

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



Baden-Württemberg
MINISTERIUM FÜR KULTUS, JUGEND UND SPORT

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

1 You are promised what you have been looking for in vain up until now. Love, recognition, happiness, success, health, knowledge, redemption ... If you **join in now**, it would be exactly the right way to achieve all of these.



3 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.



2 It 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!”

4 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.



5 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.

6 You feel that you are amongst the **elite** while the rest of mankind is sick and forlorn. Criticism by outsiders is interpreted as evidence that you are right.



7 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.



8 The new belief requires full commitment. You should **set your own interests to one side** – the cause has priority!



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



10 You are entrusted with **time-consuming tasks**: Selling books and brochures, attending courses, lectures and exercises, attracting new members.



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



12 You feel that you are **pressurised** because you want to leave the group. You are made to try and look at things differently.