

RELIGIOUS TRAUMA



RESOURCE GUIDE

KC DAVIS struggle
care

FINDING COMMUNITY

Searching for a Church: Church Clarity

Church Clarity is crowd-sourced database of local congregations that we score based on how clearly they communicate their actively enforced policies. Our mission is to increase the standard of clarity throughout the Church Industry. We are not advocating for policy changes; we are standardizing church policy disclosure, whatever the policy or type of church in question. People deserve to know the truth. Powerful institutions tend to operate in ambiguity, rather than in clarity. And churches are no exception. Many churches fail to disclose their actively enforced policies on their websites. Can a woman preach? Will you officiate a same-sex wedding? Hire a queer pastor? Answers to these questions often remain elusive. Ambiguity enables those with power to operate without accountability and cause real harm. Many people invest years of their lives into a church community, only to later discover the truth about the church's policies, and end up feeling betrayed, deceived and "bait-and-switched." Search a church here to see their ranking re: LGBTQ and women <https://www.churchclarity.org/>

Online Communities

Facebook Groups:

- Living Life Unfundamentalist
- Deconstructionists Podcast FB Group
- Mental Health for Exvangelicals
- Evangelical Universalism

Subreddits:

- Open Christian
- Radical Christianity
- Exvangelical

Subscription Based

- You Have Permission Podcast Group
- BadChristian (BC) Club
- Bible for Normal People Slack
- Pasterds Pub

Note: Struggle Care is not affiliated with nor does it officially endorse any of these communities. Please use caution when deciding what communities are healthy for your journey.

THERAPY (USA)

Resources for Religious Trauma & Adverse Religious Experiences
<https://www.roomtothrive.com/resources>

Open Path Psychotherapy Collective

A non-profit nationwide network of mental health professionals dedicated to providing in-office mental health care—at a steeply reduced rate—to individuals, couples, children, and families in need. www.openpathcollective.org

National Alliance on Mental Illness

NAMI, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, is the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to building better lives for the millions of Americans affected by mental illness. www.nami.org

Therapy for Black Girls

Therapy for Black Girls is an online space dedicated to encouraging the mental wellness of Black women and girls. www.therapyforblackgirls.com

The Loveland Foundation

Loveland Foundation is committed to showing up for communities of color in unique and powerful ways, with a particular focus on Black women and girls. Our resources and initiatives are collaborative and they prioritize opportunity, access, validation, and healing. We are becoming the ones we've been waiting for. www.thelovelandfoundation.org

RECOVERING FROM HIGH-CONTROL GROUPS

Freedom of Mind Resource Center ~ For over 40 years, founder Steven Hassan has helped individuals and families leave and recover from destructive groups and relationships. Steven knows cults. He's an ex-member himself. Freedom of Mind offers services to help you or help a loved one get out of a controlling situation and heal from the effects of undue influence and brainwash. freedomofmind.com

International Cultic Studies Association ~ The ICSA is a hub of information for people recovering from or learning about cults. They offer workshops for those born or raised in cultic environments and have an active YouTube channel with helpful videos for ex-members, their loved ones, and mental health professionals alike.

Spiritual Abuse Resources ~ SAR (run by ICSA) offers helpful information for individuals recovering from what they call Post-Cult After Effects. They also provide resources for concerned loved ones, as well as guidelines for both religious professionals, whom many ex-cult members turn to for safety, and mental health professionals, who can sometimes be ill-equipped to understand or help those fleeing spiritual abuse.

Cult Recover ~ Roseanne Henry is a therapist who has helped cult survivors for over 25 years. Roseanne offers consulting for ex-cult members by phone or Skype, and if you're in Colorado, the option to meet with her in person is available as well. She also runs recovery workshops.

Hope Valley Counseling ~ UK-based Dr. Gillie Jenkinson specializes in post-cult counseling and working with survivors of spiritual and sexual abuse. She offers distinct approaches for the different needs of first and second-generation former cult members. If you're outside the UK, you can still work with her by Skype or phone.

EnCourage Survivors of Cults and Abuse ~ EnCourage exists to help ex-cult members get professional counseling by subsidizing the cost of therapy for those who cannot pay. They are UK-based and require that the counselors are Approved Service Providers (ASP). All are thoroughly checked and approved by EnCourage. Want to help? Donate!

Jim Moyers, Therapist ~ Serving the San Francisco Bay Area, Jim is a former Seventh-Day Adventist who has a particular interest in helping others who come from fundamentalist and cultic backgrounds. See his list of resources for ex-fundamentalists and former cult members, especially those from cults disguised as churches.

<https://www.jimmoyers.com/spirituality/resources.html>

IS IT A CULT?: HIGH CONTROL GROUP CHECKLIST

We suggest that you check all characteristics that apply to your or your loved one's group, then print this browser page for future reference. You may find that your assessment changes over time, with further reading and research.

- The group is focused on a living leader to whom members seem to display excessively zealous, unquestioning commitment.
- The group is preoccupied with bringing in new members.
- The group is preoccupied with making money.
- Questioning, doubt, and dissent are discouraged or even punished.
- Mind-numbing techniques (such as meditation, chanting, speaking in tongues, denunciation sessions, debilitating work routines) are used to suppress doubts about the group and its leader(s).
- The leadership dictates sometimes in great detail how members should think, act, and feel (for example: members must get permission from leaders to date, change jobs, get married; leaders may prescribe what types of clothes to wear, where to live, how to discipline children, and so forth).
- The group is elitist, claiming a special, exalted status for itself, its leader(s), and members (for example: the leader is considered the Messiah or an avatar; the group and/or the leader has a special mission to save humanity).
- The group has a polarized us- versus-them mentality, which causes conflict with the wider society.
- The group's leader is not accountable to any authorities (as are, for example, military commanders and ministers, priests, monks, and rabbis of mainstream denominations).
- The group teaches or implies that its supposedly exalted ends justify means that members would have considered unethical before joining the group (for example: collecting money for bogus charities).
- The leadership induces guilt feelings in members in order to control them.
- Members' subservience to the group causes them to cut ties with family and friends, and to give up personal goals and activities that were of interest before joining the group.
- Members are expected to devote inordinate amounts of time to the group.
- Members are encouraged or required to live and/or socialize only with other group members.

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SAFETY

This is a resource list of organizations that serve those seeking safety after challenging their family or religious belief systems. Whether you are being kicked out, escaping a forced marriage, or running from religion-sanctioned abuse.

Domestic Shelters ~ Many religions condone domestic violence. You don't need to submit anymore. Find safety now for you and your children.

Locate a shelter near you. National Domestic Violence Hotline ~ 24/7 phone and chat services to help you get to safety.

Call: 1-800-799-7233 (USA)

Safe Place ~ Are you under 18 and don't know where to turn for help? Start with finding a free place to stay and counseling services.

Find a safe place

Text "Safe" with your address, city, and state to 44357 (4HELP) (USA)

RAINN ~ The Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network is America's largest anti-sexual violence organization. Many religions both condone and cover up sexual violence. If you've been assaulted and you need help, call their hotline or chat.

Call 1-800-656-HOPE (USA)

Unchained At Last ~ Helping girls, women, and anyone else in the U.S. facing a forced marriage or child marriage, Unchained will help you plan your escape (including international escapes), find safe shelter, provide emergency financial assistance, and provide you with psychotherapy and career counseling - for free. <https://www.unchainedatlast.org/> (USA)

Karma Nirvana ~ This UK-based nonprofit offers help for those facing abuse, threats of disownment, and arranged marriages. Their Survivor Ambassador Programme gives you practical life skills to rebuild your life. Call their helpline if you need urgent assistance.

Call 0800 5999 247 (UK)

Holding Out HELP* ~ If you've left a polygamous group like FLDS, this nonprofit will help you find housing, finish your education, and provide counseling and other assistance. *This is not a secular organization. (USA)

Call: 801-548-3492

Email: help@holdingouthelp.org

CRISIS CARE (USA)

Suicide:

1-800-273-8255

If you're thinking about suicide, are worried about a friend or loved one, or would like emotional support, the Lifeline network is available 24/7 across the United States.

Suicidepreventionlifeline.org

LGBTQ+ Crisis

Trevor Project

Crisis counselors are trained to answer calls, chats, or texts from LGBTQ young people who reach out on our free, confidential and secure 24/7 service when they are struggling with issues such as coming out, LGBTQ identity, depression, and suicide.

Text 'start' to 678-678

Call 1-866-488-7386

Substance Use:

Next Distro:

An online and mail-based harm reduction service designed to reduce opioid overdose death, prevent injection-related disease transmission, and improve the lives of people who use drugs.

www.Nextdistro.org

(800) 484-3731

If you are going to use by yourself, call us! You will be asked for your first name, location, and the number you are calling from. An operator will stay on the line with you while you use. If you stop responding after using, the operator will notify emergency services of an "unresponsive person" at your location.

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