

Controlling & Abusive relationships:

After studying the tactics used by cults and brainwashing sects it became very apparent to me that many of the techniques are employed by controlling men in abusive relationships with women. If you are trapped in an intensely controlling or abusive marriage or relationship you will be familiar with the range of controlling tactics employed by your controlling partner. Subtle and almost invisible tactics are employed to keep you on the wrong foot, isolated, and dependent on him. Consider these typical tactics that are used by cults as much as by pathologically controlling and abusive men.

Love-bombing: This involves his smothering you with intense and-over-the-top 'love' soon after his abusive behaviour. This 'love bombing' serves to confuse you into forgetting his bad behaviour and to feel guilty about your ever doubting him. 'How could you think badly of him when he obviously loves you so much', you are led to think. This bombing-you-with-love is, however, only temporary and intended to distract you from the real truth and to make it even harder for you to leave him. Love-bombing also makes you doubt yourself and your feelings so much so that even though he may have humiliated you the night before, he makes you feel guilty for rejecting his loving advances the next day. It does-your-head-in because there is no acknowledgement of the effects of his bad behaviour. His love-bombing actually ignores it all and forces you to accept him again without ever dealing with his problem.

Perfection Rituals: This is a subtle tactic of control where the abuser forces you to do small things in order to get them perfect. This trivial enforcement is a typical tactic of brainwashing where the controller focus on small imperfections and gets the abused to comply. The effect is to gain more control over the victim's emotional life.

Disabling Self-esteem: When the message of the controller is weak it is necessary to gradually break down the self-esteem of the controlled. It is then easier to get her to believe it. Again, a weak message is easier to sell to a broken person. Therefore an abuser will gradually try to wear down the self-confidence of his victim as a means of getting her to believe that the problems in their relationship are because here is something wrong with her.

Extreme Privacy: Controlling and abusive men gradually try to isolate the woman from her friends and family by trying to focus on their flaws or else by trying to prevent their partners from meeting up with them. He realises that his wife's friends will inhibit his control and see him for what he is.

Life Re-evaluation: The abusive and controlling personality tries to get his partner to gradually re-evaluate her life in such a way as to erode her confidence in her past decisions and relationships. Up until meeting the abuser she will have felt good about herself and her life, but gradually he will have got her to re-evaluate all of her previous assumptions in such a way as to erode her confidence. "Do you not realise that your family have always been crazy?" he will ask.

Cult of Confession: The cult of confession involves getting his partner to gradually confess to him all her flaws and to seek forgiveness for them. Her confession follows from his pseudo-interest in her feelings and experiences through which he gets her to reveal more and more about herself. Through this 'confession' he creates a dependency on him as he uses her confessions against her. Once he gets her to confess in this way he has control over her.

Persuasion Persistence: This is when he gradually wears you down and wears down any wish or intention you have to escape from the relationship. This never-ending forceful entrapment makes it almost impossible for you to find an easy way out. His force of personality and persuasion entraps you.

Personality Change: His effect on you will be such that your friends and family will say that you have changed, that you are not the same. Your isolation and your ending of relationships will illustrate how he has gradually taken control of your life. Privately your family will ask you what is the matter but you will find yourself defending him to the hilt – despite yourself.

Family Events: He will try to prevent you from going to family events or else when you do create some sort of a scene or problem that takes all the joy and pleasure from the event. This again is part of his attempts to isolate you and his insecurity when you are in the embrace of friends and family.

Building The Exit Cost: When things begin to deteriorate he will build the cost of your leaving the relationship to such an extent that you will feel it to be well nigh impossible to consider ending the relationship. He will threaten to take the children from you, to hunt you down, to make your life a misery to such a degree that you believe him and believe that the cost of exiting from the relationship will be so severe as to be not worth contemplating it.

Phobia Doctrine: In these ways his doctrine forces you to create a phobia about leaving or getting help. "People will realise that you are crazy," he will argue. And, over time, you will have come to believe it.

Identity Guilt: He will, over time, create a real sense of guilt in you about just being yourself. You will feel guilty about just being you. You will have almost forgotten what it was like to be yourself; the ease and joy that was part of being you will have gradually faded away.

The message for today is to be aware of what happens in an intensely controlling relationship and how, almost unbeknownst to yourself, your esteem, identity, and self-belief will have been eroded. See it for what it is. Don't forget who you are.