









September 20, 2012

Family and Community Development Committee
Inquiry into the Handling of Child Abuse by Religious and Other Organisations
Parliament House,
Spring Street
EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002

Dear Family and Community Development Committee Members,

In relation to your committee Inquiry into the Handling of Child Abuse by Religious and Other Organisations, I send you a submission that includes Item 1: Table One from a *Zadok paper S116, Summer 2001: Power, Secrecy and Abuse: Changing the Church*. This table was adapted from my book *Cultures of Secrecy & Abuse: A Paradox for Churches*. As Item 2, I also include the contents of a booklet, *Families Can Monitor to Stop Secrecy, Abuse and Bullying* that is based on a conference paper I gave at the Third International Conference of the Beyond Bullying Association, *Responding to Professional Abuse*, St. John's College, University of Queensland, 2-3 July, 1999. A summary of this booklet was reproduced in the conference proceedings publication *Bullying: Backyard to Boardroom, Vol 2. Responding to Professional Abuse* (2001: 44-54) Sydney: Federation Press.

Together with 'In Good Faith & Associates', 



who works to develop awareness of bullying, abuse and cult type leadership, I have distributed the book, the Zadok paper and the booklet widely. It has been used for discussion specifically by folk seeking information about how to protect their children. 


These documents have been requested by people throughout Victoria, Australia and across the world (particularly every corner of Australia, Canada, USA, United Kingdom, Ireland, and South Africa). For example, an Anglican Bishop bought a set of twelve books to use in his Diocese for workshops. Indeed, Helen Last of 'In Good Faith and Associates' distributed the booklet throughout Ireland and the United Kingdom where it has been used in workshops and by individual families.

I have had folk travel from the United Kingdom, Canada and from all over Australia seeking to discuss with me how I could possibly write so knowingly about his or her particular case. My answer is that the academic literature details how the misuse of power and secrecy leads to abuse and the structures and processes in churches are particularly vulnerable to the misuse of power that corrupts.

Organisations and individuals use the material in this book extensively to fathom how abuse can occur. The Uniting Church of Australia, through its Bethel Pastoral Centre, Abuse in Church: Prevention and Healing has multiple copies of this book and uses Table One in workshops to assist in developing awareness to both understand, heal and prevent abuse. At times Bethel Pastoral Centre uses Table One on its website to assist people as preparation for attendance at workshops. Helen Last assures me that she and 'In Good Faith and Associates' continue to use the research gathered in these documents to assist in developing awareness of what and how abuse occur, assist in healing the pain suffered by those who have been abused in churches, and other organisations and moreover, to prevent such abuse continuing.

I respectfully request that you regard the contents of Table One table and the booklet, together with the explanatory documents, as a submission to your inquiry, particularly relating to items 2 and 3 of your terms of reference as cited below:

whether there are systemic practices in such organisations that operate to preclude or discourage the reporting of suspected criminal abuse of children to State authorities;

and

whether changes to law or to practices, policies and protocols in such organisations are required to help prevent criminal abuse of children by personnel in such organisations and to deal with allegations of such abuse.

Mindful of the closing date being this Friday September 21st, I am sending you Table One as part of my submission, and the booklet. One copy of the book, ten copies of the paper are included as supporting documents.

Table One: Processes Conducive to Abuse

Process	Description
1. Autocratic, authoritarian structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leader(s) exert(s) absolute control over: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - policy - program details, including minutiae - dominant ideas expressed and/or taught - financial matters- who participates - who receives special attention - who gains advancement.
2. Loyalty, submission, dependence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Isolates individual from others • Maintains secrecy of interchange • Must be demonstrated in action • Requires all confidences are told to leader(s) • Involves vulnerable sharing in group • Obliges obedience be given to leader(s) • Creates dependence on guidance from leader(s) • Produces veneration of leader(s)• Allows bias towards leader's (s') interpretations • Encourages self-diminishment in deference to leader/group.
3. Absorption into group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produces conformity to all aspects of group • Involves long hours of shared activities • Uses praise and ridicule to encourage membership • Places disproportionate emphasis of new membership.
4. Isolation from: - family of origin; - friends; - early socialisation; - internalised norms and values - former activities (e.g. study & hobbies)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distorts relationship to family of origin • Excludes links and traditions of old family • Locates members at remote sites • Conflicts with past ideals and interests • Concentrates on leader(s) as confidant(s) • Transfers trust to the leader(s) and group • Bewilders families.
5. Idiosyncratic teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depends on selective teachings • Misuses legitimate church beliefs and doctrines • Creates theories about good and evil that are separated from orthodox teaching.
6. Evil as defined by the leader(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequently a topic in discussions • Attributed to particular people and places (e.g. participant's family of origin, environments and objects) • Avoided by narrowing contacts to the group • Produces fear in members.
7. Divergent moral standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exist but are kept secret from members and wider community • Differ from 'ordinary' group members and mainstream society • Increase isolation from mainstream moral standards • Produce dilemma and quandary for victim.

8. Denial of victims' claims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victims' claims often denied and victims are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - accused of lying - accused of fabrication - accused of fantasy - placed in fear of disbelief. • Responses to victims are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - delayed - often inadequate - kept secret.
9. Mind control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Erodes personal autonomy • Manipulates thoughts • Produces destructive patterns in members' lives • Maintains commitment to the group • Mind control can occur via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'guidance' method - encouragement to attend programs constantly - encouragement to deep commitment - rejecting independence in members - techniques used to prime and control meetings - focus on the inner core to prime meetings - 'thought stopping' techniques (e.g. misuse of praying, meditating, chanting) - reduced objective assessment of meetings - special activities and confidences for inner group only - distrust of past - rejection of self - erosion of independent decision making.
10. Cognitive dissonance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates discrepancy between patterns of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - thought - feelings - behaviour. • Removes previous meaning and order of personal life; • Disrupts ideas and beliefs in irrational ways; • Reduces ability to listen for the substance of truth; and • Increases commitment to the leader/group.

From: *Zadok Paper - S116* — Cara Beed - Power, Secrecy and Abuse: Changing the Church, 2001, pp. 8-9.
Adapted from Beed (1998) pp. 81 – 83.

Families Can Monitor to Stop Secrecy, Abuse and Bullying

Do you belong to a club?

Are your children in clubs?

How is your children's school organised?

What happens in your church organisations?

Does your family have authoritative relationships?

Are there bullies in your work place?

What types of relationships exist in your school, home, work and church?

Do you have authoritarian or authoritative relationships?

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Author's Note

The material, suggestions, and recommendations described in this booklet are based on the research literature. All the stories, characters, and descriptions of behaviours used in the presentation of this booklet, with the exception of *Unresolved Grief*, are fictional. Any resemblance to real people, living or dead, is unintentional. Nothing within my publications should be interpreted to refer to myself, my family, or anyone else with whom we have associated, unless otherwise stated explicitly. The material, stories, characters, behaviours and recommendations are based on the research and material in *Cultures of Secrecy and Abuse: A Paradox for Churches* (Beed, 1998). In the author's note to the above book, I acknowledged the literature as origins of my concerns, and to a limited extent observation of groups in a variety of arenas.

It is important readers understand my interest in the issues was inspired by the literature. Mindful of legal parameters, I have not based my writing on, or identified, any persons or groups. In the first book, the research material was used to develop an overview of the topic in relation to religious groups. As in that book, readers can be assured I have observed the arena about which I write.

Throughout this series of writings, I seek to isolate some of the structures and processes conducive to spiritual, emotional and physical abuse, particularly within religious, educational and pastoral care organisations. By discussing these elements, my aim is to highlight the importance of, and need for, education about the topic and accountability by churches, schools and care organisations. I look forward to a time when changes sweep through the major institutions in society. Only then will the social atmosphere encourage families to develop, maintain, express, and insist on, the authoritative relationships necessary throughout every arena of a dignified and caring society.

Families Can monitor to Stop Secrecy, Abuse and Bullying

Introduction

This booklet is an effort to develop the element of positive monitoring in a difficult and fraught area of human relationships and social organization. It is not a definitive piece of work, just a contribution to the field - to stir the pot and stimulate healthy discussion. My aim is to outline the value of individuals developing authoritative expressions of their personal autonomy. Specific suggestions are made for families to monitor for the presence of cultures of secrecy and abuse in family, work, services and community life. The main emphases in this booklet are on church and church related organisations. Social accountability through education is needed. This will heighten the culture of awareness about potential for abuse. In addition we need independent intervention and appropriate legislation to ensure abuse and bullying is stopped in all organisations, including families, schools, churches, work places and clubs.

The suggestions in this booklet are based on material in *Cultures of Secrecy and Abuse: A Paradox for Churches* (Beed, 1998). Only a summary of the definitions and ideas is presented here. I am committed to authoritative relationships being encouraged throughout society, developing particularly in families and advancing in all institutions. My purpose in presenting ideas for monitoring secrecy, abuse and bullying is to heighten awareness of what is healthy in relationships. Furthermore, where each individual holds and is expected to express their personal autonomy within authoritative relationships bullying and abuse are not easily achieved. If we encourage the best, we might stop the abuses. As individuals, and as a society, we should recognise abuse can occur everywhere. Most importantly, we need the power to address and overcome the problems. There is a certain amount of repetition and overlap within the twenty-five suggestions. This is necessary to achieve as much clarity as possible.

Definitions

The following summaries are taken from more detailed discussion in Beed (1998) to which the booklet is a companion. The notes here are included as an introduction only.

Power

Power is the ability to produce results desired by a particular person or group. Everyone needs power, but when one person imposes his or her power on another abuse can occur.

To exercise power a person needs:

- commitment to an idea;
- a framework in which to work;
- knowledge of how to go forward;
- skills to go forward;
- co-operation from others;
- opportunities to influence others; and,
- opportunities to involve powerful others.

Abuse and Bullying

Abuse is anything that hurts another person (Ormerod & Ormerod, 1995: xi). Bullying is repeatedly and deliberately putting a person under stress (McCarthy, Sheehan & Wilkie, 1996: vii). Abuse can be physical, sexual and/or psychological. A person's nervous system is affected by bullying and abuse and stress can result (Wilkie, 1995: 8; McCarthy et al., 1996: vii).

The Culture of Abuse

The culture of abuse is all the conventions, practices and language used anywhere to hurt, mistreat, malign or revile people. It is all the ways used to injure and maltreat people in all walks of life. Even meetings can be abusive structures, as can gossip and denigration. Typically, highly structured, authoritarian hierarchies allow those at the top of the structure to abuse; even those in the lowest rank can adopt abusive patterns.

The Culture of Secrecy

The culture of secrecy is the use of dominant social forces to deny truth. Those wanting secrecy use ideas, laws, norms, customs, language, myths, beliefs and institutional rules to stop the truth being seen or heard. Powerful forces in society, usually leaders of institutions, limit disclosure of information about abuse. Don't confuse the culture of secrecy with privacy or confidentiality. Everyone has the right to privacy, as long as they respect everyone else's rights. Confidentiality is a sound part of therapy, but only while it benefits the client. Otherwise, confidentiality stops victims getting help. When confidentiality stops a person getting the help they need, it's 'secrecy' and that's more abuse. Secrecy and silence breed abuse, particularly by isolating the victim from people who can help. In professional services, such as medicine and pastoral care, the culture of secrecy amounts to organised abuse of already abused clients.

Pain in the Community

Bullying, abuse and the culture of secrecy causing pain in the community through church-related pastoral care situations is well documented (e.g., Last, 1990, 1994 & 1996 & 1997; Born, 1992 & 1996, Bartley & MacDonald, 1993; CAHPACA, 1996; Foley, 1995 & 1996; Pastoral Response Office, 1996 (hereafter: PRO); the Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference and the Australian Conference of Leaders in Religious Institutes, 1997 (hereafter: ACBC) and Kohl & Crowley, 1998).

Personal Autonomy

The definition of personal autonomy is the right, ability and opportunity for an individual to investigate, adopt, and practice their own principles and rules of life. These opportunities must be independent of the coercion, interference or control of others, with confidence to co-operate in patterns of interdependence with others. To be free of abuse one needs some level of personal autonomy (Beed, 1998:14 – 18). All individuals need rights and opportunities to investigate, adopt, and practise their own principles and rules of life. They must not be

coerced, dominated or controlled by others.

Authoritative Relationships.

Authoritative relationships have sound verbal 'give and take' between all people. In these relationships, everyone understands why decisions are made. This is often true in families and in some organisations. Policies and actions are fully and openly discussed until everyone understands where they stand and what is being done.

In authoritative relationships, people can object to policy and actions, seeking to have their opinions discussed. If one person won't conform, their self-will is encouraged and their opinions need to be fully addressed (Baumrind, 1978: 244). Authoritative relationships need extensive time with sensitive communication about everyone's ideas. The development of agreed boundaries must be based on individuality and co-operation (Ochiltree, 1990: 24).

All this is in contrast to authoritarian relationships that are controlling. Powerful people use their authority to bind other people to the domination of their will. Although authoritarian people can think they're working in the best interests of other people, they actually corrupt the development of others' rights. The contrast is in the benefits of authoritative families where social competence is developed. Members embrace their personal autonomy, while leading interdependent and co-operative lives. Other outcomes include responsible decision making and actions.

Publications from the Australian Institute of Family Studies (eg. Ochiltree, 1990: Ch.2) argue that authoritative family structures can be extremely valuable in nurturing social competence. Building interdependent behaviour involves challenges, including highly developed discussions involving all family members.

Overcoming Bullies

What Overcomes the Bully?

Bullying is repeatedly and deliberately abusing another person, often in secret. It seldom happens where people can exert power in their lives, express their opinions and contribute to what is going on. Where power is shared, it's hard for bullies to get the upper hand. Unfortunately, bullies find it particularly easy to gain power in authoritarian groups, activities and organisations. Where power is exerted from top to bottom, little flexibility exists for individuals to reflect their own thinking and contributions. Structures, processes and behaviours in authoritarian groups are very controlling and inflexible, leading to power not being shared between people. Everyone needs some power, and if the structures and processes allow bullying, any one of us is in danger of abusing our power. The gentlest of us has the potential to be a bully if pushed into an organisational straightjacket of authoritarian edicts and machinations. Only with awareness, can we gently and kindly insist 'no bullying' here, and encourage co-operative behaviour for achieving our agreed tasks. Focusing on co-operation is a challenge. But, we can be free of that bugbear of bullying if we become aware of poor structures and eliminate these from our social relations.

Being 'Authoritative' Overcomes the Bully!

If we really want to stop bullying, we must look at the structures and processes that set the scene for bullies and bullying. Particularly, we need to develop social relations and organisations where people co-operate with others, contributing to activities through shared power. This alternative structure focuses on relationships that are 'authoritative'.

In authoritative relationships, each person has a developed understanding of what, and why, things are asked, agreed to and done. In these relationships, there is sound 'give and take' between all people and discussions are often vibrant yet dignified. Unlike authoritarian structures where orders are handed down from dominant leaders who don't listen to underlings, in authoritative relationships everyone seeks to understand others and aims for a co-operative framework. Publications from the Australian Institute of Family discuss the value of authoritative family structures in nurturing social competence.

Building authoritative relationships, as well as interdependent behaviour, involves many challenges, including highly developed discussions between all family members. In these positively uplifting relationships, authoritative people share power and use their personalities to contribute to the community for themselves and others. They do not exercise power regardless of others' needs. In authoritative relationships, bullying becomes

rare.

Part and parcel of authoritative relationships is the need to express our personal power, recognise and practice expressing our personal autonomy. The positive outcomes are co-operative resolutions of dilemmas in social relations. Each person needs a rounded sense of self and expression of her or his personal autonomy in all situations. Authoritative expression of this personal autonomy can only be achieved through appropriate structures and processes in home, work, school, sports, social clubs and social networks. These need to be the type that encourages each child and/or adult to be positive about who and what they are. This is particularly so for children as they mature through school and social activities out-of-school.

Authoritative Relationships are in Direct Contrast to Authoritarian Structures.

Presently the parameters for bullying comprise a culture of abuse. In this, the matrix of conventions, practices and language can be used within a group or an organisation to mistreat, malign and revile members. It can even extend to people outside the organisation. It is the sum total of the ways of acting that can be used to injure and maltreat both people involved in the organisation and those outside it. Even mismanaging a community meeting can allow bullying and lead to abuse.

Typically, the culture of abuse is practised in hierarchical mode, extending from those in superior control in an organisation to those in subordinate positions and through all ranks of the organisation. Secrecy about abusive behaviour forms another aspect of bullying and the culture of secrecy is very dominant. Bullies often keep the extremes of their behaviour secret, locking victims in fear to consciously hide the abuse, isolating the victim from peer and other support.

Although authoritarian people can think they're working in the best interests of other people, they work from a self-espoused position of superiority and this actually corrupts the rights of others. Power exerted over others is corruptive, while power developed in co-operation with others produces a pooling of community strength directed to common good.

Expression of Our 'Personal Autonomy' is Essential for Being Authoritative

Personal autonomy is the right, ability and opportunity for a person to investigate, adopt and practice their own principles and rules of life in co-operation with others. These opportunities need to be independent of coercion, interference or control from others, with confidence to co-operate in patterns of interdependence with others. To be free of bullying, or abuse, some level of personal autonomy is required.

Our sense of self, clear in relation to our basic needs at birth and in early nurture, becomes socialised from our earliest days. We are socialised to comply with society around us, to inhibit our natural desires, to contain our demands and so adjust to those around us. This is all well and good for the overall organisation of society, especially where there is a balance in demands for time and attention.

The gift of being born with an awareness of our basic human needs should continue as a treasured attribute. Right from birth, we should continue to appreciate and focus on knowing who we are and what our basic God-given needs are. Too often, the social milieu in which our families and we move dictates behaviour until we fail to recognise our deepest needs. Indeed, some have little sense of self, no personal autonomy and thereby become vulnerable to control by others. We need to co-operate to be part of the social networks of family, work, school and community, but not to the point where we deny our needs, accept bullies, sacrifice our own opinions or act against our will. Co-operating in the community is one thing, unquestioningly accepting bullies, and the structures that encourage them, is quite another.

New Social Relations for the New Millennium

The training of right and wrong varies in degrees between communities, but continues to form a major task for all humans. The turmoils in the world demonstrate that inculcating these skills needs far more work. Throughout world conflicts, opposing groups argue over who is right or wrong, even through armed attack. Few seem capable of identifying ways to achieve peace and charity in the world at large. Bullies are dominant in forceful displays of armed aggression. Conforming to a world that is racked with war, crime, starvation and cruelty leaves our young under a welter of pressure. We must examine how after a century where humans have produced horrific inhumanity to humanity, bullies continue to sway the power.

We enjoy affinity with our brothers, sisters, cousins, neighbours, and members of our sports, churches, school and so on. We need empathy with leaders in political parties and other representative bodies. But we can still have our own sense of self. We need our personal autonomy to express ourselves as individuals with ideas and needs. We can expect our needs to be met while being prepared to help meet the needs of others.

Unfortunately, socialisation can train us to sublimate our inner selves to such a degree that we conform to hierarchical structures throughout society. In previous centuries, humans had not developed the sophistication of the 21st century. Pyramid structures in society with powerful leaders and obedient followers have always been present. In the past, schools followed this pattern when it seemed the only way of organising a functional society.

As we progress through the new millennium, we know better. Many schools, financial and commercial enterprises, political parties and service groups have reduced top heavy authoritarian structures that force conformity and obedience on the less powerful, turning to shared goal development and agreed achievement parameters. In many schools and work arenas, co-operative patterns are developing in such areas as curriculum development, with parents and teachers working in tandem to achieve what is best for the entire community.

Authoritative Relations Work

But, what of family life or education where co-operation and authoritative relations are still not recognised as vital? Where authoritarianism still dominates relations, the community suffers from the outcomes. This is particularly so in education where differing goals cause dissention in the family, school and wider community. It is in authoritarian structures that bullying behaviours can encroach on the independence, work satisfaction and health of many individuals. This also inhibits the degrees of achievement of the overall community of the school and of the wider society. It would be nice to think such authoritarian behaviour is no longer common. It might be true that authoritarian behaviour is no longer as common as it was last century or even earlier this century. But authoritarian organisations are still around and bullies thrive in them. We need to guard that the distinctive patterns in authoritarian structures and processes don't encourage any of us into bullying behaviours.

The benefits of authoritative relationships, in families, work, schools and community enhance social competence and lift society to new levels of social interaction. All people in authoritative relationships can embrace their personal autonomy and lead interdependent and co-operative lives. Bullies won't stand a chance when we are each authoritative, expressing our personal autonomy in co-operation with others. Knowledge of what is happening in organisations will empower us to analyse and challenge the abusers and the bullies to open and dignified relationships. The following twenty-five suggestions, based on my earlier book provide a beginning to examining the organisations in which you and your family members move. Remember, for authoritative relationships to flourish, there needs to be 'give and take' with sound understanding of policies and actions leading to openness and rights of veto.

Twenty-five Detailed Proposals for Monitoring Cultures of Secrecy, Abuse and Bullying

1. Monitor the structures of the organisations in which you and/or your family participate.

Structures and processes conducive to abuse are most frequently found in authoritarian hierarchies. In these organisations, the rights of the individual are ignored in favour of the authority of the leaders. Members of these organisations are expected, and usually do, defer to the leader. Members believe the leader offers special qualities putting them above everyone else. Such leaders often use the support of the group to avoid any questioning of their power. Cultures of secrecy and abuse can be used to restrict information. Egalitarianism is absent. Claims of abuse or pain amongst participants are ignored. Rigid rules in organisations and even families are usually obeyed unquestioningly.

2. Monitor activities for the presence of abuse, secrecy, isolation and exhaustion.

Study the elements of the cultures of secrecy and abuse.
Learn the cues.
Analyse the social environments in which you and/or your family participate.
See that the elements of the culture of abuse are not present.

If you see signs of secrecy or abuse, develop a culture of awareness about these cultures.

3. Monitor whether you and/or family members can achieve your/their life goals.

Learn together and/or teach family members how to set goals.

Learn together how to exercise power to achieve agreed and co-operatively set goals.

Develop awareness of how to be authoritative in setting goals and achieving goals co-operatively.

4. Monitor groups for conformity to rules and rituals.

Conformity is not co-operation, does not relate to interdependence or the development of personal autonomy.

In no way does conformity contribute to personal motivation and aspiration (Harris, 1973).

List the rules in the group.

Take into account:

- length of time sitting still;
- freedom to move around;
- right to take refreshments;
- right to use toilet facilities;
- right to be alone;
- right to choose activities;
- freedom to vary from the dress of others in the group;
- degrees of commitment (eg. to leaders and group norms); and,
- frequency of attendance.

5. List the demanded, but unwritten, codes of behaviour that feature in the activities.

For example, are participants involved in program development?

Must participants do any of the following:

- keep long periods of silence;
- be coerced to answer questions or contribute to discussion,
- carry out particular tasks;
- wait upon leader's discussion;
- obey without understanding;
- accept leader's choice of who will speak; and,
- accept leader's approval or criticism of members' contributions?

6. Monitor if 'failure' is a judgment made about individuals &/or the group.

List when, and what, denigrating comments and judgments are made in the group.

Are these comments made in public and private?

List how judgments of failures and denigration are attributed, and by whom they are made.

For example, are the comments and judgments made by the leader/s?

Is the group berated about the failure of all or some?

Are members of the group frightened of failure?

Do leaders belittle people?

Do they do this in public or secretly?

Is 'not measuring up' an issue?

Who makes the judgments?

Who decides who fails?

Is failure seen as an individual's personal problem?

Is the organisation prepared to face and share the responsibility for disappointments suffered by individuals in the group?

Alternatively, is failure to meet the group goals seen as the beginning of rejection, gossip and ridicule?

Most particularly, in what ways does the organisation applaud success, and does it take credit for the successes of those in the group?

7. How are rewards and praise distributed?

Is the group governed by a competitive, meritocratic system of rewards?

Are particular tasks rewarded?

Do participants gain their rewards from self-fulfillment in the activity?
When is praise given in the group?
Is this in public, private or as a secret?
Do leaders praise others in their absence?
Is earning praise an issue?
Who holds the power of deciding who will be praised?

8. Is the leader the focus of all activities, and who is the leader?

Does a select leadership run all activities?
Who are the leaders?
Does the leader hold professional qualifications?
Does the leader abide by a professional code of behaviour?
Does the leader have supervisory peers involved in scrutinising the group?
Are the leaders publicly known?
Is she or he accountable and open in their relationships with all participants and their families?
Does the leader have a hierarchy of helpers and favourites in the group?
Who are these people?
On what basis are the leaders and helpers appointed?
Do these helpers have professional training; and are there professional accountability procedures?

9. Monitor any time, or patterns of time, spent in isolation with a powerful person.

Encourage your family members to resist isolation away from their peers &/or family.
This is especially important if such isolation is with a new group, in new friendship networks and with 'powerful' people.

10. Monitor for ethical responses, to all activities, structures and issues in the group.

All matters should receive ethical responses:

- financial,
- selection of participants for all activities;
- timetables for activities;
- responses to enquiries;
- responses to complaints; and,
- responses to suggestions for change.

Be vigilant regarding the ethics, behaviours, accountability and cultures in any group in which you move.

11. Expect and demand behaviour that is open, accountable and ethical.

Be concerned when leaders and members of a group indulge in discussing the lives and private stories of other members.

Don't be misled by overtures that your confidentiality is assured because the leader of group member has confidence in your 'secrecy'.

Don't participate in gossip.

Don't make, or allow, demeaning comments about anyone.

Encourage your family members to understand how to reject gossip, bullying and ridicule of others.

12. Monitor the health of members of your family for 'stress'.

Learn the symptoms of 'stress' and when the cues appear, take action.

For example, Wilkie (1995) in *Understanding Stress Breakdown* details the three stages of symptoms of stress breakdown. These descriptions are most helpful in analysing your and/or your family's life style.

13. Check all details of committees, finances, accountability, leaders & staff qualifications.

Check that these details are in the public domain and inform your family members who seek to participate in the group.

Encourage all members to be involved in monitoring all details of the group.

14. Monitor behaviours of leaders and participants in the group for signs of the misuse of power.

Does the leader take criticisms seriously?

Does the leader address suggestions and questions in a co-operative manner?

The misuses of power include cultures of secrecy and abuse.

Misuses of power are associated with:

isolation;

bullying;

restrictions on activities;

limitations on information flow;

value judgments; and,

controlling responses to anyone, or idea, that is divergent.

For example, denigration of any person/s warns us that the denigrator embraces ideas or patterns of 'centrism'.

This is the judging of others by his or her personal cultures and beliefs.

In groups promulgating cultures of secrecy and abuse, participants will become isolated and locked into sectarian ideas.

15. Become part of the culture of awareness.

Become aware of, and open to, information about the misuse of power and the subsequent 'pain in the community'.

The culture of awareness is a major aspect of monitoring for cultures of secrecy and abuse (Beed, 1998: 33 – 45).

Developed as a concept by Ray Wire (1977), the 'culture of awareness' has been implemented as just that by 'In Good Faith and Associates' (1997ff), the Anglican Diocese of Tasmania (1998) and other similar groups such as CAHPACA (Committee Against Health Professionals and Clergy Abuse), CASA (Centre Against Sexual Assault, Broken Rights, Spiral (YWCA, Melbourne) & Helen Last with 'In Good Faith & Associates', North Melbourne, Australia.

16. List the social aspects involved in the program.

List the ages of people in the activities.

Are activities multi-age?

Are children separated from adults?

Can adults observe children at all times?

List the social roles within the activities.

Who does what, when and for whom?

List the power roles in the activities.

Who decides the policy and program?

Who finalises the program?

Who decides the times, places and content of activities?

What are the authority positions in the organisation?

Who holds these authority positions and who appoints them?

Who has status in the organisation?

Who designates that status?

Is there any acknowledgement that participants have rights and needs?

Is there adequate time out for toileting?

Is there adequate time for refreshments?

Can participants leave easily for family reasons, rest, other activities?

Are the participants fully involved in decision making?

Are participants involved in decision making at all?

17. Emphasise, develop and appreciate the concept of personal autonomy.

Learn and develop patterns in family life that equip family members with personal autonomy.

These should include authoritative responses to any invasion or corruption of their personal space, autonomy or interdependence.

Personal autonomy is defined as the right and opportunity for an individual to investigate, adopt, and practice their own principles and rules of life. These opportunities must be independent of the coercion, interference or control of others, with confidence to co-operate in patterns of interdependence with others.

Maintaining freedom from control or resisting the imposition of more powerful 'others' requires the exercise of some levels of personal autonomy (Beed, 1998:14-18).

18. Be aware of the commitments your family members make to individuals and/ or groups.

Examine your family members' commitment to the group.
Compare this with the integrity of commitment to the family.
Ensure that individuals maintain their personal aspirations.
Help each other to maintain interdependence with each other.
Help each other to keep a wide network of community activities.

19. Monitor the role modelling provided by the adults and other leaders in the group.

Do leaders display personal autonomy?
Do leaders expect other members to express personal autonomy?
Alternatively, do leaders exercise control over members and activities?

20. Monitor the role modelling of the adults and leaders in the group for their use of power.

Do leaders encourage others to exercise power accountably, co-operatively?

21. Appreciate and demand acknowledgement of filial links & sound family structures.

For example, authoritative families contribute to social competence.
This strengthens family members to embrace their personal autonomy, while leading interdependent and co-operative lives. Other outcomes include responsible decision-making and actions.
As stated in earlier suggestions, authoritative family structures can be important in nurturing social competence. Building interdependent behaviour involves challenges like encouraging discussions involving all family members.
In contrast, where church power is authoritarian, social competence is diminished as the individual and the group adheres to the control of the leader/s.

22. Emphasise the social connectedness of family life to the wider community.

We all need to be part of the wider community.
We need patterns of cultures, beliefs and purpose in social networks.
These give us our dignity, support, and understanding of the wider social milieu.
Families need to appreciate and plan their social networks:
(i) Families need social connectedness to other individuals, families, activities & groups in the wider society; and
(ii) Families need reconciliation and interdependence of family members. Healthy families share and address the tensions of contemporary life. Stress in all walks of life, financial, work, education, developmental and relationship issues need to be addressed in families and in society. Stress in work, family and social networks contribute to dysfunctional individuals and relationships, as do lack of hope, direction and purpose in daily life. Unaddressed problems foster vulnerability of individuals to uncritically enter new relationships and/ or organisations.

23. Be educated about individuals who become excessively committed to authoritarian groups.

Be aware of authoritarian patterns in all groups.
Discuss the structure of the groups your family members join.
Be available to talk to everyone in your family.
Show sensitivity and patience.
Develop awareness through scrutiny.
Be available.
Encourage other family members to be patient and wait for estranged family members to return.

24. Expect and insist that organisations respect the family unit.

Expect individuals and organisations to behave accountably to the family, its members and their rights.

25. Monitor whether problems or difficulties are acknowledged in the organisation, or is only a constant image of success portrayed?

Does the organisation you are monitoring admit to having any difficulties within the group?
 Is there ever acknowledgement of the difficulties of ensuring accountability in the organisation?
 Be very careful when an organisation only applauds its activities and leaders, with no acknowledgement or discussion of any existing or potential problems in ensuring accountability within the organisation.

A Summary list of Thirty-five Promptings for Monitoring Cultures of Secrecy, Abuse and Bullying

1. Monitor the structures of the organisations in which you and/or your family participate.
2. Monitor activities for the presence of abuse, secrecy, isolation and exhaustion.
3. Monitor whether you and/or family members can achieve your/their life goals.
4. Monitor groups for conformity to inflexible rules and hierarchical rituals.
5. List the demanded, but unwritten, codes of behaviour that feature in the activities.
6. Monitor if 'failure' is a judgement made about individuals &/or the group
7. Who takes the credit for 'success'? Are 'favourites' often seen as successful?
8. How are rewards and praise distributed, and by whom?
9. Is the leader the focus of all activities, and who is the leader?
10. Monitor any time, or patterns of time, spent in isolation with a powerful person.
11. Monitor for ethical responses, to all activities, structures and issues in the group.
12. Expect and demand private and public behaviours that are open, accountable and ethical.
13. Monitor the health of members of your family for 'stress'.
14. Check all details of committees, finances, accountability, leaders & staff qualifications.
15. Monitor behaviours of leaders and participants for signs of misuse of power.
16. Become part of the culture of awareness about misuses of power and subsequent pain in the community.
17. List the social aspects involved in the program.
18. Emphasise, develop and appreciate the concept of personal autonomy
19. Be aware of commitments your family members make to individuals and/ or groups.
20. Monitor the role-modelling provided by the adults and other leaders in the group.
21. Monitor the role-modelling of the adults and leaders in the group for their use of power.
22. Appreciate and demand acknowledgment of filial links & sound family structures.
23. Emphasise the social connectedness of family life to the wider community.
24. Be educated about individuals becoming excessively committed to authoritarian groups.
25. Expect and insist that organisations respect the family unit.
26. Monitor whether problems or difficulties are acknowledged in the organisation, or is only a constant image of success portrayed?
27. Does anyone in your organisation pirate or plagiarise your ideas or work, presenting these insights as their own without acknowledgment or recognition of the source?
28. Does your organisation promote donations of money, property or valuables in ways you feel embarrass you to give beyond your means, or beyond the levels of giving in other contemporary groups?
29. Question organisations when gossip is shared, especially when gossip-sharing emphasises one person's importance while others are diminished.
30. Investigate whenever you ever feel uncomfortable about any aspect of the organisation, individuals, activities or controls such as secrecy.
31. Be wary if leaders of any organisation prevaricate rather than address your questions and / or requests for actions.
32. The only conceivable excuse for secrecy is a joyous outcome, like an acceptable surprise birthday party or an acceptable surprise present at birthdays or Christmas!
33. Is there any fear or threat in any activity or conversations, ideas or beliefs?
34. Do activities and/or resolutions of problems revolve around isolation and removal from the contemporary and traditional family, wider society and educational parameters?
35. Does a leader bridle and perhaps take action to punish, at the idea of a second opinion about the course of action to be taken by the group member or their family?

Conclusion

Positive outcomes are available when people can authoritatively. The material presented above comprises suggestions for everybody, especially families, to examine the structures and processes of any organisations their family members frequent. It is equally applicable to work places, indeed any organisation in society.

The contentions of this booklet are that cultures of secrecy, abuse and bullying can be healed, if all families checked the organizations, groups and networks in which their members move. Every classroom, school, workplace and even societies leaders would need to develop authoritative relationships. Every person will need to recognize and foster the skills, as well as the responsibility, and right to be authoritative in their dealings with others.

If we develop authoritative relationships, with no characteristics of authoritarianism, we can expect major changes throughout human society.

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For bibliography, please see the book *Cultures of Secrecy and Abuse: A Paradox for Churches* by Cara Beed

Families Can Monitor to Stop Secrecy, Abuse and Bullying ISBN 0 9577600 0 0

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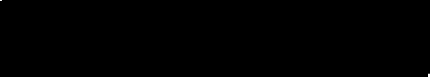
Families Can Monitor to Stop Secrecy, Abuse and Bullying is a companion booklet to *Cultures of Secrecy and Abuse: A Paradox for Churches* by Cara Beed (1998 ISBN 0 646 35905 3)

This booklet is based on a paper entitled 'Can families monitor for cultures of secrecy and abuse?' given at the Third International Conference of the Beyond Bullying Association, *Responding to Professional Abuse*, St. John's College, University of Queensland, 2-3 July, 1999. A summary was reproduced in the conference proceedings publication *Bullying: Backyard to Boardroom, Vol 2. Responding to Professional Abuse* (2001: 44-54) Sydney: Federation Press entitled *Cultures of Secrecy, Abuse and Bullying: Paradoxes in Religious Organisations, Families and Social Networks*.

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I respectfully submit my research through Item 1 — Table one, from the *Zadok paper S116, Summer 2001: Power, Secrecy and Abuse: Changing the Churches* (adapted from the book *Cultures of Secrecy & Abuse: A Paradox for Churches*, and Item 2 — the booklet, *Families Can monitor to Stop Secrecy, Abuse and Bullying*, together with the material in the above book and paper. I present this material to you in the hope it will assist in the committee members understanding how the very structure and processes of some organisations contribute to abuse and need to be changed. Families and the wider community need education to monitor for such problems.

Yours faithfully,


Cara Beed

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Member, Steering Committee, Theology of Work Project, Boston Mass. USA (<http://www.theologyofwork.org>)

Should you need, you may learn more about me and my work by visiting the Beed website at

<http://cncbeed.customer.netSPACE.net.au>

Enclosures: As part of submission:

Item 1: Table One: Processes Conducive to Abuse

(From: *Zadok Perspectives - S116 Cara Beed - Power, Secrecy and Abuse: Changing the Church*, 2001, pp. 8-9.

Adapted from Beed (1998) pp. 81 – 83. Included here as pp. 3-4

Item 2: Booklet: *Families Can Monitor to Stop Secrecy, Abuse and Bullying* included here as pp. 5-16.

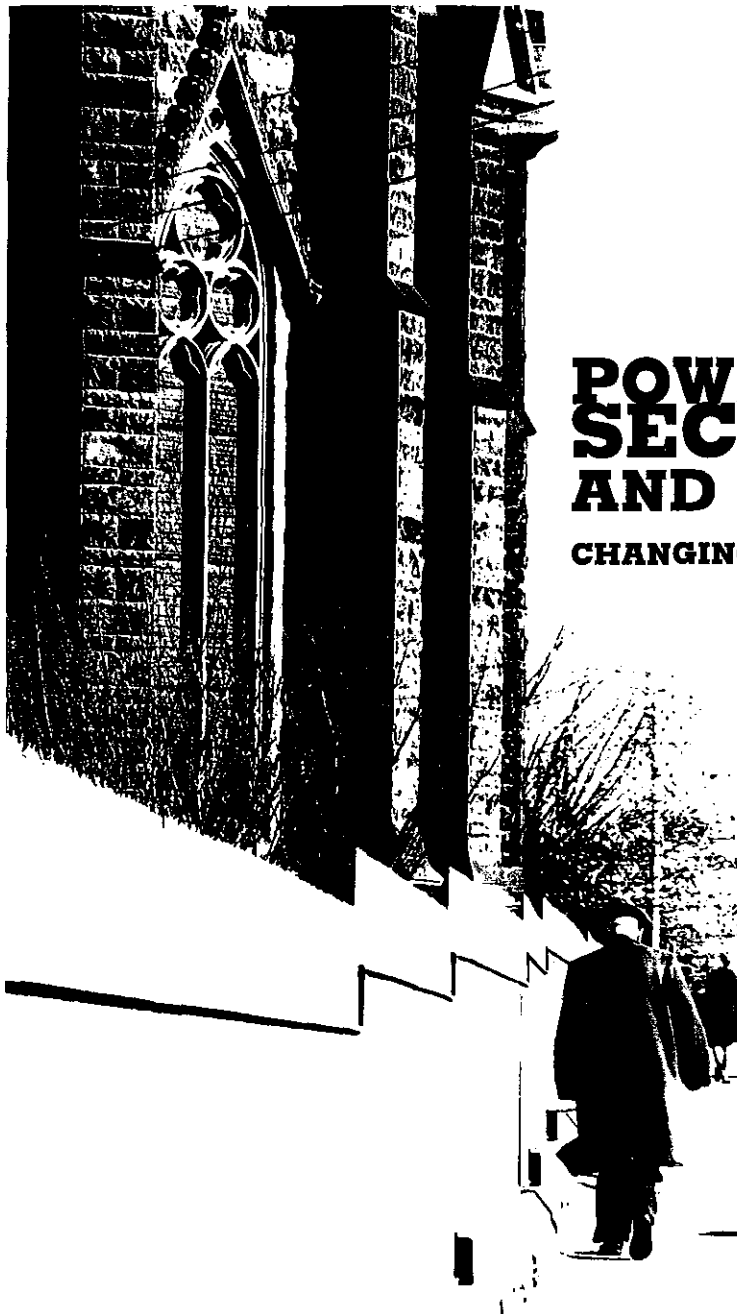
One copy of the book *Cultures of Secrecy and Abuse: A Paradox for Churches*, and

Ten copies of *Zadok Paper S116 Summer 2001 Power Secrecy and Abuse: Changing the Church*.

zadok paper S116 summer 2001



Cara Beed



**POWER
SECRECY
AND ABUSE:**
CHANGING THE CHURCH



The Paper Cara Beed looks at criteria for detecting secrecy and abuse; cults and sectarianism in church and other organisations or groups in society. She points out that as individuals succumb to a leader's domination or charisma, excessive commitment leads to a sacrifice of personal autonomy. Where authoritarian leadership governs the structure and processes of an organisation, the right, ability and opportunity for an individual to investigate, adopt and practise their own principles becomes increasingly difficult.

The Author After lecturing in sociology for many years, Cara Beed is now an academic writer. Her publications include *Cultures of Secrecy and Abuse: A Paradox for Churches* (1998); *Families Can Monitor for Cultures of Secrecy and Abuse* (1999); 'Cultures of Secrecy, Abuse' and 'Bullying: Paradoxes in Religious Organisations, Families and Social Networks', in the book *Bullying: From Backyard to Boardroom* (Federation Press, 2001). With Margery Brown, Tim Dyer and David Walker, Cara also edited *What We Need as Home: As Perceived by Homeless Youth* (1991). Her recent writing (with husband Clive) is available at <http://www.netspace.net.au/~cncbeed/>



POWER SECRECY AND ABUSE: CHANGING THE CHURCH

POWER CAN BE defined as 'the ability to produce results desired by a particular person or group'. Excessive commitment to leaders and ideas encourages misuse of power. A vital element in life, power is needed by everyone. But misuse of power is at the centre of a vortex of contradictions that cause pain and destruction. The misuse of power is aided and abetted by two negative cultures: abuse and secrecy.

A culture of abuse – a matrix of conventions, practices and language – can be used within a group or an organisation to mistreat, malign and revile members. It also frequently extends to people outside the organisation. A culture of abuse is the sum total of the ways of acting that can be used to injure and maltreat people involved in the organisation and those outside it. Even mismanaging community meetings and decisions can allow bullying and lead to abuse. Typically, a culture of abuse is practised in hierarchical mode, extending from those in 'superior' control in an organisation to those in subordinate positions, and thereby through all ranks of the organisation.

A culture of abuse goes hand in hand with a culture of secrecy. This is where the use of dominant social forces denies and hides truth. Abusers wanting secrecy use ideas, laws, norms, customs, language, myths, beliefs and institutional rules to stop the truth being seen, heard or acknowledged. This can become dominant, allowing abusers and bullies to keep secret the truth and the extremes of their behaviour. Victims become locked in fear, uncomfortable about what is happening, but unsure of the truth and their rights. They consciously hide the abuse and become isolated from peer and possible support.

With restrictions on truth, disclosure of abuse is limited by powerful forces. Such restrictions on truth are carefully structured to maintain secrecy. Forums for such secrecy extend and vary widely. They may occur within a family, in a one-to-one relationship, in a group (large or small), in institutions, or in society. Secrecy is a misuse of power that restricts knowledge and openness, while steeping the victim in abuse.

Although authoritarian people can think they are

working in the best interests of others, they work from a position of power and superiority, where these combine with secrecy and actually corrupt the rights of others. Power exerted over others is corrupting, while power developed in co-operation with others produces a pooling of community strength directed to common, beneficial ends. Any secrecy should be measured against the yardsticks of the genuine need for privacy and confidentiality, ultimate joys from a surprise, and who benefits from secrets.

Groups where extreme ideas flourish

THE CONTEMPORARY CLIMATE since September 11, 2001 has focussed attention on extremist groups. We are keen to know how people become extremists prepared to suicide for a cause. What divides humans into extreme opinions and behaviours such that terrorists will suicide to protest their ideals?

The processes outlined in Table One (pp. 8–9) are known to produce extreme commitment to a group, a leader and to the cause of the group. These processes encourage almost unswerving allegiance to the ideals of a group, and particularly obedience to the espoused opinions, instructions and actions developed as part of the group.

The ideals of the group become all embracing; a fact equally true for Christian groups as in other religious, political or other activity groups. The practices and ideas may begin with the orthodox. But with fervour, the ideas become narrow, the discussion is focussed on frustration with the world at large. Focus shifts further to the limitations for achieving the group's perceptions of justice. The group's understanding of a wider truth is limited, personal autonomy is sacrificed, the self is doubted, and then relegated to the role of submissive group follower. The ideas foundational to the group continue with some valid links to orthodoxy, to claims of justice, often supported by adverse conditions and actions in the wider society. Thus, conditions in the wider world contribute to elements of totalitarianism being

accepted and embraced by group members.

Increasingly, members will cling to the group; its leadership, ideas and echoes of orthodoxy, as well as the perception that the world will do nothing to aid justice. Believing in the 'sanctity' of the cause, steeped in group interactions and ideals of justice, they move into forms of isolation. Claiming 'rightness' – even 'holiness' – in their 'sanctified' purpose, extreme behaviour (such as suicide) arises more easily. It is only a relative step from isolation, abusive behaviour in isolation, to neglecting others, obstructing others, abusing others, and finally to suicidal terrorism.

Christian groups are not free from extremism. In varying degrees the 'processes conducive to abuse' have been shown to exist in Christian churches, their groups and their countries. Within Tables 1 and 2, degrees of the listed structures and processes are familiar in our daily life, be that in family, work, social organisations, government or churches. Any 'powerful' person, group or country espousing Christianity is likely to be studied for patterns that demonstrate the practice of 'Christian principles'. When Christians are found wanting, with the misuse of power and cultures of secrecy and abuse contravening human rights, opposition and angry reactions accrue. However, the Bible encourages principles of openness and justice. Indeed, there are firm discouragements against abuse of all types. Throughout the Old and New Testaments, Christians are called to the better 'Way', far from destruction and abuse (e.g. Isaiah 33:1; Matthew 13:49). Understanding extremism, our own and that of others, is not sufficient. We need to contribute at all levels to avoid a divisive world that breed extremism.

The 'Way' forward

THERE ARE CLEAR 'faith' lines for leadership in families and churches when our human frailties tempt us to misuse power or fall into the culture of abuse and keep it secret. Amongst the many biblical principles are those delineated in 1 Corinthians 13 where the fullest meaning of love is given to Christians, with further calls throughout the gospels (e.g. John 14: 6; 1 Corinthians 14:1; Matthew 22:39; Mark 12:30; John 13:34 and John 15:15).

In the Christian image of agapé offered by John Burnaby, individual autonomy with God and personal authenticity are linked to the person's understanding of God:

'... entirely unselfish, seeking only the good of others, and is therefore theocentric because it is the reproduction of God's own outgoing love...'

Within these and many more principles instructing us in the Bible are the foundations for the 'Way' forward. This is a Way where leaders will not misuse their power, but recognise it as an element that can corrupt. Justice demands that abuse be recognised and abusers become accountable for their behaviour. But this in itself is insufficient response to abuse. For victims to be reconciled with the ideals and beliefs of the religious organisations that originally nurtured the abuser, the structures and processes of that organisation have publicly to be examined and rectified. The 10 processes can encourage abuse in religious and other groups, although none of the points are intended to apply to any specific organisation. These processes lead to participants abrogating control of their autonomy to a more powerful person or group.

To safeguard against secrecy, abuse and bullying such processes have to be avoided in churches, their activities and related pastoral care situations. Discussion of the characteristics of abusive structure and processes (related to all religious organisations

'For victims to be reconciled with the ideals and beliefs of the religious organisations that originally nurtured the abuser, the structures and processes of that organisation have publicly to be examined and rectified.'

should become part of contemporary church especially pastoral care. Discernment can develop knowledge; through knowledge we can be empowered to evaluate the suitability of joining an organisation. This material is cited here to help people assess organisations before becoming involved. If a person becomes involved, they may be in a better situation to evaluate the activities of the group.

(See Table One pp. 8–9)

Personal autonomy in authoritative relationships

TABLE ONE SUMMARISES extremes of misuse, secrecy and abuse and represents aspects of authoritarian structures. Where authoritarianism still dominates relationships, community suffers from the outcomes. This is particularly so where differing goals cause disturbance

dissension that compromise the interests of families and the wider community. It is in authoritarian structures that bullying behaviours can encroach on the independence, work satisfaction and health of individuals. This also inhibits the degrees of achievement of an overall sense of community in the wider society. It would be nice to think that authoritarian behaviour is no longer as common as it was in the 1800s or early 1900s in 'advanced' Western societies. But authoritarian organisations do exist with bullies and abusers thriving in them. We need to be on guard against the distinctive patterns in authoritarian structures and processes leading any of us into abusive or bullying behaviours. We need to be aware of the context in which problems arise, and be aware of possible alternatives.

The alternative to authoritarianism is for every person to be able to exercise their personal autonomy in authoritative relationships that are inter-dependent and mutually encouraging. For Christians, personal autonomy presumes autonomy with God. Calling for the British public to be alert and informed, William Temple suggested Christians establish their independence sufficiently to make decisions with as 'much as their faith has won' for them 'the mind of Christ'. Conventions and contemporary mores do not dominate people who appreciate their own personal authenticity and practice their autonomy. They can live, work and worship inter-dependently with others in authoritative relationships.

The benefits of authoritative relationships, as distinct from authoritarian relationships, enhance social competence and lift society to new levels of social interaction. This functions for families, workplaces, schools and indeed all organisations in society. People in authoritative relationships can embrace their personal autonomy and lead inter-dependent and co-operative lives. Abusers and bullies do not thrive where people are authoritative, expressing personal autonomy in co-operation with others.

But what of churches, family life, work or education where co-operation and authoritative relations are still not recognised as vital? Knowledge of what is happening in organisations empowers people to analyse and challenge abusers and bullies to cultivate open and dignified relationships. Table Two, based on material in Table One, offers suggestions for examining the organisations in which we and our family members move. For authoritative relationships to flourish there needs to be 'give and take', with sound understanding of policies and actions leading to openness and rights of veto.

Table Two: Suggestions For Monitoring Groups and Activities

1. Monitor the following:
 - the structures of the organisations in which we and/or our family participate.
 - activities for the presence of abuse, secrecy, isolation and exhaustion.
 - whether we and/or family members can achieve our/their life goals.
 - groups for conformity to inflexible rules and hierarchical rituals.
 - any time, or patterns of time, spent in isolation with a powerful person.
 - for ethical responses to all activities, structures and issues in the group.
 - if 'failure' is a judgment made about individuals &/or the group
 - the health of members of your family for 'stress'.
 - behaviours of leaders and participants for signs of misuse of power.
 - the role-modelling provided by the adults and other leaders in the group.
 - whether problems or difficulties are acknowledged in the organisation, or is only a constant image of success portrayed?
 - the role-modelling of the adults and leaders in the group specifically for their use of power.

2. Ask the following questions:
 - Who takes the credit for 'success'? Are 'favourites' often seen as successful?
 - How are rewards and praise distributed, and by whom?
 - Is the leader the focus of all activities, and who is the leader?
 - Does anyone in your organisation pirate or plagiarise your ideas or work, presenting these insights as their own without acknowledgment or recognition of the source?
 - Does the organisation promote donations of money, property, time or other valuables in ways that embarrass us to give beyond our means, or beyond the levels of giving in other contemporary groups?

- Is there any fear or threat in any activity or conversations, ideas or beliefs?
- Do activities and/or resolutions of problems revolve around isolation and removal from the contemporary and traditional family, wider society and educational parameters?
- Does a leader bridle at the idea of a second opinion about the course of action to be taken by a group member or their family?
- Do publications concentrate on promoting select leaders – their ideas, work, photos and activities – rather than encourage ideas from a range of sources?

3. Take action:

- Expect and demand private and public behaviours that are open, accountable and ethical.
- Check all details of committees, finances, accountability, leaders and staff qualifications.
- Become part of the culture of awareness about misuses of power and subsequent pain in the community.
- List the demanded, but unwritten, codes of behaviour that feature in the activities.
- List the social aspects involved in the program.
- Emphasise, develop and appreciate the concept of personal autonomy
- Be aware of commitments your family members make to individuals and/ or groups.
- Appreciate and demand acknowledgment of filial links and sound family structures.
- Emphasise the social connectedness of family life to the wider community.
- Be educated about individuals becoming excessively committed to authoritarian groups.
- Expect and insist that organisations respect and co-operate with the family unit.
- Question organisations when gossip is shared, especially when gossip-sharing emphasises one person's importance while others are diminished.
- Investigate whenever you ever feel uncomfortable about any aspect of the organisation, individuals, activities or controls (such as secrecy).
- Be wary if leaders of any organisation prevaricate rather than address your questions and / or requests for actions.

- Apart from issues of privacy and confidentiality, the only conceivable excuse for secrecy is a joyous outcome, like an acceptable surprise birthday party or an acceptable surprise present at birthdays or Christmas!

Human rights, structures and processes

MANY COUNTRIES IN the world call for provision of basic human rights, including physical nurture, and for each person to develop an effective sense of self. Nonetheless, all this and much more is denied the majority of the population of the world. So it seems rash to argue that we need a world in which personal autonomy can be expressed inter-dependently. However, if enough individuals could develop situations to practice their personal autonomy, perhaps the world could be changed.

First, people need nurture and encouragement to be strong in their autonomy with God and in their faith. Life and worship, home and government need situations free from cultures of secrecy, abuse and misuse of power. Achieving this may assist more of the world's population to achieve healthy physical and emotional life opportunities.

Authoritative expression of personal autonomy can only be achieved through sound structures and processes in homes, churches, schools, sports, social clubs, social networks and governments. Such structures and processes are important not only for social elites, but must be recognised as required by any minority group attempting to lead authoritative lives in a potentially authoritarian society.

Table Two comprises suggestions for everybody, especially families, to examine the structures and processes of any organisations their family members frequent. Every aspect of all situations each of us frequents needs to be monitored: all the relationships, structures and processes in organisations, groups and networks. Of particular importance is every classroom, church and church group, workplace, association, media message, government and family. If we develop authoritative relationships, with no characteristics of authoritarianism, we can expect major changes throughout human society.

Some mainstream churches have sought to develop protocols to deal specifically with some forms of abuse, such as sexual abuse by church workers. Still to be tested, these protocols are yet to be seen as effective, open and honest. Some major omissions exist. For example, although sexual misconduct is being examined, no investigations are being conducted about how people, the church and society are damaged by

particular aspects of cultures of abuse and secrecy, or misuse of power, unfounded trust, dependency and forms of spiritual abuse. Unless changes are wrought there will be no 'justice and mercy . . . to walk quietly with God' (Micah 6:8).

Because the scale of bullying and abuse in church-related pastoral care is now reportedly of significant proportions, an ombudsperson is justified.

Churches must be challenged to ensure structures and processes are not conducive to abuse. The focus should encourage a 'culture of awareness' about the misuse of power, and their related cultures of secrecy and abuse. If people stay in a church where problems have been evident, they need information about how to be true to themselves within their faith. Being equipped means working with knowledge and truth, resisting pressure, and organising healthy spiritual systems.

Political abuse, such as witnessed in the overthrow of legitimate governments in Chile (Allendé) and East Timor, often receive public scrutiny via pressure from groups such as the United Nations and Amnesty International. Through such efforts, society is alerted to the issues, and may help correct injustice. Despite some legal exceptions, independent avenues for investigating church-related pastoral care abuse do not exist in Australia. A pastoral care ombudsperson needs powers and a program structured on the lines of the Public Interest Disclosure Agency; the body recommended by the 1994 Senate Standing Committee on Public Interest Whistleblowing and the 1995 Senate Standing Committee on Unresolved Whistleblowers Cases. Because the scale of bullying and abuse in church-related pastoral care is now reportedly of significant proportions, an ombudsperson is justified.

The Christian message is to enhance, not abuse, personal autonomy. A deep hypocrisy is practiced within the church when it allows abusive behaviour within its ranks to be kept secret. Only through a culture of awareness can the cloak of respectability be shed. First, we must understand the structures and processes which create a conducive environment for abuse. Then we must honestly address issues, practising pastoral accountability as the valid way forward. The church has no call for secrecy; it has no need for power to corrupt, or allow abuse to flourish. As George MacDonald, the 19th century Scottish novelist wrote:

'It is only righteousness that has a right to secrecy, and does not want it; evil has no right to secrecy, alone intensely desires it, and rages at being foiled of it . . .'

Author's Note: Sources for Table One, include: Enroth (1992 and 1994), Fortune (1992), Hassan (1990), Langone (1995), Ormerod and Ormerod (1995), Millikan (1991), Samways (1994), Singer (1995), Tobias and Lulich (1994), plus, on conceptual bases, Janis (1983), Marriott and Esser (1985), Manz and Sims (1982), Tetlock, Peterson, McQuire, Chang and Feld (1992), Hensley and Griffin (1986). Some reference imprints have been listed in this paper. Others follow in the selected reference list and the further reading list. For others please e-mail carabeed@netspace.net.au.

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Notes

Table One: Processes Conducive to Abuse

Process	Description
1. Autocratic, authoritarian structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leader(s) exert(s) absolute control over: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - policy - program details, including minutiae - dominant ideas expressed and/or taught - financial matters - who participates - who receives special attention - who gains advancement.
2. Loyalty, submission, dependence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Isolates individual from others • Maintains secrecy of interchange • Must be demonstrated in action • Requires all confidences are told to leader(s) • Involves vulnerable sharing in group • Obliges obedience be given to leader(s) • Creates dependence on guidance from leader(s) • Produces veneration of leader(s) • Allows bias towards leader's(s') interpretations • Encourages self-diminishment in deference to leader/group.
3. Absorption into group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produces conformity to all aspects of group • Involves long hours of shared activities • Uses praise and ridicule to encourage membership • Places disproportionate emphasis of new membership.
4. Isolation from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - family of origin; - friends; - early socialisation; - internalised norms and values - former activities (e.g. study and hobbies) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distorts relationship to family of origin • Excludes links and traditions of old family • Locates members at remote sites • Conflicts with past ideals and interests • Concentrates on leader(s) as confidant(s) • Transfers trust to the leader(s) and group • Bewilders families.
5. Idiosyncratic teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depends on selective teachings • Misuses legitimate church beliefs and doctrines • Creates theories about good and evil that are separated from orthodox teaching.
6. Evil as defined by the leader(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequently a topic in discussions • Attributed to particular people and places (e.g. participant's family of origin, environments and objects) • Avoided by narrowing contacts to the group • Produces fear in members.
7. Divergent moral standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exist but are kept secret from members and wider community • Differ from 'ordinary' group members and mainstream society • Increase isolation from mainstream moral standards • Produce dilemma and quandary for victim.
8. Denial of victims' claims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victims' claims often denied and victims are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - accused of lying - accused of fabrication

- accused of fantasy
- placed in fear of disbelief.

- Responses to victims are:
 - delayed
 - often inadequate
 - kept secret.

9. Mind control

- Erodes personal autonomy
- Manipulates thoughts
- Produces destructive patterns in members' lives
- Maintains commitment to the group.
- Mind control can occur via:
 - 'guidance' method
 - encouragement to attend programs constantly
 - encouragement to deep commitment
 - rejecting independence in members
 - techniques used to prime and control meetings
 - focus on the inner core to prime meetings
 - 'thought stopping' techniques
 - (e.g. misuse of praying, meditating, chanting)
 - reduced objective assessment of meetings
 - special activities and confidences for inner group only
 - distrust of past
 - rejection of self
 - erosion of independent decision making.

10. Cognitive dissonance

- Creates discrepancy between patterns of:
 - thought
 - feelings
 - behaviour.
- Removes previous meaning and order of personal life;
- Disrupts ideas and beliefs in irrational ways;
- Reduces ability to listen for the substance of truth; and
- Increases commitment to the leader/group.

...No investigations are being conducted about how people, the church and society are **damaged by particular aspects of cultures of abuse and secrecy, or the misuse of power...**