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## What is youtube rabbit hole

Literally, a rabbit hole is what the animal digs for its home. The earliest written record of the phrase dates back to the 17th century. But the figurative rabbit hole begins with Lewis Carroll’s 1865 classic, Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland. In its opening chapter, “Down the Rabbit-Hole,” Alice follows the White Rabbit into his burrow, which transports her to the strange, surreal, and nonsensical world of Wonderland. Since then, Carroll’s rabbit hole has proved a popular and useful reference. The Oxford English Dictionary finds the first allusive rabbit hole in a 1938 edition of The Yale Law Journal: “It is the Rabbit-Hole down which we fell into the Law, and to him who has gone down it, no queer performance is strange.” Over much of the 20th century, rabbit hole has been used to characterize bizarre and irrational experiences. It’s especially used to reference magical, challenging, and even dangerous places or positions, similar to Carroll’s topsy-turvy Wonderland. Rabbit hole has many metaphorical applications—from frustrating red tape to the mind-bending complexity of science to hallucinations during altered states—all united by a common sense of passing into some labyrinthine, logic-defying realm that, once entered, is hard to get out of. One can fall down the rabbit hole of government bureaucracy, healthcare, obtaining a green card, tax law, the political economy of modern Japan, puberty, college admissions, or quantum mechanics. If you’re Neo in the hit film The Matrix, you can take the red pill—a pill that shows you the truth, as opposed to the blue pill, which keeps you in ignorance—and “see how deep the rabbit hole goes.” In a related note, some people literally take pills and go down the rabbit hole of a psychedelic drug trip. But as Kathryn Schulz observed for The New Yorker in 2015, rabbit hole has further evolved in the information age: “These days...when we say that we fell down the rabbit hole, we seldom mean that we wound up somewhere psychedelically strange. We mean that we got interested in something to the point of distraction—usually by accident, and usually to a degree that the subject in question might not seem to merit.” Thanks to the abundance, variety, and instant access of content online, many fall down internet rabbit holes which are often spectacularly, and addictively, niche: scary stories, obscure conspiracy theories, or famous last meals, for instance. Other rabbit holes tend to be opened up by specific services or social media, which serve users item after item, link after link: Wikipedia, Netflix, Amazon, Facebook, YouTube, and so forth. These rabbit holes have become so common that people sometimes swap out rabbit for the name of the particular site, e.g. “I’ve fallen down an Instragram hole” or “I’m falling down a wikihole.” Key ways to get your loved one to view conspiracies rationally: Gauge willingness to quit by employing techniques of motivational interviewing Maintain connection without judging, ridiculing, or challenging beliefs Provide accounts of those who’ve left conspiracy thinking behind Get support for yourself and read accounts of those who have exited cults Source: StijnJon/Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 “Each one of us here today will at one time in our lives look upon a loved one in his need and ask the same question: We are willing to help, Lord, but what, if anything, is needed? For it is true we can seldom help those closest to us. Either we don’t know what part of ourselves to give or, more often than not, the part we have to give is not wanted. And so it is those we live with and should know who elude us. But we can still love them—we can love completely without complete understanding.” —Norman Maclean, A River Runs Through It This is Part Three, the final installment, of a series on “What to do When Someone You Love Becomes Obsessed with QAnon.” If you haven’t read Part One and Part Two yet, you may want to go back and do so now, to fully appreciate why trying to rescue people from QAnon may not only be difficult but in some cases doomed to fail. But here are a few practical ideas that can help. 1. Understand That “QAnons” Don’t Want to Be Saved The greatest hurdle in trying to help a loved one who’s fallen down the conspiracy theory rabbit hole is that they probably don’t want to climb out. As the above quotation from A River Runs Through It suggests, extending a hand isn’t likely to help if a loved one doesn’t reach out and grab it or meet you halfway. A similar perspective comes from an old psychiatry joke: “How many psychiatrists does it take to change a lightbulb? “Only one, but the lightbulb has to really want to change.” In Part 1 of this series, I discussed how QAnon is part conspiracy theory, part religious cult, and part alternate reality role-playing game. Thinking about QAnon based on these different facets helps to understand why followers don’t want to escape—doing so might mean giving up a form of recreation, a sense of belonging, or even a new identity and mission in life. But these facets also suggest possible interventions. For example, modeling QAnon as a kind of role-playing game that has the potential to become a behavioral addiction like video gaming or gambling suggests that some principles of addiction therapy could be applied to help those obsessed with QAnon. In addiction therapy, quantifying motivation for behavioral change is a core concept, with specific interventions matched to each stage of motivation. When that motivation is lacking in the so-called “pre-contemplation” stage, often the best intervention is to simply maintain contact, express concern, and let people know you’re there for them if they need you. That’s a great strategy for the friends and family of QAnon conspiracy theory believers who aren’t looking for help. In a type of psychotherapy called “motivational interviewing” (MI), therapists are taught to be on the lookout for any statements that might suggest that a compulsive behavior is causing problems in someone’s life and to use that to encourage change without arguing about it. So, if someone were to say, “I’m getting in trouble at work for spending so much time online, but no one understands that QAnon is more important than anything else,” an MI therapist might reply with a reflective comment like, “other people don’t appreciate how important QAnon is to you and that’s starting to negatively affect your life.” This is a non-confrontational way of echoing a distress caused by QAnon that can hopefully nudge someone closer to the “contemplation” stage of thinking about whether it might be worth trying to “unplug.” Since QAnon is largely an online phenomenon, “unplugging” is a key step in walking away, but is best done willingly. Modeling QAnon as a cult suggests that “deprogramming” techniques—a kind of “un-brainwashing”—could be helpful, but when deprogramming was used in its 1970s heyday, it usually began with families forcibly removing their loved ones from the physical confines of a cult.1 It’s nearly impossible to prevent access to the internet these days, aside from taking internet privileges away from a child or refusing to pay someone’s internet bill. Social media companies like YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter are slowly coming around to doing their part by unplugging QAnon groups from their platforms, but such measures may have limited efficacy. 2. Be a “North Star” When I’m asked how to approach people about their conspiracy theory beliefs, my first recommendation is to consider your goals. Are you trying to make small talk and keep the peace over Thanksgiving dinner? Are you really trying to understand what your loved one believes and why? Or are you looking for a debate, with the hope of winning and changing someone’s mind? More than anything, what a QAnon-obsessed loved one probably needs is support and to stay connected to something tangible and meaningful in the real world. Depending on circumstances, that might be possible without having to talk about QAnon. Focus on other common bonds instead—and if the conversation comes around to QAnon, try saying something like, “I know this is really important to you, but I’d prefer to not get into politics... can we talk about something else?” Of course, that kind of boundary-setting is less possible when people who are living together or in a romantic relationship are in daily contact. If you’re feeling more adventurous and are willing to roll up your sleeves to understand why a loved one is so obsessed with QAnon, make an effort to listen compassionately with the goal of understanding and be prepared to dive down the rabbit hole with them. But understand that belief in conspiracy theories like QAnon requires a rejection of mainstream sources of information so that bringing those up by way of argument along the way isn’t likely to change anyone’s mind. Neither will arguing from a place of ignorance—if you’re hoping to challenge your loved one’s beliefs, read up on QAnon first—this article is a great start. The common tactic of ridiculing conspiracy theory beliefs is usually counterproductive but may depend on how far down the rabbit hole your loved one has gone, as I discussed in Part 2 of this series. Research has shown that ridicule and rational arguments can be effective under some circumstances,2 especially for “fence-sitters” who have not yet decided exactly what to believe. But for “true believers” whose identity has become wrapped up in QAnon, ridicule and argument will usually just make them dig their heels in deeper. For “true believers” then, it’s best to avoid those easy traps—they’re much more likely to end in an impasse than any progress modifying beliefs. If you’re concerned about your loved one’s descent down the conspiracy theory rabbit hole and worried that you’re going to lose them, consider focusing less on how to drag them out and more about situating yourself as a kind of “north star”—a consistent reference point at the top of the hole in case they ever want to come up for air. 3. Refer to Debunking Experts Another form of psychotherapy that could be applied to conspiracy theory beliefs is cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), which is designed to challenge “cognitive distortions” and false beliefs by looking at evidence to disconfirm them. However, success in CBT requires not only that the “lightbulb wants to change,” but also that the therapist is adequately equipped to objectively analyze the evidence. That means that in order to engage in “reality testing” about QAnon, you’ll have to venture down the conspiracy theory rabbit hole yourself. But the QAnon rabbit hole is so deep and tangled that it’s not particularly realistic—or healthy—for family and friends to jump in with their loved ones. In the 1998 movie What Dreams May Come, the late Robin Williams plays a man who, in order to rescue his wife from hell, has to go there himself to pull her out. In the end, her salvation requires that he give up on rescue in favor of committing to staying in hell forever and losing his mind. With conspiracy theory believers, that’s often exactly what’s wanted from their loved ones based on the belief that they’ll see the light and want to stay there together. But while “joining them to save them” might make for a great Hollywood ending, it isn’t particularly likely to work in the real world. I would never recommend that someone try to rescue a loved one from drug addiction by becoming a drug addict themselves nor would I recommend that they try to “wing it” as a psychotherapist to treat a loved one’s psychiatric disorder. Just so, I don’t recommend that friends and family jump down the rabbit hole to debate the legitimacy of QAnon, especially if their loved ones are “true believers” who are deep in the hole. What I do recommend is referring their loved ones to accounts of those who have left the conspiracy theory world or to experts who know about QAnon and have experience and success with debunking. One “referral” option is to point QAnon believers to the Reddit subforum r/QAnonCasualties where they can read other accounts of just how much havoc QAnon has wreaked on other people’s lives and relationships so that they can better understand why you’re concerned. While they’re on Reddit, you could suggest that your loved one stop by the subforum r/changemyview to get feedback from others about QAnon conspiracy theories and to read other efforts to “reality test” them. At the very least, doing so could be a useful way of breaking out of one’s echo chamber and fostering cognitive flexibility—another way of “unplugging” as a necessary step towards climbing out of the QAnon rabbit hole. Encourage your loved one to check out the discussion forums of conspiracy theory debunker Mick West’s website Metabunk.org. West has detailed knowledge of conspiracy theories and has debunked several QAnon claims, but also likes to point out real-life conspiracies worthy of our attention. He has a kind of infectious enthusiasm for debunking that he believes could satisfy some of the needs that conspiracy theories fulfill for believers. In that vein, you might suggest that your loved one “do their own research” and spend more time investigating the identity of “Q” rather than accepting what “he” says at face value. In fact, there’s more evidence that QAnon has been perpetuated as a kind of hoax for financial gain (e.g. Google “Jim Watkins”) than there is to support that Q is a reliable source of information. All too often a simple, real-life conspiracy theory lurks behind the more outlandish ones. 4. Get Help for Yourself If your loved one has fallen down the QAnon rabbit hole, help them by helping yourself. Visit r/QAnonCasualties for support and share your story there. Arm yourself with knowledge. Here’s a recommended reading list: And finally, keep watching this space. And good luck. Read Parts 1 and 2 of this series on “What to do When Someone You Love Becomes Obsessed with QAnon”: ► The Psychological Needs That QAnon Feeds ► How Far Down the QAnon Rabbit Hole Did Your Loved One Fall? References 1. 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