

	<b>Ritual Abuse</b>
<b>Definition</b>	Ritual abuse is a severe form of abuse of children, adolescents and adults consisting of physical, sexual, emotional and spiritual abuse involving the use of rituals or ceremonial abuse.
<b>To note...</b>	<p>“Both people, the supporter and Ritual Abuse Survivor, are alike in their common humanity. They are not innately different. The ritual abuse survivor is not a defective human being. The ritual abuse survivor is a normal human being suffering from the effects of a horrendously abnormal environment that is often experienced like a completely different culture”</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Lynette Danylchuk</p>
<b>Characteristics of Ritual Abuse.</b>	<p>Ritual abuse is most commonly repetitive abuse, which can be multi-generational and commonly associated with ritual beliefs and practices; often satanic but not necessarily.</p> <p>The abuse often occurs within families (both extended and immediate) or cult groups. There are often multiple abusers and occurs over an extended period of time.</p> <p>Abuse can also occur outside of a child’s family without the parent’s knowledge.</p> <p>Children are often born into a cycle of abuse and incorporated into the ritual of abuse both as perpetrator and victim. Commonly birthing rituals are performed.</p> <p>The abuse rituals and occurrences often coincide with cult and/or satanic calendars (see below list). Birthdays are often included in the dates of abuse.</p> <p>Ritual abuse survivors commonly reports rituals around both animal and human sacrifice. Many rituals involve the use of blood.</p> <p>Ritual abuse provokes extreme feelings and reactions; children were often punished for expressing those feelings so they learn to block out, numb or split from those feelings.</p>
<b>Mind Control</b>	<p>Mind control is the cornerstone of ritual abuse.</p> <p>It is a tool used to silence and indoctrinate (uncritical acceptance) the victims. Mind altering drugs are often used in order to gain compliance. It is about ensuring conformity, restrict free will, behaviour control, and create altered belief systems which revolve around cult principles and beliefs.</p> <p>Cults impose a variety of techniques beginning with conditioning which is conducive to indoctrination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) <b>Physical:</b> exhaustion, drugs, isolation, hunger, thirst, pain, sexual abuse, bright lights.</li> <li>b) <b>Emotional :</b> Terror, guilt and shame, emotional isolation &amp; despair, rage,</li> </ul>

	<p>c) <b>Cognitive:</b> lack of information, confusion.</p> <p>With mind control the individuals behaviour becomes reactionary and subconscious at times rather than conscious.</p>
<p><b>Elements of Cult Indoctrination</b>  * revised  <i>(Ritual Abuse; Report of the Ritual Abuse Task Force; 1989)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Isolation of the victim and manipulation of their environment.</li> <li>• Control over channels of communication and information.</li> <li>• Debilitation through inadequate diet and fatigue.</li> <li>• Degradation or diminution of the self.</li> <li>• Induction of uncertainty, fear, and confusion, with cult defined ‘happiness and certainty’ gained through surrender to the group rituals and indoctrination.</li> <li>• Alternation of harshness and leniency in context of discipline (inconsistency creates uncertainty &amp; self-doubt)</li> <li>• Peer pressure generating guilt and requiring open confession (which may lead to punishment).</li> <li>• Insistence by seemingly all-powerful host that the individual’s survival, both spiritual and physical, depends wholly upon identifying and conforming to the group.</li> <li>• Assignment to monotonous or repetitive tasks such as chanting or copying written material.</li> <li>• Acts of symbolic betrayal or renunciation of self, family and previously held values, designed to increase psychological distance between victim’s (previous) life, inside and outside of cult group/rituals.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Impacts on a victim/survivor of Ritual Abuse</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Terrors or profound fears.</li> <li>• Guilt and fear of discovery</li> <li>• Loneliness (when abuse is outside of family)</li> <li>• Identification with being ‘Evil’</li> <li>• Rage over victimization</li> <li>• Loss of sense of self – <i>indoctrination resulted in identifying with group rather than knowing one-self.</i></li> <li>• Absence of free will – <i>sense of being controlled at all times.</i></li> <li>• Feeling like there is no escape – <i>Cult as omnipresent.</i></li> <li>• Cult as complete controller.</li> <li>• Feeling unable to protect oneself</li> <li>• Feels as though the cult group is their only community.</li> <li>• Memories are dangerous.</li> <li>• Disclosure is dangerous.</li> <li>• Belief that Satan is all powerful and God has rejected you.</li> </ul> <p>Ritual abuse trains people to be outer oriented, to take their cues from the people around them.</p> <p>Honest expression of feelings often resulted in punishment so identifying feelings is often difficult.</p> <p>Many survivors have blocked out the memories of their abuse and may only have vague feelings which come as memories through flashbacks or</p>

	triggers.
<b>Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID)</b>	<p>Due to severe abuse and trauma, many individuals who experience ritual abuse develop a coping mechanism to ‘split’ from the abuse as it occurs, as well as from memories of previous abuse.</p> <p>This coping mechanism, previously known as Multiple Personality Disorder, is now known as Dissociative Identity Disorder.</p> <p>A disorder characterizes by two or more identities or personalities that alternatively take over the person’s behaviour.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ DID is closely correlated with severe trauma in childhood (approx. 98%), most typically extreme, repeated physical, sexual and/or emotional abuse.</li> <li>◆ Dissociation is a mental process of disconnecting from one’s surroundings – this exists on a continuum of severity.</li> <li>◆ DID is serious and chronic.</li> <li>◆ There is a high level of suicide among people with DID</li> <li>◆ DID is a COPING mechanism for children/people experiencing abuse and for survivors of abuse.</li> <li>◆ Chronic dissociation may result in a series of separate entities or mental states which eventually take on identities of their own.</li> </ul> <p>Certain personalities are created to cope with different life experiences/responsibilities/roles and come in and out when the issue at hand changes or is modified (switching).</p> <p>“DID is the most extreme form of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and is the result of the child’s desperate attempt to survive and adapt to an overwhelmingly confusing and cruel world. DID is a normal child’s reaction to an abnormal environment and, as such, is a normal and common reaction to ritual abuse. I have seen ritual abuse victims who do not have DID (they do have other forms of repression and dissociation), but I have never seen a person with DID who has not been subjected to severe abuse.”</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Lynette Danylchuk</p>
<b>Common Triggers for Ritual Abuse Survivors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Circles, groups of people,</li> <li>● Candles, robes, hooded clothing, masks</li> <li>● Catholic Priests, Monks</li> <li>● certain colours (red, black, white, purple),</li> <li>● spiders, snakes, maggots,</li> <li>● rice, spaghetti,</li> <li>● goats or goats head, cows, chickens, cats, rabbits,</li> <li>● chalice, crosses,</li> <li>● Weddings, funerals</li> <li>● Babies</li> <li>● Coffins, boxes, cemeteries, death, cages</li> <li>● Needles, operations</li> <li>● Hypnosis</li> <li>● Dentist, Doctors, people in uniform</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire, bright lights</li> <li>• Bells, ringing noises, high-pitched sounds</li> <li>• Blood, bones</li> <li>• Going to the bathroom, vomiting</li> <li>• Being photographed</li> <li>• Mirrors, wires</li> </ul>
<p><b>Coping and Support</b></p>	<p>Always believe the survivor.</p> <p>Never blame the survivor.</p> <p>Don't talk about religion of any kind unless the survivor brings it up.</p> <p>Never patronize the survivor, no matter what their age.</p> <p>As previously mentioned many ritual abuse survivor have develop dissociation as a coping mechanism. Providing open and accepting support for someone disclosing or identifying dissociation is an important first step.</p> <p>Try NOT to use common 'support phrases' as they may have been used in cult programming, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You're safe now</li> <li>• It's going to be okay.</li> <li>• It's all over now.</li> <li>• They can't hurt your now/anymore.</li> </ul> <p>Stick to current phrases: it is 2005, you are in your home, look outside it is snowing/raining/sunny...</p> <p>Many ritual abuse survivors find journaling or drawing to useful when moving through a memory or intense feelings.</p> <p><b>Listen, accept and learn.</b></p>
<p><b>Sabbaths/Festivals</b></p>	<p>The following may be difficult or triggering dates for ritual abuse survivors.</p> <p>January 7th St. Winebald Day</p> <p>January 13<sup>th</sup> Satanic New Year</p> <p>February 1 Olmelc</p> <p>February 2 Candlemas</p> <p>February 14 Fertility rituals</p> <p>February 25 Walpurgis Day</p> <p>March 21 Feast of the Spring Equinox</p> <p>April 20 to May 1: this is one of the most active times of the year, with weeks of preparation for Beltane (Walpurgisnacht) on April 30 and May 1</p> <p>June 21, 22 Summer Solstice rituals</p> <p>July 31, August 1 Lammas</p> <p>September 5 to 7 Marriage of the Beast</p> <p>September 21 Fall Equinox</p>

	<p>October 29 to Nov. 4 All Hallow's Eve and Halloween rites, with follow up revels in early November for some groups  December 21-22 Winter solstice  December 25<sup>th</sup> Christmas</p> <p>Certain holidays will change year to year, since they are tied to the lunar cycle. One is the Easter revels, which begin the week before Easter in some groups. Some groups tie their spiritual rituals to full moons, and new moons.</p> <p>The person's birthday will also be tied to special ceremonies and initiations.</p>
<p><b>References and Resources</b></p>	<p>The following resources were used to research this material.</p> <p>Brown, Dee “The Treatment of Satanic Ritual Abuse Survivors: a Therapist’s Handbook”1989.</p> <p>Danylchuk, Lynette, Survivor Ship May 1992 V. IV, Issue 5. “ Treating Ritual Abuse Survivors”, p.1014</p> <p>KWSASC Ritual Abuse notes. 1994</p> <p>Waterwomon, Cheryl, Canadian Woman Studies V. 11, No.4 “ One Survivor’s Experience of Ritual Abuse”</p> <p>“Ritual Abuse: Definition, Glossary, The Use of Mind Control.” Report of the Ritual Abuse Task Force. Los Angeles County Commission for Women. Septempber 15, 1989</p>