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| **Solo Abuser Tactics** | **Cult Leader Tactics** |
| Unattainable expectations | 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. |
| Any use of force during a disagreement:  Grabbing an arm, shoving, forceful leading will escalate over time //  Controlling behavior disguised as "concern."  (ie you were ten minutes late coming home from work, or why didn't you take these phone calls from me? etc.) | Questioning, doubt, and dissent are discouraged or even punished. |
| Substance abuse | 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). |
| Rigid role assignments  Usually this refers to gender roles but there are other situations that it can apply to as well. | 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). |
| Abuse of Privilege – male privilege, breadwinner privilege, ableist or disableist privilege | 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). |
| Hypersensitivity  Are very easily insulted or upset; often through these means the abuser makes him or herself out to be the victim.//  Negative attitude toward a specific group of people  Someone who says or implies "all women are ..." "all men are ..." "all the mundanes are ..." | The group has a polarized us-versus-them mentality, which may cause conflict with the wider society. |
| Criminal record// Blame shifting for problems AND for feelings  "You make me mad"  "I got fired because my boss hates me" etc. | The leader is not accountable to any authorities (unlike, for example, teachers, military commanders or ministers, priests, monks, and rabbis of mainstream religious denominations) |

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| Spiritual Abuse – use of religious doctrines to justify household behavior | 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). |
| Verbal abuse  Use of words to make you feel pain and/or fear. Often designed to induce a feeling of helplessness.//  Routine threats, often excused as "everyone talks that way."  Perhaps momentary exaggerations happen but saying it all the time is not typical.  // Deliberately breaking or hitting objects.  Again, it's any behavior intended to induce fear. |  |
| Use of male/gender/provider privilege | 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. |
| Quick involvement/too fast  (the person that wants to move in, meet family, go on long trips WAY TOO SOON) | The group is preoccupied with bringing in new members. |
| Isolation | Members are expected to devote inordinate amounts of time to the group and group-related activities. |
| **Isolation** | Members are encouraged or required to live and/or socialize only with other group members. |
| Isolation | 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. |