

RITUAL ABUSE

DEFINITIONS

GLOSSARY

THE USE OF MIND CONTROL



MARCH 15, 1991

**REPORT OF THE RITUAL ABUSE TASK FORCE
LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMISSION FOR WOMEN**

INTRODUCTION

Ritual abuse is a serious and growing problem in our community and in our nation. Ritual abuse is not a new problem, but society is only just beginning to recognize the gravity and scope of this problem. We are all in need of education on this issue. Parents need to be educated about the hallmarks of this abuse occurring in preschools and day care centers. Many professionals are seeing victims of ritual abuse and not yet recognizing the patterns of this abuse. The concept of ritual abuse, that groups of adults would terrorize and torture children in order to control them, is frightening and controversial, raising for all of us problems of denial and fear of the consequences of such information.

Despite detailed evidence of ritual abuse coming from child victims and their families, from adult victims, and from the professionals working with them, and despite the remarkable consistency of these reports both nationally and internationally, society at large resists believing that ritual abuse really occurs. There remains the mistaken belief that satanic and other cult activity is isolated and rare.

The Commission for Women recognized the need for education and the dissemination of information about this issue. In February of 1988, the Task Force on Ritual Abuse was formed. The Task Force is made up of professionals from the fields of medicine, mental health, education, law enforcement, prosecution, and religion, serving together with adult survivors and parents of child victims. All are volunteers and give their time and energy to this work unstintingly.

This report is the result of months of work and I wish to express my deep appreciation to the members of the Task Force who participated in its writing.

My special thanks to Catherine Gould Ph.D. and Lyn Laboriel M.D. for their outstanding contribution to this project and to the work of this Task Force. My thanks also to David Sielaff for his contribution to the design and typesetting of this report.

I also wish to thank the Board of Supervisors of Los Angeles County for their support of our work.

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DEFINITIONS

CONCISE DEFINITION

Ritual abuse is a brutal form of abuse of children, adolescents, and adults, consisting of physical, sexual, and psychological abuse, and involving the use of rituals. Ritual does not necessarily mean satanic. However, most survivors state that they were ritually abused as part of satanic worship for the purpose of indoctrinating them into satanic beliefs and practices. Ritual abuse rarely consists of a single episode. It usually involves repeated abuse over an extended period of time.

The physical abuse is severe, sometimes including torture and killing. The sexual abuse is usually painful, sadistic, and humiliating, intended as a means of gaining dominance over the victim. The psychological abuse is devastating and involves the use of ritual/indoctrination, which includes mind control techniques and mind altering drugs, and ritual/ intimidation which conveys to the victim a profound terror of the cult members and of the evil spirits they believe cult members can command. Both during and after the abuse, most victims are in a state of terror, mind control, and dissociation in which disclosure is exceedingly difficult.

DESCRIPTIVE DEFINITION

Ritual abuse is a brutal form of abuse of children, adolescents, and adults, consisting of physical, sexual, and psychological abuse, and involving the use of rituals. Ritual does not necessarily mean satanic. However, most survivors state that they were ritually abused as part of satanic worship for the purpose of indoctrinating them into satanic beliefs and practices. Ritual abuse rarely consists of a single episode. It usually involves repeated abuse over an extended period of time.

Ritual abuse is usually carried out by members of a cult. The purpose of the ritual elements of the abuse seems threefold: (1) rituals in some groups are part of a shared belief or worship system into which the victim is being indoctrinated; (2) rituals are used to intimidate victims into silence; (3) ritual elements (e.g., devil worship, animal or human sacrifice) seem so unbelievable to those unfamiliar with these crimes that these elements detract from the credibility of the victims and make prosecution of the crimes very difficult.

Many victims are children under the age of six who suffer the most severe and longstanding emotional damage from the abuse. These young victims are particularly susceptible to being terrorized and indoctrinated into the abusers' belief system. During and even long after the abuse victims live in a state of terror and dissociation and suffer from the impact of mind control techniques. All this makes the initial

disclosures of abuse exceedingly difficult, and can make each subsequent disclosure a terrifying and painful experience.

Ritual abuse is known to occur as an integral part of the life of some families in which one or both parents participate in conjunction with the extended family or other group. These groups are typically satanic in their symbols and beliefs. Children in these settings are severely abused on an ongoing basis with little time during which they are safe from abuse. The results are devastating.

Ritual abuse has also occurred, without parents knowing, at pre-schools, day-care centers, churches, summer camps, and at the hands of baby-sitters and neighbors. The ritual abuse in such an institutional setting is not incidental to its operation, but is in fact intrinsic to it, the very reason for the institution's existence. Children are subjected to sexual abuse, ritual/intimidation to terrorize them into silence, and ritual/indoctrination to convert them to the belief or worship system of the group.

Ritual abuse of adolescents, and participation by adolescents in perpetrating ritual abuse, can take place in family or school settings, or in youth gangs which orient themselves toward a self-styled satanism or other ritualism, and violence.

Many adults who are victims and/or perpetrators of ritual abuse came under the influence of such beliefs and practices in their childhood or adolescence and may function with severe dissociative disorders, including multiple personality disorder. Such adults are often working members of society whose identity as members of satanic or other cults is not known outside the cult. Some perpetrate abuse, infiltrate, and/or recruit for the cult in the context of their jobs. Some adults join the cult later in life, enticed by sexual promiscuity and perversion, the availability of illicit drugs, the promise of money, and the satanic spirituality oriented toward power and moral license.

KINDS OF ABUSE

PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE

The psychological abuse which is inflicted as part of ritual abuse causes severe mental and emotional suffering to the victims*. Victims are subjected to profound terror as well as to mind control techniques so severe that most victims dissociate* their memories of the experience and lose their sense of free will.

* = Term defined in Glossary

SOME REPORTED EXAMPLES

1. Threats of punishment, torture, mutilation, or death of the victim, the victim's family or pets. Threats are heightened by carrying out killings of animals or human beings in the presence of the victim, sometimes with the victim's forced participation. Told that it would be futile to disclose because "no-one will believe you."
2. Threats against the victim's property including threats that his/her house will be broken into or burned down if s/he discloses the abuse.
3. Told that family or other loving and protective figures are secretly cult members who intend to harm the victim. Or made to believe that parents not only know, but have chosen that their child be ritually abused. Told that s/he is no longer loved by family or by God.
4. Told that his/her family is not the "real" family, that the abusers are in fact the child's "real" family. Victim is told s/he will be kidnapped and forced to live with the abusers, apart from his/her family. Or told that parents no longer want the child and approve of the cult becoming the child's "new family."
5. Tied up or confined to a cage, closet, basement, isolation house, or other confined space. Told s/he being left there to die. Some are placed in coffins and told to "practice being dead." For some this includes mock burials in which the victim is buried and told s/he is being left to die. Sometimes a cult member seems to rescue the child from these terrifying situations and thus the distraught child reaches out gratefully and bonds to the cult member.
6. Tied up or confined in space with insects or animals that s/he is told will harm him/her, or tricked into believing that frightening insects or animals are present. Confined with or hung upside-down in a hole with a dead body or the mutilated body parts of an animal or a human being.
7. Humiliated or degraded through verbal abuse. Forced nudity in front of the group. Body of the victim smeared or covered with urine or feces. Forced ingestion of urine, feces, or semen.
8. Photographed in sexually provocative poses. Photographed while being physically or sexually assaulted, or while physically or sexually assaulting someone else. Forced participation in the production of pornography* used in the intimidation and humiliation of the victim as well as to financially profit the abusers.
9. Made to feel constantly watched and monitored by abusers or their spiritual counterparts (e.g., evil spirits*). Made to believe that disclosure, or failure to perpetrate evil when expected by the group to do so, will result in punishment or even death.

10. Physically and sexually abused by perpetrators disguised as heroes or authority figures like Superman, Santa Claus, Rambo, clergy, judges, police. Undermines child's trust in authority and heroes. Inhibits disclosure.
11. Subjected to mind control and mind altering drugs which alter the victim's perception, interfere with the victim's resistance to the assault, and cloud the victim's recall of the details of the abuse. Sophisticated uses of hypnosis, indoctrination, programming, and the use of triggering.
12. Subjected to rituals like magical surgery*, birthing rituals*, and marriage rituals* which emphasize the victim's belonging to, and subjugation to, the cult. Victims also are forced to participate in ritual sacrifices* and human sacrifices*. They are forced into the belief and worship system of the group. Often, though not always, the belief and worship of the group is satanic.
13. Sworn into secrecy regarding cult activities, including the abusive activities, under penalty of death. Subjected to mind control regarding how to harm him/herself or even to commit suicide rather than remember or disclose cult activities. Vulnerable to extreme self-destructive impulses if s/he even considers leaving the cult.
14. Compelled to commit heinous acts, including the killing and mutilation of animals or human beings, sometimes including the victim's own children. Compelled to ingest blood or body parts of animals or human beings in cannibalistic rituals. Subsequently subjected by the group to profound condemnation and guilt for perpetrating and surviving these crimes. Victims tricked into believing their participation was voluntary. Threatened with exposure as a perpetrator*.
15. Compelled to act on behalf of the group while outside the group by engaging in prostitution, drug dealing, and other illegal activities. Compelled to extend the group's sphere of influence and control in social institutions (e.g., by participating and working in schools, churches, law enforcement, courts, health and mental health professions, etc.).

PHYSICAL ABUSE

Ritual abuse victims are physically abused often to the point of torture. Young victims who are being ritually abused without the knowledge of both parents are usually subjected only to physical abuse that is not easily detected.

LESS DETECTABLE EXAMPLES

1. Pins or "shots" inserted into sensitive areas of the body, especially between digits, under fingernails, or in genital areas. Electric shock to these body areas.
2. Being hung by hands or upside down by feet for extended periods of time. Sometimes hung from crosses in mock crucifixions. Sexual abuse while in such positions.
3. Submerging victim in water with perception of near drowning.
4. Withholding of food or water for several hours.
5. Sleep deprivation and activities aimed at inducing exhaustion.

MORE DETECTABLE EXAMPLES

1. Physical beatings.
2. Use of cuts, tattoos, branding, burns, often to sensitive body areas.
3. Withholding food, water, or sleep for days or weeks.
4. Removal of body parts, e.g., digits.

SEXUAL ABUSE

The sexual abuse of ritual victims is unusually brutal, sadistic, and humiliating. It is far more severe than that which is usually inflicted by a pedophile* or in the context of intrafamilial sexual abuse* (incest). It seems intended as a means of gaining total dominance over the victim, as well as being an end in itself.

1. Repeated sexual assaults by men, women, and other children, often occurring in a group. May be associated with the marriage ritual*, repeated fondling, oral copulation, rape and sodomy.
2. Assaults include the use of instruments for penetration of body orifices, including symbolic objects (e.g., crucifix or wand) or weapons (e.g., knife or gun).
3. Sexual assault coupled with physical violence. Participation in rituals in which sexual assault is associated with death. Forced sexual contact with dead or dying people.
4. Forced to sexually perpetrate against children and infants.
5. Forced sexual contact with animals.

GLOSSARY

BIRTHING RITUAL

A ritual described by victims of ritual abuse in which the victim is placed within the carcass of a dead animal, or in some cases a dead human body, and is, in the context of a ritual, "born" into membership in the group. This ritual is intended to make the victim feel profoundly connected to the group.

CHILD SEXUAL OFFENDERS

Some children who have been sexually molested have in turn molested other children. Children who do act out sexually in this way are almost always children who themselves have been sexually molested. Child victims of molestation often feel overwhelmed by intense feelings of anger, fear, and their own lack of control. Such feelings lead some molested children to perpetrate against others in an effort to gain control over the painful feelings of being a victim. The damaging impact on children who are molested by other children should not be underestimated or thought of as only "innocent" childhood exploration.

Sexual assaults which are perpetrated against children in the context of ritual abuse are generally more sadistic, degrading, and physically painful than other forms of sexual assault, and leave the child feeling extremely victimized. Because the emotional damage is likely to be greater for the ritually abused child, and because the ritual abuse involves compelling the child to sexually perpetrate against others, the ritual abuse victim is more likely than other victims of sexual assault to molest, especially if there has been no recognition of, and treatment for, that child's victimization.

CONSENT

Among adults, someone is regarded as having been sexually victimized when sexual behavior goes beyond that to which they have consented. Any sexual activity involving children is by definition activity without their consent. Children and adolescents are not fully aware of the implications or consequences of sexual activities. They are under the legal and physical control of adults. When a person perceived by the child victim as powerful or authoritative presses for sexual activity, whether forcefully or seductively, meaningful consent by the victim is not possible. The imposition of adult sexuality upon the child often results in the loss of the child's sense of safety and trust in adults and in the distortion of that child's development for years after the abuse has occurred.

CULT—DESTRUCTIVE

“A destructive cult may be defined as a closed system/group whose followers have been recruited deceptively and retained through the use of manipulative techniques of thought reform and mind control (undue influence). The system is imposed without the informed consent of the individual and is designed to alter one’s personality and behavior. The leadership is all-powerful, the ideology is totalistic, and the will of the individual is subordinate to the will of the group. The destructive cult sets itself above society by creating its own values with little or no regard for society’s ethics or morals.

“... (they) have engaged in some *illegal* and *unethical* practices—child abuse, neglect and death; illegal and fraudulent immigration; drug dealing; smuggling money, cars, guns, gems; fraud and deceit in recruiting, business, financial records, and fund raising; theft; harassment of families and former members with threats, lawsuits and foul play; stockpiling and smuggling weapons and ammunition; beatings; sexual abuse and prostitution; kidnapping; murder; attempted murder; and psychological and emotional damage.”

(quoted from *CULT AWARENESS NETWORK*)

DEMONS AND EVIL SPIRITS [from Greek *daimon* = a spirit]

Spiritual beings who are evil and ruled by Satan. According to Christian tradition, they are angels who shared in Satan’s rebellion and were expelled with him.

Ritually abused children and adults are victimized at rituals which invoke such beings. Victims report believing that perpetrators of ritual abuse possess control over these spiritual entities. Some victims are made to believe that these spirits have power to control the victim’s life. For some, the fear of harm from such evil spirits or demons, or the fear of being controlled by them, is more oppressive and debilitating than fear of the perpetrators themselves.

DISCLOSURE

The Accommodation Syndrome described by Roland Summit outlines certain predictable patterns of tentative disclosure in any child’s effort to disclose sexual abuse. Briefly, the syndrome helps to explain the family dynamics and societal pressures which lead a child either to be unable to disclose sexual abuse or, having disclosed, to subsequently retract the disclosure. The child is often put in the position of “mobilizing altruism and self-control to insure the survival of the other” (Summit, 1983), being forced to choose between ongoing abuse and the chaos that is sure to follow disclosure.

In ritual abuse, additional forces can prevent or fragment a child's disclosure. Threats have been made of constant surveillance by the perpetrators and of harm to the child and those s/he loves if s/he discloses the abuse. Painful physical and sexual abuse make the child afraid to disclose what was done to him for fear of further harm from the perpetrators. Memories of systematic humiliation and degradation may cause the child to feel too ashamed of the activities in which he was involved to be able to disclose them. Most children are deceived and manipulated into believing that the actions they took in abusing others were a result of their own free choice. These children feel guilty and ashamed and fear rejection and retribution from family and society.

All of this, combined with dissociative defense processes, often leads the child to psychologically isolate the painful experiences and carry on in other parts of his life without disclosure. Ironically, the closer a child feels to his parents, the more difficult it may be for him to disclose. The child feels that his silence is the key to the safety of his family. Finally, the disbelief on the part of parents, therapists, society and/or the courts, which is even more extreme in cases of ritual abuse than of sexual abuse, contribute to the child keeping this information buried within himself.

Children may not reveal their ritual abuse until adulthood. When they do attempt to disclose, they experience the same extreme disbelief as disclosing children, and are sometimes labeled as psychotic and hallucinatory. Many also suffer from an extreme form of dissociative processing, multiple personality disorder*.

DISSOCIATION

"A disturbance or alteration in the normally integrative functions of identity, memory, or consciousness. The disturbance or alteration may be sudden or gradual, transient or chronic. If it occurs primarily in identity, the person's customary identity is temporarily forgotten, and a new identity may be assumed or imposed (as in Multiple Personality Disorder) or the customary feeling of one's reality is lost and replaced by a feeling of unreality (as in Depersonalization Disorder). If the disturbance occurs primarily in memory, important personal events cannot be recalled (as in Psychogenic Amnesia or Psychogenic Fugue)." [DSM III-R 1987]

The horror and fear experienced by a child who is ritually abused is processed by the child with varying degrees of dissociation as a defense mechanism against the overwhelming pain. Most children who were ritually abused during their preschool years will have completely dissociated the events within two years of the cessation of the abuse, and will be unable to consciously recall and report what

occurred. A skilled child therapist can help the dissociated ritual abuse victim to recall his/her abuse and to work through the severe trauma which, if left untreated, is likely to cause serious emotional problems for the child throughout his/her life.

EXTRAFAMILIAL SEXUAL ABUSE OF CHILDREN

Any sexual contact or explicit sexual behavior imposed on a child by someone outside the child's family. The perpetrator is likely to be known to the child and his/her family. Frequently the victim's parent or guardian, knowingly or unknowingly, will have permitted the perpetrator to have access to the child.

Research and clinical experience suggest that children who have been neglected, abused at home, or who are economically needy, may be particularly susceptible to the seductive pedophile willing to pay for sexual favors with gifts and attention.

Ritual abuse of children does not depend on the particular vulnerabilities of the child. *All* children who are trapped in a ritually abusive setting are vulnerable and in most cases *all* are abused.

(cf. CONSENT; PEDOPHILE; PERPETRATOR; VICTIM OF RITUAL ABUSE)

INTRAFAMILIAL SEXUAL ABUSE OF CHILDREN (INCEST)

Intrafamilial sexual abuse encompasses any form of sexual activity between a child and another family member. The other family member could be a parent or stepparent, sibling, or other member of the extended family. Incestuous assault refers to any manual, oral, or genital sexual contact or other explicit sexual behavior that a family member imposes on a child or adolescent.

(cf. CONSENT; PEDOPHILE; PERPETRATOR; VICTIM)

MAGIC SURGERY

Child victims of ritual abuse describe being drugged or hypnotized and, on awakening, being told they have had "magic surgery." The blood that has been smeared on their bodies constitutes compelling evidence that such surgery has taken place. In some cases children are told that a bomb has been placed inside them, a bomb that will explode if the child ever discloses the abuse, killing not only the child but the trusted person to whom he discloses.

Most typically, child victims of magic surgery are told that they have had a monster, a demon, or "the devil's heart" placed inside them, and that it will attack them if they disclose. They are also told that the monster, demon, or devil is now in charge of their thoughts and behavior and will cause the child to "be bad." Child victims are

made to believe that this entity will cause them pain if they fail to comply with its wishes. Ritually abused children often report somatic complaints such as abdominal pain in connection with this phenomenon.

MARRIAGE RITUAL

A ritual described by victims of ritual abuse in which a "mock marriage" takes place between a child and a member of the abusive group, between two children, or between the child and Satan. Victims of this ritual are made to feel profoundly connected to the group itself or to the powers of evil.

MULTIPLE PERSONALITY DISORDER

"1. The existence within the person of two or more distinct personalities or personality states (each with its own relatively enduring pattern of perceiving, relating to, and thinking about the environment and self).

2. At least two of these personalities or personality states recurrently take full control of the person's behavior." [DSM III-R 1987]

Kluft, in describing the kinds of events that trigger the creation of new personalities in children, delineates the following criteria: (1) the child fears for his own life; (2) the child fears that an important attachment figure will die; (3) the child's physical intactness and/or clarity of consciousness is breached or impaired; (4) the child is isolated with these fears; and (5) the child is systematically misinformed or "brainwashed" about his or her situation. These criteria are certainly met in the events encountered by the ritually abused child. Many patients with multiple personality disorder have memories of severe ritual abuse in the context of a group that used satanic symbols and rituals. Some young children known to have been ritually abused show signs of multiple personality disorder.

It is important to remember that multiple personality disorder is not a thought disorder, and that although different personalities may be in touch with different pieces of memory and reality, they are not delusional. The memories that they express, however painful and frightening, should not be dismissed as hallucinatory fantasies.

OCCULTISM [from Latin *occultus*—covered over, concealed]

Belief in the existence of mysterious, secret, or supernatural sources of power that can be known and/or communicated with by human beings. "Occult" is a general designation for various systems of belief, practices, and rituals based on knowledge of the world of spirits and/or unknown forces of the universe.

PEDOPHILE [from Greek *pedo* = child + *phile* = loving]

An adult who has sexual relations with a child and receives primary sexual gratification through sexual contact with children. (Most research has focused on males, although recognition of the participation of women in the sexual abuse of children is growing.) Generally, men who molest children have been thought to fit into one of two categories—"fixated" abusers whose sexual desires have always been primarily for children, and "regressed" abusers who have had sexual relationships with adults, but who begin to sexually abuse children, usually as a result of traumatic or stressful circumstances. Fathers who have incestuous relations with their children have often been thought of as being in this second category. There is also evidence of a third category, that of "crossover" abusers, that is men who may be fathers, and have sexual relationships with adults, but whose primary sexual attraction is to children. Many in this group are in fact pedophiles who have abused children inside and outside their own homes.

Pedophiles were themselves often victims of sexual abuse as children. They have very poor self-esteem and fear the risk of rejection from an adult partner. They often do not think of themselves as harming children. They view their sexual activities as acts of love. It is important to them to believe that the child enjoys the sexual contact as much as they do. They view the process of having sexual activity with a child as one of seduction and education rather than of force and power. (cf. PERPETRATOR OF RITUAL ABUSE)

PENTAGRAM

A five pointed star. In satanism, used pointing downward, and sometimes enclosed within a circle.

PERPETRATOR OF RITUAL ABUSE

Perpetrators of ritual abuse usually function in a group setting. Most victims report being abused by several perpetrators, often in conjunction with other victims. Women are reported to be perpetrators of ritual abuse as often as are men.

Little is known with certainty about the perpetrators of ritual abuse, but it is important to note that they do *not* fit commonly held concepts of the motivation and psychological profile of the pedophile (cf. PEDOPHILE). Ritual abusers are generally far more sadistic and cruel in their sexual abuse than are pedophiles. Victims report painful and frightening sexual acts, and humiliating practices involving, for example, the use of urine and feces. The perpetrators seem motivated by a desire to see the victims lose a sense of their own free

will, identify with evil, and submit to the will of the group. Because of the apparent determination on the part of many ritual abusers to victimize and indoctrinate as many young children as possible, they frequently function together in groups in the operation of preschools, day-care services, and baby-sitting services, providing themselves access to children outside of their own families.

There is evidence that many of these perpetrators have been raised in groups with strong systems of belief or worship (usually satanic in content) and highly systematic practices of abuse that are passed on within families from one generation to the next. Thus, many of the perpetrators of this abuse are in fact both victims and perpetrators within a family system of abuse. Those who have been victimized by ritual abuse in a family setting experience varying degrees of dissociation, including, in some cases, multiple personality disorder. This may explain how it is possible for some perpetrators to function undetected in child care settings, to seem quite believable when they deny children's complaints of abuse to experienced law enforcement investigators, and even to do quite well on polygraph examinations.

PORNOGRAPHY

Ritually abused children report being photographed nude in sexually provocative poses as well as during sexual and physical assault. Some of these photographs are circulated or sold for profit. The child victims also talk about the photographs being shown to them as part of an effort to make them feel humiliated, ashamed, and fearful of discovery by their parents. Children are often told that *they* will be arrested because of what the photographs show.

POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

A dissociative disorder triggered by the experience of profoundly traumatic events. The dissociation may be characterized by intrusion (intrusive thoughts, nightmares, hypervigilance), and by denial (inattention, amnesia, and constriction of thought process) [Horowitz, M. J. *Stress Response Syndromes*, 1976].

Post-traumatic stress disorder in adults was first studied in returning war veterans who experienced amnesia and flashbacks of overwhelmingly traumatic events from their wartime experience. Studies have since been done of children exposed to violence or extreme fear who manifest post-traumatic stress disorder as a result. Sexual abuse has been shown to cause post-traumatic stress disorder among its victims. If left untreated, this condition often persists long after the abuse occurred.

Ritual abuse victims typically suffer from severe post-traumatic stress disorder. They often experience nightmares or intrusive thoughts containing elements of ritual violence, yet due to amnesia for the actual abuse, have no idea why they are troubled by such dreams and thoughts.

SACRIFICE [from Latin *sacrum* (holy) + *facere* (to make)]

A religious rite in which an object is offered to a god in order to establish, restore, or maintain a right relationship of man to the sacred order. Blood sacrifices (killing with bloodshed) are based on the concept that the sacred life force of both man and animal resides in blood. Blood is particularly important in rituals involving fertility, purification and atonement. Sacrifices in different cults are often required according to certain calendars of special days as well as for unique purposes on a given occasion. Burning is believed to be another way that a sacrifice can be made directly available to a god. A third way in which a sacrifice is conveyed to a god is burial in the earth. In some belief systems sacrifice is also a means of obtaining supernatural powers or favors from the god.

HUMAN SACRIFICE

The offering of the life of a human being to a god. The occurrence of human sacrifice usually can be related to the belief that blood is the sacred life force in man. The killing of a human, or of an animal in its place, represents an attempt to affect communion with a god and participate in its life force. Sacrifices have been made in connection with fertility rites, although specific other uses for obtaining powers and favors are also common. Cannibalism is practiced as part of human sacrifice because of a belief that by ingesting human blood and flesh the individual is empowered and transformed by the life force contained therein.

Adults and children who have been ritually abused report being forced to participate in the killing of babies, children, and adults in ritual settings with the understanding that the purpose is to obtain certain magical powers. Ritual abuse survivors explain that the drinking of blood and the practice of cannibalism are ways to invest the worshipper/perpetrator with the spiritual powers of the victim.

The practice of human sacrifice as it has been reported by victims of ritual abuse always raises extreme problems of credibility. Where have the victims come from? Where are the remains of these victims? Survivors have explained that victims come from within the cult membership (including babies "bred" for sacrifice), from the ranks of homeless people, and even represent some unknown portion

of the large numbers of missing adults and children. Explanations for the absence of found remains include cannibalism, cult access to mortuaries and crematoria, frozen storage of body parts, and the retention by cult members of bones and body parts for further magical practices.

SATAN [from Hebrew = the adversary/accuser; NB equivalent in Gk *diabolos* = accuser/slanderer; hence “devil”]

A spiritual being, opposed to God, supremely evil. According to Christian tradition an angelic being, once called Lucifer (Isaiah 14:12), created by God for good purposes, but who led a rebellion against God and was cast out of heaven. Satan is believed to be the Serpent in the Garden of Eden who tempted Eve to disobey God by saying, “You shall be like God” (Genesis 3:5). Satan is also called the Father of lies, and Lord of the Flies (*Ba'alzebub*). He is the ruler over demons and evil spirits who works to interfere with the relationship of God and man by provoking man to evil.

SATANISM

Worship of Satan. Satanists seek to obtain power to manipulate the world around them for their own gain by calling upon the powers of Satan in certain prescribed rituals. They oppose the traditional values of Judeo-Christian tradition and adhere instead to a system of personal power and control over the world around them. [“Anyone who claims to be interested in magic or the occult for reasons other than gaining personal power is the worst kind of hypocrite.”—Anton LaVey in the *Satanic Bible*.]

Many young children who are victims of ritual abuse describe rituals that appear to use the accouterments of satanic ritual, e.g., black and red robes, hoods, altars, pentagrams, daggers, candles, sacrifice, etc. Many adult survivors describe being ritually abused on an ongoing basis from early childhood, through adolescence and into adulthood. They state that their abuse was part of a system of satanic worship and describe satanic invocations and rituals.

[There appears to be a wide spectrum of practices, from the more organized satanic churches to the self-styled practitioners of satanism. It should be noted that spokespersons for two of the more publicly well-known satanic organizations, the Church of Satan and the Temple of Set, have issued statements that their organizations are not in any way associated with the abuse, sexual or otherwise, of children or adults, or the sacrifices of animals or human beings.]

SATANIC ALPHABET

Letters of the alphabet written backwards, upside down, or sideways. A magical practice stemming from a system which values reversing anything which is the norm. Some children who attended ritually abusive pre-schools report having been taught to copy the satanic alphabet. Other occult alphabets may consist of magical symbols and runes.

SATANIC CALENDAR

There exist many versions of so-called satanic calendars, each of which includes a variety of holidays on which certain rituals must be performed. There are apparently many individual differences among groups that would call themselves satanists regarding which holidays are celebrated. Some groups simply do rituals whenever they please.

The birthday of the individual, Halloween (October 31), and, in some cases, Beltane (April 30) appear to be the holidays celebrated by most satanic groups. Many individuals who have been ritually abused and have participated in rituals on satanic holidays experience particular difficulty at these times of the year. (Common Halloween celebrations, for example, regarded by most people as innocent make believe and child's play, are extremely traumatic for ritual victims who think of them as satanic holidays, and as the occasion of ritual celebrations often including human sacrifice.) On these holidays and on anniversary dates victims may become emotionally overwhelmed, terrified that cult members will come to kidnap or kill them. Some are overcome by horrifying flashbacks of the abuse. Some feel compelled to commit suicide or self-injury. Others feel a deep compulsion to return to the cult.

TRANCE STATE

A dissociative state one enters when hypnotized in which memory and perception are altered. The dissociative effects of the trance state can also be induced by other conditions such as physical or mental exhaustion, terror, repetitive chanting, rituals, or drugs. Not all individuals are equally susceptible to trance or to dissociation. Research has shown that those people who show a high degree of susceptibility to hypnosis are likely to possess some apparently biological predisposition to it. They are also more likely to have been victims of abuse as children.

Some states of trance seem to be self-induced and function as a defense against experiencing the overwhelmingly painful stimuli of an abusive environment. For some individuals, the use of self-

induced trance and dissociative states in the face of severe abuse can be associated with the development of multiple personality disorder.

Trances also can be induced by another person who functions as a hypnotist. The hypnotist can give post-hypnotic suggestions to the individual in trance to carry out certain carefully defined actions or to experience certain emotions or physical sensations after the trance state is over. These actions or emotions are usually triggered by certain discrete cues that have been suggested to the subject while s/he was in trance. The mind control from which many ritual abuse victims suffer is in part a result of having been put into trance states repeatedly and given a complicated series of post-hypnotic suggestions (see RITUAL ABUSE AND THE USE OF MIND CONTROL).

However, hypnosis and trance states also have an important role to play in treating ritual abuse victims. In trance employed in a therapeutic environment, victims are often able to retrieve memories which have been dissociated from their conscious awareness. This process constitutes a very significant aspect of the ritual abuse victim's recovery.

VICTIMS OF RITUAL ABUSE—YOUNG CHILDREN

Young children who are victims of ritual abuse usually fall into one of two categories: those whose families are perpetrators, and those who are abused without the parents' knowledge. Ritual abuse within families (intrafamilial) can be particularly destructive because of the continual physical presence of the perpetrators and the lack of any safe environment for the child. Intrafamilial abuse usually includes the extended family and is multigenerational. In cases of intrafamilial ritual abuse, the abuse and indoctrination are incessant. Children are generally raised to perform a given role within the group and are continuously being trained to fulfill that role. The child feels him or herself to be identified as a member of the abusive group because of the biological relationship with the offending parents and because of the group's indoctrination about the inevitability of the child's continued participation. Dissociation is the result of such abuse and in some cases will manifest in the emergence of multiple personality disorder. Therapy for victims' intrafamilial ritual abuse usually is not sought until adulthood, if ever.

Children who are abused outside their home (extrafamilial) generally have a better prognosis because of the presence in their lives of loving adults who protect them from known sources of harm. Unfortunately, the parents of many young victims are unable to believe that their children have been ritually abused, and refuse to acknowledge that they have a problem or to seek help. Their children often

have been made to believe that their parents were willing co-conspirators with the abusers, leaving the children very confused, with feelings of dread and distrust toward their own parents. The extreme severity of the abuse, and the systematic attempts to indoctrinate the child into the cult's belief system, make the recovery process quite difficult and protracted even with the help of skilled therapists. Children who are not treated are likely to face very poor outcomes.

WITCHCRAFT

Witchcraft is an ancient and widespread practice, the tribal religion of Pre-Christian Europe. In contemporary practice, much of witchcraft focuses on self-knowledge and healing, revering the laws of nature and working with nature. Many modern witches, predominantly women, conceptualize witchcraft within the context of feminist theory and consciousness, reempowering the symbols of the feminine.

Because of its general antithesis to Christianity, and because many members of destructive cults identify themselves as witches, witchcraft and satanism are often believed to be analogous. While abuse has been described as having occurred in connection with witchcraft, witchcraft per se does not connote abuse.

GROUPS IDENTIFIED WITH SATANISM

Church of the Final Judgment—also known as *The Process*

Church of Satan (founded by Anton La Vey)

Ordo Templis Orientalis (once headed by Aleister Crowley)

Temple of Set (led by Lt. Col. Michael Aquino, U.S. Army)

Worldwide Church of Santanic Liberation (led by
Paul Valentine—recruits teens)

RITUAL ABUSE AND THE USE OF MIND CONTROL

Mind control is the cornerstone of ritual abuse, the key element in the subjugation and silencing of its victims. Victims of ritual abuse are subjected to a rigorously applied system of mind control designed to rob them of their sense of free will and to impose upon them the will of the cult and its leaders. Most often these ritually abusive cults are motivated by a satanic belief system. The mind control is achieved through an elaborate system of brainwashing, programming, indoctrination, hypnosis, and the use of various mind-altering drugs. The purpose of the mind control is to compel ritual abuse victims to keep the secret of their abuse, to conform to the beliefs and behaviors of the cult, and to become functioning members who serve the cult by carrying out the directives of its leaders without being detected within society at large.

The information available about how ritually abusive cults indoctrinate young children comes primarily from child and adult survivors who have been able to remember how the cult achieved mind control over them and others in the cult. Therapists who have worked extensively with ritual abuse victims have gleaned a significant, although still incomplete, degree of understanding of the process by which the mind control is achieved. A key element of the victim's recovery from ritual abuse consists of understanding, unraveling, and undoing the mind control which usually persists for a long time, even in victims who no longer participate in the cult. Undoing these controls is critical, for victims may remain unable to disclose their abuse, or vulnerable to cult manipulation if the systematic programming is not dismantled. As more ritual abuse victims are helped to free themselves from cult mind control, the body of information about this important aspect of ritual abuse continues to grow.

Satanic cults focus their initial efforts to achieve mind control most frequently and strenuously with children under the age of six. Like developmental psychologists, satanists understand that people are most susceptible to having their character, beliefs, and behavior molded during this early period of development. This review of the mind control techniques utilized by satanic cults will focus primarily on the techniques used on very young children, both those in ritually abusive families, and those in extrafamilial settings, such as day-care and preschools. Children who are abused in intrafamilial settings are subjected to ongoing mind control that is often sustained in extreme forms throughout their childhood and adolescence.

There is a growing body of research into the indoctrination techniques which are used by a wide range of destructive cults. It is helpful to consider how satanic cults make use of these and other techniques to control their victims.

In *Cults, Quacks and Non-Professional Psychotherapists*, West and Singer have described elements of cult indoctrination as follows:

1. Isolation of the recruit and manipulation of his environment.
2. Control over channels of communication and information.
3. Debilitation through inadequate diet and fatigue.
4. Degradation or diminution of the self.
5. Induction of uncertainty, fear, and confusion, with joy and certainty through surrender to the group as a goal.
6. Alternation of harshness and leniency in a context of discipline.
7. Peer pressure generating guilt and requiring open confessions.
8. Insistence by seemingly all-powerful hosts that the recruit's survival—physical or spiritual—depends on identifying with the group.
9. Assignment of monotonous or repetitive tasks such as chanting or copying written materials.
10. Acts of symbolic betrayal or renunciation of self, family, and previously held values, designed to increase the psychological distance between the recruit and his previous way of life.

Satanic cults use many of the same techniques, but apply them in unique ways to indoctrinate and control very young children. To begin with, they impose a variety of *PHYSICAL*, *EMOTIONAL*, and *COGNITIVE CONDITIONS* which are conducive to indoctrination.

PHYSICAL CONDITIONS

1. HUNGER AND THIRST

Ritually abused children are often deprived of food and water for extended periods of time, and are told they will be left to die of hunger and thirst. Their deprivation and fear of dying make them willing to comply with virtually any behavior or belief necessary to be given food or water again. The cult member who finally does feed the child is perceived as an ally and benefactor. The child feels deeply grateful and is thus susceptible to bonding with that cult member, thereby increasing the child's vulnerability to identifying with the cult and its beliefs and practices.

2. PAIN

Ritually abused children are physically tormented and sexually abused in very painful ways. The pain can cause them to dissociate* and, like prisoners of war subjected to torture, they become willing to do whatever is demanded of them in order to

make the pain stop. For a young child who is ritually abused in an out-of-home care setting, even a brief encounter with intense pain profoundly impacts that child's susceptibility to cult mind control. For those children raised in cults, the use of pain and the threat of pain continues for as long as they are submitted to the cult, causing an ongoing and deepening degree of subservience to the cult.

3. DRUGS

Both child and adult victims of ritual abuse have described being abused with mind-altering drugs. Some drugs are injected or administered in suppositories. Others are hidden in food or drink, or simply swallowed under duress.

The drug effects include hypnotic and paralytic effects, causing victims to experience mental and emotional states ranging from confusion and drowsiness, to passivity and helplessness. Memory distortions occur as well. Victims tend to recall very real and painful experiences only with difficulty as though they were unreal or even just dreams. Additionally, in such drug-induced states, young children are even more pliable than they would otherwise be, and more open to the belief system into which the cult is attempting to indoctrinate them. Cult leaders capitalize on drug-induced reality distortions to create the illusion that they have absolute power to which the child must submit.

4. EXHAUSTION

Ritually abused children are often deprived of rest and sleep. In the extrafamilial settings in which ritual abuse occurs, children are frequently deprived of needed nap and rest periods. In ritually abusive family settings, children may be deprived of sleep for extended periods of time. The influence of repeated drugging further deepens their sense of exhaustion. People in a state of exhaustion are more open to mind control because fatigue saps their normal coping capacities. This effect is especially pronounced in young children.

5. ISOLATION

Ritually abused children are put into closets, holes, cages, coffins, and other confined, usually dark, spaces. The children are often isolated there and told they will be left to die. The sensory deprivation that may result can cause some degree of disorientation. The isolation causes the child to feel desperate and overwhelmed with fear and dread. An abusive adult who subsequently releases the child from confinement is perceived by the child as a rescuer, often causing the young child to bond to that cult member. The child's bonding with one or more cult members increases the

degree of the child's identification with the values and beliefs of the cult. In other words, both the isolation and the rescue make the child more susceptible to indoctrination into the destructive beliefs and practices of the cult.

6. SEXUAL ABUSE

Ritually abused children are subjected to brutal sexual abuse which involves severe pain and may involve sexual arousal with which the children are neither physically nor emotionally prepared to cope. Sometimes the sexual abuse is performed with symbolic instruments (e.g., penetration with a crucifix or wand) which reinforces the satanic belief system of the cult. The pain, especially if in combination with arousal, is extremely disorienting and overwhelming, again making the child willing to comply with the demands of the cult members in order to make the feelings stop. The sexual arousal can contribute to the formation of distorted bonds with the abusers, leading to identification with the abusive cult.

7. BRIGHT LIGHTS

Adult and child victims of ritual abuse describe having harsh, intensely bright lights shined in their eyes immediately before and during indoctrination. The lights appear to disorient them and to induce a state of trance* which lowers the victim's resistance and heightens the susceptibility to indoctrination.

EMOTIONAL CONDITIONS

1. TERROR

Ritually abused children have been terrorized and are profoundly afraid of their abusers. They have endured physical torture and painful sexual assaults. They have witnessed the terror, torture, and murder of other children and adults in group settings, experiences which greatly intensify the child's own overwhelming fears. Their terror is heightened by what they perceive as the omnipotence and omniscience of their abusers, including what they believe are their abusers' abilities to control them through the use of demons and evil spirits*.

Ritually abused children have also been threatened repeatedly with death to themselves and their families should they disclose. This state of terror causes the child to be willing to do or believe anything to appease the abusers, thereby reducing the degree of threat the child feels from them.

2. GUILT AND SHAME

Ritually abused children have been forced to engage in humiliating and degrading activities such as handling, smearing, and ingesting urine, feces, blood, and human flesh. They have been photographed pornographically and, sometimes, been made to view these pictures. They have been forced to participate in the abuse, torture, and killing of animals, and the murder of children and adults.

They are then made to feel responsible for their actions as though these actions were freely chosen by them. They are threatened with exposure as perpetrators, and fear being rejected completely by their families or even being arrested and jailed. Their feelings of guilt and shame contribute to a perception that through their actions, they have already shown their loyalty to the cult and its beliefs. They are made to feel that the abusive group itself is their only refuge of acceptance. By turning to the abusive group for a sense of acceptance and protection, these children are open to even further indoctrination.

3. EMOTIONAL ISOLATION AND DESPAIR

Children who are ritually abused are made to feel cut off and rejected by their families and the rest of the world. They are often told that their "real parents" have died or have abandoned them, and that the people with whom they live are pretenders. Sometimes they are told that the cult members are their "real parents" who will someday "rescue" them from their homes. These ritually abused children often come to feel emotionally estranged from their families. The deep loneliness which results opens them to bonding with abusive cult members, identifying with them, and thus becoming open to indoctrination into the cult's system of beliefs and practices.

In addition, children who are ritually abused are profoundly sad. They experience tragedy and horror, as well as isolation, at an intensity which would induce an overwhelming sadness in a mature adult. They may come to feel utterly hopeless, and in their despair they are likely to feel that cult abuse and cult membership are all that they deserve and all that they can imagine for their future. The cult convinces them that there is no place to turn for help, and thus no way out of the cult.

4. RAGE

Ritual abuse provokes children to feel enormous rage, because the violation which they experience is so great. This rage within the child contributes to the cult's efforts to indoctrinate that child

into a belief system in which violence and rage are valued and encouraged. A child who has been repeatedly violated by the cult over time, and not permitted to express any emotion about his/her abuse, may be eager to vent his/her rage by striking out and victimizing others. The assaultive behavior which ensues is encouraged and rewarded by adult cult members, and is used to make the child feel s/he already is just like the abusive adults who have provoked the rage.

COGNITIVE CONDITIONS

1. LACK OF INFORMATION

Young children who are being ritually abused lack sufficient information and experience to know that much of what their abusers tell them is untrue. They lack the cognitive development to perceive the contradictions in some of the lies they are told. They are likely to accept the misinformation offered by the cult members as part of the mind control process.

2. CONFUSION

Ritually abused children are confused by the infliction of pain, the extreme sexual arousal caused by sexual abuse, the incessant directives to do things they know are wrong, the extensive lying and deception by cult members, and the perceived loss of control over their own behavior and the behavior of those around them. Children in such situations long for explanations from adults to reduce their confusion about what is happening to them. The result again is an increased vulnerability to indoctrination as they open themselves to any explanations offered by the adults in the cult.

THE ROLE OF TRANCE STATES*

These conditions—physical, emotional, and cognitive—exacerbate the impact of the child's ritual abuse, especially in combination with the used trance states. It is important to look at the role of trance states in achieving mind control over the ritually abused child. When children are in a state of trance, they are more open to indoctrination and other techniques for attaining control over their minds and behavior. For example, a child who hears an adult state repeatedly, "Satan has the power," is much more likely to incorporate that as a deeply held belief if the child is in a state of trance, than if the child is in a normal waking state.

There are many means by which trance states can be achieved with children during the course of ritual abuse. The rituals themselves contain many trance inducing elements, among them, chanting, isolation, sensory deprivation, pain, and other forms of extreme physical

discomfort. Trance states are also induced in ritual abuse victims by using hypnosis and hypnotic drugs.

Traumatic experiences which occur while the victim is in a trance state can be used to indoctrinate victims. These experiences have a profound and long-lasting impact on the beliefs, feelings, and even the behavior of victims, despite the fact that these experiences cannot always be remembered consciously. Only later in life, usually with the help of a highly skilled therapist, are some ritual abuse victims able to painstakingly reconstruct what happened to them while they were in various states of trance or dissociation.

The fact that certain events are not easily remembered does not mean that they do not have a significant impact on the life of the individual. Until the memories are surfaced and worked through in a safe environment, the survivor of such abuse is still controlled to some extent by these past experiences. Typically, the survivor will react most strongly to past indoctrination when triggered by an event which is a reminder of it. For example, if the survivor was abused in childhood by a cult that conducted abusive rituals on every full moon, s/he may feel compelled as an adult to seek out a cult and participate in rituals whenever the moon is full. Or s/he may be triggered to perform a physically or sexually assaultive act on the full moon without seeking out a cult. Alternatively s/he may act out in some other compulsive way to cope with the anxiety associated with the dissociated memory of this traumatic event.

Survivors experience triggering of certain beliefs into which they were indoctrinated, or certain behaviors that they are programmed to enact. They are usually unaware of what it is that is triggering them. With help, a victim can bring the triggering events to conscious awareness, and then can gradually become empowered to free him/herself from these compulsions.

Behaviors can be triggered spontaneously by cues that by chance happen to remind the individual of past indoctrination or programming. Cues may be implanted by the cult during indoctrination which can also be employed deliberately by cult members to elicit particular behaviors from a victim. For example, a survivor who was ritually abused and indoctrinated in early childhood can often be called back into the cult years after the indoctrination occurred when approached by a cult member who knows what trigger words or signs to use to access that individual's programming and gain the desired response.

The abusive system of mind control described has distinct *EMOTIONAL CONSEQUENCES*, as well as a major impact upon the *COGNITIVE* and *RELIGIOUS BELIEFS* under which the victims function.

EMOTIONAL CONSEQUENCES of ritual abuse and mind control for both adult and child survivors include the following.

1. TERROR

Ritually abused children are overwhelmed with profound fear. They are hypervigilant, feeling that they are constantly being watched. They are anxious and agitated, sometimes mistakenly perceived as "hyperactive."

2. GUILT AND FEAR OF DISCOVERY

Ritually abused children experience profound fear both of punishment and loss of love from family and friends. They have been made to feel that their participation in heinous acts was freely chosen and that they are responsible for their actions. They are especially fearful of being found responsible by their families or by the authorities (e.g., police) and of being punished for their participation in the violence, sexual contacts, pornography, and murders.

3. LONELINESS

Children abused ritually outside of their families feel painfully cut off from their families and deeply lonely. They feel that the acts they have committed, and the vows they have been forced to make to the cult and to Satan, separate them from their families irrevocably. This kind of emotional estrangement from their parents is often accompanied by profound despair.

4. IDENTIFICATION WITH THE GROUP AND A SENSE OF PERSONAL BADNESS

Ritually abused children tend to feel identified with the evil performed by the cult. This feeling of being "one of the bad people" often leads to compulsions to behave in physically and sexually assaultive ways.

5. RAGE OVER VICTIMIZATION

Enraged child victims are encouraged to act out their anger by assaulting others and are then told that this is evidence that they are truly becoming members of the abusive group. Thus, even their own rage is turned against ritually abused children, thereby heightening their sense of hopelessness and entrapment.

6. LOSS OF SENSE OF SELF

Ritual abuse victims feel a loss of boundaries between the self and the group. Often, they come to be so identified with the group that they feel like an extension of it. This loss of the sense of self contributes to feelings of personal badness and of rage.

7. ABSENCE OF FREE WILL

As a result of techniques like magic surgery*, the perception that controlling evil spirits* are present, that cult members know everything that the child thinks or does, and the use of impossible double binds (e.g., stab or be stabbed), the victim comes to feel that there is no choice but to comply, and yet is still burdened by guilt and shame.

COGNITIVE BELIEFS imparted by ritual abuse and mind control, seen in both adult and child survivors, include the following.

1. THERE IS NO ESCAPE

"The cult members are everywhere. The spirits, monsters, demons, devils, etc. that the cult controls, surround me, too. They know if I violate any of the rules of the cult, and they will punish me. I can never leave."

2. THE CULT COMPLETELY CONTROLS ME

"I am controlled by the cult and by the demon* which the cult has placed in me to both control and monitor my behavior. I have no freedom and must follow the orders of the cult leaders in all things. I must be ready to assault others and neither trust nor make any close associations with anyone outside the cult."

3. I AM INCAPABLE OF PROTECTING MYSELF

"I am inadequate. I have no control and no power. I am paralyzed."

4. THE CULT IS MY ONLY TRUE FAMILY

(In extrafamilial cases)—"My family is dangerous to me and only the cult members accept me. I will eventually live with them forever because they are my true family."

5. MEMORIES ARE DANGEROUS

"I must hurt myself if I begin to remember. I must cut myself, beat myself, or kill myself if I remember what happened. Terrible things will happen to me and my family if I remember."

6. DISCLOSURES ARE DANGEROUS

"The cult will know if I tell anyone. If I do tell, I or my family will be hurt by them, or I will be compelled to hurt myself."

RELIGIOUS BELIEFS imparted by ritual abuse and mind control, seen in both adult and child survivors, include the following.

1. SATAN IS STRONGER THAN GOD

“Satan has all the power. He is stronger than God. God has not been able to do anything to protect me from what has happened.”

2. GOD DOES NOT LOVE ME

“I am despised and rejected by God. I am guilty of crimes that God could never forgive. I am evil and beyond hope for redemption or restoration.”

3. GOD WANTS TO PUNISH ME

“I am profoundly afraid of God who must want to destroy me.”

4. MY LIFE IS CONTROLLED BY SATAN

“I belong to Satan irrevocably. His power lives inside me and has taken over my life. I am possessed by an evil spirit or demon that controls my life.”

5. MY LIFE IS DEDICATED TO SATAN

“I have taken vows to serve Satan throughout my life. I will serve him by willingly committing acts of evil and destruction. In turn, he will protect me from harm and allow me to gratify all of my desires.”

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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RESOURCES

1. For crisis counseling, and information about therapists in your area:

Childhelp, USA
National Child Abuse Hotline
1 - 800 - 4 A Child

2. For parent and victim support, resource materials and information, speakers, and newsletter:

Believe the Children
P.O. Box 1358
Manhattan Beach, California 90266
(213) 379-3514

Additional chapters:

Believe the Children
P.O. Box 26 - 8462
Chicago, Illinois 60626
(312) 973-5275

Believe the Children
P.O. Box 6593
Lincoln, Nebraska 68506

3. For parent support, resource materials, information and speakers:

Families of Crimes of Silence (FOCOS)
P.O. Box 2338
Canoga Park, California 91306
(805) 298-8768
(213) 372-6231

4. For non-sectarian resource materials, information, and speakers on destructive cults in general:

Commission on Cults and Missionaries
Jewish Community Relations Committee
Jewish Federation Council of Greater Los Angeles
6505 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles, California 90048
(213) 852-1234, Ext. 2813

5. For non-sectarian parent and victim support for those injured by the activities of destructive cult groups:

Cult Clinic
Jewish Family Service
6505 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles, California 90048
(213) 852-1234, Ext. 2650

6. For written materials on ritual abuse:

Marshall Resource Center
Children's Institute International
711 South New Hampshire
Los Angeles, California 90005
(213) 385-5100

7. For inservice training of professionals and the general public regarding child abuse as well as custody and protection issues.
General training in ritual abuse:

Adam Walsh Resource Center
782 Westminster Blvd.
Westminster, California 92683
(714) 898-4802

8. For additional copies of this report, referrals, training for professionals, or speakers on ritual abuse:

Los Angeles County Commission for Women
383 Hall of Administration
500 W. Temple St.
Los Angeles, California 90012
(213) 974-1455

NOTES



LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMISSION FOR WOMEN
383 Hall of Administration/500 W. Temple/Los Angeles CA 90012/974-1455

RITUAL ABUSE

DEFINITIONS
GLOSSARY
THE USE OF MIND CONTROL



MARCH 15, 1991

REPORT OF THE RITUAL ABUSE TASK FORCE
LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMISSION FOR WOMEN

Ritual Abuse is a brutal form of abuse of children, adolescents, and adults, consisting of physical, sexual, and psychological abuse, and involving the use of rituals.

This 30-page report provides useful information for the mental health professional, survivor, concerned parent, or anyone concerned about this growing problem.

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