

Confession to Crimes Not Committed

Memory Manipulations

Some individuals are perhaps more vulnerable to false confessions than others. We know that memory can be manipulated. This is particularly true for individuals with low intelligence quotient (IQ) levels and people who are compliant or suggestible. They may believe, through intense interrogations, that they in fact committed the offense. Additionally, anxious individuals may not be able to withstand the intensity of an interrogation and may confess to end the anxiety-provoking situation.

Celebrity Status

Some individuals may claim that they committed a crime simply for the celebrity status of the case, though this happens only in a few highly publicized cases.

End Interrogation

Some individuals may confess as a way to end the interrogation. They may view it as a cost–benefit analysis and just assume that if they confess, they can end the interrogation and get on with their lives. This can also be encouraged by false promises from the interrogators.

Lengthy Interrogations

Some individuals may confess because of lengthy interrogations in which the individuals are deprived of sleep, isolated from their family, and refused counsel. It can lead many individuals, not just vulnerable juveniles, to feel that it is better to confess than to continue to endure the interrogation.