



Spiritual Abuse: Recognizing and Addressing in Clinical Situations

Jamie Marich

PhD, LPCC-S, REAT



Jamie Marich

PhD, LPCC-S, REAT

- Licensed Supervising Professional Clinical Counselor, Registered Expressive Arts Therapist (IEATA), 500-hour trained yoga teacher
- EMDRIA Certified Therapist/Approved Consultant and Training Provider
- 24 years of experience working in social services and counseling; includes three years in civilian humanitarian (Bosnia-Herzegovina)
- Author of *EMDR Made Simple*, *Trauma and the 12 Steps*, *Trauma Made Simple*, *Process Not Perfection: Expressive Arts Solutions in Trauma Recovery*; *Transforming Trauma with Jiu-Jitsu*; co-author of *EMDR Therapy & Mindfulness for Trauma-Focused Care* and *Healing Addiction with EMDR Therapy*
- Creator of the Dancing Mindfulness practice and author of *Dancing Mindfulness: A Creative Path to Healing and Transformation*
- Author of *Dissociation Made Simple: A Stigma-Free Guide to Embracing Your Dissociative Mind and Navigating Life* (2023) and *You Lied to Me About God: A Memoir* (2024)
- Interfaith Seminarian, The Chaplaincy Institute

Purpose Statement

To give learners an overview of the basic terminology surrounding spiritual abuse and religious trauma and to assist them in recognizing its impact when it shows up in clinical settings.

Too often there has been an association that spiritual abuse is simply about “cults” (the kind that get documentaries), yet its manifestations are so much more varied.

Objectives

1

Define spiritual abuse from a pastoral, developmental, and clinical perspective.

2

Identify the common themes amongst religious denominations and spiritual practices that have led to abuse experiences in individuals.

3

Assess for commonly encountered negative cognitions acquired by those who have been spiritually abused in the context of clinical symptomology.

4

Develop a trauma-informed treatment or service plan that is sensitive to the needs of clients who have experienced spiritual abuse.

5

Identify components of healthy spirituality that can assist in the recovery process within any clinical or human services approach.

**How would you define
spiritual abuse?**

**(There is no right or wrong answer here, this is
simply a question for your reflection.)**

Marich (2018)

Whenever a person or system in a position of power uses God or any other spiritual construct as a **weapon** to control, manipulate, or demean, spiritual abuse occurs.

Wherever religion/spirituality and a power differential exist, spiritual abuse can happen.

“The power differentials can take many forms with some of the most commonly observed being that of a religious/spiritual leader to congregant/disciple, teacher to student, and parent to child. In the largest possible sense, the power that a theocratic political state exercises over its people can also be viewed as a spiritually abusive dynamic, especially when the language of “God’s will” or “God’s plan” is used to justify state-sponsored discrimination or withdrawal of basic rights.”

Ellis et al. (2022)

- Components of defining spiritual abuse and religious trauma across 25 studies:
 - Misuse of power
 - Psychological harm
 - Spiritual harm

National Domestic Violence Hotline (2022)

Spiritual abuse is no less harmful or difficult to endure than any other kind of abuse, as a person's spiritual life is deeply personal. However, it can be very difficult to identify, as many victims may not recognize they are being abused. In addition, the abusive partner may claim that any challenge to the abuse is an assault on their own religious freedom.

Definitions and Foundations



Sociological



Pastoral/Biblical



Clinical

Comes from the Latin meaning “to worship.”

In modern usage, there is a negative connotation, generally meaning *a new religious movement or other group whose beliefs or practices are considered abnormal or bizarre.*

“guru”



Sanskrit word meaning “teacher” or “master,” literally translated as “one who casts out darkness.”



The purpose of a healthy guru or teacher is to help one discover the *true guru* that lives within themselves.



In the modern era, more of a negative connotation ascribed: *anyone who manipulates others under the guise of knowing what’s best for them* (Kramer & Alstad, 1993).

Characteristics of a Cult (Langone/ICSA, 1993)

- The group displays excessively zealous and unquestioning commitment to its leader and (whether he is alive or dead) regards his belief system, ideology, and practices as the Truth, as law.
- Questioning, doubt, and dissent are discouraged or even punished.
- Mind-altering practices (such as meditation, chanting, speaking in tongues, denunciation sessions, and debilitating work routines) are used in excess and serve to suppress doubts about the group and its leader(s).

Characteristics of a Cult (Langone/ICSA, 1993)

- The leadership dictates, sometimes in great detail, how members should think, act, and feel (for example, members must get permission to date, change jobs, marry—or leaders prescribe what types of clothes to wear, where to live, whether or not to have children, how to discipline children, and so forth).
- The group is elitist, claiming a special, exalted status for itself, its leader(s) and members (for example, the leader is considered the Messiah, a special being, an avatar—or the group and/or the leader is on a special mission to save humanity).

Characteristics of a Cult

- The group has a polarized us-versus-them mentality, which may cause conflict with the wider society.
- The leader is not accountable to any authorities (unlike, for example, teachers, military commanders, or ministers, priests, monks, and rabbis of mainstream religious denominations).
- The group teaches or implies that its supposedly exalted ends justify whatever means it deems necessary. This may result in members' participating in behaviors or activities they would have considered reprehensible or unethical before joining the group (for example, lying to family or friends, or collecting money for bogus charities).

Characteristics of a Cult

- The leadership induces feelings of shame and/or guilt in order to influence and/or control members. Often, this is done through peer pressure and subtle forms of persuasion.
- Subservience to the leader or group requires members to cut ties with family and friends, and radically alter the personal goals and activities they had before joining the group.

Characteristics of a Cult

- The group is preoccupied with bringing in new members.
- The group is preoccupied with making money.
- Members are expected to devote inordinate amounts of time to the group and group-related activities.
- Members are encouraged or required to live and/or socialize only with other group members.

Characteristics of a Cult

- The most loyal members (the “true believers”) feel there can be no life outside the context of the group. They believe there is no other way to be and often fear reprisals to themselves or others if they leave (or even consider leaving) the group.

For More Resources from ICSA



<https://www.icsahome.com/home>

For More Resources on Ritual Abuse



<http://ra-info.org/>
<https://therasa.org/>

Ritual abuse is an extreme, sadistic form of abuse of children and non-consenting adults. It is methodical, systematic sexual, physical, emotional, and spiritual abuse, which often includes mind control, torture, and highly illegal and immoral activities such as murder, child pornography, and prostitution. The abuse is justified by a religious or political ideology.

Van Vonderen & Johnson (1991)

“Spiritual abuse is the mistreatment of a person who is in need of help, support, or greater spiritual empowerment, with the result of weakening, undermining or decreasing that person’s spiritual empowerment.”

Post-Traumatic Church Syndrome Riley (2015)*

- A condition of spiritual injury that occurs as a result of religion, faith, and/or the leaving, losing, or breaking thereof
- The vile, noxious, and otherwise foul *aftermath* of said spiritual injury
- A serious term intended to aid serious spiritual healing—without taking itself too seriously in the process.

* ***Not to be confused with a medical disorder or mental diagnosis.*** This author is not a doctor nor does she play one on the written page. Origin: Back of a napkin, 2002

Blue (1993)

- Describes the first major incident of “spiritual abuse” recorded biblically in Ezekiel 37, when a story is told of how religious authorities sinned against their followers, revealing the plight of those getting “injured and frightened” under the care of their “false shepherds.”
- Jesus taught on the abuse of power by Pharisees in Matthew 23.

Matthew 23: 23-24

“Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices—mint, dill and cumin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law —justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former. You blind guides! You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel.”

Ryan & Ryan (1992)

- “Spiritual abuse is a kind of abuse which damages the central core of who we are. It leaves us spiritually disorganized and emotionally cut off from the healing love of God.”



Purcell (2008)

- Spiritual abuse: *any unhealthy mind-altering relationship with the God of a person's conception which has life-harmful consequences.*
- Exists on a continuum:
 - Zero...Mild...Moderate...Severe...Terrorism

Purcell (2008):

3 Primary Causes of Spiritual Abuse

- **Legalism:** A religious belief that people can please God or any chosen deity, even earning their way into heaven or an afterlife, through obeying the rules; commensurate with a *reward and punishment* mentality, the lowest stage in Kohlberg's stages of moral development
- **Literalism:** The belief that the Bible or other sacred texts must be interpreted literally, not symbolically, to be properly understood
- **Mixed messages:** Receiving two contrasting viewpoints about God or spirituality (e.g., "God loves you unconditionally," vs. "But God will only love you if you follow all of the rules")

Clericalism (Plante, 2020)

- **Clericalism** allows a small group of highly regarded and special leaders to have the power and privilege to make all or most of the important and critical decisions for the organization and those within it.
- Little to no input taken from parishioners, other stakeholders in the community, and if taken it is not highly regarded
- A particular problem causing and exacerbating the abuses identified within the Roman Catholic Church, although not unique to the RCC

Traits of Those Who Abuse (Marich, 2018)

- Narcissistic traits/tendencies, resulting from deep insecurity; “traumatized narcissism” (Shaw, 2014)
- Usually a genuine belief that they are doing “the right thing;” *rarely an intent to harm*
- Skilled in the language of love, emotions, trust, and intimacy

Traits of the Vulnerable (Marich, 2018)

- Deep insecurity *and* emotional sensitivity
- A genuine intent to pursue truth, “do the right thing”
- “Love is earned”
- Deep longing for love, emotions, trust, and intimacy
- Periods of crisis or major life change

The Role of Disorganized Attachment (Stein, 2021)

- Disorganized attachment style is highly vulnerable; if a person does not already operate in this style, cultic/abuse systems work to cultivate it in followers.
- “The primary task of the totalist system to effect this change: to gain control of followers it must, in fact, rewire attachment behavior and utterly reconfigure followers’ attachments” (loc. 801).

CALFB: Child Abuse Linked to Faith or Belief (Oakley, et al., 2019)

- Lack of research in this area, leading to this significant mixed methods survey of over 1,300 participants.
- Frontline workers express a lack of understanding and experience of child abuse linked to faith or belief (CALFB), and all require specific training.
- There is a need for faith literacy training and a space for statutory and faith-based communities to dialogue to build trust, formulate policy, and share good practice.
- Policy around CALFB needs to be formulated and translated into practice.

Development of the Spiritual Abuse and Harm scale

(Koch & Edstrom, 2022)

- Developed from 66 survey prompts given to 3,222 participants; Christian context.
- Six factors measured in the 27-item scale:
 - *Maintaining the system*
 - *Internal distress*
 - *Embracing violence*
 - *Controlling leadership*
 - *Harmful God image*
 - *Gender discrimination*
- See your dashboard for public domain access to the screener.

Test Your Knowledge!

After hearing the story behind this picture, which primary cause of spiritual abuse does it represent?

- A. Mixed messages
- B. Literalism
- C. Legalism
- D. Clericalism



Test Your Knowledge!

After hearing the story behind this picture, which primary cause of spiritual abuse does it represent?

- A. **Mixed messages**
- B. Literalism
- C. Legalism
- D. Clericalism



The Case of Denise (Marich, 2010)

- Grew up in a Baptist home, both father and stepfather were Baptist ministers
- Was always taught that she was “going to hell” if she had sex before marriage, so figured she was “doomed” after sleeping with her boyfriend at age 19
- Developed sexual addiction and eventually chemical addiction
- Upon presenting for addiction treatment at age 40, the two biggest cognitions she had to work on were “I am deserving [of treatment]” and “I am deserving of God’s love.”

The Case of Danyell (Marich, 2011)

- Grew up in an Evangelical home with a very “strict” father and an alcoholic mother
- Sexually assaulted by another student at the “church school” as a pre-teen
- Realized she was a lesbian in her teens
- Sexually assaulted at one of her mother’s AA meetings as a teenager

The Case of Danyell (Marich, 2011)

- When she presented for treatment for PTSD and cannabis dependence in her thirties, had a difficult time connecting with any semblance of a “Higher Power” or spirituality, even though she felt it was in her nature to be spiritual.

Common “Stuck” Cognitions in Sexual and Emotional Abuse

- I’m not good enough.

Common “Stuck” Cognitions in Sexual and Emotional Abuse

- I’m not good enough.
- I’m permanently damaged.

Common “Stuck” Cognitions in Sexual and Emotional Abuse

- I’m not good enough.
- I’m permanently damaged.
- It’s my fault.

Common “Stuck” Cognitions in Sexual and Emotional Abuse

- I’m not good enough.
- I’m permanently damaged.
- It’s my fault.
- My body is ugly.

Common “Stuck” Cognitions in Sexual and Emotional Abuse

- I’m not good enough.
- I’m permanently damaged.
- It’s my fault.
- My body is ugly.
- I have to be perfect.

Common “Stuck” Cognitions in Sexual and Emotional Abuse

- I’m not good enough.
- I’m permanently damaged.
- It’s my fault.
- My body is ugly.
- I have to be perfect.
- I cannot trust anyone.

Common “Stuck” Cognitions in Sexual and Emotional Abuse

- I’m not good enough.
- I’m permanently damaged.
- It’s my fault.
- My body is ugly.
- I have to be perfect.
- I cannot trust anyone.
- I’m not worthy.

Common “Stuck” Cognitions in Sexual and Emotional Abuse

- I’m not good enough.
- I’m permanently damaged.
- It’s my fault.
- My body is ugly.
- I have to be perfect.
- I cannot trust anyone.
- I’m not worthy.
- I am not safe.

Common “Stuck” Cognitions in Sexual and Emotional Abuse

- I’m not good enough.
- I’m permanently damaged.
- It’s my fault.
- My body is ugly.
- I have to be perfect.
- I cannot trust anyone.
- I’m not worthy.
- I am not safe.
- I cannot show my emotions.

Common “Stuck” Cognitions in Spiritual Abuse

- I have to be perfect.

Common “Stuck” Cognitions in Spiritual Abuse

- I have to be perfect.
- I am defective.

Common “Stuck” Cognitions in Spiritual Abuse

- I have to be perfect.
- I am defective.
- I am not deserving [of God’s love/grace].

Common “Stuck” Cognitions in Spiritual Abuse

- I have to be perfect.
- I am defective.
- I am not deserving [of God’s love/grace].
- I am a disappointment [in God’s eyes].

Common “Stuck” Cognitions in Spiritual Abuse

- I have to be perfect.
- I am defective.
- I am not deserving [of God’s love/grace].
- I am a disappointment [in God’s eyes].
- I cannot trust my judgment.

Common “Stuck” Cognitions in Spiritual Abuse

- I have to be perfect.
- I am defective.
- I am not deserving [of God’s love/grace].
- I am a disappointment [in God’s eyes].
- I cannot trust my judgment.
- I am demonic/possessed/ “Satan’s child.”

Common “Stuck” Cognitions in Spiritual Abuse

- I have to be perfect.
- I am defective.
- I am not deserving [of God’s love/grace].
- I am a disappointment [in God’s eyes].
- I cannot trust my judgment.
- I am demonic/possessed/ “Satan’s child.”
- I am not safe in the world.

Common “Stuck” Cognitions in Spiritual Abuse

- I have to be perfect.
- I am defective.
- I am not deserving [of God’s love/grace].
- I am a disappointment [in God’s eyes].
- I cannot trust my judgment.
- I am demonic/possessed/ “Satan’s child.”
- I am not safe in the world.
- I am cursed.

Common “Stuck” Cognitions in Spiritual Abuse

- I have to be perfect.
- I am defective.
- I am not deserving [of God’s love/grace].
- I am a disappointment [in God’s eyes].
- I cannot trust my judgment.
- I am demonic/possessed/ “Satan’s child.”
- I am not safe in the world.
- I am cursed.
- _____

Oppressive Cognitions (Levis & Siniego, 2016)

- Originated as auto-punitive beliefs
- Applicable to the individual or the specific minority group
- Typically sociopolitically influenced and culturally reinforced in an ongoing and insidious manner by the dominant majority and the media
- Successful resolution depends on an acknowledgment of the impacts that historic and ongoing social oppression have upon the presenting problem.



General Consensus Model of Trauma Treatment (ISSTS, 2012)

- PHASE I: Stabilization/Preparation
 - *EMDR Phases 1-2*
- PHASE II: Processing of Trauma
 - *EMDR Phases 3-6*
- PHASE III: Reintegration
 - *EMDR Phases 7-8*

Education, Awareness, and Recognition (Ellis, et al., 2022)

- Interventions to educate individuals are promising for prevention and treatment in individual or group contexts
- Social media can be a positive element in raising awareness.
- Working with all three functions of the definition (e.g., abuse of power, psychological harm, spiritual harm) is critical in treatment, especially in cases of domestic violence and where spiritual abuse is concurrent with other forms of abuse.
- Self-reflection and supervision is important for the therapist.

National Domestic Violence Hotline

(2022)

National Domestic Violence Hotline (2022)

- If you are experiencing spiritual abuse, it can help to create a safety plan that might include:
 - Reaching out to a trusted member of your spiritual/religious community for support.
 - Exploring options for practicing your faith/religion in a safe way.
 - Creating an emotional safety plan.

What constitutes healthy spirituality?

(There is no right or wrong answer here,
this is simply a question for your
reflection.)

Healthy Spirituality (Interfaith Resource)

From the Center For Unhindered Living (2012)

- Realizes that spirituality is simply the search for meaning in everyday life.

Healthy Spirituality (Interfaith Resource)

From the Center For Unhindered Living (2012)

- Realizes that spirituality is simply the search for meaning in everyday life.
- Has compassion, forgiveness, respect, and unconditional love as its foundation.

Healthy Spirituality (Interfaith Resource)

From the Center For Unhindered Living (2012)

- Realizes that spirituality is simply the search for meaning in everyday life.
- Has compassion, forgiveness, respect, and unconditional love as its foundation.
- Encourages individuals to look within to find the source of all wisdom and knowledge.

Healthy Spirituality (Interfaith Resource)

From the Center For Unhindered Living (2012)

- Realizes that spirituality is simply the search for meaning in everyday life.
- Has compassion, forgiveness, respect, and unconditional love as its foundation.
- Encourages individuals to look within to find the source of all wisdom and knowledge.
- Accepts that each person's path is right for them and does not devalue paths that are different from their own.

Healthy Spirituality (Interfaith Resource)

From the Center For Unhindered Living (2012)

- Realizes that spirituality is simply the search for meaning in everyday life.
- Has compassion, forgiveness, respect, and unconditional love as its foundation.
- Encourages individuals to look within to find the source of all wisdom and knowledge.
- Accepts that each person's path is right for them and does not devalue paths that are different from their own.
- Acknowledges that each person alone contains everything needed for a fulfilling and successful spiritual existence.

Healthy Spirituality (Interfaith Resource)

From the Center For Unhindered Living (2012)

- Recognizes that our spirituality arises from our own personal relationship with God/the Universe, and not from our relationship with any religious institution.

Healthy Spirituality (Interfaith Resource)

From the Center For Unhindered Living (2012)

- Recognizes that our spirituality arises from our own personal relationship with God/the Universe, and not from our relationship with any religious institution.
- Recognizes the spiritual/intuitive gifts of all individuals as divinely empowered.

Healthy Spirituality (Interfaith Resource)

From the Center For Unhindered Living (2012)

- Recognizes that our spirituality arises from our own personal relationship with God/the Universe, and not from our relationship with any religious institution.
- Recognizes the spiritual/intuitive gifts of all individuals as divinely empowered.
- Stresses the releasing of judgment and the acceptance of the connectedness and unity of all.

Healthy Spiritual Abuse Recovery

Christian-Based Source (Orlowski, 2010)

- Allow sufficient time to grieve.

Healthy Spiritual Abuse Recovery

Christian-Based Source (Orlowski, 2010)

- Allow sufficient time to grieve.
- Forgive and release the situation to God.

Healthy Spiritual Abuse Recovery

Christian-Based Source (Orlowski, 2010)

- Allow sufficient time to grieve.
- Forgive and release the situation to God.
- Find a suitable faith community.

Healthy Spiritual Abuse Recovery

Christian-Based Source (Orlowski, 2010)

- Allow sufficient time to grieve.
- Forgive and release the situation to God.
- Find a suitable faith community.
- Move forward in Christ with the help of the Holy Spirit.

Other RECOMMENDED RESOURCES – BOOKS

- Ajoy, A. (2024). *Star Spangled Jesus: Leaving Christian nationalism and finding a true faith*. Worthy Books.
- Anderson, L. (2023). *When religion hurts you: Healing from religious trauma and the impact of high control religion*. Brazos Press.
- Bolz-Weber, N. (2019/2020). *Shameless: A case for not feeling bad about feeling good (about sex)*. Convergent Books.
- Connelly, G. (2017). *Boy erased: A memoir of identity, family, and faith*. Riverhead Books.
- Evans, R. H. (2015). *Searching for Sunday: Loving, leaving, and finding the church*. Nelson Books.
- Goldberg, L., Goldberg, W., Henry, R., & Langone, M. (2017). *Cult recovery: A clinician's guide to working with former members and families*. International Cultic Studies Association.

Other RECOMMENDED RESOURCES – BOOKS

- Gungor, M. (2019). *This*. Roundtree Press.
- Karris, M. (2020). *Religious refugees: (De)constructing toward spiritual and emotional healing*. Quoir.
- Lalich, J., & Tobias, M. (2006). *Take back your life: Recovering from cults and abusive relationships*. Bay Tree Publishing. (Now in its 3rd edition)
- Langone, M. (1995). *Recovery from cults: Help for victims of psychological and spiritual abuse*. W.W. Norton & Co.
- Marich, J. (2022). *Trauma and the 12 steps: Revised and expanded edition*. North Atlantic Books.
- Marich, J. (2024). *You lied to me about God: A memoir*. North Atlantic Books.
- Menakem, R. (2022). *The Quaking of America*. Central Recovery Press.
- Mertz, R.B. (2022). *Burning Butch*. Unnamed Press.

Other RECOMMENDED RESOURCES – BOOKS

- Paintner, C. V. (2017). *The wisdom of the body: A contemplative journey to wholeness for women*. Sorin Books.
- Pasquale, T. (2015). *Sacred wounds: A path to healing from spiritual trauma*. Chalice Press.
- Remski, M. (2024). *Surviving modern yoga*. North Atlantic Books.
- Sztokman, E. (2022). *When rabbis abuse: Power, gender, and status in the dynamics of sexual abuse in Jewish culture*. Lioness Books.
- Winelle, M. (2006). *Leaving the fold: A guide for former fundamentalists and others leaving their religion*. New Harbinger Publications.

Other RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

- **Articles**

- Amico, J. (2003). *Healing from spiritual abuse: Assisting gay and lesbian clients*. NALGAP.
- Marich, J. (2018). *Confessions of a recovering “pro-lifer.”* Christian Feminism Today. <https://eewc.com/confessions-of-a-recovering-pro-lifer/>
- Sandlin, M. (2011). *Clobbering “biblical gay bashing.”* Patheos. <https://www.patheos.com/blogs/thegodarticle/2011/10/clobbering-biblical-gay-bashing/?repeat=w3tc>
- Wilton, G. (2025). *I apologize to LGBTQ Catholics*. Outreach. <https://outreach.faith/2025/01/cardinal-wilton-gregory-i-apologize-to-lgbtq-catholics/>

Other RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

- **Websites**

- Charter for Compassion: <https://charterforcompassion.org/>
- Q Christian Fellowship: <https://www.qchristian.org/>
- Faith on the Fringe: <https://faithonthefringe.com/>
- The Guru: Exposing Cults and Spiritual Abuse: <https://gurumag.com/>
- Healthy Beliefs: www.healthybeliefs.org
- International Cultic Studies Association: <https://www.icsahome.com/home>
- Lalich Center on Cults and Coercion: www.lalichcenter.org
- Patheos: <https://www.patheos.com/>
- Reclamation Collective: <https://www.reclamationcollective.com>
- Ritual Abuse Survivors Association : <https://therasa.org/>
- Religious Trauma Therapists Network (Closed Facebook Group):
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/197185142402308>

Other RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

- **Documentaries & Movies**
 - Around the World in 80 Faiths (2009)
 - Hillsong: A Megachurch Exposed (2022)
 - Holy Hell (2016)
 - Sins of the Amish (2022)
 - Going Clear (2015)
 - The Deep End (2022)
 - Jesus Camp (2006)
 - Keep Sweet: Pray and Obey (2022)
 - Kumaré (2011)
 - The Way Down (2022)
 - Saved! (2004)
 - Reversing Roe (2018)

Other RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

- **Documentaries & Movies**
 - The Source Family (2012)
 - AKA Jane Roe (2020)
 - Wild, Wild Country (2018)
 - The Vow (2020)
 - Pray Away (2021)
 - Seduced: Inside the NXVIM Cult (2021)
 - Bad Faith (2024)
 - Escaping Twin Flames (2024)
 - True Believer (2024)
 - 1946: The Documentary (2023)

References

- Bagwell-Gray, M. E., Thaller, J., Messing, J. T., & Durfee, A. (2021). Women's reproductive coercion and pregnancy avoidance: Associations with homicide risk, sexual violence, and religious abuse. *Violence Against Women*, 27(12–13), 2294–2312. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10778012211005566>.
- Blue, K. (1993). *Healing spiritual abuse*. InterVarsity Publishing.
- Brown, J. (2019). *Grounded spirituality*. Enrealment Press.
- Center for Unhindered Living (2012). Qualities of healthy spirituality [online resource originally accessed in 2012, website no longer active]
- Cloitre, M., Courtois, C.A., Ford, J.D., Green, B.L., Alexander, P., Briere, J., Herman, J.L., Lanius, R., Stolbach, B.C., Spinazzola, J., Van der Kolk, B.A., Van der Hart, O. (2012). *The ISTSS Expert Consensus Treatment Guidelines for Complex PTSD in Adults*.
- Davis, M., & Johnson, M. (2021). Exploring Black clergy perspectives on religious/spiritual related domestic violence: First steps in facing those who wield the sword abusively. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma*, 30(7), 950–971. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10926771.2020.1738615>.
- Ellis, H.M., Hook, J., Zuniga, S, Hodge, A.S., Ford, K.M., Davis, D.E., & van Tongeren, D.R. (2022). Religious/spiritual abuse and trauma: A systematic review of the empirical literature. *Spirituality in Clinical Practice*, 9(4), 213-231. <https://doi.org/10.1037/scp0000301>.

References

- Fowler, J. (1981). *Stages of faith: The psychology of human development*. Viking/Harper Collins.
- Hobson, W.W., Enroth, R., Langone, & Giambalvo, C. (2012). *Suffer the little children: Understanding and overcoming spiritual abuse*. Author [Kindle Book].
- Koch, D. & Edstrom, L. (2022). Development of the spiritual harm and abuse scale. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 61(2), 476-506. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jssr.12792>.
- Kramer, J. K. & Alstad, D. (1993). *The guru papers: Masks of authoritarian power*. North Atlantic Books.
- Landers, A. L., Danes, S. M., Campbell, A. R., & Hawk, S. W. (2021). Abuse after abuse: The recurrent maltreatment of American Indian children in foster care and adoption. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 111, 104805. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2020.104805>.
- Langone, M.D. (Ed.) (1993). *Recovery from cults: Help for victims of psychological and spiritual abuse*. W.W. Norton & Co.

References

- Levis, R.V., Siniego, L. B. (2016). An integrative framework for EMDR therapy as an anti-oppression endeavor. In Nickerson, M.I. (Ed.), *Cultural competence and healing culturally-based trauma with EMDR therapy: Innovative strategies and protocols*. Springer Publishing Company.
- Marich, J. (2010). EMDR in addiction continuing care: A phenomenological study of women in recovery. *Psychology of Addictive Behaviors*, 24(3), 498-507.
- Marich, J. (2011). *EMDR made simple: Four approaches to using EMDR with every client*. Eau Claire, WI: PESI Publishing.
- Marich, J. (2018). No longer trapped: Insights on spiritual abuse recovery. *Christian Feminism Today*. Available: <https://eewc.com/spiritual-abuse/>.
- National Domestic Violence Hotline (2022). What is spiritual abuse? Retrieved 25 July 2022, from <https://www.thehotline.org/resources/what-is-spiritual-abuse/>.
- Oakley, L., Kinmond, K., Humphreys, J., & Dioum, M. (2019). Safeguarding children who are exposed to abuse linked to faith or belief. *Child Abuse Review*, 28(1), 27-38. <https://doi.org/10.1002/car.2540>.
- Orlowski, K. (2010). *Spiritual abuse recovery: Dynamic research on finding a place of wholeness*. Wipf & Stock Publishing.

References

- Plante, T. (2020). Clericalism contributes to religious, spiritual, and behavioral struggles amongst Catholic priests. *Religions*, 11(5), 217. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel11050217>.
- Purcell, B.C. (2008). *Spiritual terrorism: Spiritual abuse from the womb to the tomb*. AuthorHouse.
- Riley, R. (2015). *Post traumatic church syndrome: One woman's desperate, funny, and healing journey to explore 30 religions before her 30th birthday*. Howard Books.
- Ryan, D. & Ryan, J. (1992). *Rooted in God's love*. InterVarsity Publishing.
- Shaw, D. (2014). *Traumatic narcissism: Relations systems of subjugation*. Routledge.
- Simmons, B. W. (2017). Coming out Mormon: An examination of religious orientation, spiritual trauma, and PTSD among Mormon and ex-Mormon LGBTQIA adults (No.10724/38227) [Doctoral dissertation, University of Georgia]. Open Access Theses & Dissertations. https://getd.libs.uga.edu/pdfs/simmons_brian_w_201712_phd.pdf
- Stein, A. (2021). *Terror, love and brainwashing: Attachments in cults and totalitarian systems*. Routledge.
- Van Vonderen, J. & Johnson, D. (1991). *The subtle power of spiritual abuse: Recognizing & escaping spiritual manipulation and false authority within the church*. Bethany House Publishers.

Thank You!

Jamie Marich, PhD

The Institute for Creative Mindfulness

jamie@jamiemarich.com

www.jamiemarich.com

www.redefinetharpy.com

www.instituteforcreativemindfulness.com

IG: drjamiem

TikTok: traumatherapistrants

YouTube: DrJamieMM





You have completed the course: **Spiritual Abuse: Recognizing and Addressing in Clinical Situations**

Thank you!