

SPIRITUAL and EMOTIONAL ABUSE TEST

by

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This is a short questionnaire to help you determine whether or not you are or were a part of an abusive church community. However, just to make it flow better, this test is written from the perspective that you are still in a church. If you are no longer in a church, you can determine whether or not the church you left was in fact abusive.

I suggest you take each question slowly and deliberately. Decide right now that you are going to be honest with yourself. You do not need to protect anybody. This is your time. Relax in a nice chair. Maybe have some tissue on hand just in case. Coffee. Or wine.

There are 3 pages. Okay, here we go:

1. Do you feel nervous when you go to church?
2. Are you extra careful with how you behave so as not to make other members or the church leadership upset?
3. Do you feel obligated or coerced into doing things for the church?
4. Are you afraid of expressing a different opinion than the church leadership?
5. Does the church leadership make you feel ashamed, embarrassed, or that you are a disappointment, and sometimes do this to you in front of other members?
6. Does the church leadership seem to check up on what you are doing, or require you to confess your activities, and generally seem suspicious of your answers?
7. Does the church communicate that you would be disloyal and a betrayer if you considered leaving? (*continue below*)

8. Does the church promise better treatment, favors and responsibilities if you conform to its expectations?
9. Does the church seem to motivate you to isolate yourself to the point where you are losing touch with friends and family outside of your church and all your primary relationships are inside the church?
10. Does the church's attitude and behavior towards you make you feel as if you've done something wrong?
11. Does the church ever use threats, including spiritual ones, to motivate you?
12. Do you always feel like you are hiding important parts of your personality to please the church in order to avoid being hurt?
13. Does your church communicate its expectations in order to keep you from doing things that you normally would want to do?
14. Do you always feel that nothing you do is ever good enough for your church?
15. Does your church suggest that if you try to leave, you are jeopardizing your future and will never see the fulfillment of your promises or destiny, or that you will harm your family if you leave?
16. Does your church say that if you try to leave, that will be damaging your reputation or jeopardizing the church's mission?
17. If you challenge your church, is there always an excuse for its behavior? ("We were lead by the Holy Spirit." "The whole leadership was in agreement." "You just don't understand.")
18. Do you hide your questions about your church by lying to your family and friends about your sadness, depression, confusion or frustration? (*continue below*)

*In addition, here are some common signs of **emotional abuse**. Does your church:*

- Repeatedly gives you destructive criticism, verbal threats and browbeating?
- Always claims to be right?
- Excludes you from making decisions and claims to be the authority over your life?
- Withholds information from you and is suspicious of you?
- Minimizes or denies its abusive behavior when confronted?
- Constantly shows disrespect, puts you down or embarrasses you in front of others?
- Requires more personal information from you than seems appropriate?
- Micro-manages your life?
- Monitors all of your behavior and even your thought life?

I might have a surprise for you. You might be thinking:

"I wonder how many out of these should apply to me in order for me to determine that I am abused."

*No! If just **one** of these applies to you, then it is possible that you are in an abusive relationship with your church. All it takes is one of them to apply for you to be the victim of abuse.*

If you would like to talk with me about it, go [here](#).

Peace on your path!

David