

Pathways to radicalisation

There is no single way that radicalisation works. However, it often looks like one of these two pathways:

Pathway 1

1. Introduction to extremist ideas.

This could be through a friend or family member; someone the person meets through a hobby or at an event; or an online group.

2. Introduction to more people who share these ideas.

This can look like being invited to join a new hobby group or a new online space, which is run by an extremist group. The goal of the recruiter is to replace any existing support network with the extremist group, so that the person relies on their new extremist friends for social interaction and support.

3. More intense and extreme ideas.

Once a person is part of an extremist group, they are exposed to more intense beliefs.

4. Adopting extremist beliefs.

Surrounded by new friends who all have the same beliefs, and often rejected by their old friends, the person adopts the extremist beliefs as their own.

5. Justifying violence.

Once the person genuinely believes in the extremist cause, it becomes easier to justify violent or terrorist acts.

Pathway 2

1. Identifying something unfair.

This is often related to romantic relationships, employment, or general safety; for example, the injustice could be being unable to find a romantic partner, being fired from a job, or being the victim of a crime.

2. Assigning responsibility.

The person decides that a particular group of people is responsible for the unfair thing that has happened to them. This is usually inaccurate (for example, the person might decide that it's the fault of all women that they can't find a girlfriend; or the victim of a crime committed by a particular ethnicity might believe that high crime rates are the fault of everyone of that ethnicity.)

3. Dehumanisation.

Dehumanisation is the idea that a particular group is less than human. It usually includes the belief that everyone in a particular group is the same; that they all follow racist, sexist, or otherwise bigoted stereotypes; that they are less intelligent; and that they are more likely to be dangerous or criminals.

4. Justifying violence.

Once the person believes that everyone in a particular group is both dangerous and less than human, it becomes easy to accept the idea of violence against them.

Where to go for help

In an emergency or if someone is in immediate danger, call 111.

If you believe the police should be notified but there isn't an immediate emergency, call the police non-emergency line on 105, or complete a report at 105.police.govt.nz.

If you have information about an extremist group, you can report the group to the New Zealand Security Intelligence Service here:

<https://providinginformation.nzsis.govt.nz/#2yp4a1m06q6l0cfbdb1ao3225>

To report violent or extremist online content to the Department of Internal Affairs, fill in this form:

<https://www.dia.govt.nz/web/submitforms.nsf/digviol>

Netsafe provide free, confidential advice about online content and interactions. You can report an incident to them here:

<https://report.netsafe.org.nz/hc/en-au/requests/new>

If you need support or someone to talk to, contact your local Autism New Zealand Outreach Coordinator – you can find a list of Outreach Coordinators by region here: <https://autismnz.org.nz/support-from-us/>