



THINK FOR YOURSELF: OUTSMARTING MIND-HACKERS

Just as a hacker takes over a computer to deny users access to crucial networks, a mind-hacker uses undue influence to override your critical thinking skills, isolate you from your support network, and gain control over how you make decisions about your life.

A mind-hacker can be a person or a group. They might “love bomb” you with excessive attention and

affection, say that only they can help you with your problems, promise you things you really want, or claim to be your soul mate. They’ll insist on constant communication or meetings that leave no time for family, friends, or hobbies. They’ll convince you to hang out only with them and, before you know it, you’ve cut off everyone else.

HERE’S HOW TO BLOCK MIND-HACKERS

Back Up & Reboot: You need to have control of your own time and the freedom to fact-check what you’ve been told with independent sources. Take a break before making any major decision. There’s no way of knowing if your mind is being hacked without spending time away from the possible mind-hacker and learning how undue influence works.

Rely on Your Network: Talk to friends, family, and mentors you’ve always trusted. Get their input on any new advice you’re getting, without pressure from the possible mind-hacker. Be aware that one technique mind-hackers use is to tell you not to tell anyone else about your conversations with them. If you think you’re in danger or a crime is being committed, contact the police.

Go Low-Tech: If you feel you’re being overwhelmed or bullied via phone or social media, write down what you’re being told and take time to think it over when you’re not flooded with emotion. If the person or group is pressuring you for contact, it’s OK to limit your replies or even to unplug for a while.

Use Privacy Protection: Don’t discuss personal matters, finances, medical history—or that of your family—with someone you’ve known for only a short time. Mind-hackers will scan for vulnerabilities, using the information you share to *their* advantage.

Filter Out Viruses: Predators, con artists, and terrorists can appear innocuous and even friendly at first to disguise their dangerous intent. Be suspicious when people you hardly know want to talk in-depth with you about philosophy, psychology, spirituality, self-help programs, or “sure-thing” business opportunities.

Set Up a Firewall: Knowledge protects. Learn about undue influence and how mind-hackers work. Set personal boundaries. If you let a mind-hacker in, you risk them alienating you from your loved ones, pressuring you into giving up things that are important to you, and even corrupting your memories so you see things the way they do.



THE SPECTRUM OF INFLUENCE

Recognize and avoid manipulative tactics that short-circuit your ability to think critically, isolate you from objective sources of information, take control of your decision-making, destroy healthy connections, and trap you in exploitative relationships.

Safe to Continue: Ethical Influence

- Nurtures your independence
- Respects your other relationships and interests
- Encourages access to information
- Leaves you in control of your choices

Caution — Early Signs of Mind-Hacking

- Disregards your personal boundaries
- Pressures your thoughts, feelings, and behavior
- Begins to isolate you
- Leaves you feeling confused

Danger! Undue Influence

- Fuels fears
- Controls your time and keeps you isolated from others
- Demands unquestioning commitment
- Leaves you obligated to get permission before making decisions

For more information, go to njsafeandsound.org and facebook.com/njsafeandsound.