



**Combating Cult Mind Control**  
**Excerpts from Steven Hassan's Book**  
[www.freedomofmind.com](http://www.freedomofmind.com)

**Brenda Lee's comments appear in Red.**

Steven describes the components of mind control as these four things (p. 59):

(1) Control of behavior: "Each day a significant amount of time is devoted to cult rituals and indoctrination activities...In destructive cults, there is always something to do." (p. 60)

The Watchtower leadership demands that its members attend at least five weekly meetings a week. In addition, they are strongly encouraged to attend local and regional religious conventions that last for several days. Weekends offer no relief. When they aren't working or attending meetings, they are expected to hold home studies of the Watchtower literature and to participate in door-to-door proselytizing.

(2) Control of thoughts: "All that is good is embodied in the leader and the group. All that is bad is on the outside. ...A destructive cult typically has its own loaded language..." (p. 61)

(3) Control of emotions: "Members are taught never to feel for themselves or their own needs but always to think of the group and never to complain. They are never to criticize a leader, but criticize themselves instead." (p. 64) **This is precisely what happened with Jehovah's Witnesses when Armageddon didn't come in 1975.**

(4) Control of information: "Information is compartmentalized to keep members from knowing the big picture. ..A member in one city will therefore not necessarily know about an important legal decision, media expose, or internal dispute that is creating turmoil in the group somewhere else. Cult members naturally feel they know more about what's going on in their group than outsiders do..." (p. 65)

**How many Jehovah's Witnesses know about the Dateline or BBC program on sexual child abuse or even the organization's own teachings regarding the two witness rule?**

I recently asked my father how he felt about the two witness rule for sexual child abuse and he countered with, "That's ridiculous, Brenda. No one in *this* organization would require two witnesses for child abuse. That's not even logical." When I told him I could prove it to him using his own literature, he stated defensively that he and my mother have in their possession (and have read) all of the *Watchtowers* and *Awakes* from the last 25 years and there isn't any such information in their literature. He challenged me to send it to him, which I did. A few weeks later I called him up to see what he thought of the article and he said he didn't want to discuss it or receive anything else "like that" because it "upset your mother."

**Steven talks about how happiness in a cult comes through good performance (p. 81):** "The love seems to be unconditional and unlimited at first, and new members are swept away by a honeymoon of praise and attention. But after a few months, as the person becomes more enmeshed, the flattery and attention are turned away toward newer recruits. The cult member learns that love is not unconditional but dependent on good performance."

**Cult members are manipulated through fear. Steven says,** "In every destructive cult I have encountered, fear is a major motivator...the more vivid and tangible a devil the group can conjure up, the more intense is the cohesiveness it fosters." (p. 82)



Referring to doctrine, Steven says, "...destructive groups change the "truth" to fit the needs of the situation because they believe that *the ends justify the means*...Legitimate organizations don't change their doctrine to deceive the public. (p. 99)

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