

Spiritual Abuse

What is Spiritual Abuse?

Spiritual abuse is the practice of using scripture or religion to control, harass, ridicule or intimidate someone else.

Spiritual abuse can be perpetrated by:

Controlling Spirituality

- Preventing the practice of spirituality
- Forcing the practice of spirituality
- Forcing spirituality to be practiced in a particular way

Using Spiritual Community

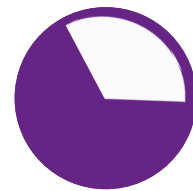
- Getting community members to pressure survivor to stay in the relationship
- Using fear of community stigma and gossip
- Isolating from spiritual community

Using Spirituality to Justify Abuse¹

- Using text, tradition, or norms to:
- Justify sexual abuse
 - Justify unequal gender dynamics
 - Interfere with reproductive health
 - Claim abuse is deserved



Spiritual abuse is especially difficult to identify in spiritual communities that aren't your own.



69% of Jewish survivors experience a form of spiritual² abuse.

References

1. Interfaithpartners.org, "Spiritual and Religious Power and Control Wheel"
2. JWI. (2021). National Center on Domestic Violence in the Jewish community. JWI. Retrieved October 13, 2022, from <https://www.jwi.org/national-center#jewish-dv-research>

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"All Jews are responsible for each other"