

Christianity is a Mental Disorder

Robert J Lifton wrote a book on the way cults recruit and indoctrinate their members. He found the following eight elements to be intrinsic in the process of converting a person to a new and absolute philosophy.

I contend that at least 7 of these 8 elements are also intrinsic in the process of harvesting new converts into Christian churches. The only significant difference is the level of coercion in the first element.

Coercion is not used by Christian churches today to harvest converts, but it has been used by Christians in the past. Also, once in a monastery or nunnery environment, neophytes are strictly controlled by martinets.

- ✓ Milieu Control: The purposeful limitation of all forms of communication with the outside world, sleep deprivation, a change in diet, control over who one can see and talk to.
- ✓ Mystical manipulation: Teaching that the control group has a special (divine) purpose and that the subject has been chosen to play a special role in fulfilling this purpose.

- ✓ Need for purity: Convincing the subject of his former impurity (before joining the control group) and the necessity of becoming pure or perfect as defined by the group.
- ✓ Confession: Getting the subject to let down barriers and openly discuss innermost fears and anxieties.
- ✓ Sacred science: Convincing the subject that the control group's beliefs are the only logical system of belief and therefore must be accepted and obeyed.
- ✓ Loading the language: Creating a new vocabulary, by creating new words with special meanings understood only by members of the group, or by giving new and special meanings to familiar words and phrases.
- ✓ Doctrine over persons: Convincing the subject that the group and its doctrine take precedence over any individual in the group or any other teaching from outside it.
- ✓ Dispensing of existence: Teaching the subject that all those who disagree with the philosophy of the control group are doomed.

Thought Reform and the Psychology of Totalism: A Study of Brainwashing in China

Robert J Lifton

These are the symptoms of delusional disorder:

- ✓ The patient expresses an idea or belief with unusual persistence or force.
- ✓ That idea appears to exert an undue influence on the patient's life, and the way of life is often altered to an inexplicable extent.
- ✓ Despite his profound conviction, there is often a quality of secretiveness or suspicion when the patient is questioned about it.
- ✓ The individual tends to be humorless and oversensitive, especially about the belief.
- ✓ There is a quality of centrality: no matter how unlikely it is that these strange things are happening to him, the patient accepts them relatively unquestioningly.
- ✓ An attempt to contradict the belief is likely to arouse an inappropriately strong emotional reaction, often with irritability and hostility.

- ✓ The belief is, at the least, unlikely.
- ✓ The patient is emotionally over-invested in the idea and it overwhelms other elements of their psyche.
- ✓ The delusion, if acted out, often leads to behaviors which are abnormal and / or out of character, although perhaps understandable in the light of the delusional beliefs.

I couldn't help noticing that this is a very accurate description of every born-again Christian I have ever known.