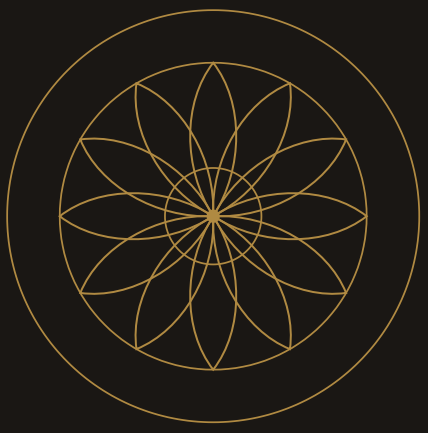


THE SACRED DIVIDE

THE FULL RECORD

New Age / Spiritual-but-Organized Movements

New movements & the spiritual marketplace family

Before you begin

This is the record of New Age / Spiritual-but-Organized Movements 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*.

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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 New Age / Spiritual-but-Organized Movements 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	New Age has no countable membership by design. About six in ten US adults accept at least one of four beliefs Pew asked about in 2018 (psychics, spiritual energy in physical objects, reincarnation and astrology), among religious and non-religious adults alike. This measures belief, not membership, and the survey is from 2018. ACADEMIC SOURCE · Pew, 2018
WHO'S IN CHARGE	No office exists. Teachers are independent businesses, and this page cites no source for any body that appoints them, owns them or removes them.
CHOSEN BY	No one appoints a teacher.
REMOVABLE BY	No one removes one, except a court after the harm.

MONEY IN ONE LINE	The money comes from tiered course funnels ($97 → $997 → $10K masterminds, meaning paid high-end group programs), retreat economies, certification pyramids (paying to become a certified healer who certifies others, which is MLM logic in spiritual clothing; MLM means multi-level marketing) and influencer monetization. INVESTIGATIVE REPORT · documented cases, e.g., sweat-lodge deaths (a sweat lodge is a heated ceremonial enclosure; James Arthur Ray, convicted 2011 [COURT RECORD and died in January 2025 [15]) and NXIVM's self-help-to-coercion pipeline (NXIVM was a self-help organization whose leader was convicted of racketeering and sex trafficking) COURT RECORD]
LEAVING IN ONE LINE	There is no formal exit, but sunk costs, identity investment ('lightworker', a person who sees themselves as a spiritual healer or guide), loss of community, and blame reversal ('you manifested this', meaning you caused it yourself by your own thoughts) make departure costly. FORMER MEMBER TESTIMONY
THE UNANSWERED QUESTION	If the healing works, why does the funnel always need another tier?
EVIDENCE	None of the 30 techniques is sourced to a named document. All 30 are graded Cultural.
FAMILY	New movements & the spiritual marketplace — scientology, new-age, unification-church
LAST CHECKED	2026-10-03

Disclosure scorecard

ACCOUNTS	PAY	SAFEGUARDING	EXTERNAL FIRST	REMOVAL	REPLY
NOT ASSESSABLE	NOT ASSESSABLE	NOT ASSESSABLE	NOT ASSESSABLE	NOT ASSESSABLE	NOT ASSESSABLE

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

There is no single office at the top here. The glance table's answer to who chooses the top office is "No one appoints a teacher", and to who can remove its holder, "No one removes one, except a court after the harm". That can protect people from a distant hierarchy. It can also mean there is no one to appeal to when the people closest to you are wrong. If that happened to you, who would you go to?

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.

Brie · A Tuesday in Mercury retrograde (an astrological period popularly blamed for disruption) · Byron Bay, and Instagram

At six there is breathwork (a guided breathing practice), and the ocean, and a genuine steadiness in her body that she did not have at twenty-five and that she built herself, and no one is taking that from her.

She is thirty-three. She is a certified practitioner in three modalities (methods of healing). Two of the certifications require her to pay an annual fee to the person who certified her, and one of them pays her a percentage when she certifies someone else, and she has certified four people.

At ten a client cries on Zoom about her diagnosis and asks whether she should do the protocol her oncologist recommended. Brie says, carefully, that she can't give medical advice, and then says, less carefully, that the

body knows, and that fear has a frequency. She has said this before. She believes it, mostly. She thinks about it for the rest of the day.

At one she posts a reel (a short video) and it does 40,000 views, and eleven people send direct messages asking about the container (her paid group program). The container is $2,400. Six years ago she was on $19 an hour in a café and she is not going back, and anybody who has never been broke can keep their opinion.

At four she gets a message from a woman who did the container in February asking, politely, whether there is a refund policy. There is not. Brie types three versions of a reply and sends the one about integration timelines (how long it takes to absorb a healing experience) and the journey being non-linear.

At eleven she lies on the floor with her feet up the wall, which is the only thing that works, and she thinks about the client with the diagnosis. And a thought arrives that she has been outrunning for about a year: that if it goes badly, the framework she teaches has an answer ready — that the woman's fear attracted it — and that the answer is available to Brie and costs Brie nothing. She gets up and puts music on.

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 probably came here because organized religion hurt you or bored you, and you wanted something without hierarchy, guilt, or men in robes. You were right to want that. But you may have walked into the one structure in this codex with no institution to appeal to, no credential to check, no refund policy, and a doctrine that makes every harm your own fault.

THE UNANSWERED QUESTION

If the healing works, why does the funnel always need another tier?

The widest gap between word and record

THEY SAY	THE RECORD SHOWS	RECEIPT
You create your own reality.	If you create your own reality, the assaulted client created hers, and the seller can never be at fault. Ask them to finish the sentence.	PATTERN OBSERVED

One cost of leaving, beside its denial

COST	DOCUMENTED?	DETAIL	THE OFFICIAL DENIAL
Formal penalty	None	There is no membership to lose, and the absence of structure is the selling point.	Accurately: no institutional exit cost exists.

The strongest objection, answered

The objection. There is no institution, no doctrine, and no hierarchy — so none of this applies.

What is true in it. There genuinely is no organization, and the impulse that brought people here — direct experience, no gatekeeper — is legitimate and was a reasonable response to being hurt by organized religion.

The answer. The absence of an institution is the problem rather than the defense: no credential to check, no complaints body, no refund policy, no license to revoke. And the harms are documented in criminal courts and regulatory actions.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Try answering the unanswered question yourself: *If the healing works, why does the funnel always need another tier?* 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 New Age / Spiritual-but-Organized Movements, 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.

> New Age is a decentralized economy of coaches, healers, manifestation teachers, plant-medicine circles, wellness influencers and workshop empires. It sells spirituality as a consumer marketplace, with no membership institution behind it.

Healthy practice here looks like practitioners who hold credentials, are honest about the scope of what they can treat, publish refund policies and work with trauma-informed ethics (care taken not to re-injure people who have been through trauma). The marketplace has one genuine gift, the freedom to explore without membership. That freedom is healthy when its shadow, freedom from accountability, is named.

Some of that standard is already on the record. Section 20 records a minority of practitioners who have voluntarily adopted credentials, scope-of-practice honesty and refund policies. Section 21 records Sarah Edmondson, a former NXIVM recruiter who became a whistleblower [10], and the Lakota Summit V, whose 1993 declaration condemned the sale of Lakota ceremonies by outsiders [4]. Each is a place where a participant or a community held the market to the standard this page applies, and each is recorded here as credit.

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.

The movement has roots in 19th-century New Thought (a movement teaching that thought shapes health and circumstance) and Theosophy (an esoteric movement whose society was founded in 1875). The human potential movement (a movement from the 1960s promoting personal growth through workshops), with Esalen (a California retreat institute) and est (Erhard Seminars Training), industrialized transformation seminars. The internet then completed the conversion of spirituality into scalable content commerce.

The internet then completed the conversion of spirituality into scalable content commerce.

Timeline

HISTORY AT A GLANCE



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

1 1830S–1900S

New Thought, Mesmerism (healing by a supposed magnetic force), Spiritualism (communication with the dead), Theosophy

Mind-over-matter healing and channeled authority — the template for everything that follows.

2 1875–1930S

Theosophical Society; Krishnamurti groomed as World Teacher and then repudiates the role

The founding cautionary tale, delivered by the movement's own designated messiah.

3 1962–1970S

Esalen Institute; human potential movement; est trainings

Transformation becomes a purchasable weekend product with high-pressure group dynamics.

4 1970S–1980S

Channeling boom (people claiming to speak for spirits), A Course in Miracles (a channeled spiritual text), crystals, harmonic convergence 1987 (a mass meditation event)

Mass-market spirituality with no institutions and no accountability.

5 1990S

The Secret's precursors; wellness industry forms; MLM-spiritual hybrids emerge

Prosperity thinking without a church — and therefore without even a board.

6 2006–2010

The Secret becomes a global bestseller; James Arthur Ray's sweat lodge kills three (2009); convicted 2011

Manifestation doctrine's blame-reversal logic reaches lethal consequence. COURT RECORD

7 2010S

Instagram and YouTube monetize spiritual influence; certification pyramids scale

The teacher's income depends on the follower's aspiration, not on results.

8 2017–2021

NXIVM prosecuted; Keith Raniere convicted 2019

Self-help to coercive control pipeline documented in federal court.

COURT RECORD

9 2020–PRESENT

Pandemic-era conspirituality (spiritual belief merged with conspiracy theory); ayahuasca (a plant-based psychedelic brew) and psychedelic retreat boom; QAnon (a conspiracy-theory movement) overlap

Wellness spirituality is described as becoming a vector for medical and political misinformation; this page cites no study. PATTERN OBSERVED

Moments in the room

OCTOBER 2009 — SEDONA

Three people died and eighteen were hospitalised after a sweat-lodge event run by self-help figure James Arthur Ray. He was convicted of negligent homicide in 2011.

Why it matters. The deaths set the industry's ceiling, and a criminal court established it because no other body existed to do so. Before those deaths there was no authority above the seminar leader, and after them there still is not.

2017–2021 — NXIVM

A group marketed as an executive-success programme was prosecuted as a racketeering enterprise (an organization used to carry out a pattern of crimes); its founder received a 120-year sentence, and several associates were convicted.

Why it matters. The founder of a seminar company was convicted of racketeering and sex trafficking [3]. The pipeline from a personal-development workshop to a criminal enterprise ran through ordinary certification tiers, which is why this page tracks tiers.

2020–2021 — THE WELLNESS-TO-CONSPIRACY PIPELINE

Large wellness and yoga audiences have been described as migrating into medical and electoral disinformation during the pandemic. This page cites no study of it.

Why it matters. The absence of an apex was supposed to be the sector's protection against capture. It was, instead, the reason nothing could correct at scale.

Sources for this section: 2 3 7

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

New Age / Spiritual-but-Organized Movements 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.

New Age has no branches, because it is a market. Its clusters include manifestation and the law of attraction (the belief that thoughts attract matching events), energy healing (Reiki, a hands-on practice of Japanese origin, and others), astrology and tarot, plant medicine, channeling, breathwork, spiritual coaching, and MLM-wellness hybrids.

CLUSTER	EXAMPLES	WHERE THE RISK SITS
Older roots	The older roots are New Thought, Theosophy (1875) and Esalen (1962) [7].	The risk here is largely historical.
Manifestation and coaching	Examples are law-of-attraction courses, "masterminds" and large-group trainings.	Course prices escalate, and one self-help company, NXIVM, became a criminal enterprise [3].
Ceremony and plant medicine	Examples are sweat lodges and ayahuasca and kambo retreats (kambo is a ritual in which a frog's skin secretion is applied to the body).	The risk is physical danger, with deaths at a 2009 sweat lodge and at unregulated retreats [2 6].

Wellness products	Examples are crystals, "energy" products and supplements.	The health claims are unproven, and regulators have acted [8][9].
MLM-wellness hybrids	Examples are supplement and oil sellers.	The risk lies in income claims and recruitment structures [5]. The FTC case cited, Herbalife, concerns a nutrition company, not a spiritual organization.

About six in ten US adults accept at least one of four beliefs Pew asked about in 2018 (psychics, spiritual energy in objects, reincarnation, astrology), religious and non-religious alike [1]. That is a measure of belief, not of membership.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

If you know one community of New Age / Spiritual-but-Organized Movements, 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?

New Age has no branches, because it is a market.

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	New Age has no countable membership by design. About six in ten US adults accept at least one of four beliefs Pew asked about in 2018 (psychics, spiritual energy in physical objects, reincarnation and astrology), among religious and non-religious adults alike. This measures belief, not membership, and the survey is from 2018. **ACADEMIC SOURCE** · Pew, 2018
Regions	New Age is concentrated in the United States, Canada, Western Europe, Australia, New Zealand, Brazil and urban centers globally. There is also substantial diaspora appropriation of Asian and Indigenous practices.
Trend	This page cites no growth figure; the Pew survey is a single 2018 snapshot.
Participation	There is no membership at all. Involvement is measured in purchases. This page cites no figure for how revenue is distributed among participants.

Authority

- There is no institution, which is both the sales pitch and the accountability void. Authority is charismatic, self-certified, and answerable to no synod (a church's governing council), court, or tradition. **PATTERN OBSERVED**
- Invisible authorities (spirit, the universe, your higher self) reliably agree with the seller. **PATTERN OBSERVED**

The top of the chain

> There is no throne here and no single owner at the top. Teachers are independent, and distribution runs through platforms and publishers.

OFFICE	WHO SITS IN IT NOW	CHOSEN BY	REMOVABLE BY
The platforms and publishers	No one holds this as an office. Platforms and publishers carry the teachers' content, but this page cites no source that they own, appoint or remove teachers.	Not recorded on this page.	Not recorded on this page.
The certification pyramids	Whoever sits atop each training lineage holds this office and collects tolls from every practitioner certified below.	The holder founded the pyramid.	The only remedy is a refund policy, if there is one.
The named floor	This is where the law reached. James Arthur Ray was convicted after the 2009 sweat-lodge deaths (he died in January 2025 [15]), and there were racketeering convictions in the NXIVM case. Together they are the seminar industry's ceiling, established in court.	—	A criminal court removes them, after the harm.

> **THE TELL**
>
> When there is no bishop, the court fills the vacancy — afterward. The absence of an apex does not protect you. It means a court may be the first body to act, and only after the harm.

Who holds what

ENTITY	TYPE	HOLDER	HOLDS	WHY IT MATTERS TO YOU	RECEIPT
The teacher-entrepreneur	Sole authority	Any individual with an audience can hold this position.	The teacher holds the diagnosis, the treatment, the pricing, and the framework in which failure is always the customer's.	Your money, your grief, and your medical decisions are involved.	PATTERN OBSERVED
Certification pyramids	Commercial structure	Whoever entered earliest holds them.	They hold downstream fee shares from everyone they credential.	They set what being allowed to practice costs, forever.	PATTERN OBSERVED
MLM-wellness hybrids	Multi-level marketing	Corporate parents and upline distributors (the distributors above you in the sales chain) hold them.	They hold documented majority-loss structures (arrangements in which most participants lose money) wrapped in abundance language.	Your savings are at stake, and the arrangement is sold to you as empowerment.	GOVERNMENT REPORT · regulatory actions

Retreat and plant-medicine operators	Unregulated service	Private operators, frequently not from the source tradition, hold these roles.	They sell high-cost experiences with inadequate screening, and deaths are documented.	Your safety is at stake, in a jurisdiction you chose for its absence of rules.	COURT RECORD
Adjudicated cases	Individual, adjudicated	A retreat operator was convicted of negligent homicide after three deaths, and a self-improvement founder was convicted of racketeering and sex trafficking.	These cases are proof of where the frame ends up when nothing constrains it.	They mark the outer limit of an industry with no licensing body.	COURT RECORD
Platforms and algorithms	Distribution	Technology companies hold this role.	They amplify whatever converts; this page cites no source for their terms.	They shape what your feed decides you need healing from.	PATTERN OBSERVED

Sources for this section: 1 2 3 5 6 15

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

There is no church here. The glance table says no office exists and that teachers are independent. That means no body exists to protect you from a teacher's sales funnel. If a healer harmed you, who would you report it to? The page's answer is that for most of this industry, no one.

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	WHAT HAPPENED
United States — criminal	Criminal law on negligent homicide, racketeering and sex trafficking applies [2][3].	James Arthur Ray was convicted over three sweat-lodge deaths (2011) [2], and NXIVM's leader was sentenced to 120 years (2020) [3].
United States — consumer	False-advertising law applies [8][9].	Ten California counties settled with Goop (Gwyneth Paltrow's wellness and lifestyle company, a retailer rather than a spiritual organization) in 2018, without an admission of liability, for $145,000 over unsupported health claims for its jade and rose-quartz eggs and a "flower essence" [8][9].
United States — MLM	The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) Act, which prohibits unfair or deceptive business practices, applies [5].	Herbalife, a multi-level marketing company that sells diet and nutrition products, paid $200 million and restructured in 2016 [5]. Herbalife is not a spiritual organization; it is cited for the MLM structure only.
Peru	This page cites no Peruvian statute.	The US Embassy warned in 2025 against ayahuasca and kambo retreats after deaths and assaults [6].

Who can compel an answer

The bodies that can compel an answer are consumer-protection agencies, advertising-standards bodies on health and income claims, professional licensing boards wherever clinical language is used without clinical credentials, and the courts, which have already set the industry's ceiling.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

When this industry is held to account, it happens through ordinary law. James Arthur Ray was convicted over three deaths in a sweat lodge at one of his retreats. NXIVM's leader was sentenced to 120 years. Ten California counties settled with Goop over unsupported health claims. The US Embassy warned in 2025 against ayahuasca and kambo retreats in Peru after deaths and assaults. Before you book a retreat abroad, have you checked what your own government says about 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 money comes from tiered course funnels ($97 → $997 → $10K masterminds), retreat economies, certification pyramids (paying to become a certified healer who certifies others, which is MLM logic in spiritual clothing) and influencer monetization. INVESTIGATIVE REPORT · documented cases, e.g., sweat-lodge deaths (James Arthur Ray, convicted 2011 [COURT RECORD] and died in January 2025 [15]) and NXIVM's self-help-to-coercion pipeline COURT RECORD]

Follow the money

FLOW	STATED PURPOSE	HOW IT CONTROLS	WHO BENEFITS
Tiered course funnels ($97 → $997 → $10K+ masterminds)	The stated purpose is progressive transformation.	Spend escalates with no defined outcome, and sunk cost drives continuation.	The teacher-entrepreneur and the platform benefit.
Certification pyramids	The stated purpose is to become a certified practitioner.	Practitioners pay to be certified and then certify others, which is MLM logic in spiritual clothing, with the upstream seller taking the margin.	The original certifiers benefit. PATTERN OBSERVED

Retreats and plant-medicine tourism	The stated purpose is deep healing.	The settings are high-cost and low-regulation, medical screening is often inadequate, and deaths are documented.	Retreat operators and facilitators benefit. **COURT RECORD / INVESTIGATIVE REPORT**
One-to-one coaching and readings	The stated purpose is personal guidance.	The practice is unlicensed and adjacent to psychotherapy, with no scope-of-practice limits or insurance.	Individual practitioners benefit.
MLM-wellness hybrids	The stated purpose is abundance and community.	The structures are documented as majority-loss and are wrapped in spiritual empowerment language.	Upline distributors and the company benefit. **GOVERNMENT REPORT** · FTC actions

WHERE THE MONEY GOES, AND WHAT IT HOLDS

Tiered course funnels ($97 → $997 → $10K+ masterminds)

STATED PURPOSE
The stated purpose is progressive transformation.

HOW IT CONTROLS
Spend escalates with no defined outcome, and sunk cost drives continuation.

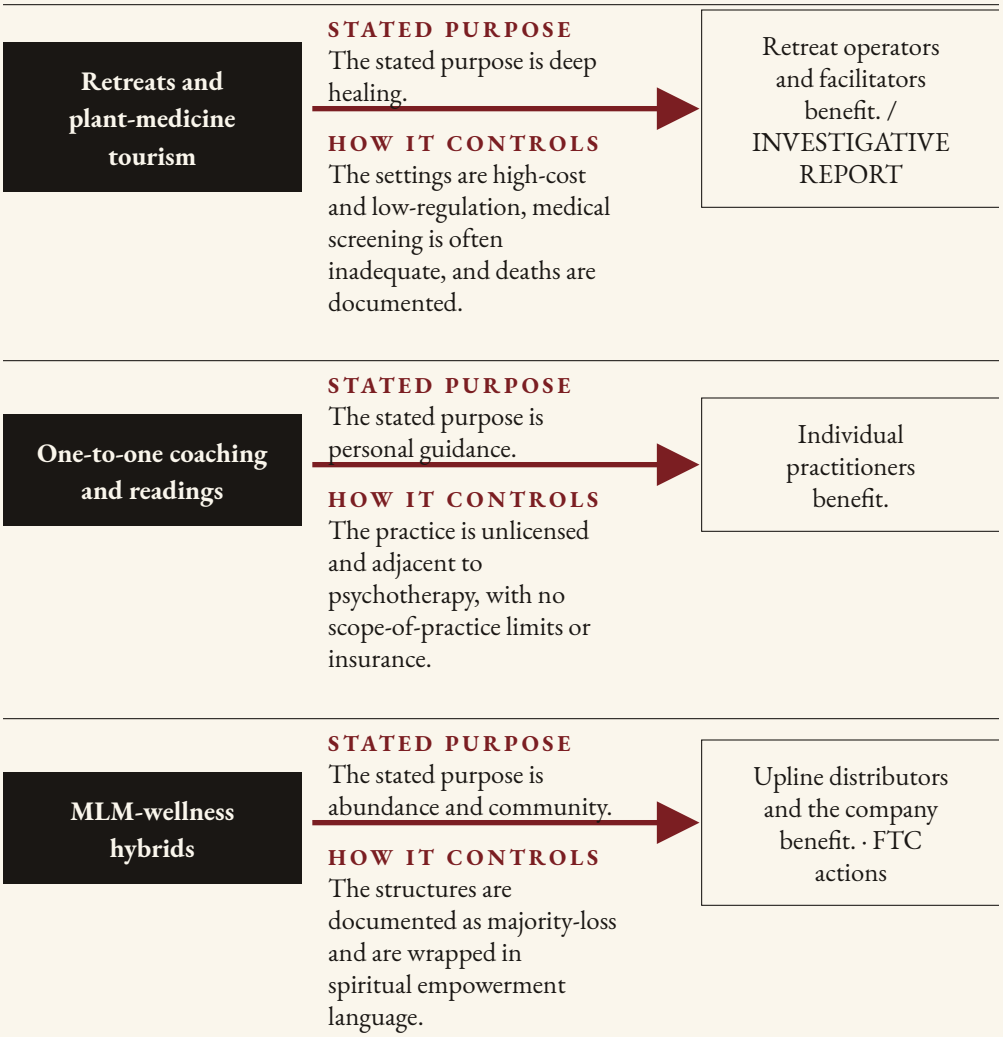
→ The teacher-entrepreneur and the platform benefit.

Certification pyramids

STATED PURPOSE
The stated purpose is to become a certified practitioner.

HOW IT CONTROLS
Practitioners pay to be certified and then certify others, which is MLM logic in spiritual clothing, with the upstream seller taking the margin.

→ The original certifiers benefit.
PATTERN OBSERVED



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

Pipelines this tradition shares

GRADED SPIRITUAL SERVICES

Source. The money comes from participants paying per tier of a course funnel.

Path. Participant → Teacher's company. This page does not record where the money goes after that.

Disclosed. Course prices are disclosed.

Hidden. Refund rates and income distribution are not recorded on this page.

RETREAT AND CEREMONY TOURISM

Source. The money comes from Western participants seeking healing.

Path. Operator, often not from the source community → Facilitators → where the money ends up is not recorded on this page

Disclosed. Not recorded on this page.

Hidden. This page records no safety record, training standard or benefit-sharing arrangement. The sweat-lodge case in section 19 is the one documented safety failure it cites.

CERTIFICATION PYRAMID

Source. The money comes from practitioners paying to become certifiers.

Path. Trainer → Original certifier → Perpetual downstream fee share

Disclosed. Course fees are disclosed.

Hidden. Failure rates and income distribution are hidden.

Money in numbers

- **Goop (2018):** Goop, a wellness retailer rather than a spiritual organization, paid $145,000 in civil penalties without admitting liability, and refunds were offered to some customers [8][9].
- **Herbalife (2016):** Herbalife, a nutrition company rather than a spiritual organization, paid $200 million to compensate distributors [5].
- **Course funnels and certification ladders:** These are described under Money above. This page cites no total for the market.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

The money line describes a funnel: $97, then $997, then a $10,000 mastermind, plus retreats and certification ladders where you pay to become a certified healer who then certifies others. The page calls that "MLM logic in spiritual clothing." The unanswered question is the one to ask before your next payment: if the healing works, why does the funnel always need another tier?

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?

MANIFESTATION AND LAW-OF-ATTRACTION BLAME REVERSAL

Origin. 19th-century New Thought, popularized through 20th-century self-help and mass-marketed from 2006 onward. ACADEMIC SOURCE

What it was for. It was a genuine reaction against Calvinist fatalism (the doctrine that God has already decided who is saved), built on the idea that a person's mind and effort matter. That was

liberating in its original context.

Why that reason expired. Taken to its conclusion, it means the cancer patient attracted the tumor and the assaulted woman manifested the assault. It is delivered in the language of empowerment.

Who benefits now. The teacher benefits, structurally and permanently. In a framework where you create your reality, the seller can never fail — every failure is your vibration.

CERTIFICATION PYRAMIDS

Origin. Modality certification models expanded through the 1990s–2010s, borrowing structure from multi-level marketing. PATTERN OBSERVED

What it was for. It had no older purpose. This is a business architecture, not a lapsed tradition.

Why that reason expired. It was never a spiritual lineage. You pay to be certified, then certify others, and the person above you takes a margin — with no licensing body, no scope of practice, and no complaints procedure anywhere in the chain.

Who benefits now. Whoever entered the pyramid earliest benefits. The people at the bottom are paying for the right to recruit.

INVISIBLE AUTHORITY (THE UNIVERSE, GUIDES, HIGHER SELF)

Origin. Spiritualism and Theosophy's channeled authorities, adapted into contemporary coaching and healing. ACADEMIC SOURCE

What it was for. A claim of direct access, positioned against clerical gatekeeping — which is a genuine impulse.

Why that reason expired. An authority that cannot be cross-examined and reliably endorses the seller's recommendation is worse than a bishop, because a bishop can at least be found and asked. 'Spirit told me' is unfalsifiable by construction.

Who benefits now. The channel benefits; they hold the only microphone and answer to no synod, no board, and no regulator.

VIBRATION POLICING

Origin. Energy-frequency framing popularized in late 20th-century spirituality.

PATTERN OBSERVED

What it was for. It was a metaphor for mood and outlook.

Why that reason expired. It became a silencing device: your objection is low vibration (a supposedly negative energetic state), your grief is dense energy, your anger is what attracted this. It performs the exact function that 'you have a spirit of division' performs in a megachurch, with better branding.

Who benefits now. Anyone in the room who does not want to be questioned benefits, which in an unregulated market is everyone selling.

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

- 'Do your own research' and 'trust your intuition' function as source control by dissolving the category of expertise — any correction can be dismissed as low vibration or fear-based. PATTERN OBSERVED
- Invisible authorities (spirit guides, the universe, higher self, channeled entities) cannot be cross-examined and reliably endorse the seller's recommendation. PATTERN OBSERVED
- Medical misinformation is described as a harm in this sector: alternative cancer treatment promotion, vaccine refusal, and delayed care. This page cites no study. PATTERN OBSERVED
- Critics are reframed as spiritually asleep, wounded, or attacking the teacher's light — a complete immunity structure with no institution required.

Children

- Indigo, starseed and crystal-child labeling (labels for children said to carry special spiritual gifts or origins) attributes special cosmic status to children, sometimes displacing diagnosis and treatment of real developmental or psychiatric needs. PATTERN OBSERVED
- This page cites no case of a child's death or a prosecution tied to refusal of vaccines or treatment in a New Age setting. PATTERN OBSERVED

- Unschooling (education led by the child's interests, with no fixed curriculum) combined with anti-institutional ideology can leave children without basic educational grounding. PATTERN OBSERVED
- This codex found no systematic data on children in ceremony and plant-medicine settings — and in a market with no licensing body, the absence of records is itself the risk.

Bodies

- Divine feminine and sacred masculine framings are marketed heavily, often reproducing rigid gender essentialism under progressive language. PATTERN OBSERVED
- Sexual boundary violations by healers, tantra teachers (teachers of sexual-spiritual practice), and retreat facilitators are alleged; this page cites no case or prosecution record. There is no license to revoke and no institution to complain to. PATTERN OBSERVED
- NXIVM's DOS (a secret women's group inside NXIVM) branding of women is the extreme documented endpoint of coercive control inside a self-improvement frame. COURT RECORD
- The audience for wellness and coaching products is predominantly female, and the highest-earning teachers are disproportionately male in the largest programs. PATTERN OBSERVED

Sources for this section: [3]

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?

Divine feminine and sacred masculine framings are marketed heavily, often reproducing rigid gender essentialism under progressive language.



12

The 30 techniques

How the thirty techniques are established here

30
CULTURAL

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

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 CULTURAL	
STAGE 7 Discard	**27** Manufactured Crisis CULTURAL	**28** Discard CULTURAL		
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.

You are gifted, empathic, chosen, a starseed, an old soul. Someone says they knew you in a past life within an hour of meeting you. This circle is your real family.

What it asks of you: Instant cosmic intimacy is a technique. It was used on you by someone with a product.

1 · Love Bombing

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

How it shows here

- Seekers are welcomed with language of healing, vibration, trauma release, manifestation, soul family (a group said to be bound together across lifetimes), divine feminine, astrology, plant medicine, breathwork, and "you were meant to be here."
- The newcomer is often told they are gifted, empathic, chosen, starseeded, blocked, awakening, or surrounded by negative energy that the group can help clear.
- Love bombing happens through instant cosmic intimacy: "I feel like we've known each other in past lives," "Your energy is powerful," "This circle is your real family."

The strongest defense. These spaces help people heal outside rigid religion.

The counter. Leaving traditional religion does not make someone immune to manipulation. If a group names your wound, flatters your identity, sells you healing, and makes skepticism sound like low vibration, it has rebuilt the church with crystals instead of crosses.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL Instant cosmic intimacy and chosen-identity framing are sales technique with no institution behind them.

2 · Weaponized Generosity

Giving help that installs unspoken obligation.

How it shows here

- New Age spaces may offer free circles, healing sessions, astrology readings, breathwork introductions, plant medicine communities, trauma language, manifestation coaching, and "soul family" belonging.
- The seeker may be told they are gifted, empathic, blocked, awakening, chosen, or carrying ancestral trauma that the group can help clear.
- Generosity turns into obligation through paid workshops, retreats, certifications, coaching packages, energy clearings, teacher loyalty, and constant "next level" healing.
- Emotional validation becomes the bait: "You are not broken. You are awakening." Then the invoice arrives: "Here is the course that will unlock it."

The strongest defense. These communities help people heal outside rigid religion.

The counter. A crystal invoice is still an invoice. If a group flatters your wound, names your pain, calls skepticism "blocked energy," and sells access to your higher self in installments, it has recreated religious dependency without admitting it is religion.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL Free circles, readings and introductions are offered as gifts and followed by paid workshops and retreats, a sales sequence that no institution sets or oversees.

Stage 2 · Hook

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

You are promised abundance, awakening, alignment and your highest timeline. None of it is ever measured, and every shortfall is attributed to your vibration. Retrieval is the next offering, the next container, and the suggestion that leaving was itself the block.

What it asks of you: A framework in which every failure is your frequency has made itself permanently unfalsifiable and permanently blameless.

3 · Future Faking

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

How it shows here

- New Age systems future-fake through awakening, ascension, 5D consciousness (a supposed higher plane of awareness), twin flame union (union with a single destined soul partner), abundance, manifestation, divine feminine activation, soul mission, starseed destiny, and energetic upgrade.

- The seeker is told they are special but blocked. The future self is radiant, healed, abundant, magnetic, intuitive, sexually liberated, financially free, and cosmically aligned.
- Every failure can be reinterpreted as a stage: purge, shadow work (exploring the parts of yourself you deny), dark night, ego death, ancestral clearing, karmic release, nervous system reset, integration.
- The future arrives through paid containers: retreats, masterminds, coaching packages, certifications, plant medicine ceremonies, breathwork intensives, astrology readings, energy healings.
- "Your breakthrough is close" becomes the spiritual entrepreneur's favorite sentence. Close enough to buy the next course. Not close enough to stop buying.
- Twin flame systems are especially brutal: abuse, abandonment, obsession, and humiliation are reframed as signs of a destined future union.

The strongest defense. These movements help people heal, find meaning, and imagine a better version of themselves.

The counter. Healing becomes future faking when the healed self is always one purchase away. If the teacher profits from keeping you almost awakened, almost abundant, almost united, almost embodied, almost aligned, then your future self is not liberation. It is inventory.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL Abundance and alignment are promised in popular teaching and course material with no verifiable endpoint; the page names no text that sets them out.

4 · Hoovering

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

How it shows here

- Someone leaving a New Age circle, coaching group, twin flame program, plant medicine community, or spiritual mentorship may be told they are blocked, afraid of expansion, resisting abundance, or abandoning their soul contract (a supposed pre-birth agreement).
- The teacher may return with sudden intimacy: "I felt your energy," "Your guides told me to reach out," "You are at a breakthrough point," "This is your ego trying to keep you small."
- If the person stops paying for sessions or courses, they may be told they are sabotaging their healing or dropping out right before transformation.
- Twin flame groups may hoover brutally: separation is framed as part of the journey, abuse as mirroring, obsession as destiny, and returning as spiritual courage.
- Former participants may be pulled back through "soul family" language — leaving the group means leaving the only people who truly understand their awakening.

The strongest defense. Spiritual communities check in because healing is difficult and people often quit when deep work begins.

The counter. That line is exactly how the trap protects itself. If every impulse to leave is labeled resistance, ego, fear, low vibration, or trauma response, then the person's boundary has already been discredited before it is spoken.

EVIDENCE GRADE

CULTURAL The entry describes teachers and twin flame groups answering a departure with claims of blockage and a sudden return of intimacy; it cites no text that instructs the practice, and the basis is observed practice.

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.

You are told the problem is your blocks, your resistance, your unhealed shadow and your scarcity mindset. The next level always addresses what the last one did not.

What it asks of you: You have paid repeatedly to fix something that is redefined each time you pay.

5 · Devaluation

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

How it shows here

- New Age movements can devalue through softer language: you are blocked, low vibration, unhealed, misaligned, unintegrated, wounded, asleep, carrying ancestral trauma, or resisting abundance.
- The person is flattered and diminished at the same time: you are powerful, but blocked; chosen, but wounded; gifted, but unintegrated; divine, but in need of the teacher's program.
- Skepticism becomes fear. Boundaries become trauma response. Anger becomes low frequency. Leaving becomes self-sabotage.
- Every ordinary problem can be spiritualized into personal deficiency: illness, poverty, loneliness, heartbreak, anxiety, and abuse become lessons you attracted, manifested, or failed to transmute.
- The self is never sinful; it is under-optimized.

The strongest defense. New Age spaces help people heal trauma and reclaim power.

The counter. Healing becomes devaluation when the teacher profits from keeping people perpetually almost healed. If your pain is constantly rebranded as blockage that requires another session, retreat, certification, or activation, then empowerment has become a boutique dependency loop.

EVIDENCE GRADE

CULTURAL Blocks, resistance, and unhealed shadow are described as the customer's condition in teaching and marketing; the page names no text that sets this out.

6 · Gaslighting

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

How it shows here

- Someone questions a teacher's prices, claims, or control, and is told they are in scarcity mindset.
- A person says a ceremony, coach, or group harmed them, and the answer is, "You are being triggered because this is deep work."
- Boundaries are called fear. Skepticism is called low vibration. Anger is called unhealed trauma. Leaving is called self-sabotage.
- Failure to manifest is blamed on limiting beliefs.
- Abuse may be reframed as a soul contract, mirror, karmic lesson, or necessary activation.

The strongest defense. Healing work often brings up resistance, and people sometimes project old wounds onto teachers.

The counter. That may sometimes be true, which is why it is such an effective trap. If every criticism can be rebranded as projection, then the teacher never has to be accountable. The client's wound becomes the teacher's legal defense.

EVIDENCE GRADE

CULTURAL Objections are reclassified as low vibration or unhealed shadow; the page names no text that teaches this, and the basis is observed practice.

7 · Double Bind

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

How it shows here

- Seekers are told to trust their intuition — until intuition says leave, at which point it is fear, ego, scarcity, or a trauma response. Intuition is sacred; yours is broken.
- 'Only take what resonates' — while resonance is trained, and non-resonance is diagnosed. The menu is open; ordering off it reveals your wound.
- You create your own reality: empowerment when you pay, culpability when you're harmed. The teacher's role appears in your reality only as a credit, never a cause.

The strongest defense. Self-responsibility teaching is the opposite of control; we return power to the individual.

The counter. Power is not returned when the individual carries all blame and the teacher keeps all credit and revenue. A frame where the seller can never be at fault is not spirituality's discovery; it is liability's oldest dream.

EVIDENCE GRADE

CULTURAL The paired instructions appear in the movement's common slogans (trust your intuition, only take what resonates, you create your own reality); the entry cites no text that sets them side by side, and the basis is observed practice.

Stage 4 · Confuse

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

You manifested this. Your vibration attracted it. This is your lesson. The person harmed becomes the cause of the harm, and the seller becomes a mirror.

What it asks of you: This is the only framework here that makes the victim the perpetrator by definition. Name it precisely.

8 · Intermittent Reinforcement

Unpredictable reward that creates addictive emotional dependency.

How it shows here

- Manifestation teaching is a purpose-built variable-reward loop: visualize, act, and attribute — hits prove the method, misses prove your vibration, and the course catalog resolves the gap.
- The guru-coach alternates public celebration of a client ('look at her breakthrough!') with public processing of her 'resistance,' and the group learns to crave the spotlight's warm setting.
- Signs, synchronicities, and angel numbers (repeating number sequences read as messages) pay out on ambient randomness harvested as personal messages — an infinite free slot machine whose interpretation manual costs $497.

The strongest defense. We teach people to notice abundance and possibility; attention training has real psychological benefits.

The counter. Attention training is real; so is attribution laundering. When the frame guarantees the seller credit for every hit and the buyer blame for every miss, the benefit being trained is the seller's.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL Manifestation teaching reads hits as proof of the method and misses as proof of the student's vibration, with the course catalog as the remedy for the gap; the variable-reward reading is this page's analysis, and no text is cited.

9 · Moving the Goalposts

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

How it shows here

- A person buys a healing session. Then they need a package, retreat, mastermind, certification, plant ceremony, integration container, nervous system reset, or abundance activation.
- If manifestation fails, the goalpost moves: limiting beliefs, shadow work, ancestral trauma, low vibration, blocked feminine energy, unhealed inner child.
- In twin flame systems, abuse or abandonment does not disprove the promise; it becomes "separation phase," "mirroring," "purging," or "union preparation."

The strongest defense. Healing is layered; people uncover deeper material over time.

The counter. Healing becomes moving the goalposts when the healer profits from declaring you never healed enough. If breakthrough is always one more purchase away, your wound has become inventory.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL Tiered funnels with each level addressing what the last did not; no published endpoint and no governing body.

10 · Strategic Ambiguity

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

How it shows here

- "Energy" can explain attraction, illness, money, trauma, boundaries, failure, abuse, and obedience without ever becoming testable.
- "Investment in yourself" can mean healing or simply paying high fees.
- "Resistance" can mean fear of growth, but also rational refusal, financial caution, or accurate perception of manipulation.

The strongest defense. Healing language is symbolic and helps people access deeper truths.

The counter. Symbol becomes strategic ambiguity when the teacher can redefine every no as resistance and every purchase as alignment. If words mean whatever keeps the client paying, the vocabulary is a sales funnel.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL Invisible authorities — the universe, guides, higher self — cannot be cross-examined by construction.

11 · Projection

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

How it shows here

- A coach may accuse a client of scarcity mindset for questioning prices while monetizing insecurity and selling abundance.
- A person setting boundaries may be accused of fear, low vibration, ego, or trauma response while the teacher is afraid of losing control.
- A leader accuses critics of projection while refusing to examine their own grandiosity, manipulation, or financial dependence on followers.
- Twin flame groups accuse people of resisting love while normalizing obsession, abuse, abandonment, or emotional chaos as destiny.

The strongest defense. Healing spaces help people identify blocks, projections, and fear patterns.

The counter. That becomes projection when the teacher's authority is never subject to the same diagnosis. If only the paying client has blocks and the profitable leader only has wisdom, dysfunction is being projected downward.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL The entry describes coaches answering questions about price with a charge of scarcity mindset and answering boundaries with a charge of fear; it cites no text that teaches the accusation, and the basis is observed practice.

12 · DARVO

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

How it shows here

- A client questions a healer, coach, guru, channeler, retreat leader, or twin flame mentor. The teacher denies harm and says the person is triggered, projecting, blocked, or in scarcity.
- Then the client is attacked as low vibration, unhealed, fear-based, narcissistic, or unwilling to do the work.
- The leader becomes the misunderstood healer; the harmed client becomes the toxic person who cannot receive medicine.
- Abuse becomes "activation." Boundary violations become "mirroring." Financial exploitation becomes "investment in yourself."
- The group may rally around the leader's energy, brand, or mission while isolating the critic.

The strongest defense. Deep healing often brings up resistance, projection, and discomfort.

The counter. Yes, and abusive leaders exploit that exact truth. If every complaint is diagnosed as the client's wound, then the teacher never has to answer for the wound they caused.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL Manifestation doctrine's blame reversal places the cause with the harmed party; the page names no text that teaches it, and the basis is observed practice.

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

- People become normalized into paying for healing: sessions, retreats, masterminds, ceremonies, certifications, astrology, energy work, coaching, integration, and "next-level" containers.
- Vague diagnoses become familiar: blocked, low vibration, unhealed, misaligned, scarcity mindset, trauma response, ancestral wound, ego resistance.
- Boundary violations are softened as activations, mirrors, triggers, soul contracts, karmic lessons, or nervous system expansion.
- In twin flame spaces, obsession, abandonment, emotional chaos, and abuse can become normalized as part of the "journey."
- The group trains people to treat destabilization as evidence that the process is working.

The strongest defense. Deep healing can feel uncomfortable and often unfolds in layers.

The counter. Healing becomes desensitization when discomfort is always interpreted in favor of the teacher. If pain, debt, obsession, or boundary collapse is repeatedly renamed growth, the person is being trained to ignore danger.

EVIDENCE GRADE

CULTURAL The entry describes paid healing, vague diagnoses and reframed boundary violations becoming familiar over time; no cited text teaches treating destabilization as a sign of progress, and the basis is observed practice.

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.

There is no membership, but there are sunk costs, identity investment, a community, and a framework in which the outside world is asleep. Critics are fearful, wounded, or attacking your light.

What it asks of you: There is no institution to leave, so there is also nowhere to complain. That was sold to you as freedom.

14 · Isolation

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

How it shows here

- New Age groups isolate through "soul family," energetic boundaries, twin flame ideology, spiritual coaching containers, plant medicine circles, retreats, manifestation groups, and claims that outsiders are low vibration or asleep.
- A teacher may tell clients to distance from people who "do not support your expansion," "cannot hold your frequency," or "trigger your old timeline."
- Family and friends who question the group may be reframed as narcissists, karmic tests, matrix agents, 3D attachments, or people threatened by your light.
- Twin flame systems can isolate people from ordinary dating, friends, and self-respect by making one obsessive bond feel cosmically superior.
- Paid communities become the only place where the person feels understood, special, gifted, awakened, or spiritually seen.

The strongest defense. Healing sometimes requires boundaries with people who invalidate growth.

The counter. Boundaries protect autonomy. Isolation redirects autonomy to the teacher. If everyone who questions the group becomes low vibration, unhealed, narcissistic, or asleep, then "soul family" has become a spiritual quarantine.

EVIDENCE GRADE

CULTURAL Insularity runs through community identity and the framing of outsiders as asleep — no membership, no boundary rule.

15 · Triangulation

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

How it shows here

- New Age triangulation runs through guides, ancestors, astrology charts, spirit messages, twin flames, soul contracts, group leaders, healers, coaches, plant medicine, and "the universe."
- A teacher does not say, "I want your money." They say, "Your guides say you are ready for the next container."
- A client who sets boundaries may be triangulated through their higher self: "Your ego is scared, but your soul wants this."
- Twin flame systems triangulate through destiny: the abusive or unavailable person becomes your mirror, your divine counterpart, your karmic assignment.
- Group members echo the leader's diagnosis: "You are in resistance," "You are blocked," "You are projecting," "You are abandoning your expansion."
- Astrology or energy readings can be used to bypass consent: your chart, aura, nervous system, past lives, or ancestors supposedly confirm what the teacher wants.

- The person is compared to others who "did the work" and manifested abundance, love, healing, or awakening.

The strongest defense. Spiritual communities use intuitive tools and group reflection to help people see patterns they may miss.

The counter. Reflection becomes triangulation when invisible authorities always validate the leader. If your guides, chart, ancestors, higher self, twin flame, group, and coach all somehow agree that you should pay, stay, forgive, or surrender, then the universe has been conveniently staffed by the sales team.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL Guides, ancestors, charts and the higher self are named as intermediaries who agree with the teacher; they cannot be questioned, and no institution sets or checks what they are said to confirm.

Stage 6 · Extract

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

Tiered funnels run from ninety-seven dollars to ten-thousand-dollar masterminds. In certification pyramids you pay to certify others. Retreats take place in unregulated settings with inadequate screening. Unlicensed practice runs adjacent to psychotherapy with no scope limits. And your objection is reclassified as low vibration.

What it asks of you: You have paid repeatedly to fix something that was redefined each time you paid. Ask when the definition will settle.

16 · Flying Monkeys

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

How it shows here

- A person leaving a healer, coach, twin flame group, plant medicine circle, or spiritual mentorship may be contacted by group members: "You're in resistance," "Your ego is scared," "You're abandoning your expansion."
- Assistants, clients, moderators, "soul family," or fellow initiates may pressure the person back into sessions, retreats, or paid containers.
- The leader may not attack directly; the community does it through energy language and concern.
- Private vulnerabilities shared in the group may be weaponized as proof that the person is triggered, unhealed, narcissistic, or blocked.

The strongest defense. Healing communities support people when they hit resistance.

The counter. Support becomes FLYING MONKEY behavior when the group's only interpretation is that leaving equals resistance. If every friend from the circle repeats the teacher's diagnosis, they are not supporting healing. They are enforcing the sales funnel.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL The entry describes group members, assistants and moderators repeating the teacher's diagnosis to a person who is leaving; no rule or text directs it, and the page cites no case record of it.

17 · Smear Campaign

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

How it shows here

- Former clients or members may be labeled low vibration, narcissistic, unhealed, blocked, fear-based, scarcity-minded, toxic, projecting, or unwilling to do the work.
- A person questioning prices may be accused of money trauma.
- A person setting boundaries may be described as abandoning their expansion.
- In twin flame groups, the person who leaves may be accused of resisting divine union or running from their soul contract.

The strongest defense. Healing spaces need to name resistance and projection.

The counter. Naming resistance becomes smear when every criticism is converted into pathology. If the teacher profits from diagnosing critics as unhealed, the diagnosis is not insight. It is reputation control.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL The entry describes former clients being labeled low vibration, unhealed or toxic after they leave; no rule or text directs it, and the page cites no case record of it.

18 · Silent Treatment / Stonewalling

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

How it shows here

- A client asks direct questions about money, credentials, harm, or boundaries and receives vague answers about energy, readiness, alignment, nervous system capacity, or soul lessons.
- The teacher says the person is triggered, projecting, in scarcity, or not ready to receive the truth.
- Refunds, complaints, or harm reports disappear into "integration," "process," or "shadow work."
- The person is emotionally interpreted instead of answered.

The strongest defense. Healing work can bring up projections and complex emotional material.

The counter. Complexity becomes stonewalling when plain questions never get plain answers. If the teacher can state the price clearly but not the accountability clearly, the fog is financial and spiritual protection.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL The entry describes plain questions about money, credentials and harm receiving answers about energy and readiness; the basis is observed practice, with no written policy and no case record cited.

19 · Manufactured Consent

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

How it shows here

- A client "chooses" expensive sessions after being told their abundance block, trauma pattern, or soul mission requires the next container.
- Consent to plant medicine, breathwork, touch, intimacy, or emotional exposure may occur in altered, vulnerable, group-pressure environments.
- A person "chooses" to remain in a twin flame dynamic because leaving is framed as running from destiny.
- Silence in a group ceremony is treated as agreement.

The strongest defense. Healing work is voluntary and clients choose what resonates.

The counter. Resonance is not informed consent. If the teacher controls the diagnosis, urgency, spiritual meaning, and group atmosphere, the client's yes may be produced by vulnerability rather than freedom.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL The entry describes consent given under diagnosis, urgency and group pressure, including in altered states; the basis is observed practice, and the page cites no case record of a contested consent.

20 · Trauma Bonding

The wound and the bandage come from the same hand.

How it shows here

- A teacher tells the client they are blocked, low vibration, unhealed, scarcity-minded, or resisting expansion — then offers paid healing, retreats, ceremonies, or coaching as relief.
- Pain from the group is reframed as activation, shadow work, ego death, or nervous-system expansion.
- Twin flame dynamics bond through abandonment and reunion, cruelty and "divine love," obsession and promised union.
- The person feels destabilized, then briefly euphoric when the teacher or group validates them again.

The strongest defense. Healing can be uncomfortable, and breakthroughs often follow difficult inner work.

The counter. Healing becomes TRAUMA BONDING when destabilization is repeatedly caused by the same person selling the relief. If pain always means the process is working and relief always requires another purchase, the bond is commercialized dependency.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL The entry describes the same teacher naming the wound and selling the relief, with twin flame groups bonding through abandonment and reunion; the basis is observed practice, with no cited text or case record.

21 · Learned Helplessness

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

How it shows here

- A client fails to manifest results and is told they have deeper blocks, scarcity, ancestral trauma, nervous-system resistance, or low vibration.
- They try boundaries and are told boundaries are fear.
- They try leaving and are told leaving is self-sabotage or abandoning their soul contract.
- Eventually they stop trusting their own no.

The strongest defense. Healing involves uncovering deeper layers and resistance.

The counter. Layered healing becomes LEARNED HELPLESSNESS when every failed promise becomes the client's deficiency. If the teacher's method can never fail, the client is trained to fail themselves.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL The entry describes clients told that failure, boundaries and leaving are each their own deficiency until they stop trusting their own no; the basis is observed practice, with no cited text or case record.

22 · Benevolent Control

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

How it shows here

- Coaches, healers, and spiritual teachers control clients through language of healing, expansion, alignment, nervous-system safety, and soul purpose.
- Expensive retreats and programs are framed as investments in the self.
- Boundaries are called fear. Skepticism is called resistance. Leaving is called self-sabotage.
- Group pressure is framed as support for transformation.

The strongest defense. Healing communities help people grow beyond fear and old patterns.

The counter. Growth becomes BENEVOLENT CONTROL when the teacher defines every refusal as fear. If the only empowered choice is the one that keeps you paying, staying, or surrendering, empowerment has become a sales script.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL The entry describes coaches and teachers framing expensive programs, and any refusal of them, in the language of care and fear; the basis is observed practice, with no written rule or case record cited.

23 · Infantilization

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

How it shows here

- Teachers call clients unhealed, blocked, low vibration, dysregulated, in scarcity, or not ready.
- Expensive programs are framed as containers because clients supposedly cannot hold transformation alone.
- Boundaries are treated as fear or trauma response.
- The teacher becomes the interpreter of the client's soul, body, energy, money, relationships, and destiny.

The strongest defense. Healing work supports people through growth they may not be able to navigate alone.

The counter. Support becomes INFANTILIZATION when the teacher profits from keeping the client not ready. If every no proves you are blocked and every yes proves you are growing, the healer has become a spiritual parent with a payment processor.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL The entry describes teachers calling adult clients unhealed, blocked or not ready and framing programs as containers the client cannot hold alone; the basis is observed practice, with no written rule or case record cited.

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 is rebranded as empath, starseed, healer, twin flame, divine feminine, lightworker, manifestor, wounded inner child, trauma survivor, or abundance channel.
- Ordinary confusion becomes spiritual identity: blocked, low vibration, awakening, ascending, shadow-working, integrating.
- The teacher may define the person's soul mission, energy type, past lives, relationship destiny, or abundance block.
- The person stops asking what they want and starts asking what their "higher self," chart, guides, or coach say.
- Identity becomes a market category.

The strongest defense. New Age frameworks help people find meaning and reclaim power.

The counter. Meaning becomes IDENTITY EROSION when the framework replaces direct self-knowledge. If your identity is constantly renamed by the person selling the next activation, your self has become a product line.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL The entry describes participants renamed as empaths, starseeds, healers or twin flames by the people selling the next activation; the basis is observed practice, and no written rule or case record is cited.

25 · Spiritual Bypassing

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

How it shows here

- Abuse is bypassed as soul contract, mirror, karmic lesson, activation, or twin flame dynamic.
- Anger is bypassed as low vibration.
- Boundaries are bypassed as fear or trauma response.
- Financial exploitation is bypassed as abundance work.
- Harmful advice is bypassed as "the energy shifted."
- Pain is reframed until accountability disappears.

The strongest defense. Spiritual healing helps people reframe pain and find meaning.

The counter. Reframing becomes SPIRITUAL BYPASSING when it protects the person causing harm. If every wound becomes a lesson and every critic becomes low vibration, spirituality has become a laundering service for abuse.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL Systemic harm is reframed as personal destiny and lesson across popular manifestation teaching; the page names no text, and the basis is observed practice.

26 · Financial Control

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

How it shows here

- New Age financial control may appear through expensive retreats, coaching packages, certifications, healing sessions, plant ceremonies, astrology readings, energy clearings, masterminds, and "containers."
- Clients may be told that hesitation means scarcity mindset, fear of abundance, resistance to expansion, or lack of self-worth.
- Trauma language can be monetized: every wound becomes a product category.
- The teacher profits from diagnosing the blockage and selling the breakthrough.

The strongest defense. Healing professionals deserve payment, and people choose services that resonate.

The counter. Payment becomes FINANCIAL CONTROL when no is pathologized. If financial caution is called scarcity and debt is called investment in your highest self, empowerment has become a sales funnel.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL Retreats, packages and certifications are sold on escalating tiers and hesitation is called scarcity. The page cites no case of financial control: the FTC's Herbalife action concerns a nutrition MLM, and the Ray and NXIVM convictions were not for financial control.

Stage 7 · Discard

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

Access ends, the container closes, the group moves on. There is no refund, no accountability, and no license to revoke. In extreme documented cases the result has been deaths at retreats and federal convictions, including racketeering that rested on branding, in the NXIVM case.

What it asks of you: There is no body you can report this to. Consider that this was the selling point.

27 · Manufactured Crisis

Creating urgency to suppress critical thinking and generate loyalty.

How it shows here

- New Age leaders may manufacture crisis through ascension windows, energetic portals, twin flame deadlines, ancestral curses, spiritual attacks, nervous system collapse, scarcity blocks, or urgent retreats.

- A client is told they are at a breakthrough point and must act now.
- Refusing a program may be framed as self-sabotage or missing a divine opportunity.
- The teacher creates urgency around healing, then sells the container.

The strongest defense. Healing work sometimes requires timely action and commitment.

The counter. Timing becomes MANUFACTURED CRISIS when urgency serves the seller. If every deadline, portal, activation, or breakthrough requires payment now, the crisis is not spiritual. It is marketing with incense.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL Ascension windows, portals and twin flame deadlines are described as urgency devices attached to a sale; the entry cites no text that sets them, and the page cites no record of a deadline being enforced.

28 · Discard

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

How it shows here

- A client who stops paying, questions the teacher, or leaves the group may be labeled low vibration, unhealed, narcissistic, blocked, fear-based, or unable to hold expansion.
- "Soul family" may vanish quickly once the person stops participating.

- The teacher may say the person chose their old timeline.
- Group members may distance themselves to protect their energy.
- Discard is framed as energetic hygiene.

The strongest defense. Healing communities need boundaries around toxic or misaligned energy.

The counter. Energetic boundaries become DISCARD when they remove critics while protecting the leader. If someone is family while paying and low vibration while leaving, the bond was never spiritual. It was conditional access.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL Containers close and access ends with no membership, no procedure, and nowhere to appeal.

Stage 8 · Replace

Your seat is filled before the door shuts, and nobody is responsible for any of it because the authority is attributed to spirit, the universe, or your own higher self.

The container closes, the group moves on, the algorithm supplies the next cohort. And the authority is spirit, the universe, your own higher self — none of which can be located, cross-examined, or held to anything.

What it asks of you: You left organized religion to escape a middleman and bought one with no ordination, no oversight, and no complaints procedure.

29 · Replacement

Your seat is filled before the door closes behind you.

How it shows here

- A client who stops paying is replaced by another seeker in crisis.
- A group member who questions the teacher is replaced by someone eager for the next retreat, activation, or mastermind.

- The teacher promotes new testimonials to drown out former clients' warnings.
- A twin flame coach replaces one disillusioned participant with another desperate for union.
- The funnel continues because pain is abundant.

The strongest defense. Teachers continue helping those who resonate.

The counter. Resonance becomes REPLACEMENT when the teacher cycles through wounded people. If every harmed client is "not ready" and every new client is "aligned," the business model depends on replacing disillusionment with fresh vulnerability.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL The entry describes departing clients being replaced by new seekers and new testimonials being promoted to drown out earlier warnings; the basis is observed practice, with no cited text or case record.

30 · Plausible Deniability

The institution is never responsible, because the authority is attributed to spirit, the universe or a higher self, none of which is available for cross-examination.

How it shows here

- A coach says clients freely choose programs, while hesitation is diagnosed as scarcity, fear, trauma response, or resistance.

- A teacher denies control by saying, “Only take what resonates,” while the group trains members to feel that resonance means obedience.
- Expensive retreats are framed as investment in self, while financial caution becomes low vibration.
- Harmful advice is denied because “you created your own reality” or “the energy shifted.”
- The leader avoids direct commands by attributing pressure to guides, astrology, higher self, spirit, ancestors, or the universe.

The strongest defense. People choose what resonates. Healing is uncomfortable. Spiritual guidance is not coercion.

The counter. Resonance is manufactured when the teacher controls the vocabulary of fear and alignment. Discomfort is not proof of healing; it can also be proof of harm. Guidance becomes PLAUSIBLE DENIABILITY when invisible authorities always agree with the seller.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL Authority attributed to the universe, guides, or higher self — unfalsifiable by construction and unaccountable by design.

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

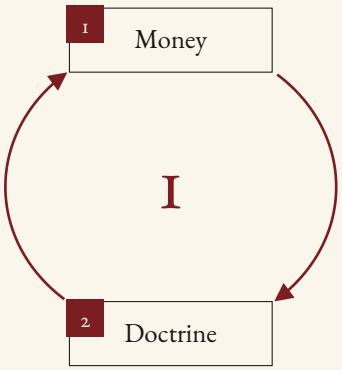
The loops

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. The loops are analysis built from findings recorded elsewhere on this page PATTERN OBSERVED; each step names the section or technique where its fact is recorded.

1 · Money to Doctrine to Money



Tiered funnels are priced by the person who defines what you still need, and the definition changes with each purchase.

How it runs.

1. A newcomer is welcomed warmly and offered free circles, readings or introductions (techniques 1 and 2).
2. The course funnel starts at $97 and rises to $997 and then to $10K masterminds (sections 1 and 9).
3. The teacher defines what the participant still needs, through blocks, resistance and an unhealed shadow (techniques 5 and 9).

4. Each shortfall is attributed to the participant's vibration or limiting beliefs, and the remedy offered is the next tier (techniques 3 and 6).

5. The participant pays, the definition of the need changes, and the next tier is offered (technique 9 and section 9).

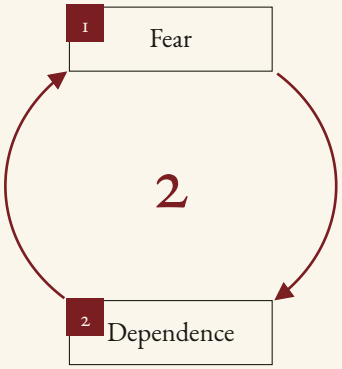
Techniques that feed it. 2 · Weaponized Generosity, 3 · Future Faking, 9 · Moving the Goalposts, 26 · Financial Control.

Why it closes. The person who defines the need also sets the price and judges whether the remedy worked. Section 14 records the 'guide' as the only person permitted to assess your progress, set the price and define the failure, so no outside measure can end the sequence.

Where it could be broken, and by whom. It weakens where the spending becomes visible and testable. A participant can ask for a written refund policy before the next payment and ask what would count as evidence that the method does not work (section 23, questions 2 and 4). Published refund rates, income disclosures and dropout data from the major certification pyramids would revise the funnel findings (section 20). This paragraph is analysis, not a documented finding.

An example from this page. In the composite day in section 2, a client who asks whether there is a refund policy for a $2,400 container is told about integration timelines and the journey being non-linear.

2 · Fear to Dependence to Fear



Blocks and low vibration supply the diagnosis, only the seller can assess relief, and failure is always yours.

How it runs.

1. A participant arrives with a need and is told they are blocked, low vibration or unhealed (technique 5 and section 12).
2. The teacher alone offers the relief, through paid sessions, retreats or certifications (technique 20).
3. The teacher alone judges whether the relief worked: a hit proves the method and a miss proves the participant's vibration (technique 8).
4. Doubt about the teacher is reclassified as fear, resistance or a trauma response (techniques 7 and 12).
5. The participant trusts their own judgment less and depends more on the teacher, and the cycle returns to the diagnosis (technique 21).

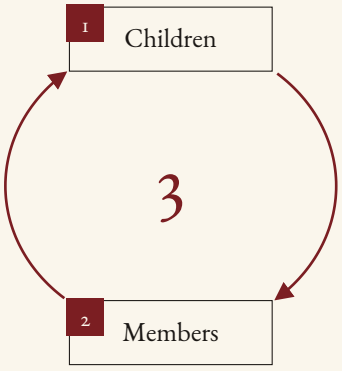
Techniques that feed it. 5 · Devaluation, 7 · Double Bind, 8 · Intermittent Reinforcement, 20 · Trauma Bonding, 21 · Learned Helplessness.

Why it closes. Diagnosis, relief and the judgment of relief come from the same person, and every failed outcome is assigned to the participant. Each doubt is told it is a symptom, which strengthens the next round.

Where it could be broken, and by whom. It weakens when the participant has a second opinion the teacher does not control. Section 24 says no product or practice replaces medical care, and section 23 asks who benefits from a rule that makes your discernment a defect (question 6). This paragraph is analysis, not a documented finding.

An example from this page. In the composite day in section 2, a client with a diagnosis asks whether to follow the protocol her oncologist recommended, and the practitioner says that the body knows and that fear has a frequency.

3 · Children to Members to Children



Indigo and starseed labeling and unschooling reach children with no institution to intervene.

How it runs.

1. Children are labeled indigo, starseed or crystal children, which attributes special cosmic status to them (section 11).
2. The label can displace diagnosis and treatment of real developmental or psychiatric needs (section 11).
3. Unschooling combined with anti-institutional ideology can leave children without basic educational grounding (section 11).
4. This page cites no case of a child harmed by refusal of vaccines or treatment in a New Age setting (section 11).
5. No institution stands anywhere in the picture to intervene (section 17), and the identity labels a child grows up with are those that technique 24 describes being applied to adults.

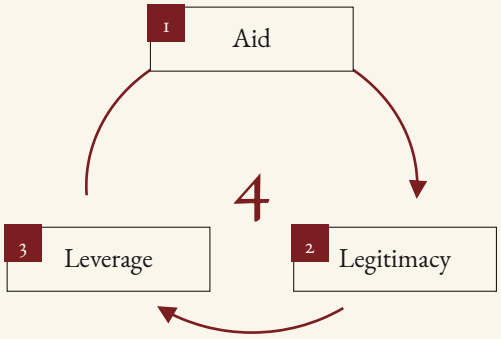
Techniques that feed it. 13 · Normalization / Desensitization, 24 · Identity Erosion, 25 · Spiritual Bypassing.

Why it closes. A child cannot assess the framework they are placed in, and nothing outside the household is positioned to notice. The page records no licensing body, complaints body or institution in the picture (section 17).

Where it could be broken, and by whom. It weakens where someone outside the household can see the child. Section 11 cites no prosecution in this area, and section 24 says no product or practice replaces medical care. Section 11 also notes that the page found no systematic data on children in ceremony and plant-medicine settings, so a first break is a record that does not yet exist. This paragraph is analysis, not a documented finding.

An example from this page. Section 17 lists children among those who carry the weight of this market: denied vaccines, treatment or schooling on ideological grounds. The page cites no individual case.

4 · Aid to Legitimacy to Leverage to Aid



Free help builds trust and an audience, and the audience feeds the next paid tier. This page records no conversion of that standing into legal or institutional leverage.

How it runs.

1. Free circles, readings and introductions are offered as help (technique 2).
2. The help builds trust and a sense of belonging in a 'soul family' (techniques 1 and 2).
3. The trust is converted into paid workshops, retreats and certifications, presented as the next step of healing (technique 19 and section 9).
4. The teacher's standing rests on audience and testimonials, which platforms amplify when they convert (sections 5, 7 and 18).
5. Standing brings new participants, who are offered the same free help. The standing is not a legal privilege, and nothing in the page's record constrains it (sections 7 and 8).

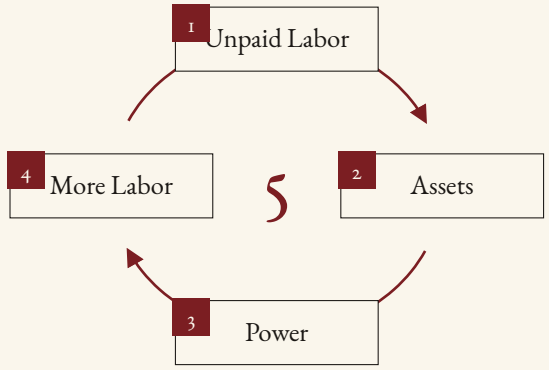
Techniques that feed it. 1 · Love Bombing, 2 · Weaponized Generosity, 19 · Manufactured Consent, 29 · Replacement.

Why it closes. The free help produces the trust that the next paid tier draws on, and the audience that results is the only standing the teacher needs. There is no credential, licence or complaints body to check it (sections 7 and 14).

Where it could be broken, and by whom. It weakens where the help is made conditional in writing, for example by asking for a refund policy before the next payment (section 23, question 2), and where a consumer-protection body acts on the claims made (section 8). This paragraph is analysis, not a documented finding.

An example from this page. In the composite day in section 2, a reel does 40,000 views and eleven people send messages asking about a container that costs $2,400.

5 · Unpaid Labor to Assets to Power to More Labor



Practitioners pay to be certified and affiliates promote for a referral commission; both recruit the next tier, and the margin flows upstream.

How it runs.

1. A practitioner pays to be certified (section 9, certification pyramids).
2. The practitioner delivers the sessions, pays upstream, and is asked to recruit the next tier (section 18).
3. Affiliate marketers sell the funnel to their own audience and are asked to post the testimonial (section 18).
4. Each recruit pays to be certified in turn, so the original certifiers hold a perpetual downstream fee share (sections 7, 9 and 10).
5. The margin flows upstream, and the recruits' work starts the next round (section 9).

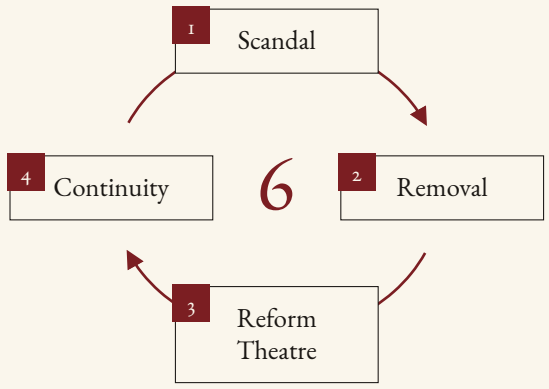
Techniques that feed it. 19 · Manufactured Consent, 24 · Identity Erosion, 26 · Financial Control, 29 · Replacement.

Why it closes. Each practitioner's income depends on certifying others, so the structure grows at the expense of the people at its bottom, who are paying for the right to recruit (section 10).

Where it could be broken, and by whom. It weakens where income and dropout data are published (section 20), where practitioners refuse to certify anyone (section 18), and where a regulator acts on recruitment-based pay, as the FTC did with Herbalife (section 8). This paragraph is analysis, not a documented finding.

An example from this page. Herbalife, a nutrition company rather than a spiritual organization, paid $200 million and restructured in 2016 after the FTC's action against its multi-level marketing operations (sections 8 and 9). The page records no comparable action against a certification pyramid.

6 · Scandal to Removal to Reform Theatre to Continuity



There is no removal because there is no institution; a court acts only after the harm.

How it runs.

1. A harm becomes public through deaths, a prosecution or a regulator's complaint (sections 5 and 19).
2. No body can remove the teacher, because there is no license to revoke and no register from which anyone can be struck (sections 7 and 14).
3. The teacher answers criticism by denying the harm and reversing the blame, or by not answering at all (techniques 12 and 18).
4. This page records no rebrand after a conviction; that a criticized teacher can carry on under another name is the prediction in section 14, not a finding.
5. The audience can re-form around whoever holds it, and the chair is held by whoever holds the audience (sections 7 and 14).

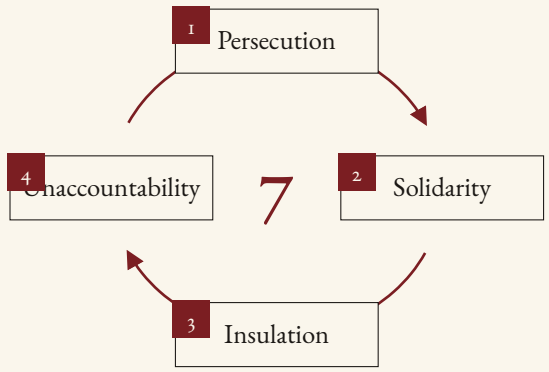
Techniques that feed it. 12 · DARVO, 18 · Silent Treatment / Stonewalling, 29 · Replacement, 30 · Plausible Deniability.

Why it closes. Nothing in the structure can impose a consequence except a court, and a court acts only after the harm (section 7). Without a body that can remove a teacher, a harm is followed only by what a court or regulator imposes afterward.

Where it could be broken, and by whom. It weakens where a register or licence exists that can strike a teacher off, which section 14 says does not exist, and where consumer-protection agencies and courts act on the claims made (section 8). This paragraph is analysis, not a documented finding.

An example from this page. In the Goop settlement the company paid $145,000 and accepted a ban on unsubstantiated health claims, and it called the settlement an "honest disagreement" (section 19).

7 · Persecution to Solidarity to Insulation to Unaccountability



Genuine harm done by organized religion is invoked to make scrutiny of the alternative look like a return to it.

How it runs.

1. Many participants arrive after organized religion hurt or bored them (section 3).
2. Their wish for direct experience with no gatekeeper is legitimate (section 3).
3. Critics of a teacher are reframed as spiritually asleep, wounded, or attacking the teacher's light (section 11).
4. Fellow participants repeat that reframing to people who question or leave (techniques 16 and 17).
5. Scrutiny of the teacher is then received as a return to the hierarchy the participant left, and the questions that would apply are not asked (sections 3 and 14).

Techniques that feed it. 11 · Projection, 16 · Flying Monkeys, 17 · Smear Campaign, 25 · Spiritual Bypassing.

Why it closes. The harm done by organized religion is real, and the participant's wariness of institutions is reasonable. The loop uses that wariness to protect a teacher who says they are not an institution.

Where it could be broken, and by whom. It weakens when the participant separates the wish for direct experience from the demand for payment. Section 23 closes by asking the reader to extend their instinct one step further, to the person selling access to their own intuition. This paragraph is analysis, not a documented finding.

An example from this page. Section 14 sets "There's no hierarchy here" against the record: there is no institution either, which means no credential to check, no complaints body and no refund.

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
You create your own reality.	If you create your own reality, the assaulted client created hers, and the seller can never be at fault. Ask them to finish the sentence.	PATTERN OBSERVED
I'm not a guru, just a guide.	It is said by the only person permitted to assess your progress, set the price, and define the failure.	PATTERN OBSERVED
This is ancient wisdom.	The wisdom comes from a tradition to which the seller is in no way accountable.	INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

There's no hierarchy here.	There is no institution either, which means no credential to check, no complaints body, and no refund.	PATTERN OBSERVED

Accountability or theatre?

Last time the chair ran. This page records no case in which a body removed a teacher. Courts convicted James Arthur Ray (2011) and Keith Raniere (2019) after the harm.

Who holds the chair now. The chair is held by whoever holds the audience.

Prediction. This is analysis, not a recorded finding: a criticized teacher can carry on, because there is no register anywhere from which anyone can be struck.

Words used here

TERM	WHAT IT MEANS INSIDE	WHAT IT DOES	SAID PLAINLY
Low vibration	It means a negative or unevolved energetic state.	It reframes criticism, grief, illness, and poverty as spiritual failures of the person experiencing them.	'Your suffering is your fault and your objection is a symptom.'

You manifested this	It is the doctrine that one's circumstances are self-created.	It is a victim-blaming instrument, and it can reach illness, assault, and bereavement.	'That happened because of you.'
Do your own research	It is an invitation to independent inquiry.	It can mean the opposite: reject institutional expertise in favour of sources the speaker has selected.	'Distrust experts and trust me.'
Holding space	It means being present with someone's process.	It can be given as the reason for not calling a doctor, a therapist, or the police.	'We watched and did not intervene.'

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

- There is no formal exit, but sunk costs, identity investment ('lightworker'), loss of community, and blame reversal ('you manifested this') make departure costly. **FORMER MEMBER TESTIMONY**

The ledger of exit

COST	DOCUMENTED?	DETAIL	THE OFFICIAL DENIAL
Formal penalty	None	There is no membership to lose, and the absence of structure is the selling point.	Accurately: no institutional exit cost exists.
Financial	Reported by former members	Course, retreat, and coaching spend is unrecoverable; some participants take on debt	“Everyone chose to invest in themselves.”
Blame reversal	Reported by former members	'You manifested this,' 'your vibration attracted it' — the framework makes the harmed person the cause	“That's just how energy works.”
Identity and community	Reported by former members	Lightworker/starseed identity and the group's belonging are real losses	“It was never a group, just a community.”

How the cost is denied

CHANNEL	LEVEL	NOTE
Explicit policy	Total deniability	There is no policy, no institution, and no document — nothing exists to hold anyone to.

Informal enforcement	High	Community vibe-policing and fear of being called low-vibration do all the work.
Leadership distance	Total	Every teacher is an independent business; there is no body that could ever be responsible.
Doctrinal ambiguity	Total	'The universe,' 'energy,' and 'your journey' are infinitely reinterpretable after harm.
Cultural outsourcing	High	Practices are attributed to ancient traditions to which the seller has no accountability.
Volunteer enforcement	High	Followers defend the teacher and attack critics unprompted.
Sacred secrecy	Medium	Initiation levels and closed containers restrict what participants may repeat.
Exit cost denial	High	The statement 'You're free to stop any time' comes from a frame in which stopping means you were not ready.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

There is no formal exit. The costs are sunk costs, identity ("lightworker") and a community, plus a blame reversal in which you are told you manifested whatever went wrong. The sunk-cost effect (Arkes & Blumer, 1985) is well documented: the more you've already paid, the harder it is to stop. If you started today, knowing what you know, would you buy the next level?

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 teacher-entrepreneur benefits, structurally incapable of being at fault within the frame ('you create your reality'). So do the platforms that take their cut and the upstream certification sellers. **PATTERN OBSERVED**

Money out, leverage back

- MLM-wellness hybrids have documented majority-loss structures wrapped in abundance and empowerment language, with regulators taking action in multiple jurisdictions. **GOVERNMENT REPORT** · FTC actions

- Plant-medicine and retreat tourism takes place in low-regulation settings; the US Embassy in Lima reported deaths and assaults at unregulated retreat centres in Peru [6]. This page cites no revenue figure. GOVERNMENT REPORT
- Wellness and conspirituality networks have been described as major vectors for medical misinformation, monetizing distrust of institutions; this page cites no study. PATTERN OBSERVED
- NXIVM demonstrated the full pipeline: personal-development curriculum to coercive control to federal convictions. COURT RECORD

Who pays

- People in medical crisis pay when they delay treatment for alternative protocols.
- Women pay when they are subjected to boundary violations by unlicensed healers and facilitators.
- Participants in unsafe ceremonies and retreats pay, including in fatal cases. COURT RECORD
- MLM participants pay when they lose money in documented majority-loss structures.
- Children may pay when they are denied vaccines, treatment, or schooling; this page cites no case.
- Indigenous communities pay when their ceremonies are sold without consent or benefit. INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

- Grieving and traumatized people pay when they are sold certainty by people with no training.

Sources for this section: [5]

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 harms recorded in this volume fall unevenly. Section 11 records the effects on information, children and bodies, section 16 records who pays, and section 22 records the retreat destinations. The table names who carries the most, how, and what makes it worse.

WHO	HOW	WHAT IT COMPOUNDS WITH
People in medical crisis	They delay treatment for alternative protocols.	It compounds with cancer, where delay is measured in survival.
Women	They suffer boundary violations by unlicensed healers, tantra teachers, and facilitators.	It compounds where there is no license to revoke and no body to report to.
Retreat participants	They face unsafe settings, inadequate screening, and documented deaths.	It compounds in foreign jurisdictions with no recourse.
MLM participants	They are sold majority-loss structures as abundance.	It compounds when they recruit their own friends and family, who also lose.
Children	They may be denied vaccines, treatment, or schooling on ideological grounds; this page cites no case.	It compounds where no institution anywhere in the picture can intervene.
Source communities	Their ceremonies are sold at Western prices, with no benefit reaching them.	It compounds when operators claim an authority nobody granted.

From The Medical Codex

- *Faith healing and delayed diagnosis* covers the 2009 Sedona sweat-lodge deaths and the subsequent negligent-homicide conviction, the seminar industry's ceiling, set in a criminal court.
- *Public health and the community effect* covers the reported migration of large wellness and religious audiences into medical disinformation during the pandemic period.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

The table puts people in medical crisis first: treatment delayed for alternative protocols, which with cancer is measured in survival. Then women facing boundary violations by unlicensed healers and facilitators, with no licence to revoke and no body to report to, and retreat participants. If someone you love has swapped chemotherapy for a protocol, would you know how to talk to them about it without pushing them further in?

The harms recorded in this volume fall unevenly.

18 The middle tiers

BEFORE YOU READ

The people in the middle: certified practitioners, community moderators, retreat facilitators and affiliate marketers 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.

This table sets out four roles in the middle of the teacher economy: the practitioners, moderators, facilitators and affiliate marketers (people who promote a program for a referral commission) who apply its terms to participants. For each role it shows what the person does, what they see, what they are asked to do and what they could refuse.

ROLE	DOES	SEES	IS ASKED TO	COULD REFUSE
Downstream certified practitioners	They deliver the sessions and pay upstream.	They see that the margin flows away from them.	They are asked to recruit the next tier.	They could refuse to certify anyone.
Community managers and moderators	They run the container and police the vibe.	They see which participants are in crisis.	They are asked to keep the energy high.	They could refuse to remove someone for asking a hard question.

Retreat facilitators	They hold the room during altered states.	They see who should never have been admitted.	They are asked to keep the group moving.	They could refuse to run a ceremony without medical screening.
Affiliate marketers	They sell the funnel to their own audience.	They see the conversion data and the refund requests.	They are asked to post the testimonial.	They could refuse to promote a programme they have not completed.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

If you are a practitioner, a moderator, a facilitator or an affiliate marketer, 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.

Sweat lodge deaths and conviction

WHEN: 2009–2011

WHAT: Three participants died after a sweat-lodge ceremony at a paid retreat run by a self-help figure; participants had paid up to $10,000 [2]. This page cites no record of the leader's training or of the safety arrangements.

RECORD: Verdict reported by CNN, 22 June 2011 [2]

OUTCOME: The retreat leader was convicted of negligent homicide on three counts and died in January 2025 [15]. The case demonstrates the consequence structure of an industry with no licensing body and a doctrine that locates failure in the participant.

TACTICS: 13 · Normalization / Desensitization, 26 · Financial Control

GRADE: DOCUMENTED

NXIVM prosecutions

WHEN: 2018–2020

WHAT: A personal-development organization was found to have operated a coercive inner structure in which women were branded and required to provide collateral. Federal convictions followed for racketeering and sex trafficking.

RECORD: U.S. federal court records

OUTCOME: The founder was sentenced to 120 years. The case is the clearest documented pipeline from self-improvement curriculum to coercive control.

TACTICS: 19 · Manufactured Consent, 22 · Benevolent Control, 24 · Identity Erosion

GRADE: DOCUMENTED

Sources for this section: [2] [3] [15]

Health claims in court (United States, 2018)

WHEN: 2018

WHAT: Goop marketed jade and rose-quartz eggs as able to balance hormones, regulate menstrual cycles, prevent uterine prolapse and increase bladder control, and a flower-essence blend as helping prevent depression [9].

RECORD: Settlement with ten California district attorneys, September 2018 [8] [9]

OUTCOME: The company paid $145,000 in civil penalties and accepted a ban on unsubstantiated health claims, and it called the settlement an "honest disagreement"; the settlement carried no admission of liability, and Goop is a wellness retailer rather than a spiritual organization [8] [9].

TACTICS: 3 · Future Faking

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
Criminal convictions were won in the retreat-death and coercive-branding cases.	Prosecutors, survivors, and journalists broke the pattern.	The convictions came in 2011 and 2019.	It took three deaths and years of documented abuse first.
Regulators took action against MLM-wellness structures.	Consumer protection regulators did so.	The action is ongoing.	It is slow, and the structures reconstitute.
Some practitioners have adopted credentials, scope-of-practice honesty, and refund policies.	A minority has done so, voluntarily.	It is ongoing.	It carries a competitive disadvantage against people who promise more.
Indigenous nations have formally denounced the sale of their ceremonies.	Lakota elders and others did so.	It began in 1993 and has continued.	The denunciation has been largely ignored by the market.

What would change this page

Refund rates, honest income disclosures, and dropout data published by the major certification pyramids would revise the funnel findings on this page.

Sources for this section: 2 3 4 5

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

Voices recorded on this page: one former insider, a community that denounced the sale of its ceremonies, and the families of the dead. Only the first spoke from inside a movement.

Only one of the three voices below, Sarah Edmondson's, comes from inside a movement. The Lakota Summit and the families of the Sedona

dead speak from outside the market, and this page cites no insider voice from the wider New Age market.

- **Sarah Edmondson.** She is a former NXIVM recruiter who became a whistleblower and wrote *Scarred* [10].
- **The Lakota Summit V** issued a 1993 declaration that condemned the sale of Lakota ceremonies by outsiders [4].
- **The families of the Sedona sweat-lodge dead** are the people whose case produced a conviction [2].

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.

United States

APEX: There is no apex; authority sits with teachers and companies.

LAW: Criminal, consumer and FTC law all apply [2][3][5][8].

DOCUMENTED: The record covers Ray (2011) [2], NXIVM (2019–2020) [3] and Goop (2018) [8][9].

EXIT: Leaving is legally free; the costs are money, debts to course providers, and relationships inside the group.

REGULATOR: District attorneys, the FTC and federal prosecutors act as regulators [3][5][8].

TELL: The industry's ceiling was set by prosecutors, not by any spiritual authority.

Peru and retreat destinations

APEX: Retreat operators hold the top position.

LAW: Local law applies, and retreats are little regulated [6].

DOCUMENTED: The record covers deaths and assaults at unregulated centres [6].

EXIT: This page records no exit rules for retreat destinations.

REGULATOR: There is effectively no regulator; the US Embassy issued a warning [6].

TELL: The most dangerous product in this market is sold far from any regulator.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

This page covers the United States and Peru and retreat destinations. 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

Ask your teacher what qualification they hold, who issued it, and who could revoke it. Note how the question is received.

WHY THIS IS ASKED

A qualification means something only if someone can revoke it. The question asks who issued your teacher's, and who could take it away.

EXAMPLE ALREADY ON THIS PAGE

The cases section describes the sweat-lodge deaths as the result of "an industry with no licensing body and a doctrine that locates failure in the participant."

QUESTION 2 OF 6

Ask for a refund policy in writing before the next payment. The answer is the whole assessment.

WHY THIS IS ASKED

A written refund policy is the simplest consumer protection there is. If your teacher won't give you one before the next payment, you already know what you need to.

EXAMPLE ALREADY ON THIS PAGE

The glance table records tiered course funnels and certification pyramids, "paying to become a certified healer who certifies others."

QUESTION 3 OF 6

If you create your own reality, ask them to say plainly whether the assaulted client created hers. Make them finish the sentence.

WHY THIS IS ASKED

"You create your own reality" has an unavoidable implication: victims are responsible for what was done to them. The question asks teachers to say it out loud.

EXAMPLE ALREADY ON THIS PAGE

The say-do table sets "You create your own reality" beside its conclusion: "If you create your own reality, the assaulted client created hers, and the seller can never be at fault. Ask them to finish the sentence."

QUESTION 4 OF 6

Ask what would count as evidence that the modality does not work. If nothing could, you

are not buying a method.

WHY THIS IS ASKED

A method that no evidence could ever disprove isn't a method. The question asks what result would count as failure.

EXAMPLE ALREADY ON THIS PAGE

The cases section records Goop's settlement over claims that jade eggs balance hormones and prevent uterine prolapse. The company called it an "honest disagreement" [8][9].

QUESTION 5 OF 6

Ask who is above your teacher — who they answer to, who audits them, who hears complaints. The silence is the finding.

WHY THIS IS ASKED

Everyone who holds power over others answers to someone. The question asks your teacher to name who that is.

EXAMPLE ALREADY ON THIS PAGE

The glance table records that no one appoints a teacher and no one removes one, except a court after the harm.

QUESTION 6 OF 6

You were told skepticism is low vibration. Ask who benefits from a rule that makes your discernment a defect.

WHY THIS IS ASKED

If skepticism is called "low vibration," your own judgment becomes a defect. The question asks who benefits from that.

EXAMPLE ALREADY ON THIS PAGE

The cases section describes NXIVM as "the clearest documented pipeline from self-improvement curriculum to coercive control," ending in a sentence of 120 years for its founder.

In closing

You left organized religion because you did not want a middleman between you and the sacred. Look honestly at what you have now: a middleman with no ordination, no oversight body, no doctrine you can check them against, and a framework that makes every failure yours. You did not escape the church. You bought a franchise of it with better lighting.

The instinct that brought you here was sound — direct experience, no gatekeeper, your own authority. Keep it, and then extend it one step further than they want you to: to the person selling you access to your own intuition. Anything that is really yours does not require a payment plan.

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. **Check refund and cancellation terms** before you pay for any course or retreat; consumer law applies.

2. **No product or practice replaces medical care;** report false health claims to consumer or advertising regulators [8].
3. **Before a plant-medicine retreat,** read official travel warnings [6].
4. **If a group has taken over your money, work or relationships,** get outside help [11] [12] [13].

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	FOR	WHERE	CONTACT
ICSA	Former members of high-control groups; families	International	Contact is through its website; no phone number is printed here [12]
Recovering from Religion	People questioning or leaving belief systems	US, Canada and online	**(844) 368-2848** (US and Canada; UK +44 20 3807 4583; Australia +61 2 8203 7137; text chat that tries to offer a 24-hour service, no phone hours listed) [11]
Faith to Faithless	People leaving high-control groups	UK	**0800 448 0748** (freephone; Monday 10:00–13:00, Wednesday 10:00–13:00, Thursday 16:00–19:00 UK time) [13]
RAINN	Sexual assault	US	**1-800-656-4673** (free, confidential, 24 hours a day) [14]

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Save one contact now, before anyone needs it: **ICSA** (former members of high-control groups; families; International). 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.

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3. US Attorney's Office, EDNY, "NXIVM Leader Keith Raniere Sentenced to 120 Years in Prison" (27 Oct 2020; convicted June 2019 of racketeering, sex trafficking and other crimes). https://www.justice.gov/usao-edny/pr/nxivm-leader-keith-raniere-sentenced-120-years-prison-racketeering-and-sex-trafficking
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11. Recovering from Religion — (844) 368-2848. https://www.recoveringfromreligion.org/

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

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. RAINN National Sexual Assault Hotline — 1-800-656-4673. https://rainn.org/learn-about-rainn/contact-us/

15. KJZZ (Phoenix), report on the death of James Arthur Ray, 6 Jan 2025 — Ray, convicted of negligent homicide after the 2009 Sedona sweat-lodge deaths, died suddenly in January 2025, aged 67; the family gave no cause. https://www.kjzz.org/kjzz-news/2025-01-06/james-arthur-ray-convicted-of-negligent-homicide-at-sedona-sweat-lodge-dies

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 size figure to say what the survey measured: belief in four things in 2018, not membership. Removed the claim that platform owners sit at the top of a chain of command, and the unsourced claims about growth, revenue, rebranding after convictions and children's deaths. Removed the name of a living person from the timeline, and removed two shared money-flow cards that described organizations this page never records. Noted that James Arthur Ray died in January 2025, that Herbalife and Goop are not spiritual organizations, and that Goop settled without admitting liability. Corrected the description of the NXIVM convictions and the sweat-lodge case to what the sources state. Regraded every technique to Cultural, because none rests on a named document. Corrected two case tags, two loop summaries and the Faith to Faithless, Recovering from Religion, RAINN and ICSA entries.
- **2026-09-27:** Added Branches, Law & state, Money in numbers, a third documented case, Voices from inside, two 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.