

## The BITE Mind Control Model

From chapter two of *Releasing the Bonds: Empowering People to Think for Themselves* (© 2000 by Steven Hassan; Freedom of Mind Press)

1. **Behavior Control**
2. **Information Control**
3. **Thought Control**
4. **Emotional Control**

Please describe what kind of group this is. Provide any information you may have about the history of the group, its inner workings, the lifestyle of the leader or founder, or methods used to influence members.

*"Dahnhak starts out as physical exercise, with its truer purpose in aiding the individual to recover his/her physical health and ethical foundation on the way to becoming a "spiritual" person who is nonetheless successful in the everyday world. At the same time, Dahnhak aims at the spiritual enlightenment not only of the individual, but the whole of and of humanity. For individual and group enlightenment are but different sides of the same coin. They cannot be separated. "*

*--Dr. Ilchi Lee - Founder of Dahnhak*

### I. BEHAVIOR CONTROL

*NOTE: These answers reflect both perspectives of a member and of having a family member involved.*

#### 1. Regulation of individual's physical reality

- a. **Where, how and with whom the member lives and associates with**  
*Masters all live together in the same communal housing and work minimum of 15 hours/day. Most work close to 20 hours a day 7 days a week. Occasionally they will get an afternoon off or be permitted to leave but that is usually not planned.*
- b. **What clothes, colors, hairstyles the person wears**  
*Everyone wears a uniform; Master uniforms are different to show the rank. Women's hair is usually short as they only have 5 minutes to get ready in the morning and sleep is precious.*
- c. **What food the person eats, drinks, adopts, and rejects**  
*The Masters all eat together and the diet is Korean. There is a high level of sugar usually with sweet breads for breakfast and lunch. There is a lot of rice and small bits of meat.*
- d. **How much sleep the person is able to have**  
*The Masters are all definitely sleep deprived--1-5 hours in some regions.*
- e. **Financial dependence**  
*They get a small stipend of approximately \$1,500/month at the Centers and pay expenses out of that (rent, utilities). I don't know what the higher ranks get back at headquarters. There is no medical insurance or benefits of any kind.*
- f. **Little or no time spent on leisure, entertainment, vacations**  
*There are no regular days off and Masters have to ask permission to leave. I had to ask the head master one Christmas for my family member to be released from the center to join us for Christmas dinner.*

## **2. Major time commitment required for indoctrination sessions and group rituals**

- *Yes—you are strongly encouraged to come to class and activities. If you are signed up for healing sessions they will call you to keep coming in for appointments. If they think they can't get any more money from you—they won't call you.*

## **3. Need to ask permission for major decisions**

- *Absolutely all decisions are made by the head masters. Students are told that their head masters "look out for you and have your best interest for your personal growth". A young master is told exactly what to do and when to do it—they are never alone or allowed to have their own thoughts.*

## **4. Need to report thoughts, feelings and activities to superiors**

- *Yes, and you are required to connect your energy to them.*

## **5. Rewards and punishments (behavior modification techniques- positive and negative).**

- *Love and attention is given and withdrawn to break you down. If you pay money, then you are given lots of attention. Also the amount of money you pay is equated to the amount of growth you will get and the amount of 'healing' you will receive. Shaming techniques are used rampantly to control people. Out of nowhere you are suddenly told that your "energy is bad" or poor and then they have an opening to control you because they are made to appear with "good energy" and superior powers.*

## **6. Individualism discouraged; group think prevails**

- *Yes, and head masters make all the decisions. You are also made to believe that you hold responsibility for bad things happening if you are not connected to them or have bad energy.*

## **7. Rigid rules and regulations**

- *Yes.*

## **8. Need for obedience and dependency**

- *Absolutely.*

# **II. INFORMATION CONTROL**

## **1. Use of deception**

- a. *Deliberately holding back information*
  - b. *Distorting information to make it acceptable*
  - c. *Outright lying*
- *Communication is very poor and not because English is usually their second language. Decisions are made at the last minute so you cannot plan, and details about ceremonies and activities are not available.*

## 2. Access to non-cult sources of information minimized or discouraged

- a. Books, articles, newspapers, magazines, TV, radio
  - b. Critical information
  - c. Former members
  - d. Keep members so busy they don't have time to think
- *If you are a master you don't have time to do think. As a student I was also criticized many times for 'thinking too much'. Questions are basically not OK—you are shamed into submission and obeying direction from your head master.*

## 3. Compartmentalization of information; Outsider vs. Insider doctrines

- a. Information is not freely accessible
- b. Information varies at different levels and missions within pyramid
- c. Leadership decides who "needs to know" what
- *Dahn is definitely preached as 'THE way'—other spiritual beliefs are looked down upon as inferior or a 'slower' way to achieve enlightenment. Dr. Ilchi Lee is called the "Grand Master" and is treated like the Pope. Ancient traditional methods of Tai Chi are considered inferior to theirs as they mimic animals in their postures.*

## 4. Spying on other members is encouraged

- a. Pairing up with "buddy" system to monitor and control
- b. Reporting deviant thoughts, feelings, and actions to leadership
- *Many examples of this—there is a fear of being outside this system that perpetuates. Initially they make you feel like you are helping people by getting them to follow the 'right' way towards enlightenment. But eventually it becomes clear that people are singled out and literally attacked by multiple Masters to coerce them back into the 'right' thinking.*

## 5. Extensive use of cult generated information and propaganda

- a. Newsletters, magazines, journals, audio tapes, videotapes, etc.
- b. Misquotations, statements taken out of context from non-cult sources
- *Many websites and Ilchi Lee is moving quickly to online training for the Dahn doctrines.*

## 6. Unethical use of confession

- a. Information about "sins" used to abolish identity boundaries
  - *If you sign up for the Healer Programs you are asked to write your story. This document ends up having all the necessary info to use against you to shame you and weaken you. And yes, it is definitely used against you.*
- b. Past "sins" used to manipulate and control; no forgiveness or absolution
- c. *I was told many things over time including that I had betrayed Heaven and therefore I could not complete my soul in this lifetime unless I paid a lot of money.*

## III. THOUGHT CONTROL

### 1. Need to internalize the group's doctrine as "Truth"

- a. Map = Reality
- b. Black and White thinking
- c. Good vs. evil
- d. Us vs. them (inside vs. outside)

*Yes, there is a lot of this; they are the ones that will save the world by healing people:*  
MISSION: *To assist people to recover original perfect health and evolve consciousness; To assist people, with this heightened awareness, to heal our society and the Earth; To overcome the limitations of materialism and to open a new culture of spirituality in the world.*

**GOAL:** To have 100,000,000 healers by 2010.

**DESCRIPTION:** Healing Society is socio-cultural activism which focuses on "Earth Love" and "Human Love" as its underlying philosophical foundation. This movement began over 20 years ago by Dr. Ilchi Lee. Healing Society seeks to bring to completion the health of the individual, society and the Earth through the process of discovering the True Self.

The major goals of Healing Society are to create a healthy Earth and a healthy Humanity. Its philosophy of "Peaceology," as conceived by Ilchi Lee, regards the Earth as the living maternal source of all human life and the homeland to which we must realize we all belong, not merely as an impersonal piece of rock in our solar system. This philosophy promotes the idea that we are "Earth-Humans" not separated from each other by nation, religion or race. Healing Society believes that many of the problems facing humanity today can be solved by approaching the solution with the awareness that we are "Earth-Humans". This enables us to overcome individual and nationalist self-interest by placing the Earth at the center of a new value system. As more and more individuals become awakened to this new value system of harmony and cooperation, we can create a critical mass of awakened individuals leading a shift in human consciousness; a new era of spirituality. Then, genuine peace can be possible.

Healing Society chooses Dahnhak and Brain Respiration as healing methods for the body, mind and spirit. Dahnhak and Brain Respiration are comprehensive training programs which were inspired by ancient wisdom, and were recreated for contemporary times by Ilchi Lee. These methods help individuals to recover their genuine health, to learn respect for ones neighbors, and to promote love for the world by meeting their True Selves.

**2. Adopt "loaded" language (characterized by "thought-terminating clichés"). Words are the tools we use to think with. These "special" words constrict rather than expand understanding. They function to reduce complexities of experience into trite, platitudinous "buzz words".**

- Korean is used extensively; for example, the cosmic energy source is called "Chunjikyun", you count in Korean, you greet each other in Korean, etc.

**3. Only "good" and "proper" thoughts are encouraged.**

- Yes, you are taught that "your mind is not you but yours" and you can control your thoughts and emotions. So if you 'feel' something negative--you are not in control of your mind, which is not acceptable..

**4. Thought-stopping techniques (to shut down "reality testing" by stopping "negative" thoughts and allowing only "good" thoughts); rejection of rational analysis, critical thinking, constructive criticism.**

- a. Denial, rationalization, justification, wishful thinking
  - b. Chanting
  - c. Meditating
  - d. Praying
  - e. Speaking in "tongues"
  - f. Singing or humming
- Controlling your thoughts and emotions is considered a discipline that you must master. You are also encouraged to do a lot of meditation, bows, chanting the "Chunbukyun" which is an 81 character prayer written and spoken in Chinese. On the surface, this doesn't necessarily seem negative—what happens after you've done some of these techniques is the interesting thing. That's when they approach you with manipulative techniques like breaking you down by saying that "your energy is bad", then you are 'sold' on some more 'healings' or a 'ceremony'—or something that will cost you money.

**5. No critical questions about leader, doctrine, or policy seen as legitimate**

- *I have been scolded for 'asking too many questions' and to not question my head master as he knows what's best for me.*

**6. No alternative belief systems viewed as legitimate, good, or useful**

- *Dahnhak is definitely the 'right' way to spiritually grow and complete your soul. They also believe strongly in preparing for your death and doing work for your ancestors to free their spirits who may be stuck on this earth. There is a specific ceremony that they do to free ancestral souls which costs \$10,000 or more per family line.*

**IV. EMOTIONAL CONTROL**

**1. Manipulate and narrow the range of a person's feelings.**

- *Yes--the masters always know what's best for you.*

**2. Make the person feel like if there are ever any problems it is always their fault, never the leader's or the group's.**

- *Definitely—it's usually your energy or something about your 'work' or path to growth. There is no responsibility taken by the organization at all for any questionable behavior by the Masters..*

**2. Excessive use of guilt**

- a. Identity guilt
  1. Who you are (not living up to your potential)
  2. Your family
  3. Your past
  4. Your affiliations
  5. Your thoughts, feelings, actions
  6. Social guilt
  7. Historical guilt

- *Yes this is true. You are made to feel guilty if you spend any time with your family--a person's real family is replaced by them.*

**4. Excessive use of fear**

- a. Fear of thinking independently
- b. Fear of the "outside" world
- c. Fear of enemies
- d. Fear of losing one's "salvation"
- e. Fear of leaving the group or being shunned by group
- f. Fear of disapproval

- *Absolutely. They use fear tactics to create a belief that all sorts of bad things will happen to you if you do not stay in this organization. You cannot 'complete your soul', you cannot achieve 'enlightenment', the spiritual realm will cause horrible things to happen to you, you can cause bad things to happen to others if you do not follow their ways, etc.*

**5. Extremes of emotional highs and lows.**

- *No lows are allowed.*