

The Guru Papers

Masks of Authoritarian Power

Joel Kramer & Diana Alstad

Contents

Preface and Map of the Book

Introduction: **Why Focus on Authoritarianism?**

Introductory chapter: **Authority, Hierarchy, and Power**

Part 1: Personal Masks

- 1. Religion, Cults, & the Spiritual Vacuum**
Religion and Morality
The Challenge of Science
Who Defines Reality in Religions and Cults?
Reexamining the Sacred
- 2. Gurus and Times of Upheaval**
- 3. The Seductions of Surrender**
Control and Surrender
Scandals, Saints, & Self-Centeredness
Recognizing Authoritarian Control
- 4. Guru Ploys**
Inducing Surrender
Maintaining Dominance
- 5. The Assault on Reason**
- 6. Stages of Cults -- Proselytizing to Paranoia**
The Messianic Phase
The Apocalyptic Phase
- 7. The Attractions of Cult Hierarchy**
- 8. Gurus & Sexual Manipulation**
The Betrayal of Trust
Spiritual Hedonism & Tantra
- 9. Gurus, Psychotherapy, & the Unconscious**
- 10. The Traps of Being a Guru**
Narcissism and Adulation
Deceit and Corruption
- 11. Jim Jones & the Jonestown Mass Suicide**
- 12. On Channeling Disembodied Authorities**
Assumptions about Channeling
An Example of Channeled Writing:
A Course in Miracles
What Are Channels Channeling?
- 13. Do You Create Your Own Reality?**
Karma Becomes Omnipotence
- 14. Healing Crippled Self-Trust**

Part 2: Ideological Masks

Introduction: The Morality Wars

1. Fundamentalism & the Need for Certainty: Dogmatism vs. Modernization

The Essence of Fundamentalism

The Quandaries of Revisionism

Revisionism and the Need for Identity

What's at Stake?

2. Satanism & the Worship of the Forbidden: Why It Feels Good to Be Bad

Good and Evil

The Problem of Evil

Satanism as an Avenue to Power

The Divided Self: Good and Evil Internalized

Satanism as the Dark Side of Monotheism

3. Who Is in Control?

The Authoritarian Roots of Addiction

What Is Addiction?

The Divided Psyche:

Symptom of a Dysfunctional Morality

Taming the Beast:

The Inner Battle for Control

Addiction as Revolt Against the Inner Authoritarian

The Failings of Disease & Responsibility Models

Twelve Steps to Where?

Developing Wholeness and Self-Trust

4. Love & Control:

The Conditions underlying Unconditional Love

What Is Unconditional Love?

Love, Time, and Timelessness

Self-Sacrifice, Power, and Passion

Control and Boundaries

"Love Addiction"

Measuring and Roles

Forgiving and Letting Go

The Religious Foundation of Unconditional Love

Timeless Love through Time

5. Oneness, Enlightenment, & the Mystical Experience

The Mystical Experience

Dualism and Renunciation

The Function of Enlightenment

The One-Sidedness of Oneness

Holism and Interconnectedness

Renunciation as Accumulation

6. The Power of Abstraction: The Sacred Word & the Evolution of Morality

Abstractions and Power

From Animism to Polytheism:

The Concrete Abstractions of Idolatry

Monotheism: A Universal Abstraction

Oneness: The Culmination of Religious Abstraction

Abstraction, Either/or Thinking, and Dualism

Symbol Systems and Power

Transforming the Symbol System:

A Dialectical Perspective

Epilogue: Where to Go from Here?

Index