

Prevention and Healing

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I've been out here in the counter-cult world for almost 35 years. I know the vast scale of the problem, and the courage of my colleagues who struggle to address it. I have come to believe strenuously that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. In metric, that's 28 grams of prevention for 453 grams of cure, but I think you get the idea. If we can show people how predatory groups and individuals take control of others, we can limit the flow to those groups and individuals.

If I'd known that human predators are boastful, back in 1974, I would have hesitated when I read Ron Hubbard's claim that "history is a race between Dianetics and atomic war."

If I'd been taught to assert myself back in school, instead of being compliant and obedient, then I would have asked hard questions from the moment I met Scientology. And anyone who asks too many hard questions will not last long in a high-control relationship or group. But I knew nothing about human predators or their techniques of recruitment, seduction and grooming.

I'm the director of projects at the Open Minds Foundation, which is a free on-line information source that explains the character and the techniques of human predators. We teach critical thinking; the basics of psychology, compliance and thought reform; and an understanding of our emotional susceptibility. We want people to achieve emotional autonomy.

We rely on evidence from multiple studies – rather than the opinions of pundits and gurus. Several prestigious psychologists have joined our Advisory Board – Philip Zimbardo, Robert Cialdini and Anthony Pratkanis among them.

We want people – and especially youngsters – to have access to simply, jargon-free explanations. And we want to make our material interesting and, wherever possible, fun.

We use the insights of leading thinkers. You don't have to join our club for us to promote you, because we aren't in this for the money or the prestige. We're here to help and that means giving access to the best possible information in the simplest possible form.

The program we're developing starts with Ira Chaleff's concept of intelligent disobedience. Here's a little video he made for kids in kindergarten. [play [Blink, Think, Choice, Voice](#)] ¹

We're developing material for adolescents, so that they'll recognise cult recruiters, pedophile groomers and radicalizers. We're working with organizations that deal with specific problems. For instance, we have an alliance with SCAARS, which aims to change the law in the US regarding survivors of child sexual abuse. We've just published Barbara Anderson's *Uncensored* about the scandalous cover-up of abuse in the Jehovah's Witness cult.

¹ <https://www.openmindsfoundation.org/blink-think-choice-voice-teaching-kids-intelligently-disobedient/>

We're also collaborating with the Radicalisation Awareness Network and Exit, and working on a 'preradicalisation' programme.

One of my projects is to develop characters for cartoons and animations for our website and our social media feed. We have the brilliant cartoonist Vince De Porter – who's worked on both *Scooby Doo* and *Sponge Bob Square Pants*. Here's the predator character he's come up with. We hope that our cartoons and animations will go viral.

We want to add animations and white-boarding videos to our website, and we're developing lesson plans that teachers and parents can use to proof their kids against manipulation and thought reform.

At the college level, I've been working closely with Dr Yuval Laor who has developed leading-edge, evidence-based ideas about conversion or change of belief. He's given this presentation to university students. We will refine it so that the essential ideas can be given to younger students, as part of our mission to safeguard society against manipulation and undue influence.

Let me welcome Dr Laor to the stage.

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We've given you a taste of our work. Please visit our website at openmindsfoundation.org. We're tax-exempt in the US, we have a sister foundation in Holland, and we're in the process of setting up a charity in England.

We want to see our material available in as many languages as possible. The Dutch version is almost ready, and we have some volunteers for a German version. What we need is the energy and the support to grow this project so that it's available everywhere in the world. Thank-you.