

1. When the holy Abba Anthony lived in the desert he was beset by lethargy, and attacked by many sinful thoughts. He said to God, 'Lord, I want to be saved, but these thoughts will not leave me alone. What shall I do in my affliction? How can I be saved?' A short while afterward, when he got up to go out, Anthony saw a man like himself sitting at his work, getting up from his work to pray, then sitting down and plaiting a rope, then getting up again to pray. It was an angel of the Lord sent to correct and reassure him. He heard the angel saying to him, «Do this and you will be saved.» At these words, Anthony was filled with joy and courage. He did this, and he was saved.

2. When the same Abba Anthony thought about the depth of the judgments of God, he asked, «Lord, how is it that some die when they are young, while others drag on to extreme old age? Why are there those who are poor and those who are rich? Why do wicked men prosper and why are the just in need?» He heard a voice answering him, «Anthony, keep your attention on yourself; these things are according to the judgment of God, and it is not to your advantage to know anything about them.»

3. Someone asked Abba Anthony, «What must one do in order to please God?» The old man replied, «Pay attention to what I tell you: whoever you may be, always have God before your eyes, whatever you do, do it according to the testimony of the Holy Scriptures; in whatever place you live do not easily leave it. Keep these three precepts and you will be saved.»

4. Abba Anthony said to Abbe Poemen, «This is the Great Work of a man: always to take the blame for his own sins before God and to expect temptation to his last breath.»

5. Abbe Pambo asked Abba Anthony, «What ought I to do?» and the old man said to him, «Do not trust in your own righteousness, do not worry about the past, but control your tongue and your stomach.»

6. «I saw the snares that the enemy spreads out over the world and I said groaning, 'What can get through from such snares?'» Then I heard a voice saying to me, «Humility.»

7. A hunter in the desert saw Abba Anthony enjoying himself with the brethren and he was shocked. Wanting to show him that it was necessary sometimes to meet the needs of the brethren, the old man said to him, «Put an arrow in your bow and shoot it.» So, he did. The old man said, «Shoot another,» and he did so. Then the old man said, «Shoot yet again,» and the hunter replied «If I bend my bow so much I will break it.» Then the old man said to him, «It is the same with the work of God. If we stretch the brethren beyond measure they will soon break. Sometimes it is necessary to come down to meet their needs.» When he heard these words the hunter was pierced by compunction and, greatly edified by the old man,

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he went away. As for the brethren, they went home strengthened.

8. The brothers praised a monk before Abba Anthony. When the monk came to see him, Anthony wanted to know how he would bear insults, and seeing that he could not bear them at all, he said to him, «You are like a village magnificently decorated on the outside, but destroyed from within by robbers.»

9. One day some old men came to see Abba Anthony. In the midst of them was Abba Joseph. Wanting to test them, the old man suggested a text from the Scriptures, and, beginning with the youngest, he asked them what it meant. Each gave his opinion as he was able. But to each one the old man said, «You have not understood it.» Last of all he said to Abba Joseph, «How would you explain this saying?» And he replied, «I do not know.» Then Abba Anthony said,

«Indeed, Abba Joseph has found the way, for he has said: 'I do not know.'»

10. The brethren came to Abba Anthony and said to him, «Speak a word: how are we to be saved?» The old man said to them, «You have read the Scriptures. That should teach you how.» But they said, «We want to hear from you too, Father.» Then the old man said to them, «The Gospel says, 'if anyone strikes you on one cheek, turn to him the other also.'» (Mt 5:30) They said, «We cannot do that.» The old man said, «If you cannot offer the other cheek, at least allow one cheek to be struck.» «We cannot do that, either,» they said. So he said, «If you are not able to do that, do not return evil for evil,» and they said, «We cannot do that, either.» Then the old man said to his disciple, «prepare a little brew of corn for these invalids. If you cannot do this, or that, what can I do for you? What you need is prayers.»

11. «God does not allow the same warfare and temptations to this generation as he did formerly, for men are weaker now and cannot bear so much.»

12. «A time is coming when men will go mad, and when they see someone who is not mad, they will attack him saying, 'You are mad, you are not like us.'»

13. Three Fathers used to go and visit Blessed Anthony every year and two of them used to discuss their thoughts and the salvation of their souls with him, but the third always remained silent and did not ask him anything. After a long time, Abba Anthony said to him, 'You often come here to see me, but you never ask me anything,' and the other replied, 'It is enough for me to see you, Father.'

14. One day Abba Anthony received a letter from the Emperor Constantius, asking him to come to Constantinople, and he was wondering if he ought to go. So he said to Abba Paul, his disciple, «Ought I to go?» He replied, «If you go, you will be called Anthony, but if you stay here, you will be called Abba Anthony.»

15. «I no longer fear God, but I love Him. For love casts out fear.» (Jn 4:18)

16. «Always have the fear of God before your eyes. Remember Him Who gives death and life. Hate the world and all that is in it. Hate all peace that comes from the flesh. Renounce this life, so that you may be alive to God. Remember what you have promised God, for it will be required of you on the Day of Judgment. Suffer hunger, thirst, nakedness, be watchful and sorrowful; weep, groan in your heart; test yourselves, to see if you are worthy of God; despise the flesh, so that you may preserve your souls.»

17. «Whoever hammers a lump of iron, first decides what he is going to make of it, a scythe, a sword, or an axe. Even so we ought to make up our minds what kind of virtue we want to forge, or else we labor in vain.»

18. «Obedience with abstinence gives men power over wild beasts.»

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If the ability to use one's gift of reason is what makes us human, then these groups rob their members of their basic humanity (p. 181).

Mind control (also known as **brainwashing, coercive persuasion, thought control, or thought reform**) refers to a process in which a group or individual «systematically uses unethical manipulative methods to persuade others to conform to the wishes of the manipulator(s), often to the detriment of the person being manipulated» The term has been applied to any tactic, **psychological** or otherwise, which can be seen as subverting an individual's sense of control over their own **thinking**, behaviour, emotions or decision making.

To help you understand what constitutes mind control, here are listed the ten traits which can be used to discern the subtle difference between the healthy and toxic influences you may be facing in your life (from books on cults, and from the internet):

1.) CHARISMATIC LEADERSHIP — the unquestioned obedience and submission to the claimed authority, divine appointment, and knowledge of a central leader or group of leaders who demand such obedience to prove the individual's faith, motives, integrity and trustworthiness.

2.) TOTALITARIAN WORLD VIEW — a «we-versus-they» view of the outside world designed to enhance the group's identity, goals, and welfare at the expense of the individual. Group

WHAT IS MIND CONTROL?

members are the heroic «good guys», and outsiders are the villainous «bad guys.»

3.) ELITISM — benefits of belonging are unobtainable to outsiders but available to the loyal only through association with the group — from personal empowerment and spiritual highs to fulfillment and ultimate salvation. The group views itself as the only one with «the truth» and lives accordingly.

4.) DECEPTION — the group's free usage of dishonesty, falsehoods and questionable claims in both its indoctrination of new members and its rejection of «outsiders» who seem critical of the group. Any media and literature used may be characterized by deceptive and misleading claims.

5.) ALIENATION — the group's active encouragement of its members to remain separate from those family, friends and parts of society opposed to group ideals. The outside world is viewed as sinful, ignorant, Satanic and must be fully withdrawn from — thus reinforcing the group's control.

6.) FATIGUE — the deprivation of members of sleep, needed rest times and free time with the insistence that long hours of work and meetings are a means of demonstrating true faith, real dedication to a cause, or determination to succeed. The effects of mental fatigue impair the individual's ability to critically think or even rationally

function, leaving them open to manipulation.

7.) FEAR — the usage of continuously overemphasized phobias (irrational fears) to control members (some of these being programmed fears of hell, fear of the government, fear of certain objects, fear of business loss, fear of the «world order», fear of displeasing God and others, fear of the devil, fear of other races, fear of displeasing the group's leaders and mentors and fear of losing close ties to the group)

8.) EXPLOITATION — a broad trait ranging from pressure to give all of one's wealth and time to the group to the usage of guilt, secrecy and emotional manipulation to maintain control: the threat of expulsion is a particularly powerful leverage of control, as is verbal, sexual and even physical violence.

9.) CHANGE IN DIET — under nourishment as well as unhealthy nutrition used to keep members mentally dulled and thereby less able to engage in independent thinking — the greatest enemy of destructive cult groups. Mind-altering toxins, drugs and chemicals are used in some foods sometimes in deliberate fashion.

10.) LACK OF PRIVACY — individuals are not allowed moments of private solitude or contemplation which may lead to independent thought: frequently, group members live and func-

tion in society together, and monitor each other closely (particularly in family situations) to ensure conformity to the group's proscribed lifestyle.

These ten characteristics are all designed to accomplish one central cult goal: *indoctrination into the group's belief system with a simultaneous shut-down of independent thought.* The nature and precise details of that belief system will differ sharply from group to cause to philosophy to study group, but the human dynamics involved are always the same. At another time we could look into thought reform and techniques used to keep the membership in these groups.

Orthodoxy is a way of life. Our life is a dynamic expression of our love for God and each other. Children are the future of the Church. We all have responsibilities to *integrate* children, young adults and newly received / illumined adults into the community of the Church. This means: teaching them the Orthodox Faith, learning together, being able to *explain the Faith to our peers and neighbours*; to witness and experience God's love in action within the Christian community, thus being welcome, accepted and not criticized, and encouraged by clergy and laity. By neglecting our duties to integrate our Church community, we are committing a sin, since these age groups and those not familiar with the Orthodox Faith are vulnerable and become easy target for various religious movements.

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