

Truth 2x2 language

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When 2x2s' leave the group they can find it hard to translate our language for new friends, therapists, work colleagues and new partners.

The 'innie' language, combined with our social isolation, leaves us feeling like aliens in our country. Leaving a multi-generational group like 2x2s, with a lot of loaded language which you can't easily translate across churches – is a contributing factor to CPTSD and loneliness.

Language misuse and weaponisation

A lot of the language is used to reinforce exclusivity and adherence to social norms/fear of social isolation.

2x2s use a lot of self-gatekeeping phrases - language that leads to shutting down of critical thinking, fear of speaking out of turn and appearing 'different' to the group norms for fear of social isolation.

Truth 2x2 language facilitates a focus on 'fitting in' and not standing out in the group.

The language and phrases caution us of outside influences; cautions us to be careful what we read and listen to. We are diverted away from TV, Radio, internet – because careful what you consume because 'the devil' plants ideas to take you away from Christ.

Listening and learning, curiosity is discouraged – any kind of debate is unsafe, as Workers can excommunicate you, or create a false narrative about you to undermine you.

You learn to be hypervigilant about what you talk about, what media you consume so as not to 'draw attention' to yourself.

To accompany the podcast episodes, it was important to me to provide further context to the language, to enable therapists, friends, family to understand more deeply our insider language and vocabulary.

Feel free to share this blog post with your loved ones outside the group – it's my hope it can be a valuable educational resource.

Some notes on Truth 2x2 language

Monotone. The use of speech patterns and language

This issue is worthy of a podcast episode all on its own, which maybe I'll come back to. In the meantime, it is worth mentioning the tone and style which also accompanies 2x2 language.

The style of preaching in 2x2s, with its lack of intonation – its cultie. The meetings are 'drone like'. Sometimes there is a performance – a crying woman in a fundie voice (a soft, gentle sing-song tone named by other ex-fundamentalist groups) saying how thankful she is. This language and tone combination is used to reinforce cognitive dissonance, spiritual bypassing and shut down critical thinking.

Verbal, oral culture: Most of 2x2 beliefs are shared verbally rather than written down in formal doctrinal books (Worker notes are as close as it gets to written theology). As beliefs are shared predominantly verbally, it feeds the 'testimony' culture, a story telling culture. This also underpins our language and vocabulary issues – we hear Workers use certain words and phrases and it shapes our own use/misuse of them.

Let's talk about names

What's in a name? The Power of words, names, registrations

The Truth 2x2s is an oral tradition and culture, very little is written down and formally recorded. With no known formal registrations, and no formal governance structures, belief statement or theology, language is often gamed and manipulated without challenge in 2x2s.

Those of us who write, speak publicly and name Truth 2x2 behaviour are being particularly rebellious in recording and putting on public record, the cult. Because

they deliberately avoid formally recording as much as possible. It makes us truly trail blazers, powerful.

The group claims to have no name, to not need a name. That itself is a manipulation, a cult tactic. Not having registrations and names allows for plausible deniability, it enables a diversion from accountability. Along with insider language and a vocabulary which doesn't translate easily outside the group, the lack of name and registrations is part of the cult-like weaponisation of language.

They're known internally to each other as "friends' and the group known as

The Truth

The Way

The Fellowship

The Friends and Workers

When pushed they may refer to themselves externally as :

A home-based bible study

Non-denominational Christians

Denial of terminology / name

This is another tactic used by the group, which further complicates language and vocabulary.

They have been known to deny that they are '2x2s'. In Australia specifically I've heard Friends deny that 2x2s are them – they've said to me that it's a different group, not them.

There are rumours that some Friends say referring to them as a '2x2' is a slur, or insult towards them. They do not recognise themselves at 2x2s, they're encouraged by Workers to believe they do not have a name.

In Australia there is a breakaway group known as Cooneyites and another known as Barlow Group. These breakaway groups provide cover for them to deny they are 2x2s', and frame the troubles as being from 'another group', not their own.

There are challenges encountered by not being able to 'name' the group.

For instance I find that leavers find it hard to google a unique name when they're curious or leaving. Its also hard for therapists and outsiders to learn about the group when a leaver can't articulate a unique name.

Common words in 2x2 daily life

Services

Professing and Baptism – rites of passage, highly gatekept and controlled by Workers, expected rites of children by 12 (pressure to conform usually starts around 8, but does vary by community)

Sunday Morning Meeting – A home based formal meeting, held in the house of a Elder, usually run by the Elder (unless a Worker is present)

Wednesday Night Meeting (sometimes called Bible Study) – a home-based meeting, less formal than a Sunday Morning Meeting. Often a study card for subject suggestions underpins the content of the meeting.

Study Card – a card distributed by Workers each year to Friends, for topic suggestions for each Wednesday of the year. One of the few formally distrusted theological pieces of information, although it provides very little in the way of theological guidance, is usually some bible verses with no further context.

Gospel Meeting (sometimes called Mission Meeting) – held in rented halls, often seen as recruitment drives, framed by Friends as evidence that they are not 'secretive' as they do hand out flyers and mailbox the times and locations of these meetings. Usually held on Sunday afternoons

Special Meeting/s – a once-a-year occasion where Friends from a region congregate for a longer meeting in a rented hall. Usually held in Winter in Australia, is held on a Sunday, for a full day of meetings.

Convention – a 4 day event held each year on a farm, specially set up for 2x2 Meetings. A farm of a senior or respected family is repurposed with a large kitchen, camping area, a shed for meetings. Friends from across a wider region (half a state for example) will stay for 4 days and attend meetings. Held in summer in Australia. Are run as giant volunteer operations, although Friends are expected to give donations.

Funerals – 2x2 burials are held in a specific style. They tend to avoid talking too deeply about the person being buried, and Workers will use the funeral to evangelicise and like another Gospel Meeting. This has relaxed a little in recent years, but often is only a graveside service, with preaching and hymns.

Convention grounds – see convention. This is the farm which is usually owned by a senior and respected family

Field – a region allocated to a Worker.

Rituals and Roles

Emblems – a slice of bread and a glass/cup of port (or grape juice in some countries) which is partaken of during Sunday Morning Meetings, only by those baptised.

Workers – Celibate, homeless preachers who have given their lives to Truth 2x2s and handed over all early possessions.

Overseer/Head – the head Worker of a state. Wields a lot of power

Elders – the person (usually a man) who's family has the Meetings in their home within a community. Elders Wife is also a term used, for the wife of this man. She wields a layer of power with women. This is usually the oldest and most senior man in a truth 2x2 community.

Standing and/or Kneeling - something undertaken in Sunday meetings during prayer. Different states and regions deal with prayer differently

Testimony – the sharing of an interpretation of a bible verse with the Meeting attendees, expected of anyone who has Professed

Prayer – a formal pray required of professing people in Wednesday and Sunday meetings

Testing The Meeting – a process of encouraging young people to stand up and commit themselves formally to the Truth 2x2s, which then requires them to give a testimony each week in Meetings, pray in meetings and participate in rituals

The Harvest Field – a region? Or a death? Maybe both.

Common phrases which didn't make it into the podcast

Having the gospel in your home – having a home perfectly run for Workers, Elders. A great example for other Friends.

Aiming for an open, spirit led home – see above

The perfect true way- The Truth 2x2s

The one true way – The Truth 2x2s

Found The Way – how a person or family was recruited into the group. At funerals and in testimony you may here a recruit speak of how Workers found them and 'saved them' or how they 'found the way'

The only one way, not man-made – Truth 2x2s. They believe all other churches are man-made and false.

Setting the wrong example – not adhering to strict gender, sexuality and behavioural standards

Lost Out – left the 2x2s and therefore going to hell

There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth for those who don't believe– the world, people who've left. It's a fear mongering phrase, used to scare people

Grace (not the concept of 'grace' as understood by mainstream Christians...) it means to be thankful for your food. To 'say grace'.

Family of God – means – us. Just us and our Friends. Its exclusive language.

To 'draw attention to yourself – to be seen not to fit in, not to be conforming. Its seen as a sin to draw attention, especially as a woman and girl

Family of His – see above

A note about the use of 'him' and 'his' – its occurred to me how patriarchal and controlling the references to 'him' are. It's also manipulative and confusing – who IS him? Is it Workers? Is it God? Is it Jesus?

Some examples include:

- Obedience to him
- Surrender to him
- We are worthless without him
- Struggling to stay true to him

Unequally yoked - marrying outside, or to someone not professing or dedicated)

Bitter ex's - bitter people who've left/speak out

False Prophets – any other church, anyone who speaks against them

Be a little candle, someone's watching you – is a verse from a hymn in an alternate hymn book (not the main Hymns old and new) which was referred to a lot in the 80s and 90s' – to remind children that God was always watching, Worldly people were always watching, and we had to be careful about outwardly appearances.

What words and phrases did I miss? listen to the podcast (there is another 10 there) and chat with me in the comments about which words and phrases you've been unable to forget from the group.