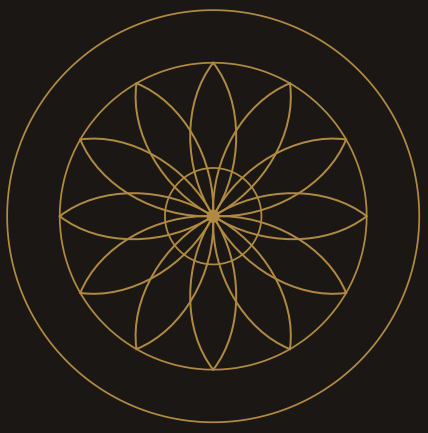


THE SACRED DIVIDE

THE FULL RECORD

Bahá'í Faith

Persian-born family

HONOR THE FAITH · NAME THE MACHINERY

TEXT CHECKED 2026-10-03

Before you begin

This is the record of Bahá'í Faith in *The Sacred Divide*. It has 27 sections, the same 27 used for every tradition, so that any section can be set beside the same section for another. Every fact is sourced.

Before each section, a short note says what the section is built to show, so you know what you are looking at before you read the detail.

After each section, a note headed *Why this matters to you* points at the part of the section most likely to touch an ordinary reader: a member, a donor, a parent, a voter, someone thinking about leaving, or someone outside forming an opinion. It usually ends with a question. The questions are not traps. They are the ones a careful reader would ask anyway.

The hard questions in section 23 are set out one at a time: the question, why it is asked, and an example already documented in this record.

Where a note states a fact, the fact comes from this record's own tables and cited sources or, in a few places, from a well-known research finding named in the text. Corrections are logged, with their dates, in the last section, *What changed on this page*.

Contents

01 At a glance 10

Disclosure scorecard

02 A day inside 12

03 The forefront 14

The unanswered question · The widest gap between word and record · One cost of leaving, beside its denial · The strongest objection, answered

04 What healthy looks like here 18

05 History 19

Timeline · Moments in the room

06 Branches & variants 24

07 Structure 25

Size and shape · Authority · The top of the chain · Who holds what

08 Law & state here 30

Who can compel an answer

09 Money 32

Where it comes from · Follow the money · Money in numbers

10 Genealogy 36

11 Reach 39
Information · Children · Bodies

12 The 30 techniques 43
All thirty at a glance · Stage 1 · Idealize · Stage 2 · Hook · Stage 3 · Devalue · Stage 4 · Confuse · Stage 5 · Isolate · Stage 6 · Extract · Stage 7 · Discard · Stage 8 · Replace

13 The loops 84

14 Say versus do 95
What they say, what the record shows · Accountability or theatre? · Words used here

15 Cost & cover 98
What leaving costs · The ledger of exit · How the cost is denied

16 The ledger 101
Who benefits · Money out, leverage back · Who pays

17 Who gets hurt most 105
Where the weight lands · From The Women's Codex

18 The middle tiers 107

19 Documented cases 109
Removed from the rolls (1997–2005) · A scholar resigns under warning (1996) · A second decade in prison (Iran, 2008–2022)

20 Precedent 111
It has been broken before · What would change this page

21 Voices from inside 113

22 Regional variants 115
Iran · United Kingdom · Worldwide (the institutions)

23 The questions 117
In closing

24 Leaving safely here 122

25 Where to get help 123

26 Sources 126
The Faith's own records · Reference work, not the Faith's own records · Dissent and review (primary accounts) · Persecution in Iran · Further sources

27 What changed on this page 131

How to read this

Every religion in The Sacred Divide is laid out the same way, in the same 27 sections, so that any section can be compared across religions. This file examines institutions, offices, money and power. It does not judge anyone's faith or the truth of any belief.

EVIDENCE GRADES

Each of the 30 techniques carries a grade for how it is established in this tradition.

- **CODIFIED** Written policy, published rule, contractual requirement, or a procedure the institution has confirmed in its own documents. The strongest grade and the hardest to deny.
- **DOCUMENTED** Established by court judgment, government inquiry, regulatory action, or financial filing. Not the institution's own words, but a body with subpoena power.
- **TAUGHT** Repeated leadership instruction from platform, publication, or curriculum, without a formal rule. Deniable as emphasis rather than policy.
- **CULTURAL** Community enforcement the institution neither mandates nor prevents. Real in effect, unattributable by design — the highest-deniability grade. A volume graded mostly Cultural has not been cleared of anything: it means the page names no document that makes the institution responsible. Cultural does not mean minor, and it is not a finding of absence.

- CONTESTED Occurs in some parts of the tradition and is actively opposed in others. Generalizing this grade across a whole tradition is a misuse of it.
- REFORMED Documented historically and materially changed since — policy withdrawn, practice ended, or independent oversight accepted. Recorded because omitting it would be dishonest.
- UNGRADED Present in the source material without a grade assigned yet. Read as an unverified pattern claim, not as a finding.

RECEIPTS

Bracketed labels such as [OFFICIAL POLICY] name the kind of source a claim rests on.

- **Official policy.** The institution's own written rule: handbook, canon, policy letter, catechism, trust deed, temple recommend question. The strongest evidence available, because it cannot be attributed to a rogue individual.
- **Court record.** Judgments, convictions, filings, and testimony given under oath. Adversarially tested, which is more than most religious claims about themselves have been.
- **Government inquiry.** Royal commissions, grand juries, parliamentary and state investigations with subpoena power. Where these exist they are usually the best record of what an institution did rather than said.
- **Regulatory action.** Findings and penalties from bodies like the SEC or consumer-protection regulators. Narrow in scope, unusually precise in what they establish.
- **Financial record.** Filings, audited statements, tax returns, disclosed compensation, property transactions. Frequently the only place an institution tells the truth about its priorities.

- **Leadership statement.** Recorded sermons, conference addresses, published letters. The institution in its own voice, to its own people, on the record.
- **Independent investigation.** Reports commissioned by the institution but conducted externally. Weaker than a court and far stronger than a press release — and notable when the institution publishes them in full.
- **Academic source.** Peer-reviewed history, sociology, and demography. Best for context, structure, and scale; weaker for specific institutional conduct.
- **Former member testimony.** Firsthand accounts from people who were inside. Indispensable and interested at once — graded as testimony, never presented as documentary proof.
- **Pattern observed.** A recurring configuration with no single document behind it. Labeled as an observation rather than a finding, and the weakest claim type in this codex.

METHOD

- Separation of targets. This codex analyzes institutional control patterns, never the worth of believers or the truth of beliefs. Theology is out of scope; behavior, money, and power are in scope.
- Pattern over anecdote. A tactic is attributed to a tradition's high-control expressions only where the mechanism recurs — one bad congregation proves nothing; the same architecture in a hundred proves the architecture.
- Evidence weighting. Every factual claim carries a bracketed source-type label and should carry a grade (A–D). Claims marked SOURCE NEEDED or PATTERN OBSERVED are analysis, not established fact, and must not be published as fact.
- Steelman rule. Every tactic section presents the institution's strongest defense before countering it. If the defense cannot be stated in a form its adherents would recognize, the counter is not yet earned.

- Asymmetry honesty. Similar tactic does not mean identical severity. A shunning policy that costs your entire family is not the same as a community that cools toward doubters, and the codex must never flatten that difference.
- The mirror rule. Any framework this powerful can itself be misused — to smear traditions, flatter one's own, or manufacture grievance. The self-audit and language guardrails apply to this project as much as to any institution it examines.

CITATIONS

A small raised number in the text links to the matching item in this religion's Sources, near the end. Every source was checked, and the date of the last check is shown at the top.

01 At a glance

BEFORE YOU READ

The whole page on one screen: how big Bahá'í Faith is, who sits at the top, how that person is chosen and whether anyone can remove them, where the money comes from, and what leaving costs. The disclosure scorecard underneath asks six yes-or-no questions any charity or public company would be expected to answer. Every later section expands one of these rows.

SIZE	The Bahá'í International Community states up to 8 million members; other estimates run from 5 to 7 million [23]. Enrollment figures include inactive members.
WHO'S IN CHARGE	The Universal House of Justice has nine members, elected every five years by the members of the national assemblies (the elected national governing bodies). The most recent election was in 2023 and the next is due in 2028. The Bahá'í World Centre publishes the membership. The House's decisions are held to be doctrinally guided, and women are ineligible by standing ruling.
CHOSEN BY	National-assembly members meet in international convention and elect the House.
REMOVABLE BY	The next election can remove a member, though members are usually re-elected until they step down.

MONEY IN ONE LINE	The Faith's funds accept donations from members only (a genuine integrity feature), and Huqúqu'lláh (the "Right of God", 19% on surplus wealth) is paid to the Faith's center. OFFICIAL POLICY
LEAVING IN ONE LINE	Ordinary resignation is administratively simple; the high cost is reserved for organized dissent — covenant-breaker designation (a formal status for a member who challenges the authority of the Covenant) means members are expected to avoid the person, relatives included, under guidance the Faith publishes [17]. OFFICIAL POLICY / FORMER MEMBER TESTIMONY
THE UNANSWERED QUESTION	Only men may sit on the House of Justice, in a faith that teaches the equality of the sexes. Who is permitted to ask why — and where is the answer filed?
EVIDENCE	None of the 30 techniques is sourced to a named document. The grades are Cultural 20, Taught 5, Contested 3 and Codified 2.
FAMILY	The Faith belongs to the Persian-born family of traditions, with Zoroastrianism.
LAST CHECKED	2026-10-03

Disclosure scorecard

ACCOUNTS	PAY	SAFEGUARDING	EXTERNAL FIRST	REMOVAL	REPLY
PARTIAL	NO	PARTIAL	PARTIAL	PARTIAL	NO

Y Yes — established from a public source · **P** Partial — true of some parts of the tradition, or true in some jurisdictions · **N** No — not established from any public source · **?** Not assessable — no institutional apex exists to assess

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

The glance table's answer to who chooses the top office is "National-assembly members meet in international convention and elect the House", and to who can remove its holder, "The next election can remove a member, though members are usually re-elected until they step down". Read that as though it described the board of a pension fund holding your savings. Would you accept the arrangement there? The scorecard finds no public evidence of leaders' pay or on-the-record replies. Each "No" is something the institution could publish tomorrow. Ask yourself why it hasn't.

02 A day inside

BEFORE YOU READ

One ordinary day, told from inside. The person is a composite built from documented patterns, not a real individual. The point is to make the structure visible at human scale: phrases like "removal mechanism" or "giving record" are easy to read past, but a Tuesday organized around them is not.

Sepideh · A Tuesday in Ayyám-i-Há (the intercalary days before the Bahá'í fast) · A city in Iran

Prayers at dawn, alone, quietly, in a flat where the window faces a courtyard. Her grandmother taught her the Arabic. Her grandmother was in Evin (the prison in Tehran) for four years.

She is twenty-two and cannot attend university. Not because of her marks — her marks were excellent — but because of the box on the form. She studies instead with the community's own institute, over patchy internet, with a lecturer in another city who has been arrested twice.

At ten her father's shop is closed for the fourth time this year by an inspector who does not write anything down. Her father makes tea for the inspector. The inspector drinks it. This is how it goes.

In the afternoon she teaches a children's class — six kids, a rug, songs about unity and the oneness of humanity, and she believes every word, and she has no idea how she would explain to a foreigner that this is the most dangerous thing she does all week.

At six she reads an essay a Bahá'í academic abroad has written about the Faith's early history. It is careful and it is accurate and it has not been through review, and there was a note attached about that, and Sepideh does not know what she thinks. She thinks the essay is good. She thinks the review policy exists. She holds both.

At night she and her mother count the cemetery. Agents took over the cemetery in 2021 and graves were razed in 2024, and it is not clear whether they will be allowed to bury her grandmother where her grandfather is. Sepideh prays for the officials by name, because the Writings (the Bahá'í scripture) say to, and she does it without irony, and then she lies down and thinks: everything trying to erase us is outside this room. That is true and it is nearly the whole story. Nearly.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Did any moment in that day feel familiar: a cost nobody questions, a door nobody can see how to open? The section of this page that explains that moment is the one to read first. If nothing felt familiar, ask whether that's because it isn't your life, or because the patterns have become normal to you.

03 The forefront

BEFORE YOU READ

The page's thesis in one place. First, the single question the documented record could not answer. Then the widest gap between what the institution says and what the record shows, one cost of leaving set beside how it is officially denied, and the strongest objection to this whole page, answered rather than dismissed.

> You may have joined the least clerical religion in this codex — no priests, elected institutions, member-only funding, and a genuine record on race and gender that predates almost everyone else's. Most of what follows is not about your daily community life, which is likely warm and service-oriented. It is about the two or three mechanisms that activate the moment someone organizes a disagreement.

THE UNANSWERED QUESTION

Only men may sit on the House of Justice, in a faith that teaches the equality of the sexes. Who is permitted to ask why — and where is the answer filed?

The widest gap between word and record

THEY SAY	THE RECORD SHOWS	RECEIPT
Independent investigation of truth is a core principle.	Members must submit writing about the Faith for institutional review before publishing.	OFFICIAL POLICY

One cost of leaving, beside its denial

COST	DOCUMENTED?	DETAIL	THE OFFICIAL DENIAL
Ordinary resignation	Documented as low cost.	Withdrawal is administrative, and members generally retain relationships.	Accurately: simple resignation is genuinely low-cost.

The strongest objection, answered

The objection. Bahá'ís have been executed in Iran and are imprisoned there. Criticism of this Faith punches down.

What is true in it. Entirely true, and this profile leads with it. This community is far more often the target of coercion than its author, and its structural safeguards — no clergy, elected bodies, member-only funding — are genuine and unusual.

The answer. That is why the section is short and limited to three mechanisms, all of which the Faith publishes openly. A religion teaching independent investigation of truth cannot also hold approval rights over its members' published conclusions. That is an internal inconsistency, not an attack.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Try answering the unanswered question yourself: *Only men may sit on the House of Justice, in a faith that teaches the equality of the sexes. Who is permitted to ask why — and where is the answer filed?* If you can't, who could, and would asking them be welcome? How an institution reacts to a fair question often tells you more than the answer does.

04 What healthy looks like here

BEFORE YOU READ

What genuinely works in Bahá'í Faith, stated first and separately from any critique. That is a standing rule of this book: no tradition is reduced to its worst documented moments. Anything criticized later is measured against the best of what is described here.

> The Bahá'í International Community states up to 8 million members worldwide [23]. It is a 19th-century religion that teaches the oneness of God, religion and humanity, with a global elected administrative order and no clergy.

- The absence of clergy, the elected administration, member-only funding and the ideal of consultation (group decision-making by open discussion) are real structural safeguards, and most members experience a service-oriented, non-authoritarian community life.
- The mechanisms this page examines, covenant-breaker designation and pre-publication review, apply mainly to organized dissent and to published writing, and not to ordinary community life (section 7).
- Bahá'ís in Iran face persecution by the state, which this page records first and treats as the largest harm it describes (sections 5 and 17) [8].

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

A bias check before the critique. People tend to read criticism of their own group as an attack and criticism of other groups as simply true. Social psychologists call this in-group bias; it shows up even when the groups are assigned at random (Tajfel's "minimal group" experiments, 1971). If you belong here, did this section feel fair? If you don't, did anything in it surprise you? The surprise is a rough measure of what you had assumed.

05 History

BEFORE YOU READ

A dated timeline and a few moments where the direction changed. Dates matter because they show that most rules had a beginning. A rule that began in a particular year, for a particular reason, is a rule that can be examined, and sometimes retired.

Bahá'u'lláh founded the Faith in 19th-century Iran and Ottoman exile, out of the Bábí movement. Leadership passed through appointed interpreters to the elected Universal House of Justice (1963), and the community has been severely persecuted in Iran. **GOVERNMENT REPORT** · UN Special Rapporteur on Iran, 2024

Timeline

HISTORY AT A GLANCE



Numbered markers match the timeline below; spacing is proportional to the years.

1 **1844**

The Báb declares his mission in Shiraz

It was a messianic movement inside Shi'i Iran, and thousands of its followers were killed in the persecution that followed.

2 **1863**

Bahá'u'lláh declares his prophetic station in Baghdad exile

This was the founding claim, made in exile and under state hostility.

3 **1868–1892**

Imprisonment in Akka; writings composed; Covenant established (Bahá'u'lláh's written designation of his successor)

Succession is designated in writing specifically to prevent schism — an unusual founding safeguard.

4 **1892–1921**

'Abdu'l-Bahá leads; Western expansion begins

The Faith becomes global and interracial early, well ahead of its era.

5 **1921–1957**

Shoghi Effendi as Guardian (the appointed head of the Faith after ‘Abdu’l-Bahá); administrative order built

Elected institutions replace clergy, a deliberate structural anti-clericalism.

6 **1957–1963**

Interregnum; Universal House of Justice first elected 1963

Authority becomes fully institutional and elected; Covenant-breaker designations are used against rival claimants. OFFICIAL POLICY

7 **1979–PRESENT**

Islamic Republic persecution: more than 200 executed or killed after 1979, the last reported execution in 1998 [19]; since then arrest, imprisonment, university exclusion, cemetery desecration

Bahá’ís are one of the most systematically persecuted religious minorities in the world today. GOVERNMENT REPORT · UN Special Rapporteur reporting

8 **1980S–1990S**

Bahá'í Institute for Higher Education founded after university bans; faculty arrested

A community builds an underground university because the state bars its youth from education. GOVERNMENT REPORT

9 **1990S–2000S**

Disputes over pre-publication review and academic freedom; some scholars disenrolled or resign

The tradition's internal control question surfaces around its own historians. ACADEMIC SOURCE / FORMER MEMBER TESTIMONY

10 2000S–PRESENT

Ruhi/Institute process (the Faith's sequence of study-circle courses) global expansion; continued Iranian persecution

The Faith grows through structured study circles, and the persecution continues.

Moments in the room

1963 — THE FIRST ELECTION OF THE HOUSE OF JUSTICE

Members of the national assemblies convened and elected the nine-member Universal House of Justice — without nominations, campaigning, or candidate information, by design, to prevent factionalism.

Why it matters. The apex is genuinely electoral, and the design that prevents factionalism is the same design that prevents an informed vote. Both descend from one intentional choice.

1979–1998 — THE IRANIAN EXECUTIONS

Following the revolution, more than 200 Bahá'ís in Iran were executed or killed, and the last reported execution was in 1998 [19]. Persecution has continued as arrest, imprisonment, property seizure, exclusion from work and higher education, and the razing of graves; as of 11 June 2026, 63 Bahá'ís were detained for their beliefs [20]. It is thoroughly documented by UN bodies.

Why it matters. Recorded first and plainly, because this page's later questions about internal governance must not be readable as ammunition for a state that executed more than 200 of them and still imprisons them. Real persecution and internal critique are both true, and the codex refuses to trade one for the other.

1990s–2000s — The review policy meets the internet

As Bahá'í academics published historical work outside the review process, several were subject to administrative sanction and the boundary of permissible scholarship became a live public dispute.

Why it matters. The mechanism the page's unanswered question turns on: an electorate that cannot read unreviewed material about its own candidates is not being asked to choose.

Sources for this section: 3 4 7 8 9 10 19 20 22

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Pick one rule that shapes your week and look for it on the timeline. If it has a start date, it was decided by people at a particular moment, for reasons of that moment. Were you taught it as timeless? What would it mean for you if it turned out to be younger than your grandparents' grandparents?

06 Branches & variants

BEFORE YOU READ

Bahá'í Faith is not one bloc. This section maps the main branches and variants, so that nothing documented about one community is read as true of all of them.

The Faith is overwhelmingly a single unified body, and the Covenant structure has been unusually effective at preventing schism. Small dissident groups (for example, the Orthodox Bahá'ís) exist and are designated covenant-breakers.

BODY	WHERE	WHAT DIFFERS ON THIS PAGE'S QUESTIONS
The Bahá'í Faith (Universal House of Justice)	The body operates worldwide, and its seat is in Haifa.	It has nine members, elected every five years by national assembly members, with no nominations or campaigning; women are not eligible [1] [2] [3]
National and local spiritual assemblies	Assemblies exist in every country with Bahá'ís.	Local and national assemblies are elected annually, and national assemblies are often registered charities [11]
Small dissident groups (e.g. Orthodox Bahá'ís)	The groups' locations are not recorded on this page.	The main body designates them "covenant-breakers".

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

If you know one community of Bahá'í Faith, you know one community. Most bad generalizations about a religion, and most unfair defenses of it, come from treating one branch as the whole. Which branch is the one you picture when you hear the name? Is that picture yours, or one you were given by news coverage or by the community itself?

07 Structure

BEFORE YOU READ

The organizational chart: how many people and institutions there are, where authority sits, who holds the top office, and who holds what beneath it. The question to keep in mind is simple: if the person at the top got something badly wrong, what written procedure exists to correct or remove them?

Size and shape

Adherents	The Bahá'í International Community states up to 8 million adherents; other estimates run from 5 to 7 million [23]. Enrollment figures include inactive members.
Regions	Country figures vary by source, and the order of this list is not taken from any source on this page. Bahá'ís live in countries including India, Iran (the historic center, now severely persecuted), the United States, Kenya, DR Congo, Bolivia, Vietnam and Papua New Guinea.
Trend	Growth is steady but slower than mid-20th-century projections, and there is a large gap between enrollment rolls and active participation, which the Faith acknowledges internally. PATTERN OBSERVED
Participation	Enrollment counts overstate activity considerably. Most members experience a service-oriented, non-authoritarian community life; the high-control mechanisms activate almost exclusively around organized dissent.

Authority

- Elected assemblies (local and national) sit under the Universal House of Justice. There is no campaigning and no clergy, and also no appeal beyond the system.
- The Covenant doctrine enforces unity through the category of 'covenant-breaker,' a person whom members are expected to avoid under published guidance [17]. It is the tradition's principal high-control mechanism. OFFICIAL POLICY

- Members' writings about the Faith are subject to pre-publication review. **OFFICIAL POLICY**

The top of the chain

> On paper, the House of Justice is the most electoral apex in this codex. The audit question is what an electorate is permitted to know.

OFFICE	WHO SITS IN IT NOW	CHOSEN BY	REMOVABLE BY
The Universal House of Justice	It has nine members, elected every five years by the members of the national assemblies. The most recent election was in 2023 and the next is due in 2028. The Bahá'í World Centre publishes the membership. The House's decisions are held to be doctrinally guided, and women are ineligible by standing ruling.	National-assembly members meet in international convention and elect it.	The next election can remove a member, though members are usually re-elected until they step down.
National Spiritual Assemblies	Each has nine members, elected annually without nominations or campaigning.	Delegates, who are themselves elected by the community, choose them [1].	They are removed at the annual election.

THE TELL

An election held under review of publications and a unity norm is an election without information about its candidates — and an election without information is a confirmation.

Who holds what

ENTITY	TYPE	HOLDER	HOLDS	WHY IT MATTERS TO YOU	RECEIPT
The Universal House of Justice	Elected supreme institution	Its nine elected members are men only.	It holds final authority over doctrine, administration and the Faith's global plans.	Every institutional decision rests with it, and there is no appeal beyond it.	OFFICIAL POLICY
National and local Spiritual Assemblies	Elected administration	Each is a nine-member elected body.	They hold control over membership standing, community activity and administrative sanction.	They decide your voting rights and your standing.	OFFICIAL POLICY
Pre-publication review	Information policy	Reviewing bodies hold it.	They hold approval of members' writing about their own religion before it is published.	They decide what you are permitted to publish about your own faith.	OFFICIAL POLICY

Covenant-breaker designation	Sanction	The institutions impose it.	It holds an expectation, set out in published guidance [17], that members avoid personal relations and correspondence with the designated person, relatives included, and meet them only with a national assembly's permission; contact needed to conclude business is allowed.	It decides how freely your mother may associate with you.	OFFICIAL POLICY
Huqúqu'lláh administration	Revenue	The Faith's central funds receive it.	It holds nineteen percent of members' surplus wealth, and no public source on this page shows whether it is accounted for to members.	It is nineteen percent of what remains of your wealth after necessary expenses.	OFFICIAL POLICY
The Islamic Republic of Iran	External persecutor	Iranian state organs act as the persecutor.	It executed more than 200 Bahá'ís after 1979 [19] and now carries out arrest, imprisonment, university exclusion and cemetery desecration.	This is the most important fact on this page — this community is far more often coercion's target than its author.	GOVERNMENT REPORT · UN documentation

Sources for this section: [1] [2] [3] [8] [9] [17] [18] [19] [20]

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

The Universal House of Justice has nine members, elected every five years by the members of the national assemblies, and its membership is published. That is a real electoral structure, more than most pages in this book can show. Its decisions are held to be doctrinally guided, and women are ineligible by standing ruling. If you are a Bahá'í woman, you can vote in the elections at every level and can never be elected to the highest one. Has anyone ever explained that to you without pointing to the institution's own authority?

08 Law & state here

BEFORE YOU READ

What states actually do. That includes how they fund, protect, regulate or enforce the tradition, and which outside body, if any, can compel an answer from it. For most readers, this is where the institution meets their own passport.

COUNTRY (continued)	WHAT THE LAW DOES	THE ACCOUNTABILITY QUESTION
Iran	Bahá'ís are not a recognized minority; community administration is prosecuted as membership of a "deviated sect" [8] [12]	Two former leaders were sentenced in 2022 to a second ten-year term after an hour-long trial [12]; arrests and imprisonments rose sharply in 2024 [9]; 63 Bahá'ís were detained as of June 2026 [20]
Iran — education	Bahá'ís are excluded from universities [10]	The community founded its own Institute for Higher Education in 1987 [10]
United Kingdom	Charity law governs the national assembly [11]	The national assembly files public accounts [11]
Internal	Members may be removed from the rolls by the institutions [5] [6] [7]	Scholars and online critics were removed in 1997, 2000 and 2005 [5] [6] [7]

Who can compel an answer

The elections themselves can compel an answer at every level, as can charity regulators wherever national assemblies are registered entities with filing duties. The review policies have no external referee; the corporate registrations do.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

In Iran, Bahá'ís are not a recognized minority. They are excluded from universities, and running the community is prosecuted as membership of a "deviated sect." Two former leaders were sentenced in 2022 to a second ten-year term after an hour-long trial. The page calls this the largest harm it records, and it is done by the state, not the Faith. If you are not Bahá'í, did you know? What would it take for your government to raise it?

09 Money

BEFORE YOU READ

Where the money comes from, how each flow is justified, how it can be used to control, and who benefits. Read it the way you would read any organization you give to: what is disclosed, what is not, and who decides.

Where it comes from

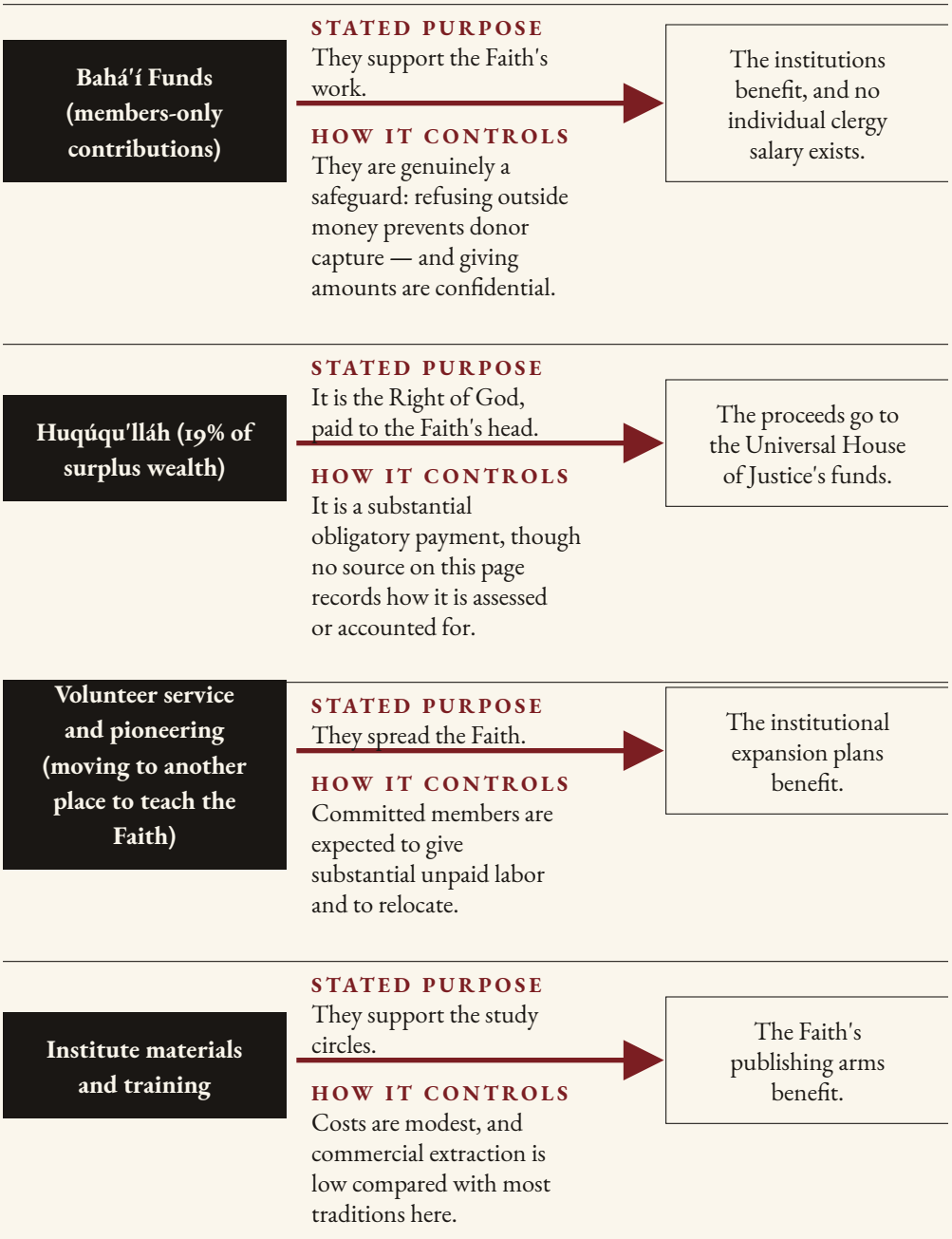
- The Faith's funds accept donations from members only (a genuine integrity feature), and Huqúqu'lláh (the "Right of God", 19% on surplus wealth) is paid to the Faith's center. **OFFICIAL POLICY**

Follow the money

FLOW	STATED PURPOSE	HOW IT CONTROLS	WHO BENEFITS
Bahá'í Funds (members-only contributions)	They support the Faith's work.	They are genuinely a safeguard: refusing outside money prevents donor capture — and giving amounts are confidential.	The institutions benefit, and no individual clergy salary exists. **OFFICIAL POLICY**
Huqúqu'lláh (19% of surplus wealth)	It is the Right of God, paid to the Faith's head.	It is a substantial obligatory payment, though no source on this page records how it is assessed or accounted for.	The proceeds go to the Universal House of Justice's funds.
Volunteer service and pioneering (moving to another place to teach the Faith)	They spread the Faith.	Committed members are expected to give substantial unpaid labor and to relocate.	The institutional expansion plans benefit.

Institute materials and training	They support the study circles.	Costs are modest, and commercial extraction is low compared with most traditions here.	The Faith's publishing arms benefit.

WHERE THE MONEY GOES, AND WHAT IT HOLDS

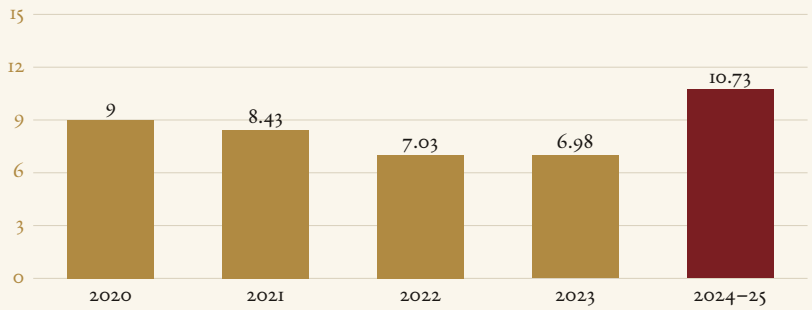


Not to scale. The table gives one figure, the German church tax of €6.75bn in 2025; the other flows are shown without amounts.

Sources for this section: [3]

Money in numbers

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS OF THE UK: INCOME



£ million — Calendar years to 2023, then a 15-month period to March 2025. Donations are accepted from Bahá'ís only. [11]

- **UK, period to March 2025:** £10.09m of the £10.73m income came from donations, and spending was £10.81m [11].
- **Huqúqu'lláh:** The Faith asks for 19% of members' surplus wealth, paid to the Faith's centre [3].
- **Donations** are accepted only from members — an integrity feature (see Money above).

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Two features stand out. The Faith's funds accept donations from members only, which the page calls a genuine integrity feature. And Huqúqu'lláh (the "Right of God"), a payment of 19% on surplus wealth, is paid to the Faith's center. In the UK the national assembly files public accounts. If you pay Huqúqu'lláh where you live, can you read how it was used?

10 Genealogy

BEFORE YOU READ

Rules with a history. Each card asks the same three questions: what was this rule originally for, has that reason expired, and who benefits from the rule continuing anyway?

COVENANT-BREAKER DESIGNATION AND REQUIRED AVOIDANCE

Origin. The designation was established in the Faith's early succession disputes to prevent the schisms that fractured earlier religions. OFFICIAL POLICY

What it was for. The designation answered a genuine and understandable problem: the founder watched rival claimants tear at the community and wrote in a mechanism to protect unity.

Why that reason expired. It works — the Faith is unusually unified. But the price is published guidance that members avoid a designated person, relatives included [17]. Unity purchased by required avoidance is not unity; it is the appearance of unity with the disagreement removed from view.

Who benefits now. The administrative order benefits, through its continuity and narrative control. The cost is paid by designated individuals and by their relatives, who must choose.

PRE-PUBLICATION REVIEW

Origin. The review was instituted as the Faith spread, to prevent inaccurate representations while it was small and widely misunderstood. OFFICIAL POLICY

What it was for. A young religion facing hostile misrepresentation wanted its own accounts to be accurate. That was defensible at the time.

Why that reason expired. It is now an explicit, written requirement that members submit manuscripts about their own religion for institutional review before publishing — one of very few such systems in any modern religion. A faith that teaches independent investigation of truth cannot also vet the conclusions.

Who benefits now. The institutions benefit, through control of the historical narrative. Scholars have reported pressure and disenrollment episodes over critical historical work. ACADEMIC SOURCE / FORMER MEMBER TESTIMONY

EXCLUSION OF WOMEN FROM THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

Origin. The rule is stated in the authoritative texts, which give the reason as "a wisdom of the Lord God's, which will erelong be made manifest" [18], in a religion whose central social teaching is the equality of men and women. OFFICIAL POLICY

What it was for. The texts say the reason is a wisdom to be made manifest later, and no published text says what it is. That is itself the notable fact.

Why that reason expired. The Faith taught women's equality in 19th-century Iran, at real cost, and was right decades ahead of its neighbors. The single exclusion sits inside that record with its stated reason deferred to the future, which means it is defended by authority alone.

Who benefits now. Nothing identifiable benefits, materially. It is the cleanest example in the codex of a rule sustained purely because questioning it is out of bounds.

PROHIBITION ON PARTISAN POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT

Origin. The prohibition was instituted to keep a global, multi-ethnic community from fracturing along national and factional lines. OFFICIAL POLICY

What it was for. The prohibition was coherent and, in many contexts, protective, particularly for members under hostile governments.

Why that reason expired. Partially: it also removes an entire community from ordinary civic contestation, including on matters affecting them, and it makes institutional direction the only permitted channel for collective action.

Who benefits now. Institutional unity benefits and, in hostile states, arguably members' safety does too. This one is genuinely double-edged and the codex says so.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

The expired-reason test works on any rule. Take one you follow or enforce, name what it was originally for, and ask whether that reason still exists. If it doesn't, and the rule survives anyway, the section's last question is the one that matters to you: who benefits from it continuing?

11 Reach

BEFORE YOU READ

How far the institution's authority extends into three private areas: what members may read and hear, how children are raised and schooled, and decisions about their own bodies.

Information

- Pre-publication review requires members to submit manuscripts about the Faith to institutional review before publishing — an explicit, written information control unusual among modern religions. OFFICIAL POLICY
- Covenant-breaker designation obliges members to avoid personal relations with the designated person, relatives included, under published guidance [17] — the sharpest sanction in the system. OFFICIAL POLICY
- Partisan political involvement is prohibited, which protects unity and also removes members from ordinary civic contestation. OFFICIAL POLICY

Children

- Children's classes and junior youth spiritual empowerment programs (programs for young adolescents) are central to the Institute process; participation is voluntary and typically warm.
- Declaration of faith at 15 is treated as the age of maturity — notably, an explicit age of consent for religious commitment, better than most traditions here. OFFICIAL POLICY
- In Iran, Bahá'í children have faced school harassment and their families' businesses have been closed. This is harm imposed from

outside, not within. GOVERNMENT REPORT

Bodies

- Equality of men and women is explicit scripture and is practiced substantially in community life — one of the strongest positions in this codex.
- The exception: women are ineligible for the Universal House of Justice, the highest institution. The stated reason is deferred to the future [18], and it is the clearest internal inequality. OFFICIAL POLICY
- Chastity outside heterosexual marriage is required; same-sex marriage is not recognized, and LGBTQ members must remain celibate to stay in good standing. OFFICIAL POLICY
- Divorce is permitted after a year of patience, which is comparatively unrestrictive.

Sources for this section: 3 8 9 17 18

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

If you are a parent, this is the section about your children: what they may read, what they are taught about their bodies, and who else has a say in their schooling. Ask what your child would need to do at sixteen to hear the strongest case against what they were taught. Would they be allowed? Would they know it existed?



12

The 30 techniques

How the thirty techniques are established here

2	5	20	3
CODIFIED	TAUGHT	CULTURAL	CONTESTED

STAGE 1 Idealize	1 Love Bombing CULTURAL	2 Weaponized Generosity CULTURAL		
STAGE 2 Hook	3 Future Faking TAUGHT	4 Hoovering TAUGHT		
STAGE 3 Devalue	5 Devaluation TAUGHT	6 Gaslighting CULTURAL	7 Double Bind TAUGHT	
STAGE 4 Confuse	8 Intermittent Reinforcement CULTURAL	9 Moving the Goalposts CULTURAL	10 Strategic Ambiguity CONTESTED	11 Projection CULTURAL
	12 DARVO CULTURAL	13 Normalization / Desensitization CULTURAL		
STAGE 5 Isolate	14 Isolation CONTESTED	15 Triangulation CONTESTED		

STAGE 6 Extract	16 Flying Monkeys CULTURAL	17 Smear Campaign CULTURAL	18 Silent Treatment / Stonewalling CULTURAL	19 Manufactured Consent CULTURAL
	20 Trauma Bonding CULTURAL	21 Learned Helplessness CULTURAL	22 Benevolent Control CULTURAL	23 Infantilization CULTURAL
	24 Identity Erosion CULTURAL	25 Spiritual Bypassing CULTURAL	26 Financial Control CODIFIED	
STAGE 7 Discard	27 Manufactured Crisis TAUGHT	28 Discard CODIFIED		
STAGE 8 Replace	29 Replacement CULTURAL	30 Plausible Deniability CULTURAL		

Thirty named techniques from domestic-abuse and social-psychology research, applied to institutions, in the eight stages of the cycle.

BEFORE YOU READ

A fixed checklist of thirty influence and control patterns from research on coercive control and social psychology, applied here to institutions rather than to individual people. Every entry carries an evidence grade. The grade matters more than the name of the technique: Codified or Documented means there is a paper trail; Contested means the claim is disputed.

Thirty named techniques from domestic-abuse and social-psychology research, applied to institutions, in the eight stages of the cycle. Each carries an evidence grade for this tradition.

Stage 1 · Idealize

You arrive with a need and are met with more warmth than you have had in years.

The offer is built on unity, interfaith warmth, racial harmony, global peace, no clergy and no hellfire. It is the gentlest entry in this codex and the offer is largely what it appears to be.

What it asks of you: Notice how little pressure you felt. Then ask what happens if you organize a disagreement.

1 · Love Bombing

Overwhelming affection on arrival to create emotional dependency before terms are revealed.

How it shows here

- Seekers are welcomed with unity language, interfaith warmth, firesides (informal gatherings in homes where the Faith is introduced), consultation, global peace ideals, racial harmony, and the promise of a religion beyond sectarian conflict.
- The first impression is often unusually gentle: no clergy, no hellfire preaching, no crude tribalism, no obvious coercive ritual.
- The deeper obligations appear later: administrative order, obedience to institutions, restrictions on partisan politics, sexual norms, covenant loyalty, and strong discouragement of public dissent.

The strongest defense. The Bahá'í Faith emphasizes unity, peace, and independent investigation of truth.

The counter. "Independent investigation" is compromised when the acceptable conclusion is already mapped. If questioning is praised on the way in but treated as disunity once inside, then unity is not peace. It is managed agreement.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL Firesides and study circles are warm and locally run; the entry experience is among the gentlest here.

2 · Weaponized Generosity

Giving help that installs unspoken obligation.

How it shows here

- Bahá'í communities may offer warmth through firesides, study circles, children's classes, junior youth programs, consultation, service projects, and unity-centered friendship.
- Seekers may be welcomed into a global vision: peace, racial unity, interfaith harmony, equality, and independent investigation of truth.
- The obligation can appear later through institutional obedience, participation in community plans, avoidance of partisan politics, sexual norms, administrative loyalty, and discouragement of public dissent.
- Service becomes a spiritual currency: the person who received community is expected to build community, teach the Faith, host gatherings, and align with institutional goals.

The strongest defense. Bahá'ís do not have clergy and emphasize independent investigation, consultation, and service.

The counter. A religion does not need clergy to create obligation. Administration can function as authority just as effectively as priesthood. If the community gives warmth to seekers but later treats dissent as disunity, then unity has become the invoice for belonging.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL The welcome is real and locally given; whether help later becomes an obligation is shown in community practice, and no written rule governs it.

Stage 2 · Hook

You are given a future that cannot be verified, and a rope for whenever you drift toward the door.

The offer is world unity, the peace of humanity and the Faith's global plan advancing through your service, a future genuinely aimed at the good and permanently ahead of you. Retrieval for the ordinary lapsed is warm and easy; for the designated, it requires recantation.

What it asks of you: The promise here is unusually decent. The question is still who decides when you have contributed enough.

3 · Future Faking

Promising a future that keeps you invested but never has to arrive.

How it shows here

- The Bahá'í Faith offers a sweeping future: world unity, peace, racial harmony, religious reconciliation, global governance, moral maturity of humanity, and the eventual unification of the human family.

- The believer is invited to build the future now through service, study circles, children's classes, junior youth programs, teaching, consultation, and obedience to administrative institutions.
- The promise is historically enormous but personally demanding: your small acts are part of the spiritual evolution of civilization.
- Dissent can be reframed as delaying unity. Public criticism may be treated as disunity, ego, covenant-breaking, or failure to understand the long arc of divine order.
- The future is always coming through the administrative plan. If it has not arrived, humanity is immature, the believers must serve more, or the process needs more time.

The strongest defense. Bahá'ís work sincerely for peace, unity, racial justice, and global cooperation.

The counter. Noble goals can still function as future faking. If the promise of world unity is used to suppress present dissent, protect administration from criticism, or demand endless unpaid service, then peace has become a horizon that moves whenever accountability gets close.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> TAUGHT World unity and the Faith's global plan are taught as the frame for service; retrieval for the ordinary lapsed is informal.

4 · Hoovering

Pulling someone back after they've started to leave, through guilt, love, or fear.

How it shows here

- Someone distancing from the Bahá'í community may be gently contacted through invitations to firesides, study circles, devotionals (prayer gatherings), children's classes, consultation, or service projects.
- The pull is usually soft: "We miss your spirit," "The community needs your gifts," "Unity requires everyone."
- Doubt may be reframed as disunity, impatience, ego, misunderstanding of the Covenant, or failure to appreciate the long process of building world peace.
- Former members may be urged not to criticize publicly because public criticism is seen as harmful to unity.
- The person may be pulled back through idealism: racial unity, global peace, interfaith harmony, and the idea that leaving means stepping away from humanity's future.

The strongest defense. Bahá'ís emphasize unity and service, so reconnecting people is loving and constructive.

The counter. Unity becomes hoovering when it cannot tolerate honest departure. If the person is welcomed back only through silence, administrative loyalty, and renewed service, then the invitation is not reconciliation. It is reintegration.

EVIDENCE GRADE

TAUGHT The gentle invitations to return rest on the Faith's teaching that unity and service frame community life; nothing written prescribes contacting those who drift away.

Stage 3 · Devalue

You are taught that you are broken, that your perception is unreliable, and that both exits from the trap lead back inside.

Insufficiency is framed as disunity rather than deficiency. You are not insufficiently pious; you are insufficiently unified.

What it asks of you: 'Disunity' is a category that makes disagreement into a moral failure without ever calling you a sinner.

5 · Devaluation

Reducing your sense of worth so you become dependent on the institution for identity.

How it shows here

- The Bahá'í Faith can devalue dissent by framing criticism as disunity, ego, impatience, covenant weakness, or failure to understand the long arc of global transformation.
- The individual is invited to serve humanity, but that ideal can make personal grievances seem petty.
- If someone questions administration, sexual rules, political restrictions, or institutional decisions, they may be treated as spiritually immature or harmful to unity.
- The self is diminished beneath the future of world peace.
- The believer may internalize the idea that their pain matters less than the community's image of harmony.

The strongest defense. Bahá'ís value independent investigation of truth and consultation.

The counter. Independent investigation is hollow if dissent is honored only before enrollment. If questioning is praised while it leads inward but pathologized when it leads outward, then unity has become a beautiful name for compliance.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> TAUGHT Insufficiency is framed as disunity rather than depravity, in institutional guidance.

6 · Gaslighting

Making you doubt your own experience so you trust the institution's interpretation instead.

How it shows here

- A person criticizes administration and is told they are harming unity.
- Doubt may be reframed as impatience, ego, misunderstanding, or failure to grasp the Covenant.
- Someone questions sexual rules, political restrictions, or institutional decisions, and the response becomes, "You are focusing on imperfections instead of the larger unity of humanity."
- Public dissent may be treated as spiritual immaturity.
- The believer's moral alarm is softened into "disunity."

The strongest defense. Bahá'ís value consultation, unity, and independent investigation of truth.

The counter. Consultation is not real if the conclusion must preserve institutional harmony. If independent investigation is praised only until it produces public disagreement, then unity has become a method for controlling perception.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL The gaslighting described is a conversational pattern in community practice; pre-publication review is the policy background, but no document records the responses the entry describes.

7 · Double Bind

A trap where both options lead to compliance. No exit serves you.

How it shows here

- Bahá'ís are taught independent investigation of truth as a founding principle — investigation that must arrive at the Covenant. Investigate and dissent, and you risk the machinery reserved for 'covenant-breakers,' including shunning.
- The Faith teaches the harmony of science and religion, but scholars publishing inconvenient history have faced review, withdrawal demands, or enrollment consequences.
- Consultation is prized; but once institutions decide, unified support is expected — the consulting voice must now defend the outcome it argued against.

The strongest defense. Unity is the Faith's central healing principle for a fractured world; covenant protections prevent schism.

The counter. A principle of independent investigation with a single permitted destination is an itinerary, not an investigation. Unity purchased by shunning the disunified is agreement's costume worn over enforcement.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> TAUGHT The bind rests on the teaching that independent investigation leads to the Covenant and that unified support follows a decision; the entry cites no document that states the bind itself.

Stage 4 · Confuse

The rewards become unpredictable, the standard keeps moving, the answers stop meaning anything, and the accusation gets turned around.

Persistent dissent is reframed as a threat to the Covenant. The subject becomes your loyalty rather than your point. Scholars publishing critical history described review pressure and disenrollment.

What it asks of you: Watch for the moment the topic changes from what you said to what your saying it means about you.

8 · Intermittent Reinforcement

Unpredictable reward that creates addictive emotional dependency.

How it shows here

- Service to the Faith is rewarded irregularly with appointment, delegation, or mention — institutional regard arriving unpredictably enough that active believers keep intensifying service to re-trigger it.

- The believer's standing brightens with teaching activity and quiet compliance and dims — without official statement — around persistent public dissent, a temperature everyone reads and no document admits.
- Prayers and pioneering sacrifices are repaid by 'confirmations' — doors opening, hearts softening — counted when they occur and reinterpreted as tests when they don't.

The strongest defense. Bahá'í administration is elected, unpaid, and explicitly forbids campaigning or status-seeking.

The counter. Forbidding the pursuit of status does not abolish the economy of it; it drives the economy into weather — felt warmth, felt distance — where nothing can be appealed because nothing was ever said.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL The unpredictable regard the entry describes is informal and no document records it; the covenant doctrine and review policy are only the background to it.

9 · Moving the Goalposts

The standard of success keeps shifting so you can never arrive.

How it shows here

- A seeker is welcomed through unity and independent investigation. Once inside, the standard shifts toward obedience to administration, avoidance of public dissent, sexual conformity, political restrictions, and service plans.

- A member raises concerns through consultation. If concerns persist, the issue becomes their tone, unity, patience, ego, or understanding of the Covenant.
- Service expands endlessly: study circles, children's classes, junior youth programs, devotionals, teaching, community-building, and administrative support.

The strongest defense. Bahá'í life requires unity, consultation, and service.

The counter. Service becomes moving the goalposts when unity is praised during inquiry but demanded during dissent. If investigation is free only before commitment, the freedom was recruitment language.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL The shifting standard the entry describes is a pattern in practice and is not a written rule; the covenant doctrine and review policy are only the background to it.

10 · Strategic Ambiguity

Language that sounds profound but means nothing specific — functioning as a shutdown to real questions.

How it shows here

- "Independent investigation of truth" is emphasized to seekers, while covenant loyalty and administrative obedience become central after commitment.

- "Unity" can mean cooperation, but also avoidance of public dissent, criticism, political conflict, or institutional embarrassment.
- No clergy is presented as freedom, while administrative structures still regulate belonging and discipline.

The strongest defense. Bahá'í unity and administration prevent factionalism.

The counter. Unity becomes strategic ambiguity when agreement is voluntary in language but mandatory in consequence. If investigation is celebrated only until it challenges administration, freedom has a closing date.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
> CONTESTED The entry is an interpretation of two published positions, independent investigation and covenant loyalty; members and critics read the relation between them differently.

11 · Projection

Accusing the outside world of the exact thing the institution practices.

How it shows here

- Bahá'í institutions may accuse critics of disunity while avoiding accountability for how unity language suppresses dissent.
- Someone questioning administration, sexual rules, or political restrictions may be accused of ego or impatience.
- Public criticism may be framed as harming the community while hidden problems remain unresolved.

- The individual's moral alarm is treated as the source of disharmony instead of the issue they are naming.

The strongest defense. The Bahá'í Faith values unity, consultation, and constructive speech.

The counter. Consultation becomes projection when criticism itself is defined as the problem. If unity requires the harmed person to soften, wait, rephrase, or disappear, then disunity did not come from the critic. It came from the system that made honesty unsafe.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL Accusing critics of disunity is described as a pattern in practice, not as stated policy; the covenant doctrine is only the background to it.

12 · DARVO

Deny the wrongdoing. Attack the person who raised it. Reverse victim and offender.

How it shows here

- A person questions administration, covenant authority, sexual rules, restrictions on partisan politics, or suppression of dissent. The first response may deny coercion: "There is no clergy," "Consultation is open," "Unity is central."
- Then the critic is attacked as ego-driven, disunified, impatient, or spiritually immature.

- The institution becomes the victim of disunity; the dissenter becomes the threat to world peace.
- Public criticism may be treated as harming the Faith, while the concerns themselves are minimized.
- The ideal of unity becomes a mechanism for reversing blame.

The strongest defense. Bahá'í communities value consultation, peace, and unity, not coercion.

The counter. Unity is not proven by suppressing conflict. If the person naming harm is treated as the source of disharmony, then the institution is not practicing peace. It is managing optics.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL The sequence of denial, attack and reversal is described as a pattern in practice, not as a written procedure.

13 · Normalization / Desensitization

Practices that would seem extreme to an outsider feel normal to insiders because they were installed before critical evaluation developed.

How it shows here

- Service expectations can become normal through study circles, children's classes, junior youth programs, devotionals, teaching plans, consultation, and community-building language.
- Dissent may be gradually softened into "disunity," "impatience," "lack of wisdom," or "not understanding the Covenant," making public criticism feel spiritually inappropriate.

- Administrative obedience becomes normal despite the lack of clergy because authority is distributed through assemblies and institutional channels.
- Members may become desensitized to suppressing political conflict, public disagreement, or criticism for the sake of unity.
- The system trains people to feel morally uneasy about direct confrontation.

The strongest defense. Bahá'í community life cultivates unity, service, and constructive consultation.

The counter. Unity becomes desensitization when members become accustomed to muting moral alarm in order to protect harmony. If dissent must be softened until it no longer threatens power, consultation has become compliance rehearsal.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL The normalizing effect of service expectations is described as a pattern in practice, not as a written rule.

Stage 5 · Isolate

Your world narrows until every voice you hear is inside the system, and everything you came for now runs through a middleman.

The isolation is moderate and runs through community, service, study circles and identity. Administrative institutions direct collective activity, and there is no channel outside them.

What it asks of you: If you disagreed with an institutional decision, what is the appeal — and is it the same body?

14 · Isolation

Shrinking your world until the only voices you hear are inside the system.

How it shows here

- Bahá'í isolation is often soft rather than dramatic: community activities, study circles, devotionals, children's classes, junior youth programs, service projects, administration, and unity language gradually become the person's social world.

- Dissenters may find that public criticism is discouraged as harmful to unity, while approved consultation happens inside institutional channels.
- Political isolation can occur through restrictions on partisan politics, narrowing how members participate in civic conflict.
- Social belonging can depend on being constructive, unified, service-oriented, and deferential to administrative order.
- A person who steps back may lose not only religious meetings but an entire network organized around world peace, identity, service, and moral purpose.

The strongest defense. Bahá'í community life encourages unity, service, and constructive consultation.

The counter. Soft isolation is still isolation if dissent has nowhere safe to go. If disagreement must be processed only through channels committed to preserving unity, then unity has become a velvet wall.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CONTESTED Ordinary community life is service-oriented and open; the avoidance guidance applies only around designated dissent.

15 · Triangulation

Inserting intermediaries between you and the thing you came for, so the institution is always in the middle.

How it shows here

- Bahá'í triangulation can run through Local Spiritual Assemblies, National Spiritual Assemblies, Universal House of Justice, community plans, study circles, service projects, children's classes, and unity language.
- A person with concerns may be encouraged to consult, but consultation often occurs inside administrative structures committed to preserving unity.
- The individual is compared to devoted servants building world peace, racial unity, and the future of humanity.
- Dissent is triangulated through the community's mission: your criticism is not just disagreement; it may be harming unity or slowing humanity's maturation.
- Service becomes leverage: "The junior youth need you," "The children's class needs you," "The community needs your capacity."
- The institution triangulates through idealism: leaving becomes not merely personal departure but stepping away from the project of global peace.

The strongest defense. Bahá'í administration and consultation exist to preserve unity and collective service.

The counter. Consultation becomes triangulation when the institution, the community, and the future of humanity are all placed against the individual's dissent. If every concern must be softened to protect unity, then unity is being used as the third party in the room.

EVIDENCE GRADE

CONTESTED Routing concerns through assemblies and consultation is read by members as the Faith's method and by critics as placing the institution between the member and the question; the avoidance guidance applies only around designated dissent.

Stage 6 · Extract

Now the harvest: your labor, your money, your identity, your silence, your children's schooling, your capacity to trust yourself.

The harvest includes nineteen percent of surplus wealth to the Faith's centre, with no public source on this page showing whether it is accounted for to members; substantial unpaid service and pioneering relocation; and pre-publication review, which requires you to submit your own writing about your own religion before publishing it.

What it asks of you: A faith that teaches independent investigation of truth cannot also hold approval rights over your conclusions. Both cannot be operating.

16 · Flying Monkeys

The community enforces the institution's norms without being asked — mobilized by culture, not memos.

How it shows here

- A Bahá'í who questions administration or public dissent may be approached by assembly members, study-circle friends, service collaborators, children's class organizers, and community members.
- The message is often gentle: "Consult," "Be patient," "Protect unity," "Don't harm the community."
- Service networks become pressure networks: people remind the dissenter that junior youth, children, or the community need their capacity.
- Concern is routed through unity, making disagreement feel like selfish disruption.

The strongest defense. Bahá'ís consult and encourage unity because division harms community life.

The counter. Consultation becomes FLYING MONKEY behavior when every person sent to "help" is committed to preserving institutional unity over the dissenter's concern. If unity always wins before the conversation begins, the helpers are not neutral.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL Community enforcement is informal and carried out by members, and no document directs it; the published guidance that members avoid a designated covenant-breaker is the background to it.

17 · Smear Campaign

Rewriting your character after departure to protect the institution from the implications of your leaving.

How it shows here

- Critics of administration may be described as disunified, ego-driven, impatient, covenantally weak, or spiritually immature.
- Public dissent may be framed as harming unity or damaging the Faith.
- People who leave may be treated as having misunderstood the Covenant or lost patience with humanity's gradual progress.
- The critic's tone becomes the issue instead of the concern.

The strongest defense. Bahá'í communities protect unity and consultation.

The counter. Unity becomes smear when dissenters are characterized as spiritually defective. If the institution cannot tolerate public criticism without diagnosing the critic's soul, unity is functioning as image protection.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL The characterizing of critics described here is practice and is not written down; covenant-breaker designation, the formal status applied to organized dissent, is the background to it.

18 · Silent Treatment / Stonewalling

Refusing to engage with legitimate questions in order to maintain control.

How it shows here

- A member raises concerns about administration, sexuality, politics, or dissent and is redirected to consultation, patience, unity, and institutional channels.
- Public criticism may be discouraged, while private channels produce vague responses.
- The person may be told to trust the Universal House of Justice, the Covenant, or the long arc of humanity's development.
- The concern is softened until it no longer threatens the system.

The strongest defense. Bahá'í consultation encourages constructive, unified problem-solving.

The counter. Consultation becomes stonewalling when it absorbs dissent without changing anything. If unity requires the complaint to lose its teeth before it is heard, the process is not consultation. It is neutralization.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL The redirection into consultation is described as a pattern in practice, and no document prescribes it; the published structure provides no appeal outside the institutions (sections 7 and 22).

19 · Manufactured Consent

Creating the appearance of choice when the conditions of choice were shaped before you could evaluate them.

How it shows here

- Seekers consent to a faith presented through unity, peace, equality, and independent investigation, then later encounter administrative obedience, sexual norms, political restrictions, and limits on public dissent.
- Members "choose" service because community-building is tied to spiritual maturity and humanity's future.
- Consultation appears open, but dissent is shaped by pressure to preserve unity.
- Silence after consultation may be treated as agreement.

The strongest defense. Bahá'í life is voluntary and based on independent investigation.

The counter. Investigation is not fully free if dissent becomes disunity after enrollment. If the system celebrates your search only while it leads inward, then consent was manufactured by front-loading freedom and back-loading obedience.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL The account of how consent is shaped describes a sequence in practice and is not a written policy; the review and covenant rules members meet after enrolling are the background to it.

20 · Trauma Bonding

The wound and the bandage come from the same hand.

How it shows here

- A member feels distress when dissent seems to threaten unity, then relief when they consult, soften, serve, and return to institutional harmony.
- Community-building creates warmth, purpose, and belonging, but disagreement can make the person feel selfish or spiritually immature.
- The system wounds through suppression of dissent, then comforts through unity language and service.
- The person bonds to the ideal of world peace even when the local structure silences them.

The strongest defense. Bahá'í community life is built on unity, consultation, and service.

The counter. Unity becomes TRAUMA BONDING when dissent creates shame and service restores worth. If the price of feeling spiritually clean is muting your moral alarm, the attachment is being maintained through harmony pressure.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL Trauma bonding is described as a pattern in practice, with no document behind it.

21 · Learned Helplessness

Teaching you that your own judgment is unreliable until you stop trusting it entirely.

How it shows here

- A member raises concerns but is repeatedly redirected into consultation, patience, unity, service, and institutional channels.
- Public dissent is discouraged, private dissent is softened, and direct conflict is treated as spiritually harmful.
- The person learns that objections must be translated into acceptable unity language until they lose force.
- Eventually they stop expecting change and call resignation patience.

The strongest defense. Bahá'í consultation avoids destructive conflict and preserves unity.

The counter. Consultation becomes LEARNED HELPLESSNESS when it absorbs dissent without effect. If the process always returns the person to service and silence, unity has become a mechanism for exhausting objection.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL Learned helplessness is described as a pattern in practice; the published structure provides no appeal beyond the institutions (sections 7 and 22), which the entry treats as its background.

22 · Benevolent Control

Control wrapped in the language of care, so that resisting the control feels like rejecting the love.

How it shows here

- Administrative obedience is framed as unity.
- Public dissent is discouraged as harmful to peace, consultation, and community-building.
- Service expectations are presented as developing capacity and helping humanity.
- Members may feel controlled through ideals so noble that refusing them feels selfish.

The strongest defense. Bahá'í structures protect unity and collective service.

The counter. Unity becomes BENEVOLENT CONTROL when dissent is softened until harmless. If peace requires suppressing moral alarm, unity is not healing the conflict. It is managing the critic.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL Control through noble ideals is described as a pattern in practice, with no written rule behind it; the published rules on unity and partisan politics are the background to it.

23 · Infantilization

Positioning the adult believer as permanently childlike and dependent on institutional authority.

How it shows here

- Members who dissent may be treated as impatient, spiritually immature, or not understanding the Covenant.
- Administration may function as parental structure while claiming no clergy.
- Public criticism can be framed as childish disunity.
- Service and consultation become ways to guide members back into acceptable behavior.

The strongest defense. Bahá'í administration helps communities mature in unity.

The counter. Maturity becomes INFANTILIZATION when it means never publicly disagreeing with authority. If adult dissent is treated as impatience, unity has become parental correction.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL Treating adult dissent as impatience or immaturity is described as community practice; no written rule treats adult members as children.

24 · Identity Erosion

Gradually replacing your identity with a role the institution provides, until you can't separate who you are from where you belong.

How it shows here

- The person's identity may be absorbed into unity, service, consultation, community-building, administration, and humanity's future.
- Personal dissent becomes morally suspect because it may harm unity.
- Political identity may be restricted under the language of nonpartisanship.
- Service roles can replace personal boundaries: children's classes, junior youth, study circles, devotionals, teaching plans.
- The person becomes a function of the global project.

The strongest defense. Bahá'í identity is oriented toward unity, service, and world peace.

The counter. Service identity becomes IDENTITY EROSION when the person cannot dissent without feeling spiritually selfish. If the self must shrink to preserve the ideal of unity, the project has become larger than the person.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL The absorption of identity into service is described as a pattern in practice; the restriction on partisan political involvement is the background to it.

25 · Spiritual Bypassing

Using spiritual language to avoid engaging with real pain, real questions, and real accountability.

How it shows here

- Dissent is bypassed through unity.
- Public criticism is bypassed as disunity or impatience.
- Political conflict is bypassed through nonpartisanship.
- Institutional harm is bypassed through consultation that softens the complaint.
- Service becomes a way to avoid anger.

The strongest defense. Bahá'í consultation and unity prevent destructive conflict.

The counter. Unity becomes SPIRITUAL BYPASSING when it suppresses necessary conflict. If peace requires silence about harm, the peace is not spiritual maturity. It is managed avoidance.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL Bypassing through unity language is described as a pattern in practice; the covenant doctrine and the nonpartisanship rule are the background to it.

26 · Financial Control

Extracting money through spiritual obligation while offering no transparency about where it goes.

How it shows here

- Bahá'í financial control may appear through funds, teaching plans, service projects, community activities, and moral pressure to support the Faith's growth.
- Even when giving is formally voluntary, social identity around service can create pressure to contribute time, money, capacity, and emotional labor.
- Public dissent may be discouraged partly because unity and institutional reputation support growth.
- Members may feel that withholding resources means failing humanity's future.

The strongest defense. Bahá'í giving is voluntary and supports global unity and community-building.

The counter. Voluntary giving becomes FINANCIAL CONTROL when refusal feels like betraying humanity's progress. If service to a global ideal makes personal limits feel selfish, the institution has moralized extraction.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> **CODIFIED** Huqúqu'lláh at nineteen percent of surplus wealth is a stated obligation; member-only funding is a genuine anti-capture safeguard.

Stage 7 · Discard

You become expensive — too many questions, too much independence — and the urgency ramps up until you are removed.

Ordinary resignation is genuinely easy and low-cost. Covenant-breaker designation is the opposite: members are expected to avoid the person, relatives included, under published guidance [17]. Loss of voting rights sits between them.

What it asks of you: The gap between those two exits tells you exactly what the system is protecting.

27 · Manufactured Crisis

Creating urgency to suppress critical thinking and generate loyalty.

How it shows here

- Bahá'í communities may manufacture crisis around disunity, public dissent, criticism of administration, political conflict, or failure to serve.

- A member's objection becomes a threat to unity or humanity's progress.
- Urgency around community-building can make personal boundaries feel selfish.
- The global mission turns local dissent into a spiritual emergency.

The strongest defense. Unity is central to Bahá'í community life and human progress.

The counter. Unity becomes MANUFACTURED CRISIS when disagreement is treated as danger. If criticism threatens the project so severely that it must be softened or contained, unity has become a fear-based control system.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> TAUGHT Covenant-breaker designation and the avoidance guidance around it are published, but the crisis framing around disunity is described as a pattern in practice and is not written down.

28 · Discard

Removing members who become too costly — too many questions, too much independence, too visible a contradiction.

How it shows here

- A member who publicly criticizes administration, doctrine, sexual rules, or institutional culture may be treated as disunified or spiritually immature.
- Social invitations may decrease while polite language remains.

- The person may be routed endlessly into consultation but lose trust and standing.
- Discard is gentle: no shouting, just cooling, distancing, and moral concern.
- The community preserves unity by quietly excluding disruptive dissent.

The strongest defense. Bahá'í communities protect unity and avoid destructive conflict.

The counter. Unity becomes DISCARD when dissenters are gently removed from warmth. If public disagreement makes someone spiritually suspect, unity is not inclusion. It is conditional politeness.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CODIFIED Covenant-breaker designation and the guidance that members avoid the designated person are published.

Stage 8 · Replace

Your seat is filled before the door shuts, and nobody is responsible for any of it because the decisions belong to institutions held to be guided.

Ordinary resignation genuinely costs little and relationships usually survive. Covenant-breaker designation is the opposite: members are expected to avoid the person, relatives included, carried out by members under published guidance [17].

What it asks of you: The gap between those two exits is the exact measure of what the system protects. It is not doctrine. It is agreement.

29 · Replacement

Your seat is filled before the door closes behind you.

How it shows here

- A member who stops serving is replaced by someone eager for study circles, junior youth work, children's classes, or administration.
- A critic is replaced by a more "constructive" voice.

- The community's mission absorbs individual departure by emphasizing growth, unity, and capacity-building.
- New service energy can hide the loss of those silenced by the system.

The strongest defense. Community work must continue, and service is voluntary.

The counter. Service becomes REPLACEMENT when people are valued by capacity. If the community moves smoothly from one exhausted servant to another without asking why people burn out, unity has become a staffing model.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL The replacement of departing members by new volunteers is described as a pattern in practice; the published constitution of the elected institutions is only the background to it.

30 · Plausible Deniability

The institution is never responsible, because its decisions are held to be guided, and a guided body is not available for cross-examination.

How it shows here

- The Faith emphasizes independent investigation to seekers, while after enrollment dissent may be routed into consultation, unity, and administrative obedience.
- Public criticism can be discouraged without being called censorship.
- There is no clergy, but assemblies and administrative structures still shape belonging, discipline, and acceptable speech.

- Service is voluntary, but nonparticipation can feel like failure to support humanity's future.
- Unity language allows institutions to deny suppressing dissent: "We only encourage constructive consultation."

The strongest defense. Bahá'í consultation is open and non-adversarial. No clergy means no priestly domination. Unity prevents factionalism.

The counter. Consultation becomes PLAUSIBLE DENIABILITY when dissent is accepted only after being softened. No clergy does not mean no power. Unity is coercive when disagreement must disappear to prove spiritual maturity.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL The published constitution locates authority in named elected institutions, which makes them traceable and cuts against deniability; the claim that unity language lets those institutions deny suppressing dissent is an interpretation of practice.

Sources for this section: [4] [7]

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Count grades, not names. A long list of Contested entries says something very different from a short list of Codified ones. A bias to watch for in yourself: people rate the same pressure as "normal" when their own group applies it and as "manipulation" when another group does. Before you judge an entry, try imagining it applied by a group you distrust. Does it look different?

13

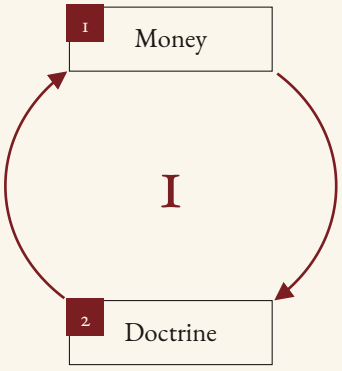
The loops

BEFORE YOU READ

How the techniques connect into cycles. A single practice can look harmless on its own. The loops show how one step feeds the next, so that, for example, a newcomer's welcome turns into an obligation.

> The seven loops below show how the practices connect, so that each step makes the next one easier and the last step feeds the first. In this tradition several of them run weakly and one barely runs, which each card says. The loops are analysis built from findings recorded elsewhere on this page PATTERN OBSERVED; each step names the section where its fact is recorded.

1 · Money to Doctrine to Money



Huqúqu'lláh and Fund contributions are member-only, which is a real safeguard, but no public source shows whether the accounting is member-facing.

How it runs.

1. The Faith asks members for Huqúqu'lláh, 19% of surplus wealth, the Right of God, paid to the Faith's head (section 9).
2. Funds accept contributions from members only, so no outside donor shapes the institutions (sections 9 and 16).

3. The Universal House of Justice holds final authority over doctrine, administration and the Faith's global plans, and Huqúqu'lláh is paid into its funds (sections 7 and 9).
4. No source on this page records how Huqúqu'lláh is accounted for to members, and giving amounts are confidential, so a member-facing accounting is not established (sections 9 and 16).
5. The money supports the institutions and their expansion plans, which members are then asked to serve through unpaid labor and pioneering (section 9), and the giving continues.

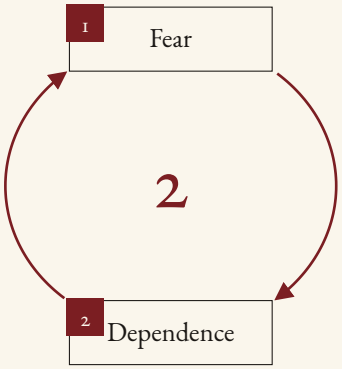
Techniques that feed it. 26 · Financial Control, 3 · Future Faking, 22 · Benevolent Control.

Why it closes. The body that sets the obligation also receives the payment and holds final authority over doctrine. The refusal of outside money protects the Faith from donors and leaves open whether members can see how their own payments are used.

Where it could be broken, and by whom. It weakens wherever the money becomes visible. National assemblies registered as charities file public accounts, as the UK assembly does (section 8); whether Huqúqu'lláh is accounted for to members is in the institutions' hands. A member can ask for the accounting (section 23, question 4). This paragraph is analysis, not a documented finding.

An example from this page. The UK national assembly's accounts are public. In the period to March 2025 it received £10.09m of its £10.73m income as donations and spent £10.81m (section 9) [11]. No equivalent account of Huqúqu'lláh is recorded.

2 · Fear to Dependence to Fear



This loop barely runs here, because fear is not the mechanism.

How it runs.

1. The offer to the seeker has no hellfire (section 12, stage 1; technique 1).
2. Insufficiency is framed as disunity rather than as sin or depravity, so there is no equivalent of a debt that must be absolved (section 12, stage 3; technique 5).
3. The one sanction that can produce fear is covenant-breaker designation, which is reserved for organized dissent and not for ordinary members (sections 7 and 15).
4. Ordinary resignation is administratively simple and members generally retain relationships (sections 3 and 15).
5. The distress that remains is the shame of seeming selfish or disunified, which service restores (section 12, technique 20).

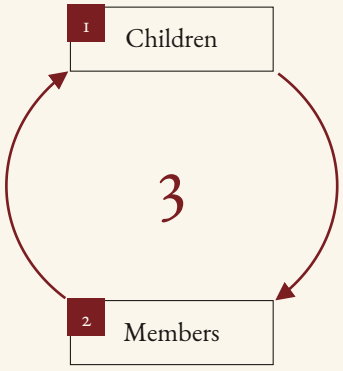
Techniques that feed it. 5 · Devaluation, 20 · Trauma Bonding, 21 · Learned Helplessness.

Why it closes. It does not close for most members, because no authority sells relief from a fear it creates. It closes only for a member who has begun to organize a disagreement, where unity language produces shame and service restores worth.

Where it could be broken, and by whom. For the member who feels it, the loop breaks where objections are heard without being translated into unity language, which lies with the assemblies (section 18 names this as a point where an assembly member could refuse to treat a persistent question as a loyalty matter). This paragraph is analysis, not a documented finding.

An example from this page. Technique 20 describes a member who feels distress when dissent seems to threaten unity, then relief when they consult, soften, serve and return to institutional harmony.

3 · Children to Members to Children



Children's classes and junior youth programs are warm and voluntary, and declaration at fifteen is an explicit age of consent.

How it runs.

1. Children's classes and junior youth programs are central to the Institute process, and participation is voluntary and typically warm (section 11).
2. The classes teach unity and the oneness of humanity, and young people come to believe it (section 2).
3. Declaration of faith at 15 is treated as the age of maturity, an explicit age of consent for religious commitment (section 11).
4. Members who have been formed this way are asked to run the classes and programs in turn, as Institute and children's-class tutors (sections 12 and 18).
5. Service roles in children's classes and junior youth work can come to replace personal boundaries, and the next group of children is taught by them (technique 24).

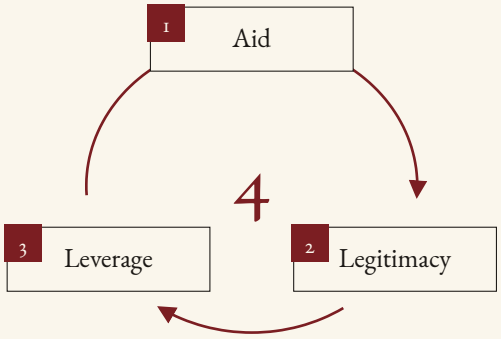
Techniques that feed it. 13 · Normalization / Desensitization, 15 · Triangulation, 24 · Identity Erosion, 29 · Replacement.

Why it closes. The formation work is staffed by the people it formed. Each group of children becomes the tutors of the next, and the plan for the programs sits with the institutions.

Where it could be broken, and by whom. It weakens where service remains voluntary and a member can decline a request without losing standing. The age-of-consent rule in section 11 is the loop's own safeguard, and it is kept by the assemblies and by parents. Section 18 names refusal as an option open to tutors. This paragraph is analysis, not a documented finding.

An example from this page. Sepideh teaches a children's class of six, with a rug and songs about unity and the oneness of humanity, and believes every word (section 2).

4 · Aid to Legitimacy to Leverage to Aid



Global service and interfaith work generate standing, but there is little corresponding legal privilege to convert it into.

How it runs.

1. Communities offer firesides, study circles, children's classes, service projects and interfaith warmth (section 12, techniques 1 and 2).
2. That work earns the Faith standing for unity, peace and racial harmony (section 12, stage 1).
3. The standing has little legal privilege to turn into. In Iran the Faith has no recognition (section 8), and in the UK the national assembly is a charity under charity law (section 8).
4. The standing turns instead into growth through structured study circles (section 5, timeline).
5. Growth supplies more members to serve and more service to offer, and the cycle repeats (section 12, technique 29).

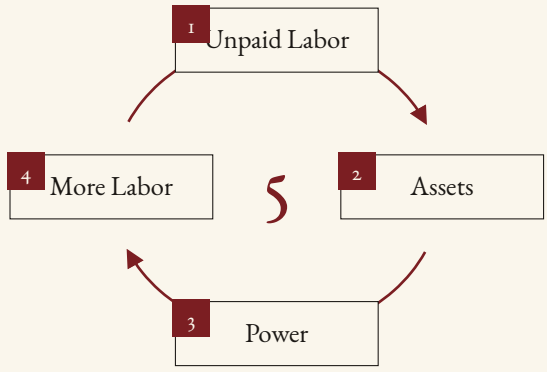
Techniques that feed it. 1 · Love Bombing, 2 · Weaponized Generosity, 22 · Benevolent Control.

Why it closes. The loop closes through membership and not through law. Standing produces service, and service produces the standing that draws in the next seeker, with obligations arriving after the welcome (section 12, technique 2).

Where it could be broken, and by whom. It is weak at the conversion step, and charity regulators already supervise national assemblies where they are registered entities (section 8). It would weaken further if seekers were told the later obligations at the point of welcome, which lies with the assemblies. This paragraph is analysis, not a documented finding.

An example from this page. The UK national assembly files public accounts under charity law, the one place on this page where the Faith's standing meets a legal duty (sections 8 and 9) [11].

5 · Unpaid Labor to Assets to Power to More Labor



Members give substantial unpaid service and pioneering relocation, and the institutional plans direct both.

How it runs.

1. Committed members are expected to give substantial unpaid labor and to relocate (section 9).
2. No clergy salary exists, and assembly members serve unpaid and without campaigning (sections 9 and 18).
3. Service becomes a spiritual currency: the person who received community is expected to build community, teach the Faith and host gatherings (section 12, technique 2).
4. Service roles can replace personal boundaries, and nonparticipation can feel like a failure to support humanity's future (section 12, techniques 24 and 30).
5. A member who stops serving is replaced by someone eager to take the role, and the institutional expansion plans continue (section 9; section 12, technique 29).

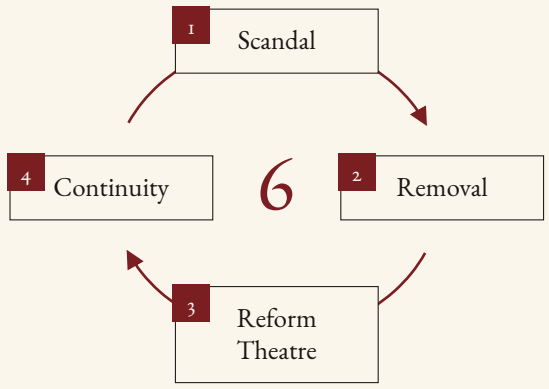
Techniques that feed it. 26 · Financial Control, 2 · Weaponized Generosity, 24 · Identity Erosion, 29 · Replacement.

Why it closes. The labor produces the growth that the plans measure, and the plans set the next demand for labor. Because departing members are replaced, the demand continues without anyone deciding to continue it.

Where it could be broken, and by whom. It weakens where a member's limits are accepted, which lies with the members and the assemblies that direct them. Section 18 records that assembly members and tutors could refuse requests that become loyalty tests. This paragraph is analysis, not a documented finding.

An example from this page. Assembly members serve without campaigning, unpaid, in genuine good faith, and see that there is no appeal above the system (section 18).

6 · Scandal to Removal to Reform Theatre to Continuity



Dissent is handled by designation and removal from the rolls, not by public scandal, so there is nothing public to remove.

How it runs.

1. A scholar or member publishes or discusses material that the institutions object to (section 19).
2. The member is removed from the rolls (1997, 2000 and 2005) or resigns under warning (1996), with no appeal outside the institutions (section 19).

3. Institutional decisions on individuals are private, while doctrine and policy are public (section 15).
4. The individual departs and the review policy remains (section 14).
5. The next dissent is resolved administratively and quietly, and pre-publication review is not revisited (section 14, prediction).

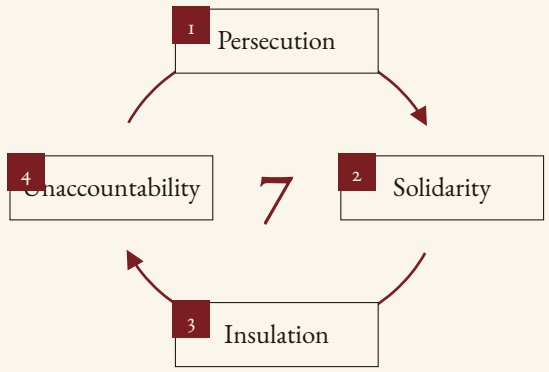
Techniques that feed it. 17 · Smear Campaign, 18 · Silent Treatment / Stonewalling, 28 · Discard, 30 · Plausible Deniability.

Why it closes. Each case ends with the person and not with the policy. Because decisions on individuals are private and no body outside the institutions can review them, the structure that produced the case survives it unchanged.

Where it could be broken, and by whom. Section 20 names the change: publication of the reasoning behind the ineligibility ruling and open pre-election information about candidates. Both lie with the institutions. Charity regulators reach only the national assemblies' filings (section 8). This paragraph is analysis, not a documented finding.

An example from this page. Michael McKenny (1997), Alison Marshall (2000) and Sen McGlinn (2005) were removed from membership, and Juan Cole resigned in 1996 after being warned (section 19) [4][5][6][7].

7 · Persecution to Solidarity to Insulation to Unaccountability



Iranian persecution is real and severe, and it makes any internal criticism feel like punching down.

How it runs.

1. Bahá'ís in Iran face imprisonment, university exclusion and cemetery desecration, and the persecution is documented by UN bodies (sections 5 and 8).
2. This page records that persecution first, because its later questions about internal governance must not be read as ammunition for a state that harms the community (section 5).
3. Within the community, public criticism is treated as harming unity and the Faith (section 12, techniques 12 and 17).
4. Members close ranks around the institutions, and approached critics are asked to consult and to protect unity (section 12, technique 16).
5. Questions about review, shunning and the ineligibility ruling go unanswered, and the next question meets the same response.

Techniques that feed it. 12 · DARVO, 17 · Smear Campaign, 16 · Flying Monkeys, 27 · Manufactured Crisis.

Why it closes. The larger harm is external and real, so each internal question can be answered by pointing to it. The more severe the persecution, the stronger the pull to treat criticism as a betrayal.

Where it could be broken, and by whom. It weakens where both facts are held at once, as sections 3 and 17 do, and where the institutions answer the internal questions on their merits. The institutions can do that, and so can members who ask. Section 20 lists what would change the page. This paragraph is

analysis, not a documented finding.

An example from this page. Sepideh thinks: everything trying to erase us is outside this room. The page answers that this is true and nearly the whole story, and the remainder is what this volume examines (section 2).

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

The loops explain why good people stay in arrangements they would never sign up for from scratch. The more you have already put in, the harder it is to walk away. Researchers call this the sunk-cost effect (Arkes & Blumer, 1985), and it works on time, money and relationships alike. Ask yourself: if you were starting today, knowing what you know, would you join?

The seven loops below show how the practices connect, so that each step makes the next one easier and the last step feeds the first.

14 Say versus do

BEFORE YOU READ

Direct, checkable comparisons: a public statement on one side, the documented record on the other, and the receipt that links them. This is the most falsifiable section on the page, because each row either matches its source or it doesn't.

What they say, what the record shows

THEY SAY	THE RECORD SHOWS	RECEIPT
Independent investigation of truth is a core principle.	Members must submit writing about the Faith for institutional review before publishing.	OFFICIAL POLICY
Men and women are spiritually equal.	Women are ineligible for the Universal House of Justice, with the reason given as a wisdom to be made manifest later [18].	OFFICIAL POLICY
There is no clergy.	Covenant-breaker designation brings an expectation that members avoid the person, relatives included, carried out by members under published guidance [17].	OFFICIAL POLICY

Consultation resolves disagreement.	Persistent organized dissent is treated as a covenant matter rather than a consultative one.	FORMER MEMBER TESTIMONY

Accountability or theatre?

Last time the chair ran. In the scholarly disenrollment episodes, the individual departs and the review policy remains.

Who holds the chair now. The elected institutions hold it, and their authority is clearly located and unusually traceable.

Prediction. The next dissent will be resolved administratively, quietly, and pre-publication review will not be revisited.

In the scholarly disenrollment episodes, the individual departs and the review policy remains.

Words used here

TERM	WHAT IT MEANS INSIDE	WHAT IT DOES	SAID PLAINLY
Covenant-breaker	A covenant-breaker is one who challenges the authority of the Covenant.	It is the tradition's most serious status, and members are expected to avoid the person. It is applied to challenges to institutional authority rather than to belief.	'You disputed the leadership and must now be avoided.'
Review	Review is the pre-publication examination of members' writings about the faith.	It means an electorate cannot read unreviewed material about its own institutions — which makes an election without candidate information into a confirmation.	'You may not read that before you vote.'
Unity	Unity is the central principle of the faith.	It is genuinely central and genuinely beautiful. As a procedural instrument it makes disagreement itself the offence, independent of what the disagreement is about.	'Disagreeing is the problem, not what you disagreed with.'

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Test one row yourself. Pick a "they say" line you have actually heard said in person, then read the receipt. If the record matches the statement, this page is wrong about that row, and you should tell us. If it doesn't, what does it mean that you had never seen the receipt?

15 Cost & cover

BEFORE YOU READ

What leaving actually costs here, in family, work, housing, money and legal status, and how each of those costs is officially denied. Where the cost is low, the page says so plainly.

What leaving costs

- Ordinary resignation is administratively simple; the high cost is reserved for organized dissent — covenant-breaker designation means members are expected to avoid the person, relatives included, under guidance the Faith publishes [17]. OFFICIAL POLICY / FORMER MEMBER TESTIMONY
- Scholars publishing critical history have faced review pressure and disenrollment episodes. FORMER MEMBER TESTIMONY · e.g., removals from the rolls in 1997, 2000 and 2005 after online discussion and scholarship

The ledger of exit

COST	DOCUMENTED?	DETAIL	THE OFFICIAL DENIAL
Ordinary resignation	Documented as low cost.	Withdrawal is administrative, and members generally retain relationships.	Accurately: simple resignation is genuinely low-cost.
Covenant-breaker designation	Documented as severe.	Members are expected to avoid the person, including relatives, under published guidance [17].	"It's spiritual protection of unity, not punishment."

Loss of voting rights (administrative sanction)	Yes, documented.	It applies for serious moral or covenant issues and leaves the person a member without participation.	"A remedial measure."
Scholarly cost	Documented cases exist.	Review requirements and pressure fall on historians publishing critical work.	"Review only checks accuracy of representation."

How the cost is denied

CHANNEL	LEVEL	NOTE
Explicit policy	Very low	The avoidance guidance, review, and eligibility rules are all published — this tradition documents its own control mechanisms unusually openly.
Informal enforcement	Medium	Enforcement is informal and rests on community expectation around participation and unity discourse.
Leadership distance	Low	Authority is clearly located in named elected institutions; accountability is traceable.
Doctrinal ambiguity	Low	Written scripture and interpretive authority are explicit; little room for retroactive reinterpretation.
Cultural outsourcing	Low	The Faith is global and multi-ethnic, so harms cannot easily be blamed on one culture.
Volunteer enforcement	High	Avoidance is carried out by ordinary members and relatives, as the guidance directs.
Sacred secrecy	Low	Institutional decisions on individuals are private, but doctrine and policy are public.
Exit cost denial	Low	The Faith openly states what covenant-breaking entails — no denial is attempted.

Sources for this section: [4] [7] [17]

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Ordinary resignation is simple. The heavy cost is reserved for organized dissent: someone designated a covenant-breaker (a member judged to have challenged the authority of the Covenant) is cut off, and members, relatives included, are expected to avoid them under guidance the Faith publishes. Scholars and online critics were removed from the rolls in 1997, 2000 and 2005, with no appeal outside the institutions that removed them. If your son were designated tomorrow, what would unity ask of you?

16 The ledger

BEFORE YOU READ

The balance sheet. It shows who benefits, who pays, and what leverage flows back to the institution in return for what it gives.

Who benefits

- The administrative order benefits through its continuity and narrative control, and unity is an institutional asset.
- Externally, the Iranian state benefits from persecuting Bahá'ís as an internal enemy — a reminder that this community is far more often victim than perpetrator of coercion. GOVERNMENT REPORT

Money out, leverage back

- The clearest fact here runs the other way: the Iranian state persecutes Bahá'ís systematically — executions after 1979, and now imprisonment, exclusion from universities, cemetery desecration — using religion as an instrument against a defenseless minority. This community is far more often coercion's target than its author. GOVERNMENT REPORT
- Funds accept contributions from members only, which genuinely prevents donor capture — an anti-leverage design worth naming as a model. OFFICIAL POLICY
- Huqúqu'lláh (19% of surplus wealth) flows to the Faith's central institutions; whether it is accounted for to members is not established from any public source. OFFICIAL POLICY

Who pays

- Iranian Bahá'ís pay: more than 200 were executed after 1979, and they are now imprisoned and barred from higher education by the state. This community is far more often the victim of coercion than its author. GOVERNMENT REPORT
- Designated covenant-breakers and their families pay, because published guidance keeps other members at a distance from them.
- LGBTQ members pay, because they are required to be celibate for life.
- Women pay, because they are ineligible for the highest institution.
- Bahá'í scholars pay when their critical historical work meets review pressure.

Sources for this section: 3 8 9 17 19 20

The administrative order benefits through its continuity and narrative control, and unity is an institutional asset.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Find yourself in this table. Are you among those who benefit, those who pay, or both? Most readers are both. The question is whether the exchange was ever explained to you in these terms, and whether you would agree to it if it had been.

17 Who gets hurt most

BEFORE YOU READ

Where the weight lands hardest, and what it compounds with: poverty, childhood, gender, a lack of civil alternatives. This is the human stakes stated plainly.

Where the weight lands

The costs in section 15 do not fall evenly. They fall hardest where a person has the least power inside the institution, or none, and the fewest places to go outside it. The table names who carries the most, how, and what makes it worse.

WHO	HOW	WHAT IT COMPOUNDS WITH
Iranian Bahá'ís	More than 200 were executed after 1979; today they are imprisoned and barred from higher education, and graves in their cemeteries have been razed.	The harm is compounded by the state, not the Faith, and it is the largest harm on this page.
Designated covenant-breakers	Members are expected to avoid them, relatives included, under published guidance.	The harm compounds for their relatives, who must choose.

LGBTQ members	Lifelong celibacy is required for good standing.	It compounds with the absence of any doctrinal path to reconsideration.
Women	They are ineligible for the highest institution, inside a religion that taught equality early and at real cost.	It compounds with the absence of any published account of what the stated reason is.
Bahá'í historians	They face review pressure and disenrollment episodes over critical work.	It compounds with loss of community as well as career.

From The Women's Codex

- *Office and ordination* — The Universal House of Justice: women are ineligible by standing ruling in a faith whose founding teaching includes the equality of the sexes, with the stated reason deferred to the future [18].

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Iranian Bahá'ís come first: more than 200 executed after 1979, and now imprisoned, barred from higher education, their graves razed. Then those designated covenant-breakers, and relatives who must choose between them and the Faith. The page holds both truths together: a community severely persecuted from outside that also applies severe sanctions inside. Is it possible to defend the first without defending the second?

They fall hardest where a person has the least power inside the institution, or none, and the fewest places to go outside it.

18 The middle tiers

BEFORE YOU READ

The people in the middle: local clergy, teachers, officials and volunteers who apply rules they did not write. The section exists so that an institution is not collapsed into a monolith, and so that people in the middle can see their own position in it.

Most of the institution's work is done below the House of Justice, by people who see decisions without making them. Assembly members, reviewers, Institute and children's-class tutors, and Bahá'í scholars each carry part of the load, and each stands at one point where the next decision could be declined. The table sets out what each tier does, what it sees, what it is asked to do and where it could refuse.

ROLE	DOES	SEES	IS ASKED TO	COULD REFUSE
Assembly members	They serve without campaigning, unpaid, in genuine good faith.	They see that there is no appeal above the system.	They are asked to maintain unity.	They could refuse to treat a persistent question as a loyalty matter.
Reviewers	They read members' manuscripts before publication.	They see which accurate history is unwelcome.	They are asked to check representation.	They could refuse to reject a manuscript because of its conclusions.
Institute and children's-class tutors	They run the community's actual formation work.	They see how open community life is compared with the sanction mechanism.	They are asked to follow the plan.	They could refuse to avoid a member's question about the Faith's history.
Bahá'í scholars	They write the tradition's history.	They see that review and disenrollment are live risks.	They are asked to submit their work for review.	They could refuse by publishing accurately and accepting the consequence.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

If you are a local leader, a teacher or a volunteer, this section is about you. It is not an accusation: most of the people who carry out a rule did not write it. But the middle tier is also where a rule is most often quietly softened, or quietly enforced. Which do you do, and what would happen to you if you chose differently?

19 Documented cases

BEFORE YOU READ

Named, dated, sourced incidents: court records, government inquiries, regulators' findings and on-the-record reporting. Read the outcome lines in particular. They show what actually changed, if anything.

Removed from the rolls (1997–2005)

WHEN: 1997–2005

WHAT: Michael McKenny (1997), Alison Marshall (2000) and the scholar Sen McGlinn (2005) were removed from membership after online discussion and scholarship the institutions objected to [5][6][7].

RECORD: Their own published accounts and documents [5][6][7]

OUTCOME: No appeal outside the institutions that made the decisions [5][6][7].

TACTICS: 17 · Smear Campaign, 28 · Discard

GRADE: DOCUMENTED

A scholar resigns under warning (1996)

WHEN: 1996

WHAT: Juan Cole, a historian of the Middle East, resigned from the Faith after being warned over his statements on an online discussion list [4].

RECORD: Juan R. I. Cole, personal statement [4]

OUTCOME: He resigned in 1996 [4].

TACTICS: 17 · Smear Campaign, 28 · Discard

GRADE: DOCUMENTED

A second decade in prison (Iran, 2008–2022)

WHEN: 2008–2022

WHAT: Mahvash Sabet and Fariba Kamalabadi, former members of the "Yaran" who administered Iran's Bahá'í community, served ten years from 2008 to 2017 [12] [21].

RECORD: USCIRF statement, 2022 [12]

OUTCOME: In 2022, after an hour-long trial in Tehran's Revolutionary Court, both were sentenced to another ten years [12].

TACTICS: —

GRADE: DOCUMENTED

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

These are not hypotheticals. Three documented cases on this page rest on a named record. The most common reaction to documented cases is "that was them, not us." Before settling on that, read the outcome lines. Did anything change in the structure that allowed each case to happen, or did one person leave while the structure stayed?

20 Precedent

BEFORE YOU READ

What has already been broken once, somewhere, and what would count as real change here. It is a benchmark, not a prediction.

It has been broken before

WHAT	WHO	WHEN	WHAT IT COST
Member-only funding, which structurally prevents donor capture	The Faith's own design	From the founding	This page records no source for any cost in growth, and it is a genuine model other traditions should copy.
Racial and gender equality taught in 19th-century Iran at real cost	The early community	1860s onward	It cost executions.
The Bahá'í Institute for Higher Education, built because the state barred members from university	Bahá'í academics in Iran	1987–present	Faculty were repeatedly arrested.
No clergy, elected administration, and consultation as method	The administrative order's design	20th century	It cost nothing, and that is why this section is short.

What would change this page

Publication of the reasoning behind the ineligibility ruling, and open pre-election information about candidates, would revise the two findings this page presses hardest.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Some rows here record a change that has already happened somewhere; others name what would count as change here. When you are told something "can't change", it is fair to ask: can't, or won't? And who decided?

21 Voices from inside

BEFORE YOU READ

People from inside Bahá'í Faith who raised the hard question publicly, often at real cost. They answer the objection that criticism only ever comes from outsiders.

Four voices appear in the record this page cites. Two belong to people in Iran, imprisoned or excluded by the state, and two to scholars who met the Faith's own review policy [4] [7] [10] [12].

- **Mahvash Sabet and Fariba Kamalabadi.** They were imprisoned for a second decade for administering their community [12].
- **Juan Cole.** Cole is a historian who left after being warned over his online statements [4].
- **Sen McGlinn.** McGlinn is a scholar who was disenrolled after his thesis on church and state [7].
- **The founders of the Bahá'í Institute for Higher Education** built a university for students Iran excluded [10].

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Were these people traitors, or the most loyal members their tradition had? Most were treated as the first at the time, and some are honored as the second now. If someone in your community raised one of these questions tomorrow, how would they be treated, and by you?

22 Regional variants

BEFORE YOU READ

The same tradition under different governments. What a member can say, leave, marry or inherit depends heavily on the state, and these cards show how differently it plays out.

Iran

APEX: No apex is permitted; the Yaran were jailed [12].

LAW: The state gives no recognition and prosecutes community activity [8] [12].

DOCUMENTED: The UN Special Rapporteur's 2024 report [8] and the 2024 surge in arrests [9] document it.

EXIT: No exit procedure is recorded for Iran.

REGULATOR: The state is the persecutor [8].

TELL: The birthplace of the Faith treats its administration as a threat to national security.

United Kingdom

APEX: The elected National Spiritual Assembly is the apex [11].

LAW: Charity law applies [11].

DOCUMENTED: The public accounts document it [11].

EXIT: Exit is legally free.

REGULATOR: The Charity Commission is the regulator [11].

TELL: The elections run without campaigns, and anyone can read the accounts.

Worldwide (the institutions)

APEX: The apex is the Universal House of Justice [1].

LAW: The law is the Faith's own administrative order [13].

DOCUMENTED: The removals from the rolls are the documented cases [567].

EXIT: Resignation is possible; removal is decided without an outside appeal [567].

REGULATOR: No regulator exists outside the institutions.

TELL: This is one of the most democratic structures in this book, with no outside route of appeal.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

This page covers Iran, the United Kingdom and Worldwide (the institutions). Your country changes what this tradition can do to you, and what you can do about it. If you live somewhere not listed, ask which of these cards your country most resembles. If you are a voter, note that each of these arrangements was chosen by a government.

23 The questions

BEFORE YOU READ

The six questions the documented record could not resolve. Each is set out below: why it is being asked, and a concrete example already on this page that it points back to.

QUESTION 1 OF 6

Your Faith teaches independent investigation of truth. Explain pre-publication review of members' writing about the Faith.

WHY THIS IS ASKED

Independent investigation of truth is a core principle. Required pre-publication review limits what members can publish about the Faith. The question asks how the two fit together.

EXAMPLE ALREADY ON THIS PAGE

The say-do table sets "Independent investigation of truth is a core principle" beside the record: members must submit writing about the Faith for institutional review before publishing.

QUESTION 2 OF 6

If a designated covenant-breaker's relatives are expected to avoid them, ask which teaching about unity asks a mother to hold apart from her son.

WHY THIS IS ASKED

Unity is the Faith's highest value. The question asks whether unity that asks a mother to hold apart from her son is unity, or silence.

EXAMPLE ALREADY ON THIS PAGE

The glance table records that covenant-breaker designation means members are expected to avoid the person, relatives included.

QUESTION 3 OF 6

Women's equality is central scripture. Ask an institution to explain the one exclusion without invoking its own authority.

WHY THIS IS ASKED

If equality of the sexes is central scripture, the one exclusion needs a reason beyond the institution's authority. The question asks for that reason.

EXAMPLE ALREADY ON THIS PAGE

The glance table records that women are "ineligible by standing ruling" for the Universal House of Justice. The say-do table sets "Men and women are spiritually equal" beside that exclusion.

QUESTION 4 OF 6

Ask for the accounting of Huqúqu'lláh. Note whether the question is answered or reframed as a spiritual matter.

WHY THIS IS ASKED

A 19% obligation is a large financial commitment. The question asks for the accounts, and notices whether the request is answered or treated as a spiritual matter.

EXAMPLE ALREADY ON THIS PAGE

The glance table records that Huqúqu'lláh (19% on surplus wealth) is paid to the Faith's center. The law table records that the UK national assembly files public accounts [II].

QUESTION 5 OF 6

A scholar publishes accurate history the institutions dislike. Describe the process by which he is heard rather than removed.

WHY THIS IS ASKED

When a scholar publishes accurate history the institutions dislike, what happens next shows how dissent is handled. The question asks for a process of hearing, not removal.

EXAMPLE ALREADY ON THIS PAGE

The cases section records that Michael McKenny (1997), Alison Marshall (2000) and the scholar Sen McGlinn (2005) were removed from membership, with no appeal outside the institutions. The historian Juan Cole resigned in 1996 after being warned.

QUESTION 6 OF 6

You were taught that unity is the highest value. Ask whether unity that asks members to avoid one another is unity or only silence.

WHY THIS IS ASKED

Unity enforced by avoidance may look like unity from outside. The question asks whether it is unity or only silence.

EXAMPLE ALREADY ON THIS PAGE

The history section records disputes in the 1990s and 2000s over pre-publication review and academic freedom, in which "some scholars disenrolled or resign."

In closing

Your religion built real safeguards most traditions in this codex lack: no clergy, elected bodies, member-only funding, consultation as a method, and a documented history of getting race and gender right early and at cost. Those are not small. They are why this profile is short.

But a faith confident in its own truth does not need to review what its historians write, and unity that asks relatives to avoid one another is not the unity Bahá'u'lláh described — it is the appearance of it. Your tradition teaches you to investigate independently. That instruction was not meant to stop at the institutions' door.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Choose one question and ask it this month, out loud, to a real person who could answer it. Then write down what happened. Were you answered, redirected, or told that asking was the problem? Whichever it was, the response is information.

24 Leaving safely here

BEFORE YOU READ

Practical, non-theological guidance for someone who needs to step back or step away safely. It is a safety document, not an argument.

Practical guidance, not legal advice.

1. **You can resign in writing;** removal from the rolls is a separate process decided by the institutions [5][6][7].
2. **Resigning is not the same as being declared a "covenant-breaker".**
3. **In Iran,** membership itself carries legal risk; seek advice before travelling [8][9].
4. **Find support** [13][14][15][16].

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Even if this section is not for you, it may be for someone you know. Most people who leave a high-demand community say that the first person who listened without trying to argue them back mattered more than anything else. Could that person be you?

25 Where to get help

BEFORE YOU READ

Organizations that can help, each checked directly against its own site, with the date of the check. Nothing here is endorsed beyond that check.

Checked 2026-10-03.

ORGANIZATION (continued)	FOR	WHERE	CONTACT
Faith to Faithless	People leaving religion	UK	**0800 448 0748** (freephone; Monday 10:00–13:00, Wednesday 10:00–13:00, Thursday 16:00–19:00 UK time) [13]
Recovering from Religion	People questioning or leaving faith	US, Canada and online	**(844) 368-2848**; the service says it tries to offer a 24-hour chat and call service; UK +44 20 3807 4583, Australia +61 2 8203 7137 [14]
ICSA	Former members of high-control groups; families	International	Contact is through its website [15]
Humanists at Risk	People persecuted for belief	Global	Contact is by casework request through its website [16]

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Save one contact now, before anyone needs it: **Faith to Faithless** (people leaving religion; UK). People in crisis rarely have the energy to research options. Having a name ready is one of the most useful things you can do for someone else.



26

Sources

BEFORE YOU READ

Every numbered citation on this page, with a named, checkable source. Spot-check a few before trusting the rest; that is the honest way to read any page in this book, including this one.

The Faith's own records

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Dissent and review (primary accounts)

4. Juan R. I. Cole, personal statement on leaving the Bahá'í Faith (resigned 1996 after being warned over statements on the Talisman list). http://www-personal.umich.edu/~jrcole/bahai/1999/persdec.htm
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Persecution in Iran

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Further sources

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12. USCIRF, "USCIRF Condemns Sentencing of Baha'i Women in Iran" (2022) — Mahvash Sabet and Fariba Kamalabadi, ten years each after an hour-long trial; earlier ten-year terms 2008–2017 (see [21]). https://www.uscirf.gov/release-statements/uscirf-condemns-sentencing-bahai-women-iran

13. Faith to Faithless (Humanists UK) — helpline 0800 448 0748 (freephone; Monday 10:00–13:00, Wednesday 10:00–13:00, Thursday 16:00–19:00 UK time). https://humanists.uk/faith-to-faithless/helpline/

14. Recovering from Religion — (844) 368-2848. https://www.recoveringfromreligion.org/

15. International Cultic Studies Association (ICSA). https://internationalculticstudies.org/

16. Humanists International — Humanists at Risk. https://humanists.international/what-we-do/humanists-at-risk/

17. Compilation, "Non-association with Covenant-breakers" (Bahá'í Library Online) — no personal relations or correspondence with a designated covenant-breaker; meetings only with permission; contact needed for business allowed. https://bahai-library.com/compilation_non-association_covenant_breakers

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22. Bahá'í International Community, "More than 30 Baha'i graves razed by Iranian authorities at Tehran mass gravesite" (March 2024) — agents took over the cemetery in 2021; graves razed in 2024. https://www.bic.org/news/more-30-bahai-graves-razed-iranian-authorities-tehran-mass-gravesite

23. Bahaipedia, "Number of Baha'is in the world" (a wiki) — quotes the Bahá'í International Community's "up to 8 million" and other estimates of 5 to 7 million. https://bahaipedia.org/Number_of_Baha%27is_in_the_world

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Don't take this page's word for anything either. People tend to believe a claim more the more often they have heard it, whether or not it is true; this is the "illusory truth effect" (Hasher, Goldstein & Toppino, 1977). Spot-check three citations at random. If any fails, tell us, and it will be corrected and logged.

27 What changed on this page

BEFORE YOU READ

A dated log of what changed on this page: corrections, additions and new sources. Changes are logged in public rather than made quietly.

- **2026-10-03:** Corrected the account of covenant-breaker designation to say members are expected to avoid the person under published guidance, not that all contact is severed. Added the stated reason for the ruling that only men may sit on the House of Justice. Corrected the Iran section: more than 200 Bahá'ís were executed after 1979, the last reported execution was in 1998, and the repression now is imprisonment and similar measures (63 detained as of June 2026). Fixed the release date of Mahvash Sabet and Fariba Kamalabadi (2017) and the date the cemetery graves were razed (2024). Corrected how national assemblies are elected and what Huqúqu'lláh is a percentage of, and removed claims about its accounting that no source supports. Regraded twenty technique entries to match their evidence and removed the "sourced" marks. Added the help-line hours and seven new sources.
- **2026-09-27:** Added Branches, Law & state, Money in numbers (UK national assembly accounts 2020–2025), three documented cases, Voices from inside, three regional cards, Leaving safely and Where to get help.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

This page keeps a public log of its own changes, mistakes included. Does the institution you belong to, give to, or were raised in keep one like it? If not, how would you know what it got wrong, and when?

Colophon

Set in EB Garamond (SIL Open Font License), regular, italic and bold, with true small capitals and old-style figures in text and lining tabular figures in tables. Laid out with Paged.js in Chromium from the same Markdown that feeds the website. US Letter, single-sided, tagged for accessibility and checked against PDF/UA-1 with veraPDF. Built 2026-10-27. Text checked 2026-10-03.

Palette: ink, oxblood, gold, cream, rule. Seven type sizes. Rules of 0.4 pt and 2 pt only.