplices become victims too!

Shallow emotions

Another one of the important characteristics of a sociopath is the lack of emotions. They are cold, shallow people, unmoved by neither atrocities nor by joyous things that elicit strong responses in normal people.

They do, however, learn to fake emotions, and these are displayed to control and manipulate the emotions of others. Of course, this is turned into a benefit for them - they can control their emotions and their followers should learn to do the same. Of course, this is just another way to control the followers. For example, anger in cults (towards the leader or the doctrine) is typically not allowed or is diverted outwards to an out group.

When leaders offer peace, joy, happiness, etc., it is a complete lie because these things are beyond the leaders' capacity to experience.

Incapacity for love

Cult leaders cannot give or receive love. But they have a tremendous need to be loved and adored by the followers. At the same time they often don't believe in love. This contradiction obviously has huge potential for manipulating and controlling people who are capable of love.

For example, a guru can claim that he has given up his life for the benefit of his followers, or he has taken on their illness or negative karma, and for this they should love him. And feel guilty!

The members love for the group may be tested in many ways, sometimes in ways that are cruel and horrific, but it is never permitted to question the leaders love.

Need for stimulation

Sociopaths get bored easily and therefore take risks just to entertain themselves. Some cult leaders will push the boundaries of respect and decency in their seminars, just to see her far they can go.

In the same vein, cult leaders may push their followers further and further beyond their limits, which is something quite common as they deteriorate psychologically and emotionally.

Callousness/lack of empathy

Cult leaders abuse the members in all sorts of ways with not the slightest consideration for their feelings. They are unable to feel empathy and other emotions.

One of the characteristics of a sociopath is a sense of superiority and this is added to by the fact that they don't consider themselves limited or burdened by emotions. They think they are above such things.

However, for cult members, it's almost impossible to understand what it's like not to have a conscience. Therefore they don't consider that they are being abused by their leaders, because it's not something they would do to others.

This makes it very difficult for them to accept that they have been taking advantage of by somebody they thought cared for them. It usually takes a while for them to get their head around this and it feels to them that a terrible evil has been done.

Impulsive with poor behavior controls

Another of the common characteristics of a sociopath is that they have difficulty learning to delay gratification and when they are frustrated they may have temper tantrums or displays of rage. These sudden outbursts, alternating with the appearance of being loving and caring, produce dependency in the members because how they are/feel depends on the mood of the leader.

These outbursts may only be visible to those in the inner circle, with the mask of perfection presented to everybody else. Of course, these outbursts are redefined to show the cult leader in a good light. Another of the common characteristics of a sociopath!

Juvenile delinquency

Another of the characteristics of a sociopath is antisocial behavior as a child. And typically this is hidden from the members, with cult leaders claiming to have had a difficult childhood and then some kind of enlightening experience after which they had powers which were almost superhuman. More lies and deceit!

Irresponsible and unreliable

Sociopaths have no sense of obligation or responsibility to anyone. Of course, for the mind controlled members, the lack of follow-up or fulfilling of obligations is explained away with something such as 'Well, that's just how he is!'

Sociopaths never feel responsible for the damage they've done to other people's lives. In fact, when exposed, they will typically blame other people. Anybody except themselves. And blaming the members is a very powerful way to continue the manipulation.

When exposed, a very common manoeuver is to blame the accuser of doing what they themselves are doing. So the sociopath becomes the victim and the sociopath claims the accuser is manipulating him or the evidence.

And the sociopath is never wrong. There is always a reason, a justification or some more information that changes the picture.

Deviant sexual behavior

Sex is often used to control the members, everything from forced abstinence to group sex to rape. Cult leaders often have a history of extramarital affairs and sexual predation upon adult and child members of both sexes.

Because of the power imbalance between the cult leader and the members, sex is not considered to be consensual and invariably is damaging for the member.

Lack of realistic life plan/parasitic lifestyle

It's very common for cult leaders to be extravagant in their spending while cult members have little. It usually turns out the cult leader is spending the members' money!

Cult leaders may be very preoccupied with their own health while destroying that of the members. This aspect may be hidden in order to maintain the aura of having superhuman abilities.

Sociopaths tend not to have long-term goals or have difficulty sticking to them. They often have somebody close to them who takes care of this aspect for them, for example, they may have a partner or devoted/manipulated cult members who organize the financial and day-to-day running of the cult.

Criminal or entrepreneurial versatility

A chameleon nature is one of the characteristics of a sociopath and cult leaders are happy to change the group to attract more members, make more money or avoid the law. If illegalities are exposed they will often disappear, relocate and start again under a different name with a different slant on the scam.

Undoing the effects

For those leaving a cult, it's very useful as part of the recuperation to be able to recognize the characteristics of a sociopath in the cult leader in order to get rid of the control, self-blame, fear and guilt that these unscrupulous parasites have used to manipulate, steal and abuse.

It's not always an easy process, but it is always worth the effort.

32. Do You Think You May Be In A Relationship With A Sociopath?

Very dangerous

If you are in a relationship with a sociopath you risk losing your money, your possessions, your job, your self-esteem, your confidence, your independence and in the occasional case, your life! And the worst thing about it is you may not realize that this is happening until it's too late.

Sociopaths, or psychopaths, can be extremely charming, smooth talkers, witty and very friendly, and often more than a touch narcissistic. They like to quickly build an intimate relationship with their victims, as we have seen earlier.

Vicente Garrido points to 5 stages in the process in the relationship with a psychopath, vulnerability, seduction, capture, exploitation and revelation. So what exactly happens when someone gets involved with a psychopath?

First contact

The initial encounter can be through the recommendation of family or friends, in a work situation, or a chance encounter. It's actually quite common that people dislike or even feel repulsion for sociopaths at the initial encounter. However, they often ignore these sensations because the family member or friend has recommended the person, or they're going to have to work with this person and so on. This, of course, proves to be a mistake, because you cannot give sociopaths the benefit of the doubt.

Once the relationship with a sociopath is underway, typically everything is marvelous. The sociopath is attentive, helpful, friendly and considerate and it seems that the sociopath is a wonderful person, providing just what you need and understanding you in a way that few others do.

Certainly in romantic situations, people feel that they are totally in love. This new person in their life (can be male or female!) is perfect for them, and they are blind to everything else.

In business situations, the sociopath seems to be demonstrating exactly the qualities needed in the organization, the ability to make decisions, getting people to do things, motivation, and typically he will be seen to have good relationships with his superiors.

There may be a small group of people around him who are keen to be with him or help in whatever way they can. Different people will have a different kind of relationship with a sociopath in these settings. That's because the sociopath is evaluating every person to see what they have that is of benefit to him or her, for example, approval of this boss, information from a particular secretary, that person to do his work for him, another person to use as a scapegoat, and so on.

In sects the new person feels that this is a marvelous group. Everybody is so friendly and welcoming, and the leader seems to be intelligent and caring and really willing to help, or educate the students, or save the souls of his congregation. They are fooled into thinking that they will get what they are seeking by having a relationship with a sociopath!

Exactly what is needed

In each case the sociopath seems to be providing exactly what is necessary in the situation. This is because they are experts in assessing vulnerabilities such things as people's needs, wants, weaknesses and strengths (yes, your strengths are

vulnerabilities that they will take advantage of). He or she will then provide those needs and wants until the victim is convinced that the sociopath is a good person.

So if you find that a friendship is moving forward very quickly indeed, and the other person seems perfect, stop and check that you are not in a relationship with a sociopath!

A change

And at some point there is a change in the relationship with the sociopath. A man has lent money to his girlfriend and she disappears. Shortly after getting married, or getting pregnant, her husband starts to drink more and becomes abusive.

The workplace psychopath starts to miss deadlines, not turn up for work, abuse others and starts to generally take liberties.

The cult leader no longer spends so much time with those people who have been indoctrinated. They get only so much time as is necessary to keep them engaged. In fact, spending time with him or her becomes a privilege. And if there is a sexual relationship (which, in the context of mind control, is sexual abuse) this typically changes as well. It may stop if the leader has new victims, or it may become very cold, devoid of emotion on the part of the leader, automatic you could say. Because of the nature of mind control, the victims are unable to make the decision to discontinue the relationship with a sociopath, even when they feel they are just being used.

But they are nice people!

Many of the people around psychopaths have come to believe that they are nice people. Therefore the initial bad behavior is explained away or justified. After all, there must be a good reason for it, right?

Two situations can arise here. One is where the person captured believes this person is wonderful and his or her friends warn them against the psychopath but they cannot see it. The other is where the manipulated person tries to tell their friends of the abuse they are suffering but their friends can't believe it because the person seems so nice to them!

It gets worse

But then the nastiness, the abuse and the dominating behavior persists.

By this time, for the person in an intimate relationship with a sociopath, it's too late. They have been captured by the sociopath and tolerate more and more abuse. The difficulty is that they have come to rely on the sociopath to make decisions, to know how they are and sometimes even who they are. They are completely dependent on the sociopath.

This explains why some men and women will tolerate 10, 15 or 20 years of abuse in a marriage. The sociopath understands how to use mind control techniques to manipulate and dominate others. And this is basically what they want, power over others.

Workplace psychopath

For the psychopath in the workplace this is the whole game. To rise through the ranks to positions of power and control. In fact we are seeing more and more articles written today in newspapers and blogs about how the corporate psychopath is responsible for much of the risk-taking that has led to the current financial crisis.

When the office psychopath has the level of control that he or she wants, then they move into high gear. They have their competition fired. They do this by having gained the confidence of the bosses and then begin to create problems for the competition, and lying about them. They use and abuse expense accounts, steal money, manipulate their way into positions of greater power and generally do what they want.

Exploitation in cults

Cult leaders lead their victims deeper and deeper into their doctrine exploiting them in whatever way they can. The victims may end up using their skills and expertise working for the cult for free. They may donate their wealth, their possessions, their house to the 'cause'. Their time and energy is spent pursuing the two basic objectives of any cult, member recruitment and the collection of funds. They may be sexually abused by the leadership or even prostituted out under the guise of saving mankind, bringing more people to God and so on.

In some cults, suicide is the end result for the group. Suicide bombers have been manipulated into taking other people's lives as well. And for those caught in a romantic relationship with the sociopath, sometimes a sociopath just kills the family.

Impression management

Remember, first impressions count and when a person enters into a relationship with a sociopath believing they are good people (remember this is set up deliberately by the sociopath), this becomes very difficult to change later on. It can be very difficult for somebody to accept that the person that they like and trust, or even love, is deliberately doing them harm. They know that they would not, or could not, deliberately do harm to those they love, so they can't understand that somebody would be doing it to them. They may even refuse to accept that they are in a relationship with a sociopath.

The other thing that's important for somebody who may be in a relationship with a sociopath, is that people don't expect other people to be evil. Unless you have been caught by a psychopath, you are not on the lookout for evil.

Typically, we like to see the good in others. And sociopaths will play on this. Even when they have been caught out in doing wrong, they can appear very genuine in saying sorry and demonstrating remorse. But, of course, it's all an act. They have no conscience and do not care about the consequences.

Relationship with a sociopath - exposed!

Sociopaths often spend a good deal of time creating reputations for themselves that allows them to continue manipulating and abusing people. When they are exposed they may simply disappear to look for other victims.

If they have a lot invested in where they are, they will fight to maintain their power. And they will be nasty about it. They will lie, cheat, blackmail, threaten legal actions and even use the courts to protect their reputation.

And often they will make themselves out to be the victims!

A common occurrence is to blame the people exposing them of doing the very thing that they themselves are doing. For example, the sociopaths will say that they are not manipulating others, their accusers are manipulating the evidence.

And they will typically attack the person/s accusing them, rather than deal with what the accusers are saying.

The revelation

Some victims never realize that they have been the victim of a psychopath. The man whose girlfriend disappears with his money is left wondering what he did wrong. The person who walks away from a cult but who doesn't know it's a cult, may simply drift into another cult. The vast majority of victims fall into this category. Without treatment, (because they don't know they have been victims of mind control), it leaves then vulnerable to more manipulation by the next psychopath they meet.

But when the victim finds out that they have been manipulated and deceived, it can be very difficult to accept at first. This is a person they trusted and respected, and even loved. They believed the person was taking care of them in some way. But now they find out the whole relationship is based on a lie. They have been tricked, abused and taken advantage of.

Initially there may be a lack of emotion because the situation is so horrific. Then there is an 'emotional storm' with a whole range of emotions, desperation, rage, sorrow, grief, anger, frustration, despair.

The victim needs a lot of support at this stage and if the people around do not understand to some degree what it happening it can be very frightening for all concerned. Professional help is invaluable!

Back to top

Part 4 - How To Protect Yourself

33. Understanding Weapons Of Influence

Education and understanding

In order to protect yourself from mind control, you have to first accept that it exists, and that there are people (often psychopaths) who will take advantage of people to the point of being evil.

Then you have to know something about how mind control works and what to look for as warning signs of destructive groups and relationships.

For those coming out of destructive groups, when they understand what made them vulnerable to being captured by the group (or individual) at that point in their lives, what was done to them, how it was done and why it was done, then the mind control will no longer have control over them.

Let's start with some basic influence techniques that seem to work in every culture on the planet and that psychopaths invariably take advantage of…

Robert Cialdini

As a social psychologist, Robert Cialdini was fascinated by influence and persuasion and he set out to study these ideas and initially did many experiments in his lab.

In order to understand how these ideas functioned in the real world, he studied compliance professionals - sales people, advertisers, fund raisers etc.

He reckoned that these people would know what worked, because their livelihoods depended on it.

Weapons of Influence

What he came up with is a list of six, what he calls, weapons of influence. Each of the six basic tactics is organized around a fundamental psychological principle. Normally people are unaware of how these principles function to determine our behavior, which

makes it incredibly powerful for the compliance professional. In any given situation, when the principal kicks in, we say yes without thinking first.

Useful...

The benefit is that it makes life easy for us; we can quickly and easily make decisions in various situations based on past experience. The principles also allow society to run smoothly, and make for smoother interactions between the members of that society. Of interest, is that these principles seem to function in every society on the planet!

But dangerous

The disadvantage is that we don't think. We go into automatic pilot, we just respond, and this makes us susceptible to the influences and manipulations of others.

Cialdini "Influence - Science and Practice"

In his book Cialdini examines the six principles - reciprocation, consistency, social proof, liking, authority, and scarcity - and explains how each produces an automatic response, a 'click-whirr' compliance without thinking. He points out that with the ever-increasing amount of information available in the modern world, these principles will become more important, and that people really need to understand how they work.

He discusses the effect each principle has on society and gives numerous examples of how the compliance professional uses each of the principles to get people to buy stuff, make donations, give of their time, their money and so on.

Finally, he makes some suggestions about how to notice when these principles are kicking in and what to do to protect yourself against the effects.

At the end of each chapter there are some questions for you to check that you understand the material, and some questions to stimulate your critical thinking about each principle.

Material self-interest

He takes this as a given. That is, that people want to give the least to get the most. The phrase ' I can give you a good deal' is a very powerful motivator in most situations. He's not minimizing its importance by not talking about it, but says it is so universal he does not need to say much about it.

The principles and cults

For Cialdini, influence techniques such as these work in all spheres of life. While he does have examples from sects (surprise, surprise!), he does not mention cult leaders as compliance professionals. These particular unethical manipulators are certainly aware of, and take full advantage of, such powerful weapons of influence. Therefore

there will be comments about how specifically dangerous cults can and do use Cialdini influence principles.

If you are a member, or ex-member, it is a very powerful and useful exercise to go through these Cialdini influence principles and look for examples of where you're leader or group takes advantage of them. Indeed, it is part of the psycho-education that is the basis for undoing destructive mind control.

1. Reciprocity

Generally speaking, the idea is that if a person acts towards us in a particular way they are entitled to receive similar treatment from us. More specifically, if I do a favor for you, you will feel obliged to return the favor.

His example here does actually involve a cult. He points out the technique the Hare Krishna's used of giving somebody a flower. When the person had it in their hand, they then asked money! It was actually very difficult for the person not to make a donation of some sort. (People later learned to avoid this weapon of influence by not actually accepting the flower in the first place.)

It's easy to understand how this benefits society. A person has no difficulty ' giving away' a favor, knowing that they can ask for something in return in the future. So it's okay to help you neighbor, knowing that your neighbor will help you when you need it.

For Cialdini influence of this type occurs in a more subtle form when somebody asks for something, you say no, then they request something smaller or of less significance. What they've done is they've given you a concession by asking for something smaller. Therefore there is a sense of obligation in returning the concession to them. It then becomes very difficult to say no to the second request!

Manipulations

So how is this idea used and abused by compliance professionals? One way is to do a favor first. That is they give something that is not requested or invited. The person receiving the favor then feels obliged or in debt to the giver.

Another way is to ask for a bigger favor than the one that was given. This might seem a bit much, but the power of the Cialdini influence principle of reciprocity is so strong that amazing things can happen. A cult leader gives a member of book, and in exchange expects the member to bring two or three people along to his expensive courses. Or a guru gives somebody a discount on a seminar, and expects sexual favors in return.

2. Commitment and consistency

Psychologists have understood for years that humans want to be seen as being consistent. Not only do we want to be consistent to ourselves, we want to look consistent to others. Leon Festinger describes this quite nicely in his book Cognitive Dissonance. (Another book that is well worth a read for ex-cult members).

A person who is consistent is seen as stable, honest and trustworthy. A useful member of society! Now try to imagine how a society would function with totally inconsistent members…!

In his book on influence Cialdini explains that behaving consistently with our thoughts and beliefs is often much easier than having to change our thinking. Because if we took the time to think, me might not like what we realize.

And whatever happens, most of us don't want to be seen to be wrong. So once we have started into something, there are very strong forces pushing us to continue. Once we make a decision, we create reasons and justifications for it and so the idea 'grows legs of its own'.

Ooops!

Because of these types of influence Cialdini points out that sometimes we will act in ways that are contrary to our own best interests. I'll say that again. These influences mean that sometimes we will act in ways that are contrary to our own best interests.

The indoctrination process

Destructive groups take advantage of this. Remember, mind control is a process. So what the destructive groups do is introduce ideas one step at a time. Once you accept the first step it's much easier to take the second step which is consistent with the first. Now that you have accepted the second part (and justified it to yourself...), in order to be consistent, there is an obligation to accept the third part.

For example, a cult member confesses something in front of the group. The then they feel obliged to accept the punishment that is normally given out for that kind of weakness or sin. Even if the punishment is outrageous or the person would never have tolerated that kind of treatment before.

Or a person goes along to a personal development seminar to learn about communication skills. And the leader begins to build a ' logical chain' starting with the idea that in order to improve communication skills a person needs to change their thinking. In order to change your thinking you need to change who you are. One way to do that is to change your values. He argues that the value of freedom is the most

important. After all, if you have freedom you have access to all the possibilities available to you. Next, an important aspect of freedom is sexual freedom.

Having led the members of his group down this particular path, members now believe that sexual liberty indicates that they are evolving, developing. This, of course, leaves the members very vulnerable to sexual abuse by the leader. After all, having sex with the leader is, he will argue, consistent with, and proof of, having sexual freedom.

(Because such a relationship is uneven in its power structure, it is not possible for informed consent on the part of the student/adept, therefore it is always considered sexual abuse.)

3. Social proof

If we don't know what to do in a given situation, the safest thing to do is what others around us are doing.

For example, an alarm rings in the gymnasium and there is no obvious fire or other danger, but people are still unsure whether they should evacuate or not. So they look at each other to see what everyone else is doing. No-one else, including the instructor, seems concerned, so they continue exercising...

With this type of influence Cialdini notes that in large cities it is not unusual for passersby to ignore two people fighting or a car crash. Initially, it may not register that there is an emergency situation. But when people ask themselves if they should do anything, and they look around and see nobody else taking an interest, they continue on their way without doing anything. There is very little conscious decision making going on, simply a 'click-whirr' response to what everyone else is doing.

Fitting in

In destructive sects, the principle of social proof is used extensively. For example, current members are encouraged to repeat courses for a reduced fee or even free. Then if the group begins to do anything strange, or different, or a bit weird, and the new people are having second doubts, when they look around and see the members acting as if all is normal, they are reassured and will even join in. This often means that they will carry out behaviors that previously they would not have done.

Note too, now that they have carried out these new behaviors, they have to change their thinking and their emotions to be consistent with this! So the weapons of influence begin to stack one on top of the other.

4. Liking

To use this influence Cialdini says that compliance professionals very often try to rapidly form friendships to make use of the power of liking. They recognize if they can get us to like them they have much more influence over us.

The skill of psychopaths

Psychopaths are particularly good at creating masks or personas that they present to people. Robert Hare, an expert on psychopaths, says that one of the first things the psychopath does to create a relationship is to get the person to like them. In fact, they are so good at it, if you find yourself great friends with someone in a very short period of time, you need to re-evaluate the relationship and check if you're actually friends with a psychopath!

This is the same advice about this type of influence Cialdini gives. He says the key to noticing this influence is if you find yourself liking the other person more than we should under the circumstances.

How to create liking

Similarity is one way to create friendship. We like people who are similar to us, similar in dress, similar in beliefs, similar in interests.

And compliments. We like people who compliment us. But be aware, we also like people who praise us even if the positive comments are untrue!! So the person doesn't even have to know us well, just giving us lots of praise means that we tend to like them.

In the introduction of new members to cults, this tactic is called love bombing. They're made to feel special and welcome, and they are led to believe they are intelligent and talented for understanding the ideas and that they will do very well in the group and so on.

Profound effects

Like the other principles of influence Cialdini says that we tend to underestimate the effect liking someone has on our decision making and behavior.

For example, the fact that the members like or love the leader of a cult, is one of the factors that actually makes it very difficult for them to leave. And if somebody tries to point out that the leader is abusing them, they find it almost impossible initially to accept it. In part, because they cannot believe that somebody that they actually like would be manipulating them and doing them harm.

Associations

Another aspect of the liking principle of influence, Cialdini says, is the idea of association.

Advertisers frequently like to associate their product with well-known and well liked celebrities. So people who like the celebrity tend to like the product as well.

Cults will also try to do this. For example, cults often associate themselves with celebrities and politicians and cults that offer courses may have other professionals come in to offer their own courses and by association, it gives credibility and prestige to the cult.

5. Authority

Authority is obviously important in society for maintaining law and order, the satisfactory running of institutions, the peaceful organization of families and so on. Children learn this at a very early age and it remains a very powerful motivator throughout life.

For the children, parents know more than they do and parents are in charge of the rewards and punishments. A similar situation persists into adulthood, only now we have bosses, doctors, government leaders etc.

And it makes sense to defer to them because they have more information or more power than we have. Robert Cialdini says that it makes so much sense, in fact, that we often do it when it makes no sense at all.

When is there authority?

So how do we recognize authority? Think titles, uniforms, cars, letters after your name, tone of voice…

Notice that all these fake-able! There is more authority in a business suit than in a pair of jeans. Anybody can simply sign letters after their name, or call themselves 'Dr.'

Cult leaders and authority

This one is particularly important for cults when you consider that many cult leaders are psychopaths. Robert Hare, an expert on psychopathy quotes one psychopath who says "we lie as often as we breathe."

So it's business as usual for cult leaders to lie about their qualifications and so on. Another important factor here is the fact that psychopaths do not experience guilt or remorse. Nor are they embarrassed if they are caught out in a lie. They simply change the story to continue the manipulation. So it's very easy for them to say whatever they like, and even lie, with an air of authority.

If you have doubts about any particular group, check the credentials of the leaders yourself! The question you ask are "is this authority truly an expert?" and "how truthful can we expect this expert to be?"

6. Scarcity

The idea is "less is best and loss is worst".

If something is scarce and we like it, we want it more. And humans are loss-aversive creatures. We don't like to lose things or miss out on something.

Some people, for example, absolutely have to answer the mobile phone. Because if they don't, well…, they might miss something.

Advertisers used this principal regularly. "The first five people to call will get…", "Get it while stocks last!"

Scarcity works for 2 reasons. If something is scarce it often costs more, and we often use value as a shortcut to assessing quality. The "more expensive equals better" idea.

And when something is scarce we feel we are losing freedoms, and we react strongly to that - by wanting it more.

Doctrines

The doctrine of destructive cults is designed to invoke the scarcity principle. (After all, they have the 'Truth', with a capital T)

The information that the group has is unique. You can't get it anywhere else. This leader works at a personal level unlike anybody else. Other groups have got it wrong. Members may tell new recruits that they need to sign up now or they will miss an opportunity to… Be saved by God, be one of the chosen few, hear this particular lecture given by the leader and so on...

This principle can be tricky to combat because when we hear something is scarce we tend to stop thinking critically and want to act. But what we need to do is think critically, specifically to ask ourselves if this thing is actually scarce or whether the scarcity is being manufactured.

Weapons?

Robert Cialdini calls these weapons of influence because they function outside of the normal awareness of most people. Compliance professionals are very aware of these tactics and will often try and use combinations of them to get what they want. When you consider how powerful each one is, combinations of them may leave a person defenseless!

Robert Cialdini points out repeatedly that our world is so busy that we have to take shortcuts if we are not to be paralyzed by information. This means our decision making has changed somewhat.

We decide based on the most relevant information, often one of the principles described, without a thorough critical assessment. And that's in normal life.

In cult life where critical thinking has been severely diminished, the impact of these principles is amplified…

A must read...

This book is a must read for everybody in order to learn about influence and persuasion, but especially for those who have been victims of destructive mind control. Having read the book you will notice that you are much more aware of when and where these techniques are being used, whether intentionally or not!

34. Mind Control Victims:

What Are The Vulnerabilities That Make Any Of Us Susceptible?

The damage and destruction done to mind control victims can be immense. The experts in mind control suggest that everyone is vulnerable. But nobody willingly joins a cult or goes looking for a relationship with a psychopath. And yet many people are caught every day. So how does this happen? What makes us vulnerable?

The vulnerabilities of mind control victims can be broadly classified as either societal or personal.

Societal factors

In many countries there is little or no legislation against mind control. It seems the lawmakers are not interested, judges and lawyers don't understand it and the police are not trained to recognize it.

More than one psychopath has been released only to kill or rape again, and more than one psychopath has charmed and lied his way out of the courtroom, or used the courts to silence his critics, in order to continue abusing his mind control victims.

Some countries are beginning to recognize that cults and psychopaths are causing so much damage that they have begun to take active steps against them. (Between one

and 4% of the population fit the profile of a psychopath and psychopaths are responsible for more than 50% of major crimes.)

Psychopaths/sociopaths

I mention psychopaths here because they are responsible for much of the destructive mind control that occurs in our society. Of course, not everyone engaged in mind control is a psychopath and not every psychopath is successful in mind control.

Another important consideration is that psychopaths will compete for positions of power. And as judges, politicians and bankers they have considerable influence over what happens in society.

And coincidentally(!) many of the characteristics of psychopaths are now considered talents in our society. Self-confidence, charisma, ability to make decisions and take charge, getting other people to do what you want, are seen as leadership qualities.

The psychopath's coercion and manipulation can easily be mistaken for these qualities and they are often hired into positions of influence within organizations.

And the organizations today where there are rapid changes and mergers, a fast pace, high-risk-high-profit environments, with few constraints or rules, are ideal hunting grounds for psychopaths. Here they have a chance not just to manipulate people but to manipulate the whole organization! The mind control victims are not just their co-workers and bosses, but the whole system.

Personal vulnerabilities

Let's have a look at the personal factors that, when present, make people susceptible to becoming mind control victims.

- Not understanding how mind control works

- Thinking 'it will never happen to me'

- Not understanding psychopaths or sociopaths/ people with no conscience

People who know nothing about mind control are targets for psychopaths. Those who think that they are not susceptible are actually much easier targets for psychopaths!

Mind control victims who have undone the effects with a professional, do understand these things and are much more able to spot the danger signals. They are unlikely to be caught again.

People who have been mind control victims and do not undo the effects are even more vulnerable to being conned by the next manipulator who meets them, because the manipulators recognize people who have been traumatized before!

We are all basically good?

- Thinking there is good in everyone

- Believing everybody can change

- Having incorrect ideas about the type of relationship we can expect

- Ignoring the indicators of violence (be it mental, psychological, emotional or physical)

- Ignoring our intuition

- Not wanting to believe that there are evil people in the world.

Many mind control victims have stayed victims for a long time because of these beliefs and the lack of awareness or action. On top of this...

- Normal people are not used to trickery, deceit and manipulation. Psychopaths are.

- People tend to blame themselves or often get depressed when tricked, instead of fighting back.

We often don't know how to respond to being ill-treated. Too often we politely excuse and justify behavior that is actually inexcusable.

Turning points and times of stress

At points of major change in people's lives they are very vulnerable to being influenced. Many mind control victims have been captured in these moments. Similarly with periods of general discontent.

Such things include:

- At times of low self-esteem, a relationship breakup, failing in exam, losing a job etc.

- Lack of life purpose or meaning

- Difficulties adapting socially or making friends

- Feeling lonely

- Being generally dissatisfied with life

- A low tolerance of frustration or uncertainty

Positive traits?

And interestingly, many mind control victims have been caught because of

- Naive idealism

- A desire to take care of others

- Seeking spirituality

- High regard for authority

Here, the manipulators take advantage of whatever they can, including 'strengths' or characteristics often considered good, in order to abuse their mind control victims.

Weaknesses

- Being in a state of anxiety, stress and depression

- Difficulty saying no, expressing doubts or asking questions

- Substance abuse

- Susceptibility to alter states of consciousness

- Dependent and superstitious types

- Discontentment with society

- Wanting black and white answers and wanting them now

- Preoccupation with what other people think of oneself

Also make people vulnerable and open to being mind control victims.

Can you say that none of these things on this page have never applied to you? That's why each and every one of us is vulnerable and it is highly likely that each of us will cross paths with a psychopath at least once in our lifetime!

What the experts say...

The experts agree that there is not one personality that is more vulnerable to mind control. Everybody has times of crisis in their life, and these moments are used by manipulators to flatter, help, advise and form relationships with people who become their next victims.

Sociopaths are experts in reading people and working out needs, desires, weaknesses and even strengths. And they know how to use these to manipulate people's emotions.

And once they've got the emotions going, well, then you're in a relationship with a sociopath…

People need to learn about the characteristics of a psychopath, about mind control and how to stop it in order not to become mind control victims… But even then there is no guarantee!

Expert psychologists understand that they can still be tricked, even when they know the person in front of them is a psychopath!

35. What To Look Out For To Stop Mind Control

In order to stop mind control the first thing you have to consider is what stage the process is at.

Is the person at the stage where the new ideas are being introduced or have they already made some kind of commitment and changed some ideas and beliefs?

This is an important distinction because once the person has changed their beliefs (and it can occur very early in the process) it's much more difficult to stop mind control and undo the effects.

Let's have a look at the first situation, where a person is meeting the manipulator for the first time, or even the third or fourth time. The manipulator can be a con man, super-salesman or a cult leader or other compliance professional.

Some basic principles

In 1979 Anderson and Zimbardo wrote a paper on how to stop mind control called 'On resisting social influence'.

They point out that when information is deliberately hidden or distorted, it is impossible to make unbiased decisions. People can be led to believe they are making their own decisions and freely choosing. Therein lies the danger, because these kinds of decisions have a profound and lasting effect on our thinking and behavior, simply because of the fact that we think we have used our own reasoning and justifications to make up our own mind.

We are most influence-able in situations that seem normal where we don't think we need to be skeptical. But we need to remember that in sectarian relationships the aggressor is aiming that his victim "suspends his rational judgments and surrenders emotionally to the relationship".

They suggest that mind control "exists not in exotic gimmicks, but rather in the most mundane aspects of human existence: the inner pressure to be bonded to other people, the power of group norms to influence behavior, the force of social rewards (such as smiles, praise, a gentle touch). We influence one another, intentionally or unintentionally, using the most basic principles of social psychology, motivation and social learning. It is people in convincing social situations and not gadgets or gimmicks that control the minds of the people. The more worried we are about being seen as ignorant, uncultured, untalented of boring, and the more ambiguous the events are that are to be evaluated, the more likely we are to take on the beliefs of those around us to avoid being rejected by them."

As humans, we don't like rejection. We are social creatures and want to be part of a community. But there is a difference between maintaining your integrity and sense of self within the group, and being totally taken over by the group as occurs in a destructive sect or cultic relationship.

So where do we draw the line? Is it possible to tell the difference between benign social influences and destructive mind control?

Can we stop mind control?

The answer is yes, and we need to be vigilant and to use the following strategies in various situations in order to be able to stop mind control from happening...

Be on the lookout for discontinuities between somebody's ideals and their actual behaviors. If what they say does not match what they do, beware! (If older members of the group are justifying the leader's incongruencies, this should be even more alarming.)

Observe communications, checking for any hidden agendas behind the obvious content.

Be prepared to disobey simple situational rules or polite social customs if you think it's necessary.

Be on the lookout for situational and group pressures in your physical and social surroundings.

Never do anything unusual or anything you don't want to do just to please others.

Recognize conditions in which you are vulnerable. (Major life events, loss, grief, depression, after failing exams, losing a job and so on.)

Don't be pushed into making a decision. Reserve the right to defer a decision or say no.

If you think you need to get more information, do so. Or look for other sources of information.

Effective persuaders appear to be just like us. Be very wary of excessive emphasis on topics of mutual interest in order to stop mind control before it's too late.

Be wary of requests for a small commitment now… And an open-ended contract for later.

Practice "seeing through" your programmed responses to authority.

Notice who is controlling whom in social situations, and why.

If there is disagreement, state your arguments with conviction. If necessary practice creative arguments why listening to persuasive messages to avoid automatically accepting them.

Strong self-worth can stop mind control

Learn to keep your sense of self-worth even in intimidating circumstances.

As far as possible, do not accept the initial premise that someone is better or more competent than you.

Don't accept generalizations or inadequate explanations to your questions or challenges. Complex communication does not make conclusions acceptable. Be careful too, of false analogies, semantic distortion, euphemisms and jargon.

Be wary of "You won't understand it now but you will in the future". A real expert can explain his field so that even a 10-year-old understands.

Always look for other information and criticisms before joining a group and investing your time and money.

Train yourself and your children to notice the influence "tricks" in the language used in, for example, advertisements.

Avoid negative dialogue about yourself, especially if it is generated by somebody else.

Think of being different as being 'important' rather than inferior.

Emotional manipulation

When our attention is forced on to ourselves by being made to feel bad or wrong or different, we become self-conscious and we begin to wonder what other people will think of us. This makes us more susceptible to mind control.

Effective manipulators control our emotions. Beware of people who create emotion-laden conflicts, especially if they are offering a solution as well!

Avoid situations where someone makes you feel guilty, stupid or awkward.

Do not confess to anything or give information that can be later used against you.

Do not make decisions when you are stressed, especially in the presence of the person causing the stress.

When you're feeling very strong emotions, your ability to think critically is reduced. Do what you need to do to relax, even if it means leaving the situation.

Be very aware of those creating fear and guilt. These are very powerful emotions for influencing beliefs and attitudes.

If somebody claims to be making sacrifices on your behalf, thank them with words. Don't be drawn into a repayment in kind.

Decisions

You should hear warning bells and see flashing lights when someone emphasizes your freedom of choice of the alternatives they have offered.

And also when they point out that you have lost some freedom, but with them you can get it back again. Especially if you feel very strongly that you actually want it.

Revise any commitments and decisions you made in the past if they are no longer beneficial.

Groups

Be very careful if you seem to be making a lot of very good friends very quickly in a new group. If everybody makes you feel special, intelligent and repeatedly tells you that you will do well with them, you need to reassess what's actually happening if you are to stop mind control early in the process.

If you are being offered simple, complete answers to complex problems it should be treated as a warning sign. "Just do this thing and your life will be different!"

If you're told that you need to get out of your mind, or that your problems are based on your thinking, be careful that it is not simply a way of creating a state of passive acceptance.

Programming

The authors recognize that mind control works by manipulating people's programmed responses in social interactions.

Since then Robert Cialdini has written about what he calls the six weapons of the influence. We have covered them in a previous chapter.

This might seem like an incredibly long list of things to have to look out for to stop mind control. But just ask any ex-cult member (who has received professional treatment) about it, and not only will they be able to add to this list, but they will also tell you that this kind of thing should be taught in schools to children so that they not only recognize it but can stop mind control.

But what if somebody is already 'manipulated'? They have already changed their beliefs and behaviors and are committed in a group or are in a relationship with a sociopath. In this case the steps needed to stop mind control are somewhat more complicated.

36. How do you know if you are in a destructive cult?

Below is a list of questions for you if you think that you might be in a destructive group. I suggest that you take some time and do this yourself first. Write down your answers. (It can be as simple as writing yes or no, or even 'y' or 'n'.

Then sit down with someone who is not in the group but who knows you well and go through the questions again with them.

Does it bother you when others talk negatively about the group or the leader to the point that you want/need to convince them about the good things?

Do you think you know more than people who are not in the group?

Do you sometimes think that you know more about others than they know about themselves?

Are you now more critical of people who irritate you?

Do you think that the leader is always right?

Have you changed your values? Or your beliefs?

Do others comment that you are pushy/obsessed about this new group?

Have you started doing a lot of new things/behaviors?

Have you changed your sleep patterns?

Have you noticed that the leader does not like criticism, or does not tolerate 'difficult' questions?

Have you lost your sense of humor?

Do you find that you are very demanding of yourself, and at other times it's the opposite, it's other people who have the problems?

Do you find that you can never quite do things as well as the leader?

Do you feel that if you are not learning it is your responsibility?

Have you started doing things without worrying about the consequences of your actions on others, because they are responsible for themselves?

Do you believe that most of your problems are the fault of others?

Do you believe you are special and you deserve to be treated as such by others?

Have you noticed that many people have left the class?

Were you told that these people were not ready/good enough/intelligent enough for this type of advanced work?

Have you noticed a lot of sexual references?

Do you now believe that your problems are due to your limitations?

Do you feel alone or lonely sometimes?

Do you sometimes feel strong emotions for no particular reason?

Has the group become your biggest financial expense?

Are you expected to give of your time to the group or are you spending more and more time on group activities, even if you believe you are choosing to do it?

Does the leader seem to make all the decisions, even if he has groups or committees for different tasks?

Does your whole life now revolve around the group, instead of the group being one aspect of your life, separate from the other parts?

Have any of your friends or family said that you have changed and that they don't like it?

Have you noticed yourself having contradictory thoughts?

When you first joined the group were you usually with older members and not left on your own?

Have you broken off or distanced yourself in any of your family or close relationships since you started in the group?

Have you noticed that you have worked on a goal in the group but outside when you try to do something about it, you can't?

Have you ever left the group angry and frustrated, even determined never to return, but you went back anyway?

Do you believe that the leader is a friend, a good person, who wants to help?

Does he remind you of your father, grandfather or brother, or someone very close to you?

OR - Does she remind you of your mother, grandmother or sister, or someone very close to you?

Do you feel very grateful or indebted to the leader?

Do they remind you that 'you owe them'?

Do you believe that he can cure many illnesses, including mental illnesses?

Do you think that he can solve any problems people may have?

Do you recommend him to your friends and family ahead of anyone else?

Do you believe he knows what you are thinking or in some way he know more about you than anyone else in the world, including yourself?

Does he have more information about your past and you personally than anyone else?

Have you noticed that you have received contradictory messages about particular ideas?

Have you noticed that when stories are repeated, the details change depending on what he is trying to install in the group?

Do you find it difficult to explain to others the details of exactly what the group is about, or what the benefits are?

Is the leader the final judge, he or she does not answer to anyone?

Do you believe working with this person is a great opportunity to learn?

Would you like to have his abilities?

Do you think that's possible for you?

Have you noticed that sometimes there seems to be one set of rules for the group and another set for the leader?

Or he does not have to do what he tells you you should be doing?

If you have a complaint or criticism, do you feel you shouldn't really tell anyone about it?

When he changes his mind or his plans, is the change always for his benefit, even if it doesn't benefit others?

Is he good at reframing these things, making it out to be of benefit for others, just in different ways?

When he is caught out in a lie or is wrong, does he explain it away easily, without feeling guilt or embarrassment of any sort?

Are you involved in a romantic or sexual relationship with the leader?

If you have said yes to the majority of these questions, the chances are that your ability to think rationally and critically has been affected. Take care with the following questions…

Do you realize that changing your values and identity probably have nothing to do with the reason you joined the group in the first place?

What were your goals when you first joined the group? Are you achieving these? (Not newer ones, or better ones… the original ones!)

How is your life now? Is it getting better or worse? Is there any confusion?

Have you learnt that, on the one hand, you should live your emotions, and on the other, you shouldn't get lost in, or be controlled by your emotions? And at the same time you spend a lot of time in strong emotional states?

Have you checked the credentials of the leader or have you simply accepted his word for it?

Have you said or done things in which you do not believe, just to fit in with the group?

Do you have negative internal dialogue about yourself?

Have you started believing in things since you started in the group that you would not have accepted before?

Have you noticed that you wanted to do something that you learnt in the group but you can't seem to do it?

Have you ever felt bad or guilty for not acting in the way that you learnt in the group?

Have you ever noticed a behavior or idea of the leader that you didn't like, but you quickly justify it or decide that he must have a good reason for it, in order to make it ok for yourself?

Do you think in the same way about your goals when you are in the class/group as when you are away from it?

Have you noticed any incongruencies between the leaders ideas/ideals and his actions? Any differences between what he says he does and what he actually does?

Do you believe that the ideas/beliefs/doctrine of the group is complete, it covers everything and it has the solutions to all problems? Have you ever said "If only everyone knew this, or did this… the world would be different?"

Why do you think the leader is changing your ideas/beliefs to what he thinks is right?

Can you write down (not just say) 3 defects of the leader?

A word of warning!

I suggest that you sit with someone who is not part of the group for the following reason.

When a person is manipulated, under mind control, the actions of the group and the leader are considered normal and even desirable, something to be aimed for. The manipulated person does not see anything wrong with what is going on, or if there is something wrong, they quickly justify it to make it fit in with their beliefs and ideals. They may consider that answering yes to all the questions above is a good thing.

A person who is manipulated but is doubting the group or the leader may find these questions reassuring in that they begin to confirm what they have been thinking.

If you are in this category, start talking to others outside the group, continue reading material about sects and cults. If possible talk to ex-members who believe the group is a cult. The most important thing you can do for yourself, that will speed things up

enormously, is to talk to an expert in cults, someone who understands mind control and who treats people who have left a cult. It is worth it even for one consultation just to understand exactly where you stand.

If you are the outsider reading these questions with someone who may be in a cult, please be patient and be gentle!

For someone leaving a cult and realizing they have been deceived by someone they thought was taking care of them, someone they admired and respected and even loved, it is a very difficult time, trying to disentangle everything that went on while they were in the group.

They need time, support and above all, they need people not to judge them.

And if you are in a position where they trust you enough to go through these questions with them, it would help for you to go along with them to the counselor/therapist/psychologist with them too!

Now What?

After going through the questions if you think you are in a destructive group there are a few things that you need to keep in mind.

It is not your fault. You were tricked, deceived and lied to. It is not your fault.

It does not mean you are weak, stupid or defective in any way. Cults actually look for healthy, energetic, sympathetic people who get things done.

You may be asking yourself how could it happen to you. It's a great question and it will be helpful to know exactly why you were trapped at this point in your life and what particularly made you vulnerable, in order to undo the mind control as well as prevent you from being caught again.

37. Checklist for abusive relationships

Here are some questions for you if you think you might be in a relationship that is abusive. As with the previous list, it may help to go through this list with a trusted friend who may have a different perspective on your relationship and may be able to see things that you cannot.

Do you think that your opinions no longer matter to your partner?

Do you feel that your partner does not take your feelings into account?

Does your partner criticize you a lot?

Does your partner make fun of you?

Do you think they know exactly how to push your buttons to make you feel bad?

Do they use sarcasm?

Does your partner punish you when they are displeased with you?

Do they accuse you of doing what you think they are actually doing?

Do they play on your sympathy and make you feel sorry for them even when you feel that you are the one that has been hurt?

Was your relationship fantastic at the start, but then suddenly it wasn't so great anymore?

Was the change after a particular event, getting married, a pregnancy or moving in together? An event that indicated more commitment on your part?

Did you fall in love very quickly?

Did you find yourself telling your partner lots on intimate details about yourself very early on?

Did you think that you had found someone who really understood you, who accepted you, a soul mate?

Does your partner do hurtful things, apologize profusely, and then do the same hurtful things again?

Are you blamed for everything that goes wrong?

Are you told it's your fault that they behave badly, because they are simply responding to what you do?

Do you feel belittled, as if what you do is not as important as what they do, or your things or your time is not as important as theirs?

Are you treated as inferior? Not as intelligent?

Do you feel your partner control many aspects of your life?

Does your partner control the money, what you can buy, even where you work?

Does your partner keep you away from friends and family, deliberately or in subtle ways?

Have you noticed that you spend less time with other people?

Does your partner threaten you, either with words or weapons?

Do they threaten to end the relationship or even commit suicide?

Is your partner unreliable in not doing things they say they will do?

Do they break promises or change the plans to suit themselves?

Are you ordered to do things instead of asked?

Does your partner use vulgarities or call you names?

Do you have to do things your partner's way or there is hell to pay?

Does your partner have a fierce temper?

Do you find yourself doing things or not doing things in order not to upset them?

Are they aggressive or do they break things when angry?

Does the temper tantrum stop very suddenly and they act very differently, almost as if nothing happened?

Does your partner deny being wrong or blame someone or something else if they make a mistake?

Is your partner very jealous?

Does your partner accuse you of having affairs?

Does your partner treat you one way in private, but act another way in public?

Do others think your partner is a great person, wonderful, marvelous to have around, and when they say so, you think to yourself "If only you knew!"

Are you afraid to tell others what really happens in your relationship because you think they might not believe you?

Are you afraid to tell others what really happens in your relationship in case your partner finds out?

Does your partner force or pressure you to have sex, or do sexual things that you don't want to do.

Does your partner use sex to control you, denying sex to punish you or rewarding you with sex?

Does your partner control where you go, who you see, what you read, what you watch on TV, who you speak to on the phone?

Do you feel you would betray your partner if you left?

Have you thought about leaving but just cannot do it?

Does your partner play mind games with you, e.g., denying that things happened, or getting you to believe they said something when you know they didn't.

Does your partner frequently check up on you when they are not around?

Is your partner using the kids to upset you?

Does your partner tell the children lies about you?

Do your family or friends complain to you that you have changed or that they don't see you very often anymore?

Do you find yourself defending your partner to your family or friends?

Does your partner compliment you and criticize you frequently?

Do you feel dependent on your partner to know how you are?

Are you walking on eggshells a lot of the time?

Does your partner seem to like fighting and arguing?

Does your partner know how to 'hit you when you are down'?

Do you doubt your own judgment or abilities?

Do you feel like you are going mad?

Do you feel helpless or resigned, like nothing you do is going to change things?

38. Dealing With A Sociopath - 9 Important Rules

If you think you are dealing with a sociopath in whatever kind of relationship, business, romantic, therapeutic or educational, here are some rules to follow (as much as is humanly possible!)

1. Get professional help

This is an incredibly useful thing to do and very often overlooked when people are looking for help in dealing with a sociopath or a narcissist. Every step after this one becomes so much easier when you understand the motivations and tactics of the sociopath as well as how mind control works.

A therapist who specializes in this area will help you to understand the steps taken by the sociopath to capture you and manipulate you. This is important for several reasons. Firstly, it means you're able to see the relationship for what it is, something totally false that the sociopath creates in order to manipulate your emotions.

Secondly, the sociopath loses his power over you. He can no longer manipulate you in the same way and the effect he has becomes minimal.

This is really important because sociopaths like to dominate and control. When it becomes obvious to them that they are expending more effort trying to control you then it takes you to keep them away, they typically get fed up and move away to find easier prey.

2. Get professional help

I know! But is so much easier than doing this on your own...

Sociopaths and narcissists install beliefs in their victims that they, the victims, are responsible for what happens to themselves and that they should be able to sort things out for themselves. This is enhanced when the person is isolated from family and friends. It makes it difficult for victims to ask for outside help.

Cult leaders also install a sense of superiority or elitism in the members. They do this firstly because the members become clones of the leader and the sociopathic leader believes he is better than others. And secondly because the members believe they know things that outsiders do not, or they know more than outsiders. Therefore how could someone outside the group help them?

Add to this a contempt for psychiatrists and psychologists because of comments by the leadership, and it becomes very difficult for victims to seek outside expert help in dealing with a sociopath.

3. Cease contact

No contact means no contact. No phone calls, no text messages, no e-mails. As long as you continue to engage the sociopath they will continue to try and manipulate you. They have nothing better to do in their lives. In fact, often they will spend their lives trying to continue to manipulate you!

Sociopaths don't have friends. They perceive others as victims or competitors, and the competitors typically end up as victims too, because the sociopath wants to win at all costs.

Any contact is a sign for them that they still have a chance to continue to manipulate you. It's absolutely useless to want to have the last word or to need to explain how upset you have been. You're just giving them a chance to continue to play with your emotions, and the lack of empathy and guilt gives the sociopath an advantage that you will never have, and that you can never beat.

No ultimatums or power plays either. You are going to lose. Don't waste your energy.

Of course, sometimes it's simply not possible to cease all contact straightaway. Children, business contracts, marriages may need to be sorted out first. But as soon as you realize you're dealing with a sociopath, you need to take steps to protect yourself.

Get copies of important paperwork and computer files. Store them in a friend's house. If you do need to communicate use e-mail and keep all copies. Let their phone calls go to voice mail and save them. If you fear for your physical safety, take whatever steps are necessary. Get professional help if you need to.

Let other people know what's happening, including your boss. Very often when you try and break off contact, a sociopath will try to begin to manipulate the people around you. Get them on your side first, before he tries to make you look bad and/or crazy. You are going to need support!

4. Do not give them more information about you

Any information you give them can and will be used against you. This is important because you are dealing with a sociopath. This means you are dealing with a professional manipulator and you should expect that any personal information you give will be used to manipulate your emotions, blame you for what is happening and/or used to try to continue the relationship.

If you need to communicate, keep it short, stick to the facts (no opinions or personal thoughts) and communicate as if you know your communication is going to be read out in court.

5. Know your weaknesses

Because the sociopath certainly does! And has been taking full advantage of them. At least if you understand what you're weaknesses are it gives you a better chance of dealing with a sociopath because you will recognize when he is pressing your buttons.

And why you're at it, check out your strengths too. Chances are the sociopath has been manipulating you by using them as well! For example, if you are good at helping people, he will want to be helped.

6. Pay attention to your instincts

What are your instincts telling you? It's difficult when dealing with a sociopath because due to the manipulation you have been overriding your instincts. What, for example, was your initial feeling on first meeting the sociopath? Did you give them the benefit of the doubt at the start for whatever reason? This is something you can never afford to do when dealing with a sociopath.

7. Do not try to reform them or give them more chances…

There is no treatment for sociopathy/psychopathy. Often it makes them worse! They simply learn more about people's behavior in therapy sessions and it gives them more ammunition for later.

Somebody who has no conscience has no conscience. They're not going to change. In fact, because of their big egos, arrogance and sense of entitlement, they think they are better than everybody else and see absolutely no reason to change.

And besides, doing this means that you are maintaining contact. See rule 3.

8. Educate yourself

Read books about mind control, about psychopaths and watch movies and videos. Apply the information to yourself. How were you deceived from the beginning? How did they keep the charade going? What techniques were they using? Why did you fall for them? This is all part of your recuperation for undoing the influence these charlatans had on you.

9. Realize that it's not your fault

You have been dealing with a sociopath. You have been tricked, deceived and manipulated. Somebody was deliberately molding your reality, influencing your decisions and directing your thinking and behavior. Whatever happened during this time is not your fault. You did not realize what was going on. You were not fully informed. If you need to, forgive yourself. And realize that you do not have to apologize to other people either, if you don't want to.

Education is the best defense

Learning about mind control and how sociopaths treat others is a great way to prevent yourself from becoming a victim of these social predators.

It is definitely not easy having to deal with a sociopath, and the best thing is to prevent the mind control in the first place.

39. What to do if you think a friend or family member is in a cult

In the past, family and friends of cult members often ended up kidnapping the cult member and deprogramming them by force feeding them information about the cult and the leader. Obviously this was very traumatic and nowadays is not used so much.

The main approach nowadays is a process of 'psycho-education', introducing information to the cult member in a way that allows them to accept it so that they can begin to think for themselves again.

This is best done under the guidance of a professional. And by professional I mean someone who deals exclusively with mind control and cults. This is a very tricky area because you are dealing with psychopaths. They are not normal people, they have no conscience and will do horrible things that you couldn't dream up in your worst moments…!

There are some important considerations when dealing with someone that you think may be in a cult. (They typically won't agree they are in a cult!!)

1. They have a pseudopersonality.

2. This pseudo-personality is designed to defend itself and the leader of the cult

3. Cults install phobias

4. The doctrine acts as the master program for the thinking and behavior of the cult member so they will not be thinking logically

5. Nor will the cult member be making his own decisions, no matter how much they think they are choosing for themselves.

6. The cult leader is often a psychopath, so they can be unpredictable, illogical and can do horrible things that you wouldn't ever consider doing.

Remember that cults create pseudo-personalities that suppress and dominate the normal personality. The best way to think of this is that you are talking to 2 different people at the same time. The pseudopersonality may have very different beliefs, values and behaviors than the normal personality, and even the physical appearance can be different, with the pseudopersonality having glassy eyes, pale skin and little facial movements in extreme cases.

Most of the time you will be dealing with the pseudopersonality but occasionally the real personality may appear.

The pseudopersonality may be very different from the normal personality and a sudden switch in personalities can be very disturbing for family and friends. (This is not the same as multiple personalities where one personality has amnesia for the other/s)

The pseudopersonality will typically repeat (often parrot fashion) words and explanations that have been learnt in the cult. It will defend its beliefs and ideas, often aggressively. It will not tolerate criticism of the group or the leader. It has been trained to recruit members into the group, although the cult member believes they are trying to change others ideas 'for their own good', because the cult members believe they are the best, they are special in some way.

Cults instill fear in the members, fear of leaving the group, fear of outsiders, fear of not doing what the leader want, all designed to control the members. These fears can be conscious, or operating outside the awareness of the members. For example, a cult leader may claim that he does personal development work at a deeper level than others 'in his field', so the cult members come to believe that if they leave the group they will lose out in some way, and this fear is used as an incentive to keep members attached to the group.

Cult leaders also 'inoculate' members against what outsiders are going to say. "You will lose your friends because they are not ready for this kind of 'work' ", or 'Your family will tell you that you have changed or that you are being brainwashed", and, of course, when these things happen it just reinforces the idea that outsiders are not ready (or less evolved, or sinners, or whatever…), and that the leader is all-knowing and powerful and right!

The doctrine becomes like the master program within which the members of a cult think and act. If ever there is doubt or uncertainty for a cult member, the typical response is, 'What would my guru/master/teacher do?' or 'What would the group do?' In this way, the thoughts, decisions and actions of the members are controlled, even when away from the group or the leader. (This is why there are so many cults nowadays where people live in their own homes, keep their jobs, have families etc. It is not necessary to be living in communes, wearing saffron robes etc. to be a cult.)

Cult members typically think they are making their own decisions while nothing could be further from the truth. But when we make our own decisions, we don' t typically like to change them or admit that we made a mistake. And if we believe we are making our own decisions, these decisions have a more profound effect on our behaviors than if we think we have been pushed into something. This means that cult members are fiercely committed to what they are doing and no amount of direct confrontation will shake their conviction.

And psychopaths. Never underestimate what psychopaths are capable of. Just when you think things cannot get any worse, they can get a lot worse!!

These are just some important factors to keep in mind while dealing with someone you think might be in a cult.

So what can you do?

The basic aim with a cult member is to allow the real personality to emerge so that the person can begin to think and reason for themselves so that they can make their own decisions once again.

You want to avoid confrontation because the pseudopersonality is trained to defend itself and the leader and any confrontation will simply push the member deeper into the group.

It's useful to feed information about the group (sometimes slowly!) to the member, information that the member may not have access to because the leader doesn't want it. For example, the past history of the leader, or information you may have from ex-members about the real nature of the group.

Some do's and don'ts

Maintain contact and a good relationship with the cult member. Write, email or call regularly if the member is away from home, even if there is little response.

Make the member feel very welcome when they do return home.

Keep records of communications.

Show the cult member that they are loved, no matter what. Knowing there are people outside the group that care for them (cult leaders will tell them that family is bad, the source of their problems etc.), makes it easier for them to leave.

Find out all you can about the group. Attend meetings or workshops if possible. Be friendly with other members. Get phone numbers or emails if you can and build relationships with them, too. They may give you valuable information too.

Find and talk to ex-members who understand that the group is a cult. They will be your most valuable source of information about how exactly the group works.

Talk to a specialist in cults, a counselor or psychologist who treats ex-cult members to undo the pseudopersonality and the mind control.

Read about cults, mind control and psychopaths. See the bibliography for specific ideas.

Remember to look after yourself and other family members too!

Do have patience with the member. Leaving a cult takes time. Understanding the manipulation and deception takes time for them to get their head around.

Write down what you think the new beliefs of the cult member are. Beliefs about family, friends, work, life, death, the group, the world, etc…

This is important for several reasons. It means you can avoid upsetting them by directly challenging their new beliefs (remember cult members are trained to defend their new beliefs). It also means you can begin to think of questions that indirectly challenge their beliefs.

For example, cult members are often led to believe that their parents are the source of all their problems, or that outsiders are inferior in some way.

You can ask questions about times when they learned things from their parents, or when the parents helped them out of some difficult situation when they were actually the source of all their help!

As regards others being inferior, you will be able to find lots of examples where group outsiders do something better than the group does, or the fact that outsiders can be successful without knowing what the group knows.

They usually believe that life outside the group will be considerable worse in some way. It is incredibly important that they begin to think of and visualize life outside the group. Questions such as 'If you hadn't met this group, what would you be doing now?' or 'If this group did not exist tomorrow, what would you do instead?

You may have to be gently persistent to get them to give answers to these questions. They may try to deflect attention, say the questions are stupid or unreasonable or generally try and not answer. You may need to ask the same question more than once!

Another important thing to do is to give them time to answer these questions. When you ask the question, stop talking. Do not try to help them with the answer. Do not give them prompts. Do not rush them. After asking the question, the next person to speak should

be them. Occasionally it may take more than 5 minutes for them to be able to come up with an answer!

More things to avoid.

Avoid direct confrontation with the cult member. This will push the pseudopersonality to be defensive and will push the member deeper into the mindset of the group. Remember the cult leader has probably warned the members that families may become hostile! You want to provide evidence to the contrary to your loved one.

Avoid telling them that they are brainwashed or that they are in a cult. This is not what they have experienced and it may provoke conflict.

Do not get angry with the member. This may mean biting your tongue, or screaming with your inside voice and not your outside voice!!

Do not directly challenge the member's beliefs or values. They have been taught to actively defend them.

Don't belittle the leader to the member. For the member, the leader is wise, enlightened, god-like, a friend, a helper/guide etc.

Try not to judge the member or the group in front of the member.

Do not give money to the member and especially not to the group.

When talking to the member remember the aim is to allow the real personality to emerge so that you can introduce information that allows them to consider the group from a different perspective.

This is sometimes easy, sometimes difficult.

For example, talking to them about their life before the involvement with the cult can often trigger the real personality to take control. Talking about old times, looking at photos, doing activities that you did together before the cult, having old friends contact the cult member again, sending them a cake baked like grandma used to make, are all useful to have the real personality re-emerge.

Talking about other cults is usually acceptable to cult members. They can usually easily identify and understand the cultic aspects of other groups, and when it's about other groups it's not threatening for them. They can usually be engaged in conversations about what other groups are doing and how it is dangerous. Sometimes that is enough to get them thinking about their own group, especially if they are doubting.

Sometimes talking about other groups is all you can do on a particular day. You are just introducing ideas about how cults work. To do more on the same day would be too much and they would get defensive.

Later the practices of other groups can be compared to their group. When to take this step is a tricky decision and for this reason professional help can be invaluable.

Handling the phobias and fears instilled by the cult can be tricky too. A phobia is an irrational fear, that is to say that the fear present is out of proportion to the actual risk. Cults use many phobias, and members may believe that if they leave the group they will be possessed, there will be spiritual suffering, health problems, death of relatives and friends, destruction of the earth, they will be eternally unhappy and so on.

The cult member must recognize that the fear/phobia exists, that the group has installed this phobia, that people can overcome phobias, and they have to be able to consider what would happen if they left the group. This process can be done in various stages, (doing it all in one go may be too much) and when they can visualize a life outside the group, it makes it much easier for them to leave.

Thought stopping techniques are taught by cults to the members and this prevents them from thinking negative things about the cult. Chanting, praying, certain physical activities are examples and sometimes members activate these when those around them are criticizing the member, the group or the leader.

The best way to deal with them is not to activate them in the first place! This is why it's important not to antagonize the cult member or confront them too aggressively.

Other ideas for conversations

A person is often 'attracted' to a cult for a particular reason. The cult is offering something. But when the person is caught up by the group what they end up getting is something different. This usually means that the person's initial desire or goal is not actually being fulfilled in the group.

For example, someone joins thinking they will earn more money and ends up working for the group for little or no money. Another joins to improve their communication or relationships and ends up devoting hours and hours organizing classes for the leader with no pay, while paying the leader large sums of money for never ending mentoring and tuition.

Bringing this kind of thing to the attention of a cult member can begin to sow the seeds of doubt, which is what you want to do so that the person begins to question the group and its motives. (The motives of a cult are to get money and recruit members but the members are unable to see that.)

Asking the cult member to teach you about the group can be useful for various reasons. You are building rapport with the member (very important – you are genuinely interested in what they are doing without being judgmental), you are gathering information about the group and opening doors to be able to ask probing questions about the group.

Asking about the things that a person does not like about a group can begin to plant seeds of doubt.

Typically, cult members cannot tell you 3 defects that the leader has. This can be very revealing about the level of mind control that is present. (Normally people can list some faults of those around them.) It can also begin to ring warning bells for the cult member if you can get them to realize that it is not normal that someone has no faults.

Cult doctrine deals with absolutes, black and white thinking. Invariably there are contradictions. If you can find and talk about these contradictions it can stimulate the cult victim (because that's what they are!) to begin to evaluate things from a different perspective.

And talking about different perspectives, if you can get the member to begin to consider things from your perspective, or other people's perspectives, this can be a very powerful way to begin to change how they think and process information about the group.

This can be done formally as role playing, where you both switch roles, or it can be done more conversationally by asking questions (at an appropriate moment!) such as 'If you were me, how would you feel about your son/friend/mother doing things with this group?'

Working through the checklists (if the member is willing!) can be a way to get the person thinking about their level of involvement in a group.

Professional help

This is a tricky and delicate area. Getting annoyed, judgmental and critical, (which are normal responses in such a situation!) can cause harm and push the cult member deeper into the group and make it more difficult to get them out.

The help and advice of an expert in this field is invaluable. You can start by going to the expert yourself to understand what is happening and how best you can help the cult member. The aim would be to get the member to eventually go to the expert to undo the mind control and the pseudopersonality.

Cults typically talk badly about such professionals, mental health workers and psychologists. This makes it very difficult for cult members to get help even when they

leave because they have been led to believe that the only help available to them is within the group. (Twisted, huh?)

Some experts like to do 3 day interventions where they get the member to agree to spend 3 days with them, in order to get them thinking so that they can decide not to return to the group. Others prefer to work for one or 2 hours a week, gradually easing the member away from the group.

A great book to read is Steven Hassan's "Releasing The Bonds: Empowering People To Think For Themselves" where he lays out quite explicitly how he works with his clients in order to get them out of cults.

40. Important Things To Consider To Undo Mind Control

Leaving destructive groups

Whether people undo mind control often depends on how they leave the destructive group or cultic relationship. People typically leave in one of three ways. They can be thrown out by the group, they leave of their own volition or they are counseled out.

The first way, being ostracized by the group can be extremely traumatic, especially if they have devoted their whole life to the group. The first thing they typically do is try and win their way back into the group's good graces. Usually they're not aware they are in a destructive group and so make no attempt to undo mind control or its effects.

In the second case, the person may leave because they are disillusioned with the group but are still unaware that they have been in a sect. Consequently, they do not seek help to undo the effects of mind control.

In fact, they may even find themselves involved in another destructive group because this new group seems to be offering what the previous one did not!

The third group, who are counseled out by an expert who understands coercive persuasion, do have a chance to undo mind control experienced in their group.

How is it done?

In the past, deprogramming was used, and often involved more or less kidnapping the person and keeping them detained to undo mind control with them. They were given facts and information about the leader that was previously hidden until they finally began to see through the deception. Obviously this is very traumatic, especially when

you consider that group members have very strong beliefs about the leader and the group. It was not always successful and sometimes members returned to the group.

Nowadays exit counseling is much more the norm. A group member is invited to spend 1, 2 or even 3 days away from the sect to talk to a specialist. The group member spends this time talking to the specialist, sometimes ex-members and some close family members about what's actually going on.

Again they will be given information about the group and the leader that was previously hidden. Ex-members can be especially helpful here in clarifying the contradictions, lies and deception that is going on in the group.

Planning

Obviously, this is a very delicate situation that needs much preparation and planning. Before the meeting, any family members that have contact with the group member can begin to introduce various ideas in the conversations with him or her.

The basic idea is to begin to get the member thinking critically once again. This is fundamental to undo mind control because the very nature of mind control is to shut down reasoning and critical thinking in the victims.

During the intervention, the member is allowed some control over what happens, for example, when there are rest breaks, who he talks to, but it's best that there is no contact with the group.

At the end of the meeting, the aim is for the member to have sufficient information and understanding of how mind control works, how he was deceived and the real intentions of the leader, that he is able to makes his own decision about whether or not to return to the group.

Occasionally people do return to the group, but very often sufficient doubts have been sown that they leave soon thereafter. The usual response is for the person to decide to stay away from the group and to start therapy to undo mind control and get their life back.

The recuperation

Not everyone who has been in a sect will need therapy. However, if you think you have been in a sect, it's worth at least having an evaluation. It's very difficult for a person to know the extent of the effects the mind control has had on themselves. Such is the nature of the beast! And to undo mind control effectively it certainly helps to work with a professional.

Initially, the therapist assesses the extent of the effects of mind control. The person then start into a process of psycho education, really beginning to learn about coercive persuasion and manipulation through reading text books and fiction, and watching films and videos, and in particular, recognizing how these tactics were used to control and manipulate them. They will learn about the nature and character of the manipulator and what his or her motives actually were.

An important part of the process to undo mind control is to dismantle the phobias installed by the group. The phobias are usually installed to control and manipulate the members and obviously they need to be undone to allow the member the freedom to make their own decisions again.

It's often very difficult for group members to go to a professional for help to undo mind control because of the phobias installed by the group!

The system of beliefs and the pseudo-identity also have to be dismantled. This is a process that takes time and is necessary in order to allow the person's true identity to re-establish itself.

Typically it's a very emotional time and can take a lot of time and energy.

Finally, the last part of therapy is to help the person to reintegrate himself or herself into society once again.

Education

Knowledge and education is the main way to undo mind control and indeed, recognition that it exists, understanding how it works and vigilance is the best way to stop mind control from happening in the first place!

Back to top

Authors Note

Thanks for reading. I hope the information presented here allows you to think in a different way about cults and mind control.

Coming out of a cult is a difficult time, both for the ex-member and for those around them. Education is the key. The more information people have and the more they understand mind control and how it works, the less effect it has.

And it does takes time. It took time for the manipulator to build the web of lies and deception, and it takes time to undo that. Patience is required.

But with continued learning and persistent effort, all the horribleness and awfulness passes. And the ex-member gets their life back.

My wish in writing this manual is that it gives people some tools and ideas to help to get their loved ones out of cults. Or if you are, or have been, in a cult that you now have a different understanding of what was happening to you.

If you'd like professional help to leave a destructive group or relationship, or to undo the pseudopersonality that has been imposed upon you, you can contact me via my website

www.decision-making-confidence.com/contact.html

I have written another book, "What Is Narcissism? A practical guide to protecting yourself". Narcissists are another group that use mind control techniques to dominate and abuse others for their own benefit. I have added the first chapter of the book below.

If you have read lots of theory but you are still unsure about exactly what to do in certain situations, you might like my other book, 54 Practical Tips For Dealing With Psychopaths And Narcissists. In it I explain certain aspects of abusive relationships and make suggestions about what specifically you can do to stop the manipulator from taking advantage of you and also how to get yourself out of the bad situation you have been dragged into. I have also included some of this book below for you to have a look at.

You can read more about me and about making your own decisions at http://www.decision-making-confidence.com

Thanks again for reading.

David Mc Dermott

What Is Narcissism? A practical guide to protecting yourself.

This is the first chapter of my book on narcissism so that you can decide if you want to or need to read more.

Chapter 1. An overview of Narcissism

Fascination for self

Originally, narcissism was used for those people who are "in love with themselves", who have a tremendous fascination for themselves, for either their physical or mental attributes. They may be selfish, haughty, self-centered, have high self-esteem, want to be the center of attention, feel superior to others and so on.

The name was derived from Greek mythology. Narcissus was a youth who was cruel and disdainful and as divine punishment he fell in love with his own reflection in a pool of water. He spent the whole time admiring himself but he was deeply dissatisfied as his love was not returned and he eventually faded away and was turned into a flower, a narcissus.

Some believe that children go through a narcissistic phase in the early development of their personality. We will look at this in more detail later.

More sinister

Nowadays, however, when people refer to narcissism it is much more likely they are talking about narcissistic personality disorder. It seems that there are more narcissists and psychopaths now than ever before! Excessive selfishness has existed as long as man has roamed the earth but only in the last couple of hundred years has it been recognized in psychological circles.

It is listed in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders under Personality Disorders. This category is reserved for those disorders which are lifelong problems and the symptoms or characteristics typically start in childhood. People with personality disorders usually fail to adapt well to society and cause various levels of disruption to those around them.

Any discussion of narcissism also involves much debate about whether this antisocial disorder is caused by genetic factors or environmental factors, and it may indeed be a combination of the two.

People with a narcissistic disorder rarely seek treatment. After all, if you thought you were superior to others and received admiration from those around you, would you think there was anything wrong? Treatment is often ineffective and may even make the situation worse. For example, a narcissist who ends up in group therapy simply learns more about human psychology and can use this to improve their manipulation skills!

So what is narcissism exactly?

Those with narcissist personality disorder are more than just selfish or self-centered. First of all, they lack empathy. This means they cannot put themselves in the shoes of others. They don't understand the emotions of others, which means they don't care about others. This allows them to take advantage of others in ways that normal people would never consider.

One of the narcissism traits is that they feel superior to others with an enormous sense of entitlement. With the lack of empathy, this means they will take from others whatever they like... money, time, emotions, sex, energy, attention. They will take everything from you. Without remorse. Without guilt. Without concerning themselves about you whatsoever!

They want to be the center of attention in every situation. They want admiration. What is narcissism without large doses of boasting, bragging, exaggerating and making themselves out to be the best at everything?!

Another of the symptoms of narcissism shows up if they can't have what you have (for example, a skill). In this case they will often set out to destroy you in some way so that you can't use that skill either.

In general they will lie, cheat, exaggerate, deceive and con people to have regular narcissistic supply: praise, adoration, gifts, compliments, reassurance, money, the pleasure of being able to dominate, control or even destroy others etc.

How specifically do they do this?

By using mind control techniques to disguise what their real motives are.

They have been called chameleons because they change their outward appearance to fool their victims. They will often befriend their victims first, because people like and trust their friends.

They have been described as predatory reptiles, because they hunt and destroy their victims with as much emotion as a snake might have.

Narcissistic behavior is designed to manipulate and dominate others in order to be the one with the power and all the possessions. Any threat to their ego or dominance, called narcissistic injury, is typically met with narcissistic rage, a sudden and violent retaliation.

Malignant narcissism

The term malignant narcissism has been coined for the most vicious and destructive creatures in this category. Some people use the term for those with narcissistic personality disorder. Others use the term for those who have psychopathic traits as

well, a hybrid if you like, where there are characteristics of antisocial personality disorder and narcissistic personality disorder.

But don't get lost in the terminology. If you are the victim of mind control, it is often more an academic distinction if your torturer is a narcissist, or a psychopath, or a sociopath. It is much more important that you learn about narcissism and mind control so that you can undo the negative effects.

Other types:

Acquired situational narcissism is a form of narcissism that occurs when there is sudden wealth, fame and celebrity status. The individual has so much attention placed on them that they come to believe that they are actually superior to others. It is said that they spend so much time having people look at them that they stop looking at other people.

The somatic narcissist, as the name suggests, places emphasis on the soma, or body. They focus their attention on their physical attributes, wanting admiration for how good-looking they are, how good they are at sex, for their physical abilities and so on. Nevertheless, it's important to remember that they still play mind games and are usually using mind control to get what they want!

Healthy narcissism is a term sometimes used for the normal development of mature, healthy self-esteem that allows individuals to navigate the ups and downs of ordinary life and relationships.

Subclinical narcissism is the presence of narcissistic traits in otherwise normal people. They are said to be happier with a greater sense of wellbeing than others. And obviously they are less prone to anxiety and depression. They also tolerate stress well. The Narcissistic Personality Inventory is used to measure this type of narcissism.

Narcissism in the workplace

It has been suggested that all psychopaths are narcissists but not all narcissists are psychopaths. You only have to consider the state of the world today, especially the financial system, to realize that there is considerable narcissism in the workplace. Large corporations are ideal hunting grounds for these predators as well.

And the number of politicians who are regularly being unmasked as power hungry thieves and/or sexual deviants suggests that our society has been subverted for the benefit of the psychopaths and narcissists who have taken power for themselves.

This is just one area that has been affected by the culture of narcissism.

How to spot narcissism...

Many people who are living with a narcissist are unaware of the nature of the creatures they are with. However, they will be suffering the effects of the abuse: dependency on the narcissist, inability to make their own decisions, loss of self-esteem, isolation from friends and family and inability to leave the relationship. They often need outside help to realize what is going on and the nature of narcissistic abuse. And even if they do leave the relationship, without professional help, the effects can last for years, especially children of narcissistic parents or a narcissistic mother.

In dealing with a narcissist the victim needs to learn about the narcissist, their motivations and desires. And they need to learn about mind control, how it works, what techniques were used against them and what effects the techniques had on them. Only then can they hope to stop the mind control and take their lives back...

The best situation is to be able to spot narcissistic people so you can avoid them altogether!

So let's begin that education…

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If you want to know more you can read more about mind control here

If you think you'd like professional help to leave a destructive group or to get out of a mind control relationship, or to undo your pseudopersonality, you can contact me at www.decision-making-confidence.com/contact.html

Thanks for reading,

David.

54 Practical Tips For Dealing With Psychopaths and Narcissists

From the introduction…

By the time most of my clients reach me, they have already spent months or even years trying to sort things out; they are unable to get the manipulator 'out of their heads' and they are still in the process of trying to wrestle back control of their lives. Most have already been to other therapists, many of whom do not understand mind control and psychopathy.

These people are well versed in what it's like to be on the receiving end of mind control at the hands of psychopaths and narcissists. They have read or heard other people's stories and they recognize the similarities.

What they are missing is the knowledge of practical ways to deal with what is going on. They don't have the 'how-to' in order to know what is the best way to get rid of the manipulator; they don't know how to respond in certain situations and most of the time the manipulator can still get them to do and say things that they don't want to do.

I wrote this book to provide practical suggestions for people who are still struggling with the effects of having been manipulated by a psychopath or narcissist. Whether you are still in a relationship with one, or have left the situation but recognize that you are still having difficulties, there are plenty of ideas that you can start using straight away.

Each tip covers a specific aspect of a relationship with a psychopath or narcissist. In order to be able to change things, it helps enormously to understand something about the dynamics of the situation, the motivations of the manipulators and the effects of the techniques being used against you.

To this end, I give information about your situation, about why the manipulators do things the way they do, what effect it has on you, their attitudes, how specifically they are manipulating normal human relationship patterns and so on. Understanding these things means that you can begin to see the patterns of abuse and how the manipulator is taking advantage.

Understanding the background makes it's easier for you to make sense of why the manipulators treat you the way they do. It also gives you a new framework for understanding the suggested behavioral changes and how these practical tips fit into the overall strategy of getting you out of the bad situation…

And here are a couple of the tips for you…

1. Your phone

Your phone rings. You know it's him/her. You catch your breath. You feel your heart beating hard. You really don't want to answer but you are rushing to get your phone. You know if you don't answer, there will be trouble later.

This situation is all too common when dealing with a manipulator. Basically they train their victims to answer quickly because they don't want to be kept waiting. Their time is more valuable than yours and they have something they want and they want it now.

Have you noticed, too, that this rule does not apply to them? They have no obligation to answer their phone straight away, and if you challenge them about it, they have an excuse that they consider valid and acceptable. (You are never allowed to use the same excuse, though!)

This particular maneuvre keeps you busy, keeps you on your toes, keeps you following their orders, allows them to keep tabs on you, reinforces your obedience, keeps you on an emotional roller coaster and keeps you in fear of them.

However… you do not have to answer your phone straight away.

The thought of not answering may cause fear when you think about it, but let's examine it in more detail.

If you are reading this newsletter, you know what you are dealing with and you are working on getting out of the relationship. (You are, right? Right??) It's time to stop running around after them all the time and take some time for yourself. You need time to pause, reflect, and learn what is happening, so that you can get away.

If you are already separated, there is no reason you should be running to get your phone to answer them. The phone is for your convenience, not theirs. And besides, every time they speak to you, they get a chance to continue the control and the abuse. Much better to tell them that they need to email or text you from now on. This has several advantages, including not being triggered hearing their voice as well as having everything in writing in case you are going to court. (It also means that you have to watch what you write, too!) And if they get angry, so what? You are not living with them any more so you don't have to deal with it. It also lets them know that they are losing control over you.

And if you have left a cult, any time the leader or members call you, they will be trying to get you back. You are better off not listening to that kind of pressure at all, no matter how well you think you can handle it.

You are even allowed to turn your phone off for hours at a time, if you are out, doing sports, at a friend's house or whatever. If any one else calls you, you will have a message or a notification of a missed call and you can call them back at your convenience.

Remember it's your phone, you can choose to whom you speak on it, and when. And you can ignore it when you like, too. This is how people who are in normal, healthy relationships think about their phones. You have every right to do the same.

4. Time pressure

Psychopaths and narcissists have a way of pressuring those around them into doing things quickly.

They expect you to answer your phone each and every time they ring. If you haven't answered an email in 2 hours, there is a second one pushing you to respond. In divorce proceedings, they frequently threaten court action if you don't respond to their solicitors' letters within 48 hours.

Meals have to be on time. When they want an errand done, it has to be now.

If they are kept waiting, you are the one who is selfish. Their work is more important than yours. Their time is more valuable than yours.

There are different strategies the psychopaths and narcissists use to achieve this result.

In cults, the leader is so revered that the members typically automatically jump when they know the leader wants something. The cult leader will have spent much time putting himself on a pedestal in the members' heads. Any cult member wants to have the approval of the leader and doing 'little jobs', and doing them quickly, is a way of ingratiating themselves with the leader.

However, there is also fear in play here, although the cult member would not admit it (oftentimes because they are not aware of it until after they leave the group). The cult member wants to avoid upsetting the leader in any way and the leader will have made it known on many occasions that he should not be kept waiting.

In intimate relationships, too, psychopaths and narcissists will express their displeasure early on in the relationship about being kept waiting. Remember they consider themselves superior to others and expect to have special treatment. Part of that special treatment is not having to delay gratification, which they don't do well.

Some psychopaths and narcissists also know that by getting people to do things quickly for them, the person has less time to reflect on and consider their situation.

A person who is constantly under time pressure, with the threat of being shouted at if they miss deadlines, has no spare time to sit and think if they themselves are benefitting from the situation, if they want to continue as they are or even whether they would be better off out of the relationship. For this reason the psychopaths and narcissists often keep people very busy (both in intimate relationships and in cults).

So what to do about it…?

The first thing is to recognize that it is occurring, that you are actually running around at the beck and call of the manipulator.

Then it's useful to see how they get you to do that. Is it fear of punishment? Fear that you will lose something? Seeking their approval? Because once you can see the tactic, it's easier not to get caught by it.

The next time it happens, being aware of the tactic gives you more options in how to respond. (Loosening the hold the manipulator has on you may be necessary in order to completely stop doing some behaviors.)

And at the same time, you need to be working on getting out of the relationship.

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If you want to know more you can read more about mind control here

If you think you'd like professional help to leave a destructive group or to get out of a mind control relationship, or to undo your pseudopersonality, you can contact me at www.decision-making-confidence.com/contact.html

Thanks for reading,

David.

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You can find reviews of many of these books here

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