



BRAINWASHING--WHAT IS IT?

#2 CULT OF CONFESSION

A Series on Lifton's* Eight Points of Thought Reform

Another of the eight points of mind control is **Cult of Confession**. One way to pull the reins in and ensure censorship and thought control is to require all members to “tattle” on each other if they witness any perceived “sin.” Failure to report “sinners” to the leaders can result in loss of privileges, admonishment, shaming and counseling, not to the “sinner,” but *to the member who did not report the offender*.

What constitutes a “sin” is always defined by the cult leader(s) and does not necessarily reflect society or cultural norms. For instance, some cults routinely engage in sex with children and may not find this sinful, whereas other cults may find something as benign as speaking to someone outside the group a serious transgression.

This tattling expectation develops a level of mistrust amongst the members and creates a “better her than me” mentality. As a result, you never know who your real friends are and you take care never to divulge too much personal information. Cult members live in perpetual anxiety that their real “sinful” thoughts or inclinations may someday be revealed.

Friendships in cults are like breast implants. On the surface it looks great but underneath you know they are not entirely real.

*Robert J. Lifton, *Thought Reform and the Psychology of Totalism—A Study of Brainwashing in China*

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