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### BlackSDA \_ 3ABN \_ When Christians Go Bad....a 3abn Spin-off

**Posted by: Clay May 4 2006, 09:09 AM**

Discussing the 3ABN situation got me to thinking... why do we permit people who claim to be christian mistreat us so? After we see their true colors why do we continue to allow them to mistreat us?

I know we have all been in that situation before, not necessarily at 3ABN, but in other dealings, so what is it in us that allows this treatment, when we would not tolerate it from people who we think are not religious or christian?

**Posted by: sonshineonme May 4 2006, 09:29 AM**

**QUOTE(Clay @ May 4 2006, 07:09 AM)**

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I know we have all been in that situation before, not necessarily at 3ABN, but in other dealings, so what is it in us that allows this treatment, when we would not tolerate it from people who we think are not religious or christian?

Two reasons I can think of - and yes, this is from personal experience. I got SQUASHED in SDA community, and when I had the right (legally) to do something about it, what was put in my face was FEAR if I did. So Fear.

The other reason; the idea we were taught (at least I was) that you should "turn the other cheek", "let it go and let God deal with it". That if you somehow stand up for yourself, you will just drag innocent people into it.

I can tell you that since that time, the people involved have not changed. In fact, even worse, the people CLAIMED to have changed, to maneuver themsleves back to their powerful positions, then people found there was no change at all. I can't help thinking maybe I should have taken legal action. You try to think of the people you can protect in the future by doing something now.

To me it's always difficult to know WHAT God would like us to do in these kinds of situations. I wish those things would get "un-muddied" and made clear. Especially if you are very concerned about doing the right thing.

Even though I have been through it, I still find myself unsure on how and when to call things as they are, without feeling I might be ruining God's plan of taking care of it.

**Posted by: statrei May 4 2006, 09:32 AM**

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**QUOTE(sonshineonme @ May 4 2006, 10:29 AM)**

Even though I have been through it, I still find myself unsure on how and when to call things as they are, without feeling I might be ruining God's plan of taking care of it.

The Creator's plan (I'd better be a good atheist) of taking care of circumstances was to give us that grey matter with which we can figure out what the next step should be. If he/she did not want us to think we would not have been made with functioning brains.

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**Posted by: sonshineonme May 4 2006, 09:45 AM**

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**QUOTE(statrei @ May 4 2006, 07:32 AM)**

The Creator's plan (I'd better be a good atheist) of taking care of circumstances was to give us that grey matter with which we can figure out what the next step should be. If he/she did not want us to think we would not have been made with functioning brains.

Funny you should mention brains. That's exactly WHY I was so careful to do the "right" thing. Using my brain, I went beyond just trusting my emotions - when, by the way, in these situations are extremely intense, running crazy with pain of rejection, shock, unbelief and are being manipulated. Exactly why you need help at those times on what to do. Well, when you are ALONE and no one to direct you, or if you only have a few people around and you are not sure of their friendship and true intentions, even then it is hard to know what God would have a person to do. I suppose I couldn't hear Him very well, or I did hear Him very well and did what He wanted of me, I just don't see the instant results - Y E T.

It's always easy to tell someone what they should have done, walk a mile in someones shoes and you will want to give them their shoes back. It would be nice to have the support of Christians at the time to stand with you and make sure things are done. Often, that is not what happens. Maybe that is what God is waiting for us to learn. To shout together when we see wrong being done. Maybe that was one of the reasons for having a group of deciples, instead of only 1 or 2 or 3.

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**Posted by: Clay May 4 2006, 09:50 AM**

so in essence are you saying that sometimes we get into a mess and then have no idea how to get out of it? And in those times it would be good to have a support system to help us through the rough spots?

I don't think we are ever alone even though we feel that we are... and it is my belief that God uses those times to show us that He is there.... but I could be wrong...

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**Posted by: sonshineonme May 4 2006, 10:06 AM**

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**QUOTE(Clay @ May 4 2006, 07:50 AM)**

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I don't think we are ever alone even though we feel that we are... and it is my belief that God uses those times to show us that He is there.... but I could be wrong...

God used that time. He never left me, in spite of some of my thinking that I "must be a horrible person if everyone is treating me this way". God did put ONE pastor (and I knew many and worked with many who all either judged me without any information or talking to me, or they simply neglected and ignored me) in my path at just the right time - He had just brought this pastor to the community. He help me with my thinking as well as the pain I was dealing with because of the "christian" treatment I was going through. This saved me, God saved me.

What I wish would have happend was that if this Christian community had been the Christians they claim to be, my pain would have been much less. Going through a divorce in an SDA community leads to all kinds of surprises. What I found was people made judgments based on NO information. And what information they had was "rumor" mill. I found that people didn't care if it was correct or not. Some based it on how others treated me. So sad, very painful.

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**Posted by: Hersheys99 May 4 2006, 10:09 AM**

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**QUOTE**

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That is true that God does use these situations, whether they be of our own making or something that has just happened in our lives, to let us know we aren't alone. BUT sometimes we just need support from others to help ease our burdens, pain, etc. that only human contact can seem to help with. Not that we don't trust God by any means.

You know what is really sad to me is when churches get up & talk in SS or church of being friendly, etc. to their members or guests even but then its only "superficial". I know that you should go to church to hear the message but on the other hand when you leave that church feeling more lonely or just as lonely as when you went & this is time after time there is a problem. So far that I have yet to find a church near me that meets all my needs.

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**Posted by: statrei May 4 2006, 10:12 AM**

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**QUOTE(Clay @ May 4 2006, 10:50 AM)**

I don't think we are ever alone even though we feel that we are... and it is my belief that God uses those times to show us that He is there.... but I could be wrong...

The God does not "use" anything. He/She is there. It is not his/her fault that we forget that. When we come to our senses it is just that; we came to our senses. We make the Creator sound like an opportunistic manipulator.

**Posted by: Clay May 4 2006, 10:13 AM**

**QUOTE(Hersheys99 @ May 4 2006, 10:09 AM)**

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why do we expect that of church? Have you ever really found your needs met in church? I choose my friends carefully... they meet the needs that I have, and if I am in trouble I know I can call on them... my friends may or may not go to my church..... so do you think our expectations are unrealistic and that sets us up for problems?

**Posted by: statrei May 4 2006, 10:18 AM**

**QUOTE(Hersheys99 @ May 4 2006, 11:09 AM)**

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Wrong. You should go to church for fellowship. You can hear the voice of the God anytime and anywhere.

**QUOTE(Clay @ May 4 2006, 11:13 AM)**

so do you think our expectations are unrealistic and that sets us up for problems?

It is the idea that the church is a place to find the Creator that is messed up.

**Posted by: Hersheys99 May 4 2006, 10:29 AM**

**QUOTE**

why do we expect that of church? Have you ever really found your needs met in church? I choose my friends carefully... they meet the needs that I have, and if I am in trouble I know I can call on them... my friends may or may not go to my church..... so do you think our expectations are unrealistic and that sets us up for problems?

Yes I was in a church like that. It was a really close knit bunch & not just little groups here & there that excluded others. But unfortunately that church is no longer together but it was due to the behind the scenes stuff that was going on with the pastor in charge. It was not a conference church.

It is really hard cause we live in the boonies & its like 25 miles to any towns. My husband is disabled & there are days I literally can't leave him alone because of the meds he is on, etc. Also I have 4 kids under 11 down to 3. To get a break from it all I have to go to town on one of hubby's' good days so he is capable of keeping an eye on the kids (just being awake to help out) but then its just to do my weekly shopping. I only have one real life friend in the area as we moved here 10 years ago & the one friend I have is from the church we were attending. She is busy with her own life & she works so we don't get together very often at all.

So hence the reason I would like to find a church where I can find friends that share some of the same beliefs I do & to have some other adult conversation with. But so far I haven't found that. I have attended the same church off & on for about 2 years & like I said I feel more lonely than before I went & that is sad. SO if they aren't going to offer real fellowship then why go? I can get just as much from my own studying, etc. at home as I can going to church. I haven't been in like 2 months or more this time & not even so much as a card, phone call or anything to see how I'm doing. So makes me wonder when you do go & they say "oh we have missed you" Yea right!!

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**Posted by: Clay May 4 2006, 11:16 AM**

so then is it really surprising that our church friends are no where to be found when we are being mistreated by "christians?" Even Jesus' disciples scattered when the heat was on....

What makes us stay in those situations though as opposed to saying, enough is enough I am outta here?

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**Posted by: sister May 4 2006, 11:25 AM**

off  
Beartrap, check your .com email address

Sorry, folks, I am the one that is off topic, please forgive me.


Sister

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**Posted by: Clay May 4 2006, 11:34 AM**



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**QUOTE(sister @ May 4 2006, 12:25 PM)**

 off  
Beartrap, check your .com email address

Sorry, folks, I am the one that is off topic, please forgive me.

Sister

hats what PMs are for...  you get a freebie this time... 

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**Posted by: beartrap May 4 2006, 11:36 AM**

Sorry, my fault. the PM box was full.




Ok, back to topic.

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**Posted by: princessdi May 4 2006, 11:40 AM**

Your PM box was full? Wow!!! you be popular!!!

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**QUOTE(beartrap @ May 4 2006, 09:36 AM)** 

Sorry, my fault. the PM box was full.



Ok, back to topic.

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**Posted by: beartrap May 4 2006, 11:41 AM**

This is an interesting question, Clay, and it is relevant in more areas than just groups and churches, it is also in many homes. There are many women and men who live year after year with someone who heaps abuse on them regularly, yet they stay and do nothing substantive about it.

Some of us have done the same thing in living under an abusive cult leader. More often than not, we have even idolized the person abusing us. We have viewed him in a godlike way. We get so used to unquestioning obedience that when told to do things that common sense would forbid, we just do it. We take the abuse and feel that somehow we don't deserve any better. To question his words and actions is tantamount to questioning God. When we start allowing ourselves to think and be concerned about it, we become afraid for so many reasons that we just try to block it from our minds and stay on the "straight and narrow" that we have been told to stay on.

It is a rather complex psychological issue that, on the surface, makes no sense at all.

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**Posted by: Clay May 4 2006, 11:47 AM**

**QUOTE**

It is a rather complex psychological issue that, on the surface, makes no sense at all.

which is why I posed the question.... perhaps we can help free someone from this mindset that makes no sense.... why are we comfortable with allowing someone else to think for us? Is that a by-product of fundamental religion?

Why are some of us afraid to question what is preached or taught? and lastly what is it about our leaders that we idolize them so?

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**Posted by: statrei May 4 2006, 11:52 AM**

**QUOTE(Clay @ May 4 2006, 01:47 PM)** 

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Why are some of us afraid to question what is preached or taught? and lastly what is it about our leaders that we idolize them so?

It is a by-product of the central myth of religion that only a few of us are qualified to speak with the gods on behalf of the rest of us.

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**Posted by: beartrap May 4 2006, 12:09 PM**

In general we tend to prefer a study in which there are definitive points. We like to look it over and see exactly what decisions were made when. Unfortunately, the defining points in this conundrum are mostly nebulous. In the group dynamic, as it relates to the leader, my own experience is that over time I became convinced that I was now a part of something much bigger than me and I no longer had any personal value. My only value was in successfully filling my place in the group, and pleasing the leader. This had to come at the expense of everything that was "me." Understand that I did not come in with that attitude, it was encouraged and propagated over time. I don't ever recall a point in time where I consciously came to that conclusion. I have since found that this is a common experience for people who find themselves in voluntary subjection to another person or group.

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**Posted by: Clay May 4 2006, 12:30 PM**

**QUOTE(beartrap @ May 4 2006, 12:09 PM)** 

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common experience for people who find themselves in voluntary subjection to another person or group.

which is what happens in "cults." At what point do you think you stopped thinking for yourself?

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**Posted by: beartrap May 4 2006, 12:49 PM**

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**QUOTE(Clay @ May 4 2006, 12:30 PM) □**

which is what happens in "cults." At what point do you think you stopped thinking for yourself?

don't know. I can't think of any particular point where that happened. I believe that it happened little by little. I think that if it had to happen all at once, it wouldn't have happened at all.

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**Posted by: Clay May 4 2006, 12:55 PM**

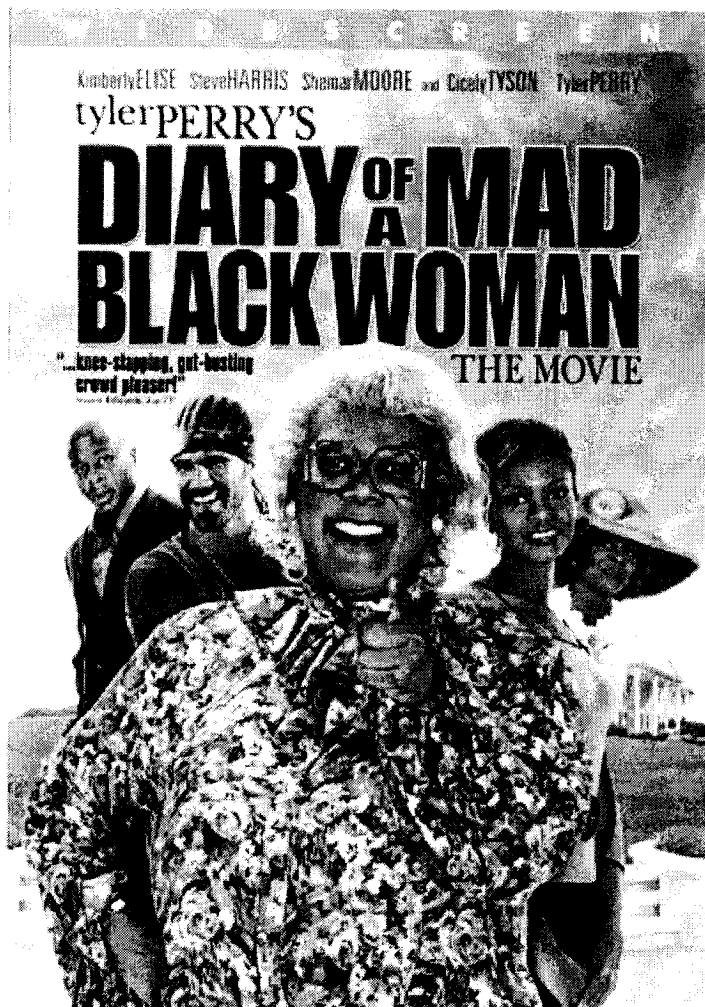
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**QUOTE(beartrap @ May 4 2006, 12:49 PM) □**

I don't know. I can't think of any particular point where that happened. I believe that it happened little by little. I think that if it had to happen all at once, it wouldn't have happened at all.

so then it happened gradually, until you felt afraid to have independent thoughts? I think those who were and are at 3abn need to watch a movie.... "Diary of a Mad Black Woman"





it deals with how we sometimes get caught up and lose who we are, and how we can become liberated...

I understand it happens... but we cannot allow anyone to do our thinking..... its the very thing that God blessed us with..... the ability to think.....

**Posted by: beartrap May 4 2006, 01:16 PM**

In Christianity we are often encouraged by words to think and study for ourselves, but the fine print governing the spirit of that encouragement disallows any real measure of independence of thought and direction in our study. We are given guidelines established by accepted doctrine, and this sets the stage for a walk down that slippery psychological path. Once we become established in that mindset, we are able to tell ourselves that in walking away from convention, we are thinking independently. One way of walking away from convention is in giving yourself over to a group that stands out from the rest of society, and is better than them. In becoming a part of that group, and in giving yourself over to the leader, you shed the vestiges of convention, give up all of those things that would make you inferior like the outside people, and in allowing yourself to be controlled completely by the leader you remove from yourself the burden of deciding between right and wrong. As long as you do as you are told by the man through whom God speaks, you can share in his spiritual superiority.

**Posted by: Clay May 4 2006, 01:28 PM**

a favorite quote of mine.....

**QUOTE**

Question everything. Every stripe, every star, every word spoken. Everything. --Ernest J. Gaines

What you say is true Bear, I believe the corrective to that is to question.... and be willing to question even the supposed "superiority." Human history is filled with too many horror stories of those in groups who felt superior and what happened to them...

I also believe there is a common element that is shared with women who are in abusive relationships, that is the man attempts to become the only source of information, he isolates the woman from friends and family, and then convinces her that he is her only hope.....

the corrective is to question everything....

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**Posted by: beanchild May 4 2006, 01:41 PM**

**QUOTE(Hersheys99 @ May 4 2006, 12:29 PM)**

...So makes me wonder when you do go & they say "oh we have missed you" Yea right!!

you speak the truth.  and i laugh because i've been in that sort of situation.

but what do you want them to do? be honest that they didn't realize you hadn't been there?? right.

...when i want fellowship, i hang out with the heathen. i certainly don't go to church for that sort of thing. what a crazy idea.

**QUOTE(Clay @ May 4 2006, 01:16 PM)**

....  
What makes us stay in those situations though as opposed to saying, enough is enough I am outta here?

i think someone else said: fear. i second that. i do think that a good part of folk stay because if they don't, they believe they are going to hell. & eternal damnation isn't such a pleasant destination. at least in my mind it isn't. ...although i guess i wouldn't ever have to wear heavy clothes...

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**Posted by: Clay May 4 2006, 02:04 PM**

**QUOTE(beamchild @ May 4 2006, 02:41 PM)**

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but what do you want them to do? be honest that they didn't realize you hadn't been there?? right.

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hen hell it is... cause there is no need to stay where there is no genuine love.... let's not pretend... when you don't go to church and no one calls, don't be hurt, if you were important they would call.... and we all know you dont have to go to church to meet God...

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**Posted by: PaperTigers May 4 2006, 02:18 PM**

I agree with Bear, sometimes we get so caught up in what's going on and in what they are saying.. that we loose a sense of ourselves and even sometimes, for a while, our own sense of right and wrong. We get in a situation where we allow others to think for us for so long that to think for ourselves almost becomes unheard of.

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**Posted by: beanchild May 4 2006, 02:26 PM**

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**QUOTE(Clay @ May 4 2006, 03:04 PM)**

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true.  but ouch, could you at least have minced some more words??

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**Posted by: Clay May 4 2006, 02:29 PM**

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**QUOTE(beanchild @ May 4 2006, 02:26 PM)**

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eality bean my child, reality.....

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**Posted by: Prisca May 4 2006, 07:22 PM**

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**QUOTE(Clay @ May 4 2006, 05:16 PM)**

so then is it really surprising that our church friends are no where to be found when we are being mistreated by "christians?" Even Jesus' disciples scattered when the heat was on....

What makes us stay in those situations though as opposed to saying, enough is enough I am outta

here?

We believe we should love our 'neighbors' MORE than we love ourselves.

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**Posted by: NormF May 4 2006, 11:06 PM**

**QUOTE(Clay @ May 4 2006, 01:28 PM)**

a favorite quote of mine.....

What you say is true Bear, I believe the corrective to that is to question... and be willing to question even the supposed "superiority." Human history is filled with too many horror stories of those in groups who felt superior and what happened to them...

I also believe there is a common element that is shared with women who are in abusive relationships, that is the man attempts to become the only source of information, he isolates the woman from friends and family, and then convinces her that he is her only hope.....

the corrective is to question everything....

Dear Steve,

hear you.

But as one cognitive, left-brained personality to another (*and statrei, this is for you too, as well as any other cognitive-type readers among us*), there is a whole lot more to it than just this.

Announcing *the* corrective is nice, but it's only one baby step past labeling/diagnosing ... and even at that, just barely. Actually, there are several cognitive approaches that are applicable and useful to victims. And I do grant you that cognitive solutions are helpful for some people and in some situations; but for even the most thoroughly left-brained among us, that's often still inadequate, because of the all-pervasive nature of what happens while being in such situations. And especially for those victims who work at life from the right brain, they are frequently woefully inadequate. The emotions and the subconscious levels of the mind require much else that cognitive interventions alone cannot reach. I grew up in a home with a psychopathic parent. I know. And I fear this is exactly what we're dealing with here for many of these folk among our members. The only significant difference is that this is a work situation instead of a home one.

The psychiatric profession has called this condition in perpetrators by several names over the years -- psychopathy, sociopathy, and antisocial personality disorder (APD). It traces way back through the years though, to Freud's time and before. Historically, the names developed over the years arose in the order I just gave. But regardless of name, they all describe the same condition ... this is one of those things where "a rose is a rose is a rose" (substitute "mess" or "stink" for the flower name, if you will).

Curiously enough, the old terminology has not been entirely abandoned for this condition. Some professionals today differentiate degree by using one label over another. For example, extreme cases are called psychopathic (ala Hitchcock murder stories, as a widely known example), milder ones get one of the other names. However, there is not full agreement on the labelling within the profession. So you can expect to see the labels/diagnoses used interchangeably, even by them.

Between those professionals who choose to continue to use one or the other of the older names in an ill-inclusive way, to the exclusion of the other two they don't like, and those who use all three names or sometimes just two of the three!) as a way of labelling degree, it can be very confusing to the uninitiated. Therefore, in the literature, one must go by context as a case is discussed, if you want to know for sure where you're at in a given discussion. (With this in mind, I'm thinking it may also behoove us here, as we post, to make our word choices clear when we're discussing this subject.) Believe me though, by whatever name you call it, NONE of it is sweet.

Regardless of this naming problem, we are dealing here with a very complex, powerful subject. Such personalities are very incomprehensible to most others, and to themselves ... and just plain extremely difficult to live with or work under. That's putting it *very* gently. These personalities are invariably in deep denial; they just can't see anything wrong with themselves. Let me assure you: if you have not lived with or worked under such a person, it is often just about impossible for you to fathom its depth or understand the range of things it does to an individual as they try to cope with living with such a person. And it takes a very long time once you're out from under it (you as a victim) to come to grips with where you've been and learn how to deal with your history and get on with your life. (As for the naming, for my part, I tend to refer to it simply as psychopathy, inclusive of all its forms, and use description rather than labelling to differentiate degree.)

It is not for nothing that examples like Jim Jones, Heaven's Gate, and David Koresh have been offered here as comparisons. The Koolaid brigade, fireballs, and other forms of self-destruction, great and small, all-encompassing or minor, are the sad results ... and much too often, it's the former ones, the biggies. If you've been there/done that, such examples are oh-so-telling. They click with you right off the bat.

Please understand, the people who have had the courage to speak publicly here as they've been doing recently, even with the anonymity that the Internet provides, are taking a huge step forward to just say *anything* about where they've been and what they've seen and know. In itself, this is a quantum leap forward. And there is so much more still ahead of them on their journeys. Getting your mind around an entire situation in such cases, and getting back far enough to see the big picture once again, requires earthshaking paradigm shifts that are not easily achieved. And then begins the long, hard process of healing.

One thing more, those persons who have such personality dysfunctions (and this is regardless of which of the three labels are applied to it) have been found to be almost completely untreatable. The worse the affliction, the more untreatable it is, too. To my knowledge, no professionals have yet stepped forward with any meaningful help for them, either with medications or with talk therapies. It is often a progressive disorder too; and if it gets too far gone, radical legal/judicial interventions may be required just to protect society and themselves from it. Notice carefully that I am making a distinction regarding susceptibility to treatment between people who are psychopathic and those around them who've been on the receiving end from them.

By the way, it's important also to note that people who are psychopathic often have other afflictions right along with this one, like megalomania (such as God complexes) and/or others. There is often a cluster effect at work.

Be patient folks if you don't see much change in others (us) immediately, when you announce such solutions as the above. Yes, new thinking can lead to recovery ... granted. But it takes time. Lots of it. And often, much more than just enough time and one therapeutic modality.

More than this, I haven't even begun to address all the other factors in this particular mess that affect what these victims have been through; that's on top of what appear to be its frantic psychological components.

Also, a disclaimer: I'm not a professional therapist nor am I attempting to make online diagnoses of anybody. I do have firsthand knowledge of the condition, and I'm offering advise that may or may not be helpful for some folks (victims) in the situations they find themselves ... plus offering some thoughts for those of us who wish to be helpful to these people who are still caught or have been caught in the past in this maelstrom. But that's all, and nothing more.

God give us courage and strength.

Regards,  
Norm

**Posted by: Clay May 5 2006, 12:47 AM**

Norm,

Understood, having worked in the mental health field for 20 yrs, I have seen more than my share of the folk of which you speak.... the point of this thread and a couple of others that I have started is to foster the process of liberation.... true the path is not easy, however it will be rewarding as people shake off the bonds of that captive mentality which they have lived in for so long..... there is nothing to dishonorable in being a victim, however we do not have to stay a victim... I made the analogy earlier about abused women....and I think the example fits from the standpoint that there are some women who are abused who will still defend the abuser, even return home with him knowing that more abuse will occur... she is literally a prisoner of her mind... a kind of learned helplessness...

This whole thing at 3abn highlights the dangers of adventist colonies, or gluten ghettos as a member here calls them, lifelong denominational employment, and also the danger of believing that the adventist church is the only true church.... think about it.... membership is voluntary, yet people have given the church all this power over their lives.....

we need not ever talk about the mormons, the JW's, or the catholics.... btjm.....

**Posted by: NormF May 5 2006, 01:46 AM**

Dear Steve,

I thought as much already, but I'm glad you confirmed we are on the same page, friend. Thanks.

It's sad but true: too often we prefer the devil we know to the Divinity we don't. (Overstated extremes of the continuum, to be sure; but the essence of the thing is there.)

Regards,  
Norm

**Posted by: Clay May 5 2006, 01:49 AM**

**QUOTE(NormF @ May 5 2006, 01:46 AM) □**

Dear Steve,

I thought as much already, but I'm glad you confirmed we are on the same page, friend. Thanks.

Regards,  
Norm

yes we are.... as i read the comments, this song comes to mind.....

OH, FREEDOM

Oh, freedom, Oh, freedom,  
Oh freedom over me.  
And before I'd be a slave  
I'd be buried in my grave  
And go home to my Lord and be free.

Jesus lived and died to free us, yet we allow the words of a serpent to enslave us....

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**Posted by: HUGGINS130 May 5 2006, 02:00 AM**

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**QUOTE(Clay @ May 4 2006, 10:13 AM)**

why do we expect that of church? Have you ever really found your needs met in church? I choose my friends carefully... they meet the needs that I have, and if I am in trouble I know I can call on them... my friends may or may not go to my church..... so do you think our expectations are unrealistic and that sets us up for problems?

Many times the "be in the world but not of the world" clause tossed about in church will have you thinking that you can't have friends outside of the church...they are too worldly remember...what are we as christians doing having friends who are going to drink or go to the club...it's just not supposed to happen...

and to answer the question, yes the expectations are unrealistic and that is the problem

**QUOTE(Clay @ May 5 2006, 12:47 AM)**

Norm,  
Understood, having worked in the mental health field for 20 yrs, I have seen more than my share of the folk of which you speak.... the point of this thread and a couple of others that I have started is to foster the process of liberation.... true the path is not easy, however it will be rewarding as people shake off the bonds of that captive mentality which they have lived in for so long..... there is nothing to dishonorable in being a victim, however we do not have to stay a victim... I made the analogy earlier about abused women....and I think the example fits from the standpoint that there are some women who are abused who will still defend the abuser, even return home with him knowing that more abuse will occur... she is literally a prisoner of her mind... a kind of learned helplessness...

This whole thing at 3abn highlights the dangers of adventist colonies, or gluten ghettos as a member here calls them, lifelong denominational employment, and also the danger of believing that the adventist church is the only true church.... think about it.... membership is voluntary, yet people have given the church all this power over their lives.....

we need not ever talk about the mormons, the JW's, or the catholics.... btjm.....

Clay if you don't mind my assessment...after being in the church for 18 years until moving out of my parents house...and then returning to the church after a hiatus for about 5 years, being in a cult for 5 years before coming into the Adventist church, I didn't realize how captivating the Christian community is...they want power over the mind...it wasn't until I walked away not only from the churches of my youth, and then the Word of Faith movement and Adventism, just these last past few years, that I found true freedom...Religions are manipulative...

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**Posted by: Clay May 5 2006, 02:03 AM**

True Thomas, it often comes down to power and control.... the misuse of texts in the bible, the peddling of guilt, etc... all designed to keep people in line, nonthinking, and unquestioning.... unfortunate....

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**Posted by: NormF May 5 2006, 02:06 AM**

On being in the world but not of it ...

If being Christian is to be salt, and if salt is to put on meat, where should we be?  Kind of missing our calling, aren't we?

Regards, Huggins,  
Norm

**Posted by: Denny May 5 2006, 04:22 AM**

Some of us allow ourselves to be spiritually bullied we abuse the text where Paul talks about not taking your brethern to court to mean let them walk all over us to preserve the church's so called good name. How many times have members frowned on the victims of those abused by others in the church, or on the those who blow the whistle on the thief in the church....

**Posted by: Clay May 5 2006, 04:52 AM**

**QUOTE(Denny @ May 5 2006, 05:22 AM)**

Some of us allow ourselves to be spiritually bullied we abuse the text where Paul talks about not taking your brethern to court to mean let them walk all over us to preserve the church's so called good name. How many times have members frowned on the victims of those abused by others in the church, or on the those who blow the whistle on the thief in the church....

some of us need to lose that mindset... tell on them... tell it all.... tell it loudly....

**Posted by: Denny May 5 2006, 05:00 AM**

**QUOTE(Clay @ May 5 2006, 11:52 AM)**

some of us need to lose that mindset... tell on them... tell it all.... tell it loudly....

I agree the de-programming is needed its the same for any abusive relationship until the victim realises she/he is not the bad one they never be mentally free. Jesus saying 'Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free' is not just about bible knowledge as we like to think its about a lifestyle of freedom in Jesus but we don't teach that do we.

**Posted by: beartrap May 5 2006, 09:39 AM**

One learns that words can mean a lot, but surface value is often often opposite of what the words say. How many times I've heard, "I'm not holding anyone prisoner, they can leave anytime they want", "I'm just a carpenter like Jesus, doing what God has told me to do", "Nobody should just believe everything we teach, they should study for themselves", "Our financial books are open. We are audited every year by an independent auditor, and you'uns are welcome to take a look", "Yes, he/she has done these things and we have all the proof... he/she has even signed this



document. Would he/she have signed it if not guilty? If he/she was right and I was wrong? Everyone knows, just ask any of my staff, the pastor, our conference president, and several well respected leaders in Adventist evangelism."

Can anybody actually understand what is behind those words?

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**Posted by: Clay May 5 2006, 10:04 AM**

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**QUOTE(beartrap @ May 5 2006, 10:39 AM)**

One learns that words can mean a lot, but surface value is often often opposite of what the words say. How many times I've heard, "I'm not holding anyone prisoner, they can leave anytime they want", "I'm just a carpenter like Jesus, doing what God has told me to do", "Nobody should just believe everything we teach, they should study for themselves", "Our financial books are open. We are audited every year by an independent auditor, and you'uns are welcome to take a look", "Yes, he/she has done these things and we have all the proof... he/she has even signed this document. Would he/she have signed it if not guilty? If he/she was right and I was wrong? Everyone knows, just ask any of my staff, the pastor, our conference president, and several well respected leaders in Adventist evangelism."

Can anybody actually understand what is behind those words?

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yes.... and they should go find someone who is not connected and question, examine, scour the info that you have access to.... oh and don't take the word of folks getting paid by the one saying those things.... in other words be skeptical.... very skeptical.... and if they say, "don't you trust me/us?" the response should be NO!!!!

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**Posted by: watchbird May 5 2006, 10:06 AM**

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**QUOTE(beartrap @ May 5 2006, 09:39 AM)**

One learns that words can mean a lot, but surface value is often often opposite of what the words say. How many times I've heard, "I'm not holding anyone prisoner, they can leave anytime they want", "I'm just a carpenter like Jesus, doing what God has told me to do", "Nobody should just believe everything we teach, they should study for themselves", "Our financial books are open. We are audited every year by an independent auditor, and you'uns are welcome to take a look", "Yes, he/she has done these things and we have all the proof... he/she has even signed this document. Would he/she have signed it if not guilty? If he/she was right and I was wrong? Everyone knows, just ask any of my staff, the pastor, our conference president, and several well respected leaders in Adventist evangelism."

Can anybody actually understand what is behind those words?

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Yes.

But how can the meaning be communcated so others who don't, can?

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**Posted by: NormF May 5 2006, 09:31 PM**

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**QUOTE(beartrap @ May 5 2006, 10:39 AM)** □

Can anybody actually understand what is behind those words?

You can if there's ever been a psychopath/sociopath/APD in your life. If not, it probably taxes even your imagination, or worse, exceeds your worst nightmares. Result (too often): disbelief of (a sorry) reality.

The examples you cite, bear, while specific to the persona in question, are highly consistent, to a T, with the disorder behind them, as outlined in the thread above. They say one thing and mean an entirely other.

Regards,  
Norm

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**Posted by: princessdi May 5 2006, 10:30 PM**

That is just right scary, right there!

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**QUOTE(beartrap @ May 5 2006, 08:39 AM)** □

One learns that words can mean a lot, but surface value is often often opposite of what the words say. How many times I've heard, "I'm not holding anyone prisoner, they can leave anytime they want", "I'm just a carpenter like Jesus, doing what God has told me to do", "Nobody should just believe everything we teach, they should study for themselves", "Our financial books are open. We are audited every year by an independent auditor, and you'uns are welcome to take a look", "Yes, he/she has done these things and we have all the proof... he/she has even signed this document. Would he/she have signed it if not guilty? If he/she was right and I was wrong? Everyone knows, just ask any of my staff, the pastor, our conference president, and several well respected leaders in Adventist evangelism."

Can anybody actually understand what is behind those words?

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**Posted by: Prisca May 6 2006, 07:46 AM**

I am confused. We are discussing thinking for ourselves which may be the exact answer to the question posed...why DO Christians go bad? Is it because they begin to think for themselves and leave the path of the tried and true? As Christians we have a whole Book of what we are to think about..this is perhaps the basis of our belief system. Are we talking about freedom to juggle those thoughts about? Freedom to react in our own way to what those thoughts produce within us?

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**Posted by: watchbird May 6 2006, 08:09 AM**

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**QUOTE(Prisca @ May 6 2006, 07:46 AM)**

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I think we are talking about thinking for ourselves rather than allowing someone else to do our thinking for us and telling us what to think.

You are fortunate indeed if you have not had this kind of experience, for it is all too common even in the Adventist church at large. In Independent Ministries it is pretty much "standard operating procedure" and those who resist such thought control, even in the ordinary decisions of life, are considered rebels, and dealt with accordingly.

From what Beartrap and others have said, this is taken even further for those who come under the influence of Danny at 3ABN, and even made more emotionally coercive by claiming that since he has direct instruction from God as to what you should think, then he and he alone should direct your thoughts.

Thought Control is taken to a new high with this additive to the fuel tank.

Mz Ellen has different things to say as to who is responsible for our thoughts and whether or not someone else should relay God's instructions for our lives to us.

**Posted by: Prisca May 6 2006, 08:26 AM**

**QUOTE(watchbird @ May 6 2006, 02:09 PM)**

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Thought Control is taken to a new high with this additive to the fuel tank.

Mz Ellen has different things to say as to who is responsible for our thoughts and whether or not someone else should relay God's instructions for our lives to us.

I hear you. Oh I know about the 'self-supporting, independent ministries'..If you read the Bible as I have then you would think like I think...folk. Spent 10 days at Mountain Missionary. Still tingling! But

I don't see a problem with Danny's belief that God speaks. You see, in my little world there are those who claim the same thing, so it is familiar to me. Those with little or no education must have something to use as 'clout'. What else do they have but direct revelation? The seer, the foreteller of the future, the dream interpreters...many do not have formal education (which is, at best questionable in its spiritual benefits) and they trace their belief to the Bible and how God used the unlearned disciples to reach the world....

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**Posted by: Clay Jul 8 2006, 01:16 PM**

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**QUOTE(Prisca @ May 6 2006, 09:26 AM)**

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delusional thinking cuts across, class, color, gender, socioeconomics.....

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**Posted by: statrei Jul 8 2006, 01:40 PM**

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**QUOTE(Clay @ Jul 8 2006, 02:16 PM)**

delusional thinking cuts across, class, color, gender, socioeconomics.....

Heaven help us when educated people fall for that kind of thinking.


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**Posted by: watchbird Jul 8 2006, 02:14 PM**

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**QUOTE(Prisca @ May 6 2006, 08:26 AM)**

I hear you. Oh I know about the 'self-supporting, independent ministries'..If you read the Bible as I have then you would think like I think...folk. Spent 10 days at Mountain Missionary. Still tingling! But I don't see a problem with Danny's belief that God speaks. You see, in my little world there are those who claim the same thing, so it is familiar to me. Those with little or no education must have something to use as 'clout'. What else do they have but direct revelation? The seer, the foreteller of the future, the dream interpreters...many do not have formal education (which is, at best questionable in its spiritual benefits) and they trace their belief to the Bible and how God used the unlearned disciples to reach the world....

  I'm confused. You seem to be describing (with a negative attitude) the type of person that I described as frequenting the "self-supporting, independent ministries" who has no use for education,

but depends on "direct revelation".

But right in the middle of this you put in the sentence "But I don't see a problem with Danny's belief that God speaks. You see in my little world there are those who claim the same thing..."

So question--Do those in your little world who say the same thing **mean** the same thing by the words they say.

Keep in mind that we have heard Bear (and I think others) describe Danny speaking of God speaking to him in the sense of him stopping in the middle of a conversation and saying God is telling me this about you, right now. From the additional descriptions that Bear has given when we were talking voice to voice, I have come to understand that Danny actually hears--or thinks he hears--voices speaking to him. Now in Pentecostal circles, especially some groups, this is essentially the same as what is called in other circles "channeling" or having a "spirit guide". This is exponentially different than the average Christian who uses the words "God speaks to me", meaning that they are giving God the credit for them recalling words of scripture or in somehow helping them work through a problem or be encouraged by a spiritual thought or feeling.

**QUOTE(Clay @ Jul 8 2006, 01:16 PM)**

delusional thinking cuts across, class, color, gender, socioeconomics.....

And my questions and confusion about Prisca's comments above carry over into yours, Clay, for I can see your statement as being applicable to the person who has or thinks he has a "spirit guide" who speaks to him. But I don't see it applying to the mind set that glorifies not being educated. So would you expand on your meaning a little more especially how you were tying it to Prisca's comment?

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**Posted by: statrei Jul 8 2006, 02:22 PM**

I have no basis for denying whether one is guided by a spirit guide. However, if that spirit guide is not speaking to me as well any cooperative work between the two of us will have to exclude the spirit guide's absolute advice. In other words, nothing goes by this mass of gray matter without scrutiny. God knows all my contact information and we are on speaking terms so he is not going to give anyone messages for me. It is almost criminal the way the church encourages the mindset that faith is antithetical to reason and logic. I would call that a crime against humanity.

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**Posted by: watchbird Jul 8 2006, 02:51 PM**

**QUOTE(statrei @ Jul 8 2006, 02:22 PM)**

I have no basis for denying whether one is guided by a spirit guide. However, if that spirit guide is not speaking to me as well any cooperative work between the two of us will have to exclude the spirit guide's absolute advice. In other words, nothing goes by this mass of gray matter without scrutiny. God knows all my contact information and we are on speaking terms so he is not going to give anyone messages for me. It is almost criminal the way the church encourages the mindset that faith is antithetical to reason and logic. I would call that a crime against humanity.

If you would change "the church" to "some in the church", or even "some segments of the church", then I could agree with all you say above.

But for myself, I identify "the church", as a generalization, with the mainline organization, not with the "independent ministry" organizations. And the mainline church as a whole is very "reason and logic" oriented--and encourages their young people to educate themselves to the extent of their

capability.

But it is true that the anti-education forces are still strong. They think in terms of "control or be controlled" and they value "clout" as Prisca put it--whether that clout comes from money or mysticism--above individuality, freedom, and personal responsibility. 3ABN represents this sector of the church very well. Which is why many in the mainline church see them as setting up a "para-church" competitive organization that is parasitic on the main organization.

There has to come a break. The only questions are how that break will be achieved, and what will be the results.

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**Posted by: statrei Jul 8 2006, 03:01 PM**

I understand you watchbird, but religion as a whole advocates that what cannot pass smell test of reason and logic must be accepted by faith. How else would we convince people that the Bible is the word of God or that the entire universe was made in one day while it took six to make the earth alone?

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**Posted by: missthg Jul 8 2006, 04:48 PM**

Now you know - there are some members at my home church who will contest that very statement. They swear that you have to come to church to meet God. I tell you I have had some of my best praise and worship on the way to work in my car.

That whole thing about we missed you is bogus at best. If you didn't think about me until you saw me - then you didn't miss me at church. And to say otherwise is purely pharisee speak to me. I can meet Jesus anytime/anywhere I want to. The beach - my job - at home - in the park, etc. I've learned not to expect to find love in the church and to be open to receive it when it comes. If not - then I can't be disappointed when it's not there...

**QUOTE(Clay @ May 4 2006, 01:04 PM)**

then hell it is... cause there is no need to stay where there is no genuine love.... let's not pretend... when you don't go to church and no one calls, don't be hurt, if you were important they would call.... and we all know you dont have to go to church to meet God...

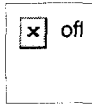
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**Posted by: Johann Jul 8 2006, 04:54 PM**

**QUOTE(statrei @ Jul 8 2006, 11:01 PM)**

I understand you watchbird, but religion as a whole advocates that what cannot pass smell test of reason and logic must be accepted by faith. How else would we convince people that the Bible is the word of God or that the entire universe was made in one day while it took six to make the earth alone?

Let's watch out here that we do not get



Some of this could be discussed elsewhere.

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**Posted by: Clay Jul 9 2006, 12:01 AM**

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**QUOTE(watchbird @ Jul 8 2006, 03:14 PM)**

And my questions and confusion about Prisca's comments above carry over into yours, Clay, for I can see your statement as being applicable to the person who has or thinks he has a "spirit guide" who speaks to him. But I don't see it applying to the mind set that glorifies not being educated. So would you expand on your meaning a little more especially how you were tying it to Prisca's comment?

just because someone says that they "hear a voice" telling them something doesn't mean I need to follow their directives..... be they educated or not....

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