

Freedom is the Frequency

A Siren's Guide to Identifying Spiritual Abuse

By Lolo Lavish, The High Siren

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Spiritual abuse occurs when spiritual beliefs, authority, language, or practices are used to control, manipulate, exploit, silence, or harm another person. This guide breaks down the different forms of spiritual abuse, explaining what each type looks like and how it often unfolds.

Freedom is essential for those who vibrate on the frequency of water. Water is not meant to be contained, dominated, or coerced. It moves by flow, not force. It adapts without surrendering its nature. Water chooses its own pathways, reshaping landscapes over time without asking permission. This is why water has always symbolized emotional truth, intuition, and sovereignty across cultures.

The ocean, in particular, is a model of freedom. It has no single ruler, no fixed border, and no hierarchy that demands obedience. Its power exists through movement, rhythm, and depth. The ocean allows life to exist in countless forms without requiring uniformity or submission. When pressure is applied, water does not break. It redistributes. It finds another way.

Sirens are sovereign because they belong to the sea, not to systems of control. Siren mythology reflects autonomy, discernment, and choice. Sirens are not owned, tamed, or commanded. Their voices are expressions of power, not tools for obedience. Sovereignty means self-governance, the right to choose one's path, boundaries, beliefs, and body without fear of punishment or spiritual consequence.

Understanding spiritual abuse is essential for those aligned with water energy because abuse is rooted in restriction, fear, and domination, which are fundamentally incompatible with the nature of water. Where water seeks flow, abuse imposes force. Where water seeks truth, abuse demands silence. Where water honors freedom, abuse thrives on control.

This guide exists to help individuals recognize when spirituality has been distorted into a tool of harm, so they may return to autonomy, safety, and self-trust. Spirituality should expand the spirit, not confine it. True spiritual work honors freedom, consent, and sovereignty, just as the ocean does.

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1. Spiritual Manipulation

This occurs when spiritual concepts are twisted to influence behavior or decisions. Manipulators may frame their personal opinions as divine truth, claim spiritual superiority, or suggest that disagreement is a spiritual failing. Over time, this erodes personal autonomy and trains individuals to defer to an external authority rather than their own discernment.

WHAT IT MAY LOOK LIKE :

A spiritual leader, reader, mentor or partner says “Never question spirit” or “If you were truly aligned, you would not question me”. The practitioner or conjurer will accuse you of wrongdoing for questioning the reading or channeled info they provided.

WHAT IS HAPPENING :

Personal opinions or desires are being presented as divine truth to override your autonomy, intuition and discernment. Students and clients should have the freedom to say “this does not resonate” or ask why a message did not make sense. Anyone who becomes upset with you for seeking clarity could be abusive.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO :

- Pause and reclaim your right to question the reader, practitioner or mentor
- Not agree or commit under spiritual pressure (easier said than done)
- Not blame yourself for feeling confused in the moment
- Seek a second neutral perspective
- Create distance if the connection continues to feel confusing
- Disengage if the reader, practitioner or partner considers curiosity an issue

This is an early warning sign.

Acknowledge it and watch for repetition.

2. Emotional & Psychological Spiritual Abuse

Emotional spiritual abuse uses fear, guilt, and shame as control mechanisms. Victims may be told they are attracting bad karma, divine punishment, or negative spirits if they disobey or leave. Normal emotional reactions are labeled as low-vibration, sinful, or spiritually immature, causing confusion and self-doubt.

WHAT IT MAY LOOK LIKE :

You are told that your anxiety, anger or grief is attracting negativity. You are told that your human emotions are not natural. You are told your frustration about an injustice is low vibrational. You are upset about an upsetting situation but someone tells you that

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your feelings are creating negative energy. A spiritual mentor, teacher or advisor does not give you the space or freedom to feel.

WHAT IS HAPPENING :

Normal human emotions are being pathologized to control behavior and suppress truth.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO :

- Name your emotions as valid information, not failure
- Remember that your feelings are a part of your natural flow
- Discontinue sharing vulnerable emotions with people who dismiss your feelings
- Withdraw from a connection when they repeatedly invalidate your emotions

Emotional invalidation is not healthy spiritual guidance.

3. Isolation Through Spiritual Framing

Abusers often isolate individuals by framing friends, family, or outside perspectives as spiritually unsafe. This creates dependence on the abuser or group and limits access to reality-checks, support, and alternative viewpoints.

WHAT IT MAY LOOK LIKE :

You are encouraged to cut off friends, family or therapists that you knew prior to the reader, practitioner or partner. You are expected to cut people out of your life without communicating or processing the problem. You are instructed to ghost and disengage from people who do not understand your reader, practitioner, or spiritual advisor. You are told not to book spiritual services with anyone outside of the current spiritual leader, advisor or guide.

WHAT IS HAPPENING :

Isolation increases dependency and removes outside reality checks.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO :

- Reconnect privately with safe people
- Report to yourself about how someone makes you feel
- Separate how you feel from how someone else feels about a person, place or problem
- Communicate your problems with people before pulling away (situational)
- Remember that you are not obligated to report your personal decisions
- Maintain multiple support systems at all times
- If isolation is enforced or punished, exit the environment

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Healthy spirituality expands your world
Abuse shrinks it.

4. Financial & Labor Exploitation

Spiritual abuse frequently includes financial manipulation. Individuals may be pressured to give money, offerings, or unpaid labor in exchange for protection, blessings, or spiritual advancement. Questioning financial demands is framed as lack of faith or devotion.

WHAT IT MAY LOOK LIKE :

You are pressured to keep paying, donating, or working for free for a spiritual advisor, mentor, or teacher. You are told blessings will stop if you do not continue to pour money or physical labor into a person.

WHAT IS HAPPENING :

Money and labor are being extracted through fear, guilt, or spiritual obligation.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO :

- Stop payments that feel coerced
- Disconnect from anyone who reveals anger when you do not donate money
- Ask yourself if the person ever reciprocates what you give
- Ask yourself if your investment into the person ever pays off
- Ask yourself if their spiritual teachings ever help you make money
- Ask yourself if the teacher or mentor ever helps you with financial issues
- Do not explain or justify your finances
- Document requests and communications
- Process what is actually required of you
- Process what you are actually financially responsible for (bills & children)
- Consider blocking, unsubscribing, or leaving

No spiritual path should require financial distress to prove devotion.

5. Sexual Abuse Justified Spiritually

Sexual exploitation may be framed as healing, initiation, or sacred union. Consent is compromised when individuals are told participation is spiritually necessary or divinely assigned. This is a severe form of abuse and exploitation.

WHAT IT MAY LOOK LIKE :

Sexual contact is framed as healing, initiation, divine union, or spiritual duty. A spiritual

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leader, mentor or teacher seeks to have sex with you or engage in sexual activity with you. A spiritual leader, mentor or teacher claims that a goddess, god or deity demands that you have sex or engage in sexual activity with them.

WHAT IS HAPPENING :

Consent is compromised through spiritual authority and pressure.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO :

- Immediately disengage
- Say no to parties or environments that make you uncomfortable
- Block someone's access to you (phone, email, social media)
- Prioritize physical safety
- Reach out to trusted support or professionals
- If safe and appropriate, report the abuse to the proper channels or authorities

This is severe abuse. Leaving is not optional ; it is necessary.

6. Physical Harm or Dangerous Practices

Some spiritual abusers encourage or justify physical harm, deprivation, or dangerous rituals. This may include denial of medical care, excessive fasting, or physical punishment framed as purification.

WHAT IT MAY LOOK LIKE :

You are encouraged to ignore medical care, fast excessively, endure pain, or participate in unsafe rituals. You are told to take the pain during a ritual because it is required. You are told that you must undergo something painful to receive spiritual access or blessings. You are convinced that pleasure is negative and pain is positive.

WHAT IS HAPPENING :

Physical harm is being justified as a spiritual routine.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO :

- Stop the practice immediately (if safe to do so)
- Seek medical or professional care
- Do not debate your pain or pain thresholds
- Do not debate your tolerance
- Do not debate your boundaries
- Do not debate your safety or what helps you feel safe
- Remove yourself from the group or guide

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Spirituality should never endanger your safety.

7. Threats, Intimidation, and Retaliation

Leaving or questioning abusive spiritual environments may result in threats of curses, spiritual attacks, public shaming, or harassment. These tactics are used to maintain fear-based control and discourage exit.

WHAT IT MAY LOOK LIKE :

You are threatened with curses, spiritual attacks, public shaming or consequences if you leave a spiritual mentor, teacher or advisor.

WHAT IS HAPPENING :

Fear is being used to prevent escape.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO :

- Do not argue about your boundaries
- Do not announce departure from the abuser
- Document all written and vocal threats
- Block and disengage where possible
- Seek legal or professional guidance if needed
- If safe to do so, report all threats to the proper authorities

Threats confirm abuse. Silence and distance are protective.

8. Gaslighting & Reality Distortion

Victims are often told their perceptions are wrong, unspiritual, or ego-driven. Over time, this undermines confidence in personal intuition and reality, increasing dependency on the abuser.

WHAT IT MAY LOOK LIKE :

You are told events did not happen, you misunderstood, or your intuition is wrong & ego-driven. The mentor, teacher or advisor never validates your channeled insight or intuition. They make you doubt your own spiritual downloads or self prophetic moments. They make you question your own personal decisions. They make you feel silly for seeking your own spiritual or ancestral insight outside of them. They make you feel wrong or bad for connecting to your ancestors or deities without them.

WHAT IS HAPPENING :

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Your perception of reality is being undermined to maintain control.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO :

- Trust your internal signals
- Follow your inner flow
- Realize that your intuition is your inner truth
- Write down what you experience
- Validate reality with outside sources (away from the abuser)
- Continue to pull your own cards and seek your insight on your own
- Do not debate your truths or feelings on a situation
- Reduce or end contact completely

If your clarity threatens them, they will try to erase it.

9. Blaming the Victim

Abuse is reframed as a lesson the victim attracted or deserved. This removes accountability from the abuser and deepens shame, making it harder for victims to seek help.

WHAT IT MAY LOOK LIKE :

You are told you are “attracted” to abuse or need it for growth. They claim that pain helps you process and gain.

WHAT IS HAPPENING :

Responsibility is shifted away from the abuser.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO :

- Reject narratives that excuse harm
- Stop seeking validation from anyone who dismisses your pain
- Seek trauma-informed support
- Realize that you don't have to be hurt to heal

Abuse is not a lesson. Survival is not a failure.

10. Loss of Autonomy & Identity

Long-term spiritual abuse often results in individuals losing their sense of self, boundaries, and decision-making ability. Personal needs are sacrificed in service of the abuser or ideology.

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WHAT IT MAY LOOK LIKE :

You no longer trust your choices, intuition, or sense of self without approval.

WHAT IS HAPPENING :

Long-term control has eroded personal sovereignty.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO :

- Step away completely from the abusive spiritual mentor, teacher or advisor
- Rebuild routines, preferences and boundaries
- Do not debate your boundaries (they are based on your emotional safety)
- Do not debate your feelings
- Engage in grounding, non-spiritual activities
- Seek support to reclaim your identity
- Relearn yourself outside of the painful people from your past

Sovereignty can be restored.

Water remembers its shape.

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A Simple Siren Checkpoint

You should NOT consistently feel like this in a healthy spiritual connection with a friend, mentor, leader, teacher or advisor. If a spiritual connection makes you feel less safe, less sovereign, or less yourself over time, then something is wrong. Even if the language sounds loving or like another siren.

- Afraid to ask questions
- Afraid of being punished spiritually
- Afraid of disagreeing
- Afraid of leaving or taking space
- Afraid something bad will happen if you stop listening
- Afraid your intuition is wrong
- Afraid to speak or tell the truth
- Confused after interactions instead of clearer
- Confused after readings, rituals and lessons
- Confused after conversations
- Constantly second-guessing yourself
- Like you need permission to make personal decisions
- Like your emotions are spiritually wrong
- Like your boundaries block blessings
- Like silence is safer than honesty
- Guilty for having needs
- Ashamed for feeling hurt or uncomfortable
- Responsible for someone else's reactions
- Like you must earn safety, love, or protection
- Like you owe loyalty at the expense of your wellbeing
- Controlled through fear, urgency, or threats
- Watched, monitored, or spiritually policed (especially on social media)
- Silenced “for the sake of the work”
- Dependent instead of empowered
- Financially drained or physically burned out

Sovereign Seas Checklist

Healthy spiritual connections expand your life rather than restrict it. They support your growth without overriding your autonomy. Whether the connection is with a spiritual friend, mentor, teacher, advisor, leader, or romantic lover, the foundation should always be freedom, consent, clarity, and empowerment. Sirens are sovereign. That means your spirit, body, time, money and choices remain yours. A healthy spiritual connection should help you feel more like yourself, not less. Use this checklist as a body-based and intuitive reference. You do not need to justify why something does not feel right or wrong. Alignment feels spacious, not pressured.

If a spiritual connection consistently helps you feel free, safe, empowered, respected, financially intact, and aligned, it is likely healthy. If it demands fear, obedience, silence, sacrifice, or self-abandonment, it is not aligned with water, sovereignty, or true spiritual growth.

In a Healthy Spiritual Connection, You Feel :

- Free and sovereign
- Free to ask questions without fear
- Free to disagree without punishment
- Free to pause, leave, or take space
- Free to follow your own intuition
- Free to say no without spiritual consequences
- Free to change your mind

- Emotionally safe to share honesty
- Respected when you express boundaries
- Listened to without being corrected or shamed
- Taken seriously as a whole person
- Supported without being controlled

- Encouraged to trust your own discernment
- Supported in making independent decisions
- More confident in yourself as the connection deepens

- Clear and free of confusion
- The freedom to learn without fear-based tactics
- Supported in curiosity and exploration
- Allowed to evolve without punishment

- Freedom to spend your money as you please
- Respected with financial boundaries
- Clear and transparent financial exchanges
- Increased financial clarity, stability and confidence

- Encouraged to follow what feels true for you
- Freedom from roles, rituals or actions that do not align with you
- Supported in honoring your timing & capacity

- Mutual respect instead of hierarchy
- Freedom from teacher-student or leader-followed dynamics in romance
- Clear, enthusiastic and on-going consent
- Shared spiritual beliefs instead of enforced ones

- Calm and clear after rituals, readings or conversations
- Rooted in your body and intuition
- Supported instead of disconnected

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