

Collusion vs. Empathy

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Collusion, what is it?

As defined by the authors and experienced psychiatric Registered Nurse, Dee Ann Miller, collusion is the conscious or unconscious collaboration of two or more individuals to protect those who engage in unethical practices. It is a symptom of a serious systemic thinking disorder. Collusion is not a normal condition, though individuals who have spent large amounts of time in dysfunctional communities accept it as the norm.

Why do people engage in collusion?

In an article, [Basic Facts about Collusion](#), written by Dee Ann Miller, R.N., the following reasons are suggested as to why individuals practice collusion, (1) acculturation (it is all they have known), (2) the need to preserve a system that is important to them (Christian organizations; other parts of the community) and (3) unresolved issues including incest, drug use, addictions and other dysfunctions in the family unit.

Some religious reasons include closed system thinking, and/or in-house problem solving (avoidance of outside intervention or help). This is frequently demonstrated within Christian denominations, churches, and mission boards. This example has been seen and demonstrated by many denominations.

The more a Christian community walls itself away "from the world", the more it becomes a law unto itself, and a grotesque deviation from Christ Jesus' original intention for the community of believers.

A Patriarchal mind set helps collusion succeed by demonization of individuals who challenge the closed system. "Touch not Gods Anointed" is one terribly distorted, misused section of scripture which lends Gods favour (and protection) to whatever the leader approves. This is one major example of the spiritual abuse accompanying the colluding life style. Another effect of patriarchal thinking is the corrosion of personal accountability, failure to address inappropriate behavior by in-house abusers, and failure to take actions to address abuse.

"The Family" is one more concept which aids collusion. While it seems good to have a community of "aunties and uncles" within a Christian community, this concept enables and protects those predatory individuals who seek ultimate in-house safety and protection. Sadly, within the same "Family" lives the idea that those who have victimized children and adults need only forgiveness and restoration. Pedophilia and sexual assault are not seen as crimes which need to be reported to the criminal justice system.

At the same time that perpetrators are protected, restorative help and funds are often withheld from the victims and their families.

What needs to change?

Before anything else, awareness of this disorder is necessary. You won't change what you do not acknowledge as a problem.

One question many ask is this, "What can possibly change the narcissistic and performance oriented perspective to one of an unselfish, other-focused, and empathetic mindset?"

Other questions might be, "What is empathy compared to narcissism? How can an empathetic capacity affect our lives for the better?"

What is Empathy?

Empathy can be defined as the antithesis of narcissism, or the ability to enter the world of another person. Children fortunate enough to be raised in a consistently caring, nurturing environment mirror the empathy they observe in their care takers.

The effects of empathy could include:

- experiencing genuine love and intimacy in relationships.
- helping people understand who they really are and what brings authentic love and fulfillment.
- lessening self-absorption inherent in the narcissistic mindset.
- providing a way of being that is less selfish and egotistical.

Empathetic training can be a huge step forward in shaping a balanced, healthy world view among Christian leaders and their families. It certainly will help to enable the works of love in the lives of Christians as described in the first through third gospels of John.