

HOW TO DETERMINE IF A GROUP IS A DESTRUCTIVE CULT

Q) Anybody can unfairly attack a group they disagree with by calling it a cult or saying they are using coercive mind control. How does FACTNet prevent this type of problem and determine fairly whether or not a group is a cult?

A) dikaosune.com uses specific criteria to determine if a mind control system has been used, and does not suggest organizations are destructive or dangerous cults without careful research and determination that the evidence fits definite criteria. These criteria are threefold.

The first set of criteria comes from the group's use of a specific set of mind control tactics. Please see "A technical overview of mind control tactics" for a shorter version. These two documents are derived from the work of professor emeritus at the University of California at Berkeley the acknowledged leading authority in the world on mind control and cults.

The second set of criteria has to do with defining other common elements of mind control systems, as defined by Robert Jay Lifton's eight point model of thought reform. Please see "Robert Jay Lifton's Eight Point Model of Thought Reform". If most points in this model are being used in a cultic organization, it is most likely a dangerous and destructive cult.

The third set of criteria have to do with defining common elements of destructive and dangerous cults. The following section will help clarify what some of those specific elements and criteria are.

Common Properties of Potentially Destructive and Dangerous Cults

The cult is authoritarian in its power structure. The leader is regarded as the supreme authority. He or she may delegate certain power to a few subordinates for the purpose of seeing that members adhere to the leader's wishes and roles. There is no appeal outside of his or her system to greater systems of justice. For example, if a school teacher feels unjustly treated by a principal, appeals can be made. In a cult, the leader claims to have the only and final ruling on all matters.

The cult's leaders tend to be charismatic, determined, and domineering. They persuade followers to drop their families, jobs, careers, and friends to follow them. They (not the individual) then take over control of their followers' possessions, money, lives.

The cult's leaders are self-appointed, messianic persons who claim to have a special mission in life. For example, the flying saucer cult leaders claim that people from outer space have commissioned them to lead people to special places to await a space ship.

The cult's leaders center the veneration of members upon themselves. Priests, rabbis, ministers, democratic leaders, and leaders of genuinely altruistic movements keep the veneration of adherents focused on God, abstract principles, and group purposes. Cult leaders, in contrast, keep the focus of love, devotion, and

allegiance on themselves.

The cult tends to be totalitarian in its control of the behavior of its members. Cults are likely to dictate in great detail what members wear, eat, when and where they work, sleep, and bathe-as well as what to believe, think, and say.

The cult tends to have a double set of ethics. Members are urged to be open and honest within the group, and confess all to the leaders. On the other hand, they are encouraged to deceive and manipulate outsiders or nonmembers. Established religions teach members to be honest and truthful to all, and to abide by one set of ethics.

The cult has basically only two purposes, recruiting new members and fund-raising. Established religions and altruistic movements may also recruit and raise funds. However, their sole purpose is not to grow larger; such groups have the goals to better the lives of their members and mankind in general. The cults may claim to make social contributions, but in actuality these remain mere claims, or gestures. Their focus is always dominated by recruiting new members and fund-raising.

The cult appears to be innovative and exclusive. The leader claims to be breaking with tradition, offering something novel, and instituting the only viable system for change that will solve life's problems or the world's ills. While claiming this, the cult then surreptitiously uses systems of psychological coercion on its members to inhibit their ability to examine the actual validity of the claims of the leader and the cult.