



SHOULD I GO NO CONTACT?

THE PURPOSE OF GOING NO CONTACT IS TO BREAK THE CYCLE OF ABUSE. BUT GOING NO CONTACT WITH A RELIGIOUS GROUP IS CHALLENGING. IT CAN BE ESPECIALLY ISOLATING IF YOUR CLOSE FAMILY AND FRIENDS ARE STILL A PART OF THE GROUP. GROWING UP IN A HIGH-CONTROL RELIGION MAY HAVE KEPT YOU SHELTERED FROM THE WORLD, MAKING IT MORE INTIMIDATING TO STRIKE OUT ON YOUR OWN. HOWEVER, STAYING MAY EXPOSE YOU TO MORE HARM OR STUNT YOUR HEALING. THE PURPOSE OF THIS WORKSHEET ISN'T TO TELL YOU IF YOU SHOULD GO **NO CONTACT** OR NOT. BUT IT IS DESIGNED TO SUPPORT YOU AS YOU MAKE THE DECISION THAT IS BEST FOR YOU AND YOUR UNIQUE SITUATION. **THE GLOSSARY OF TERMS (IN RED) IS LISTED ON PAGE 6.**

1- IS MAINTAINING CONTACT WITH YOUR RELIGIOUS GROUP CAUSING YOU EMOTIONAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL, PHYSICAL, OR SPIRITUAL HARM?

2- IS REMAINING IN CONTACT MAKING HEALING DIFFICULT OR IMPOSSIBLE? ARE YOU EXPERIENCING REPEATED HURT OR HARM?

3- ARE YOUR RELIGIOUS GROUP'S LEADERSHIP OR MEMBERS REFUSING TO RESPECT YOUR **BOUNDARIES** EVEN AFTER YOU HAVE COMMUNICATED THEM? (EXAMPLE: YOU ASKED THEM TO STOP CALLING YOU EVERY WEEK ABOUT JOINING THE WOMEN'S GROUP, SO THEY STARTED EMAILING YOU EVERY WEEK ABOUT JOINING THE WOMEN'S GROUP.)

4- ARE YOUR RELIGIOUS GROUP'S LEADERSHIP OR MEMBERS WEAPONIZING PAST SUPPORT OR GENEROSITY TO GUILT YOU OR KEEP YOU OBLIGATED TO THEM?

5- HAVE YOU BEEN TARGETED BY A **SMEAR CAMPAIGN**? IF SO, HOW HAS IT AFFECTED YOU?

6- HAS **RUMINATION** BECOME A PROBLEM? IF SO, HOW HAS IT AFFECTED YOU?

7- ARE YOU BEING **GASLIGHTED** WHEN YOU RAISE YOUR CONCERNS? (EXAMPLES: BEING ACCUSED OF IMAGINING HARM OR BEING BLAMED FOR SOMEONE ELSE'S ACTIONS. IF SO, HOW HAS IT AFFECTED YOU?)

8- ARE YOU BEING MANIPULATED THROUGH FEAR TACTICS? (EXAMPLES: CLAIMS THAT GOD WILL PUNISH YOU OR THAT YOU WILL BE DAMNED IF YOU LEAVE THE GROUP.)

9- ARE YOUR PERSONAL CHOICES AND/OR FREE TIME BEING CONTROLLED?
(EXAMPLE: BEING PRESSURED INTO DONATING A CERTAIN PERCENTAGE OF
YOUR LIFE'S SAVINGS TO THE GROUP TO RECEIVE GOD'S MERCY.)

10- IS YOUR COMMITMENT TO YOUR RELIGIOUS GROUP DAMAGING YOUR
RELATIONSHIPS WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS? IS IT DRIVING A WEDGE
BETWEEN YOU AND YOUR LOVED ONES?

11- HOW HAS THE ABOVE IMPACTED YOUR LIFE?

12- IN THE LEFT COLUMN, LIST THE PROS OF REMAINING IN CONTACT WITH THE GROUP IN QUESTION. IN THE RIGHT COLUMN, LIST THE CONS OF REMAINING IN CONTACT WITH THE GROUP IN QUESTION.

PROS	CONS

13- IN THE LEFT COLUMN, LIST THE PROS OF GOING NO CONTACT WITH THE GROUP IN QUESTION. IN THE RIGHT COLUMN, LIST THE CONS OF GOING NO-CONTACT WITH THE GROUP IN QUESTION.

PROS	CONS

14- BASED ON YOUR ANSWERS TO THE ABOVE QUESTIONS, WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE YOUR NEXT STEPS TO BE?

GLOSSARY OF TERMS:

NO CONTACT: INVOLVES CUTTING OFF ALL CONTACT WITH A PERSON OR A GROUP. THIS IS NOT LIMITED TO IN-PERSON COMMUNICATION. IT INCLUDES CALLS, TEXTS, EMAILS, DIRECT MESSAGES, OR ANY OTHER MODE OF COMMUNICATION. IT ALSO MEANS NOT CHECKING THEIR SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS OR ASKING THEIR FRIENDS ABOUT THEM. THE PURPOSE IS TO BREAK CYCLES OF ABUSE AND PROTECT YOUR PEACE.

BOUNDARIES: LIMITS YOU ESTABLISH FOR YOURSELF TO PROTECT YOUR WELL-BEING IN RELATIONSHIPS AND GROUP DYNAMICS. THIS INCLUDES WHAT OTHERS CAN OR CANNOT SAY OR DO TO YOU, HOW YOU EXPECT TO BE TREATED, AND WHAT YOU ARE NOT WILLING TO TOLERATE.

SMEAR CAMPAIGN: A DELIBERATE, MANIPULATIVE ATTEMPT BY A PERSON OR GROUP TO DAMAGE YOUR REPUTATION AND TURN OTHERS AGAINST YOU.

RUMINATION: WHEN YOUR MIND REPLAYS THE SAME THOUGHTS OVER AND OVER, OFTEN ABOUT WHAT SOMEONE DID OR SAID THAT WAS HURTFUL OR HARMFUL TO YOU. ALTHOUGH NATURAL, IN TIME, RUMINATION CAN CAUSE SIGNIFICANT DISTRESS AND BECOME TOXIC TO THE PERSON WHO IS RUMINATING.

GASLIGHTING: A FORM OF EMOTIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL MANIPULATION WHEN A PERSON DENIES OR LIES TO MAKE YOU QUESTION YOUR REALITY. THIS CAN MAKE YOU LOSE YOUR CONFIDENCE, QUESTIONING YOUR PERCEPTIONS, MEMORIES, AND SANITY. IT CAN DESTABILIZE YOU, MAKING YOU INCREASINGLY DEPENDENT ON THE GASLIGHTER OVER TIME.