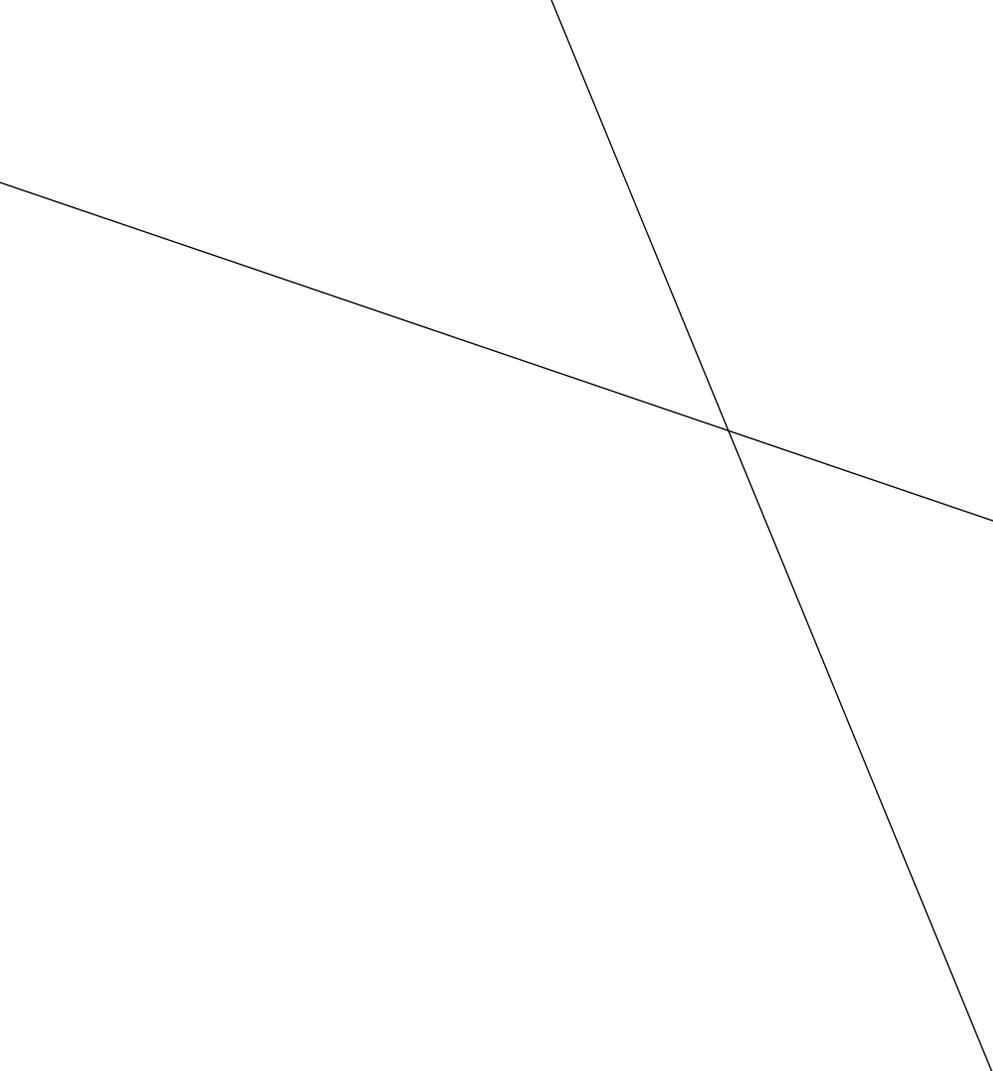
The top-left portion of the page features a complex, abstract graphic composed of several thin, black, overlapping lines. These lines form a series of irregular, nested shapes that resemble a stylized, fragmented map or a network of connections. The lines are thin and black, set against a plain white background.

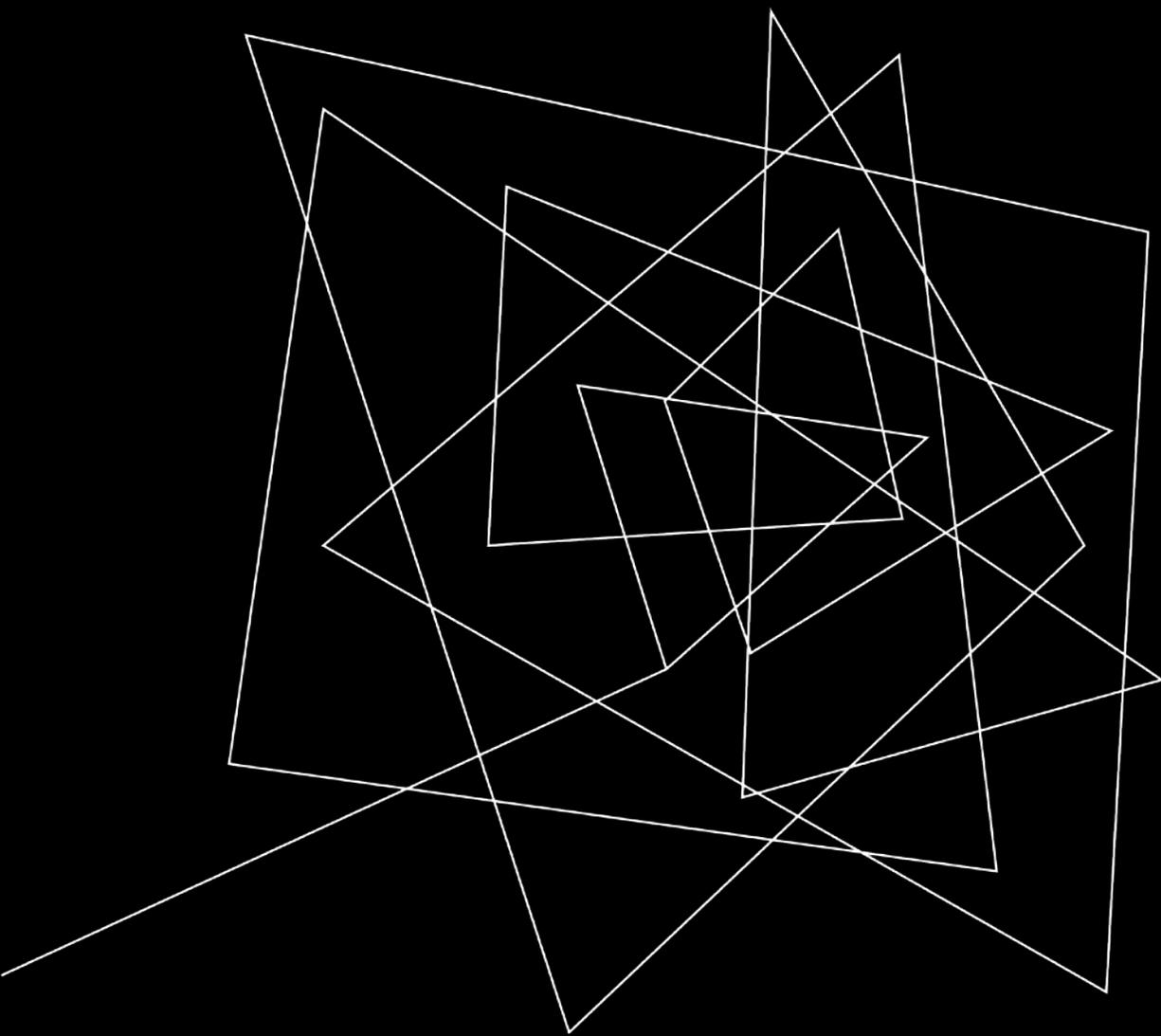
RELIGIOUS TRAUMA: IDENTITY & RELATIONSHIPS

Caroline Winzenried



LOSING SOCIAL COMMUNITIES AND SUPPORTS

Leaving a religion often comes at a great social cost and requires sacrificing the powerful institutional support of a religious institution, one's former community of faith, and sometimes even close friendships and family relationships.



LOSING IDENTITIES

Religion and religious communities can profoundly shape our identities. What happens when we lose these identity foundations?

CASCADING SOCIAL EFFECTS

“So, for her having someone who is basically being ostracized by the church, meant she had zero status in the church. It’s almost worse than having a husband who’s not part of it. You have a husband who’s an apostate,” (Nica, 2020).



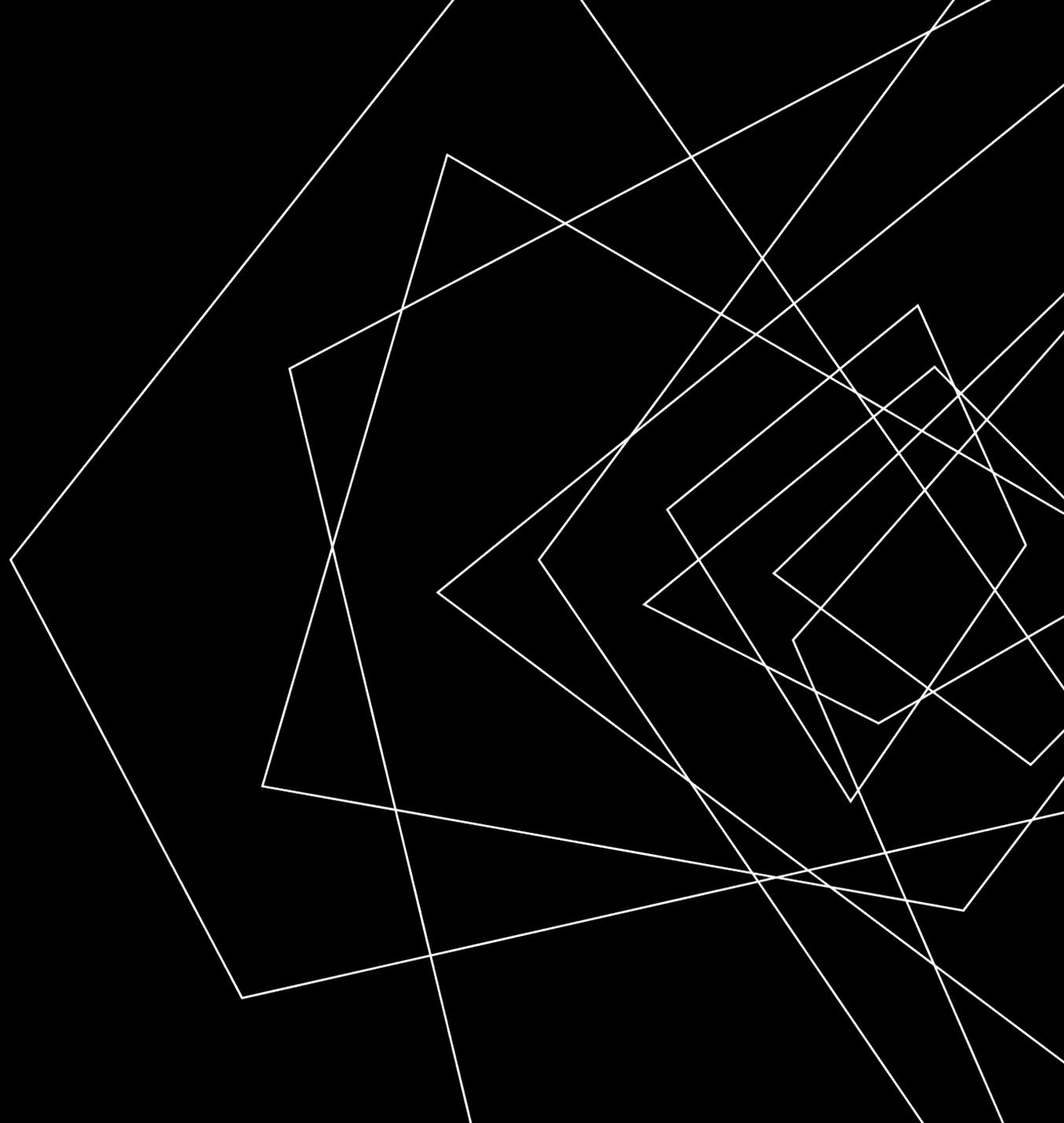


CASCADING SOCIAL EFFECTS

These role losses can feel very threatening to family members. A woman who has left the Mormon faith, for example, is believed to be shutting her family out of the Celestial Kingdom forever.

CASCADING SOCIAL EFFECTS

“If I had been disfellowshipped, and it was found out that my mom still talks to me, she could actually risk being removed too,” (Nica, 2020).



CONSTRUCTING NEW IDENTITIES – THE CHALLENGES

Constructing new identities after leaving a faith can be a long and slow process. For many, the beginning stages of this process can feel like living between two worlds at once.



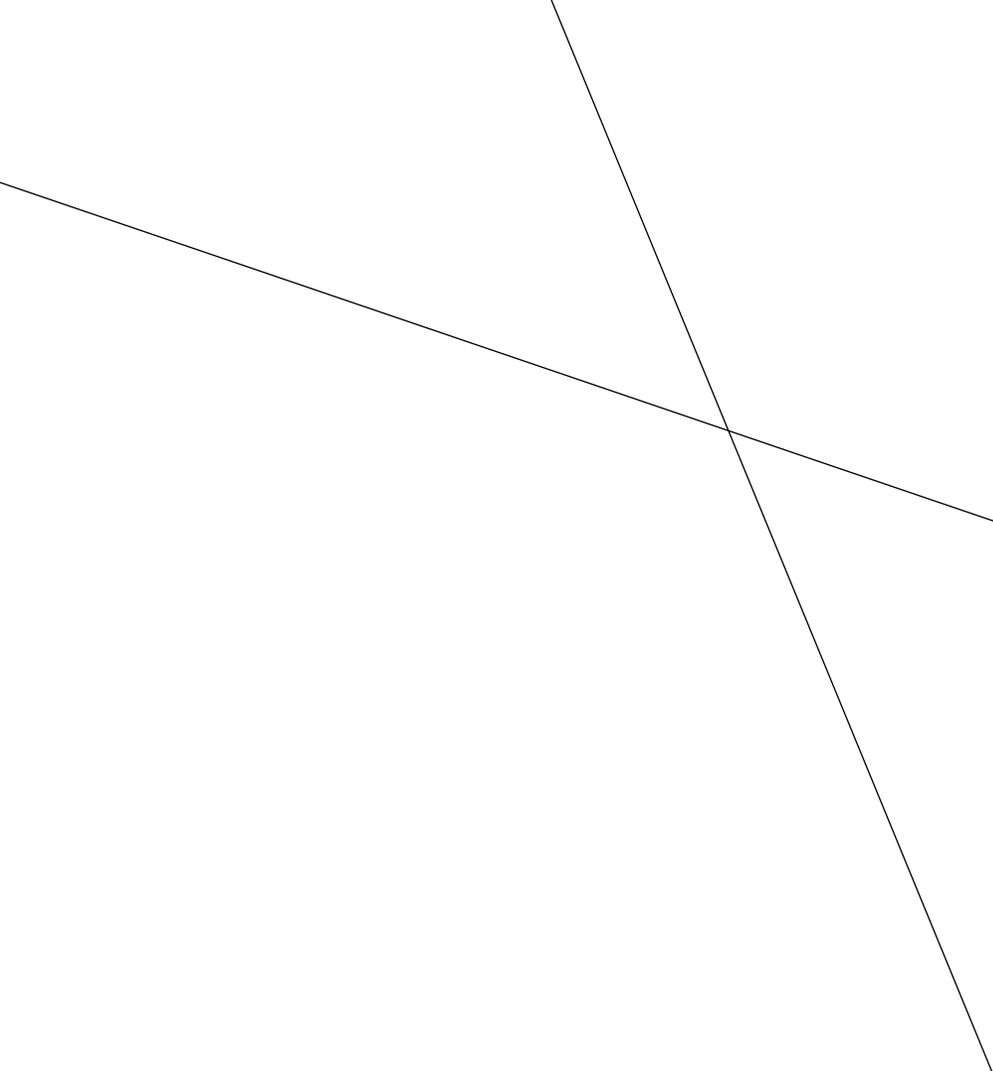
CONSTRUCTING NEW IDENTITIES – THE CHALLENGES

“There is little in the way of a cultural script for the passage of a person from being a member of an intense religious group to being a non-member,”
(Beckford, 1985).



CONSTRUCTING NEW IDENTITIES – THE POSITIVES

Finding a new label to describe current beliefs can be a first step to building a new self-concept



CONSTRUCTING NEW IDENTITIES – THE POSITIVES

Participants also expressed that it was empowering to translate to the secular world the values and skillsets that had drawn them to certain roles within their religious community.

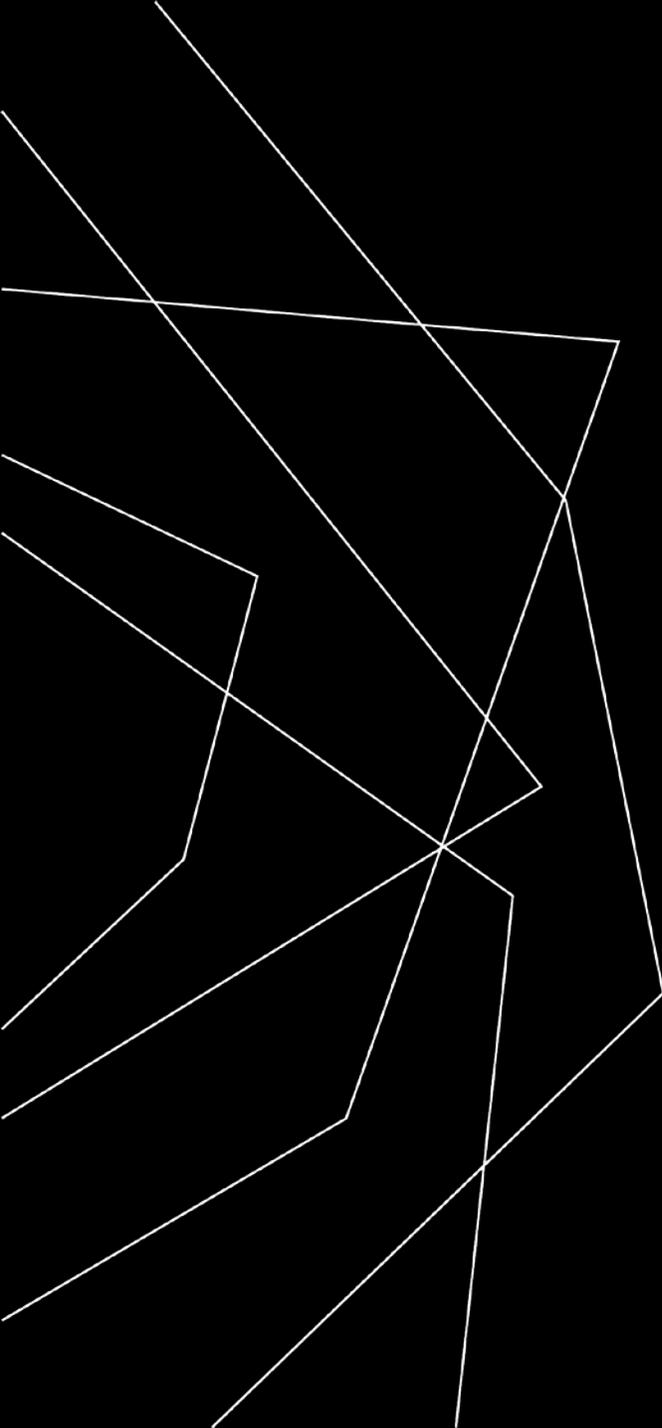
HOW TO HEAL

- Support groups
- Share your story
- Listen to others' stories
- Counselling



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THANK YOU

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