

What is Grooming?

Adult grooming happens when someone builds a fake relationship with you. They pretend to care but actually want to exploit you for sex, money, or control.



How Grooming Works

They Target You

Groomers carefully choose who to manipulate, seeking those vulnerable, lonely or going through hard times.

They Gain Trust

They use kind words, gifts, support and promises to make you feel special. They seem to understand you perfectly.

They Create Dependency

They make you feel you need them. You might depend on their approval, money, protection, or guidance.

They Isolate You

Groomers slowly separate you from others. They may criticise friends, cause drama, or say no one else understands you.

They Test Your Boundaries

They make small inappropriate requests—then bigger ones. If you resist, they use guilt or threats.

They Slowly Change You

Over time, they get you to do things you normally wouldn't. They make you doubt yourself if you question them.

They Control and Exploit You

Once they have power over you, they demand things: secrecy, obedience, sexual acts, money, or loyalty.



Two Key Elements of Grooming

Hidden Intent

They enter a relationship with a secret plan. They claim to want support or love but actually want something else - your money, control over you, or to sexually abuse you.

Fake Consent

If you knew their true plans, you would never agree to the relationship. Your consent was based on lies and manipulation.

Many groomers don't even admit to themselves what they are doing. They believe their own lies.



How Groomers Control You

- 1 They tell you others don't understand you like they do
- 2 They give rewards, compliments, and gifts to make you feel special.
- 3 They use punishments, guilt, silent treatment, or threats when you don't do what they want.
- 4 They mix good and bad treatment to keep you confused and hopeful.
- 5 They might explode in anger just once to make you afraid of upsetting them again.
- 6 They isolate you from those that might understand you and make you aware of what is happening

These tactics work step by step to trap you in their control.



Common Grooming Tricks



Personal Favours

Asking you to do some special private service for them - like massage, cooking or feeding.



Secret World

Creating a private relationship that nobody else understands. Making you feel only they truly get you.



Love Bombing

Showering you with affection, or gifts. Making you feel you have a special relationship with someone important or highly spiritual that nobody else has.



Mirroring

Copying your interests, values, or background. Claiming to share your exact experiences to create a false bond.

Grooming in Positions of Power

Grooming can occur anywhere where there is a power imbalance - in families, schools, spiritual groups, workplaces, and community organisations. Common abusive roles include:

Doctors and Healers

Doctors and others who have access to your body, emotions and personal information.

Bosses and Organisational Leaders

Those who control your position, job, career or income.



Spiritual Leaders

People seen as having special wisdom and divine connection.

Teachers and Mentors

People who guide your education and future opportunities.

Family Members

Family relations & friends may use their relationships to target you.

Not all people in these roles are harmful—but grooming often happens where trust and power are imbalanced.

When Spiritual Leaders Abuse Their Power



Elevation Effect

Spiritual leaders are seen as enlightened or divinely connected.

This perceived spiritual elevation creates a power imbalance from the start.



Special Access

They claim exclusive knowledge or connection to spiritual wisdom.

They position themselves as a gateway to enlightenment or salvation.



Vulnerability Targeting

They specifically target those in situations of vulnerability (e.g. separated from family, having limited access to external world or having to obey higher authorities)

Young or troubled aspirants or those from different cultural backgrounds become prime targets for exploitation.

When someone questions a spiritual leader's behaviour, they're often accused of lacking intuition or spiritual understanding.

Abusers may use rituals, special teachings, or "spiritual practices" as covers for inappropriate touching or sexual contact.

When Organisational Leaders Abuse Their Power

Position Control

They determine your role, location, and advancement within the organisation.

Your future depends entirely on their approval.

Silencing Tactics

They target those who might challenge their authority.

Complaints are framed as disloyalty to the spiritual mission.

Limited Recourse

Reporting structures often lead back to the abuser.

Whistleblowers risk losing their position, community, and spiritual identity.

Organisational power combined with spiritual authority creates a perfect storm for power imbalance and exploitation.

How Communities Enable Grooming



Protective Circles

Inner circles of loyal colleagues actively shield abusers from accountability and protect an organisation's leadership.

They discredit victims and reframe abuse as misunderstandings or mistakes.



Culture of Silence

The culture of non questioning authority is promoted and encouraged as a sign of spiritual progress.

Concerns are dismissed as "unfounded", "lacking spiritual insight" or expression of "negativity" and evidence is branded as "fake", "not legitimate" or the result of some conspiracy against the abuser.



Reverence for Authority Over Facts (Dogma)

Leaders' imperfections are reframed as simple misdemeanours, "tests" or "divine liila" and facts are ignored.

Questioning authority becomes sacrilege rather than healthy discernment often because of a lack of moral courage.



Heads in the Sand

Victims are not believed or consciously silenced if they try speak up. Bystanders have information but do nothing.

Lack of knowledge, inherent gender bias and cultural misconceptions keep leadership silent and make the surrounding community and the victims slow to act.

Not recognising that there is an issue despite the evidence is a form of abuse.

When entire communities participate in idealising leaders as faultless, they become unwitting accomplices in grooming processes.

Why It's Hard To Say No?

Family Shame



Families fear bringing shame on themselves and side with respected authority figures over their own children.

You might face disbelief, anger or rejection from loved ones.

Community Isolation



Speaking out risks being labeled a troublemaker, unfaithful, political agent, liar or being personally shamed.

Your friends and community may reject you.

You may lose your job or reputation

Spiritual Fears



Perpetrators may threaten to block your spiritual progress.

Fear of psychic attack or occult punishment keeps many silent.

Fear is the groomer's most powerful tool. They carefully cultivate it to ensure your silence.

Saying "no" becomes nearly impossible when your community, identity, and safety all seem at risk.

Groomers purposefully create these situations of vulnerability and power imbalance to enable them to manipulate you.

They may twist your boundaries so deeply that you doubt your own instincts.

Warning Signs You May Be Getting Groomed

In Their Behaviour:

- Ask you to spend unnecessary time alone with them
- Getting you to confide in them
- Give gifts that seem too generous
- Get angry if you don't respond fast or spend time with others
- Make you keep secrets
- Separate you from those who understand you
- Offer help to control your physical energy
- Tell you inappropriate behaviour is a practice of surrender

In Your Feelings:

- You feel confused, pressured or uncomfortable
- You feel afraid to refuse or disagree with them
- You do things you wouldn't normally do
- You keep secrets for someone you barely know
- Friends say you've changed or seem withdrawn
- You start changing how you act, dress, or speak to please them
- You feel emotionally or financially dependent on them

What You Can Do If You Suspect Grooming



Document Everything

Keep detailed records of all interactions that feel inappropriate.

Save texts, emails, and write down incidents with dates and times.



Talk to Someone Safe

Break the silence with a trusted friend who won't judge you.

Professional support lines offer confidential guidance without pressure.



Set Clear Boundaries

Trust your instincts when something feels wrong.

You can say no, delay decisions, or ask direct questions.



Connect With Others

Isolation makes you vulnerable. Stay connected to your support network.

Share your concerns with people outside the influence of the groomer.



Seek Professional Help

Advocacy groups understand the complex dynamics of grooming.

Legal support can help you understand your options and rights.

Taking action doesn't mean confronting the groomer. Focus on protecting yourself first.

Remember: It's Not Your Fault

Groomers use manipulative tactics that fool even the smartest, strongest people.

The path to healing begins with understanding that you are not responsible for the manipulation.



Recovery takes time. Be patient and gentle with yourself throughout this process.

Professional Support

Therapy or counselling can help process trauma and rebuild self-trust.

Community Connection

Peer support groups provide understanding from those with similar experiences.

Personal Boundaries

Learning to establish healthy boundaries protects your wellbeing.

Education & Growth

Understanding abuse patterns helps break cycles & recognise warning signs.

Helpful Resources:

- <https://sakshi.org.in/>
- <https://www.arpan.org.in/>

You are not alone, and help is available. Healing is possible.