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## *In Trumpland Everyone is Corrupt*

Trump has gotten away with crimes his entire adult life. He became president by engaging in criminal acts and has continued to flout rules and laws while in office. You might say his actions are learned behavior. One of the interesting aspects of this is that Trump tells us exactly what he thinks. He comes out and tells Russia on television to hack Hillary's emails. He says to Billy Bush, "grab 'em by the pussy. You can do anything." He thinks that even when he commits a crime, whether it involves misusing campaign funds, conspiring to undermine an election, or fraudulently reporting taxes, he believes that he is ok because he assumes everyone does it. This attitude, that we are all corrupt is a belief he shares with his followers and with many Americans who believe Trump is just doing what all politicians do but he is honest about it. They admire his forthrightness and his success.

Trump has stated exactly what he is up to over and over. When referring to getting dirt on Hillary from the Russians, Trump says anyone would do that. He doesn't acknowledge that it might be illegal. The line between what is legal and what is not does not exist in Trumpland. And because he is completely amoral, he believes he is not guilty of doing anything wrong. That's why he sends his son to Trump tower to deal with the Russians. He is convinced it's fine. That's why he let the Mueller investigation go forward. He does not think he has engaged in "collusion" because there is no explicit law against "collusion." Instead Trump believes that getting help from the Russians is exactly what Hilary and anyone else would have done in his shoes and therefore, it is ok.

Trump learned from Bill Clinton that one can get away with having affairs, paying women off, lying to Americans. Trump does believe that Mueller, like Starr, is a danger because

he can uncover all kinds of dirt and go off in unexpected directions. Yet he also believes that like Clinton, he will never be impeached.

Trump believes in the creed of *The Godfather*. Loyalty is paramount. Enemies are everywhere. The only people you can really trust are family members. Trump keeps his family close. Again, he doesn't see anything wrong with Ivanka using her position to get trade deals with China. He thinks it is fine for Jared to use his connections to Trump to get funding for his properties.

The blurring of lines can also be seen in Trump's use of conspiracies. He doesn't necessarily believe that Obama was not a U.S. citizen, but he is convinced that it is fair game to use conspiracies against opponents. He believes everyone is cutthroat and he must be too. There are winners and losers.

It is frightening how effective all this is. Cynical Republicans caught on and have exploited Trump's success to achieve their own ends. Ryan, McConnell, Nunes, Gingrich, not to mention Hannity, Carlson, Fox and Friends, Alex Jones, Bannon, Miller, Giuliani and Dershowitz have all attached themselves to Trump like sucker fish.

The mainstream media meanwhile is finally catching on to the extent of Trump's corruption. Why our major newspapers didn't vet Trump before the election rather than focusing on Trump the entertainer verses Hillary's emails, we'll never know.

Ryan is smart enough to get out before Mueller closes in. The rest of Trump followers do not seem to understand that it is all about him, not them. But eventually, like Nixon's supporters, they'll see that Trump, like Nixon, is just a crook.