### **IDENTIFYING AND PREVENTING DANGERS**

Many people have the desire for a sense of belonging and meaningful relationships. This understandable need can easily be exploited. Special religious and ideological groups appear under a variety of names and their actual aims are often not obvious at first glance. Prudence is always called for when this involves the individual having an unusually strong link with a community or people who exert a high degree of social control and demand large personal, time or financial investments.



#### HOW CAN ANY AFFECTED PEOPLE BE HELPED?

Anyone who finds themselves in an overpowering community is often excited in the beginning ...

Therefore: Do not impose your help! This only triggers resistance, withdrawal and a lack of understanding.

It is more helpful to stay in contact and be there for the person affected because it is easier to find your way back to reality if there are people whom you can confide in.

**Do not hand over any money!** You would at best be supporting a dubious organisation.

**Information** about the group or doctrine does **not need to be retained**. Critical objections can help the individual to ask questions one day.

**Indicate alternatives** that may help the affected people to find a new meaning in their life.

#### INFORMATION AND ADVICE

People seeking advice can contact various places depending on what is important to them. That's because only people who know what they have had to face can decide what is good for them!

#### PUBLIC BODIES:

Baden-Württemberg Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport Coordination Centre for "Sects and Psycho Groups" PO Box 10 34 42, 70029 Stuttgart, Tel.: +49 711 279-2876, www.km-bw.de

Baden-Württemberg State Office for the Protection of the Constitution, Confidential information hotline on "Scientology" Tel.: +49 711 95 61 994, www.verfassungsschutz-bw.de

Baden-Württemberg Counselling Centre for "Help with Radicalisation" Tel.: +49 711 279-4556, www.konex-bw.de

# SPECIALIST COUNSELLING CENTRES:

Zentrale Beratungsstelle für Weltanschauungsfragen Zebra-BW Gartenstraße 15, 79098 Freiburg Tel.: +49 761 488 982 96 www.zebra-bw.de

#### Evang. Landeskirche in Baden

Blumenstr. 1–7, 76133 Karlsruhe, Tel.: +49 721 91 75-359 or -315, www.ekiba.de/weltanschauungen

#### Evang. Landeskirche in Württemberg

Büchsenstr. 33, 70174 Stuttgart, Tel.: +49 711 22 93 63237, www.weltanschauung.elk-wue.de

**Katholische Kirche / Diözese Rottenburg-Stuttgart** Obere Gasse 1, 72108 Rottenburg am Neckar, Tel.: +49 7472 16 95 86, https://ha-vii.drs.de

Katholische Kirche / Erzdiözese Freiburg Schoferstr. 2, 79098 Freiburg, Tel.: +49 761 21 88-0, www.ebfr.de

SELF-HELP GROUPS: Ausstieg e.V. Binger Str. 105, 76185 Karlsruhe, Tel.: +49 700 28 77 84 34, www.ausstieg-info.de

WEBLINKS: www.ezw-berlin.de / www.zebra-bw.de / www.fecris.org

#### PUBLISHED BY: Inter-ministerial working group for issues regarding so-called sects and psycho groups Baden-Württemberg Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport PO Box 10 34 42, 70029 Stuttgart



# Information and advice

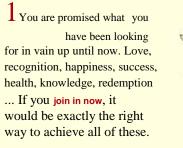
ABOUT QUESTIONABLE RELIGIOUS AND IDEOLOGICAL OFFERS



We live in a world that is diverse and confusing. This also applies to our religious beliefs and our view of the world. This diversity can be perceived as enrichment, but sometimes also as uncertainty.

*The following guidelines will help you to find your* way through the "jungle" of religious ideologies and make an independent decision.

#### Checklist for dubious services





Lt is difficult to form an accurate picture of the group. You should not analyse and contemplate for a long time, but instead participate immediately - according to the motto "Come and join us now!"

You notice that the other members / participants have almost identical views on all aspects of life. The group's conception of the world is amazingly simple and homogeneous.



The doctrine offered is deemed to be the single truth, which is sometimes represented with a scientific claim. Alternative explanations are rejected as negative, evil or incorrect.



# The group has a

"master", a medium or a leader who is the only one in possession of the truth. His instructions must be followed even if they are blatantly illegal or irrational.



The members strictly

# isolate themselves from

the rest of the world, e.g. through their clothing, their own language or unusual lifestyle habits. All rules must be followed unconditionally.

O The new belief requires full

ou feel that you are

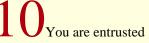
evidence that you are right.

amongst the elite while the rest of mankind is sick and forlorn. Criticism by outsiders is interpreted as

2



9 You are asked to break off your previous relationships (partner, family, circle of friends) because they hinder your "spiritual development".



with time-consuming tasks: Selling books and brochures, attending courses, lectures and exercises, attracting new members.

you have doubt because the promised success does not materialise, it is your because you haveown fault allegedly not been committed enough or your belief is not sufficiently strong.



You feel that you

#### are pressurised

because you want to leave the group. You are made to try and look at things differently.

commitment. You should set your own interests to one side - the cause has priority!