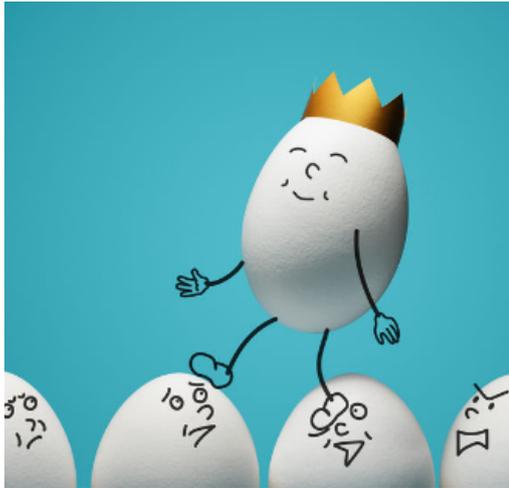




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NO, YOU'RE NOT 'CRAZY'!!

This month's newsletter focusses on Narcissism, and the damage that being in a relationship, any relationship, with someone who has Narcissistic Personality Disorder does. You're definitely not 'crazy' – you've just been made to think, feel and believe that you're 'crazy'.

Click [here](#) to read last month's newsletter, and to access all our previous articles.

Do You Think It's All Your Fault, That You're 'Crazy', or You're Constantly Confused? You May Have Been Narcissised!

By Amanda Pulford
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I bet in the last week, you've heard somebody refer to someone else as a "narcissist". It's a word that's used a lot these days, but we may be using it too widely, and in turn, we may not appreciate what it is truly like to come in contact with someone who has Narcissistic Personality Disorder. It's damaging, truly damaging, and it takes A LOT to recover from (and please be aware that leaving a Narcissistic Relationship is not like leaving a 'normal' relationship).

If you're interested in our previous articles, please click [here](#)

If you've got a suggestion for an article, or there's something more you would like to hear about, please send us an email - click [here](#)

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What Is Narcissistic Personality Disorder?

Narcissistic Personality Disorder (NPD) is a mental disorder affecting approximately 1% of the population, with a greater prevalence in men than women. NPD is defined as an inflated sense of self-importance, a lack of empathy for others, and a great need for admiration. If you are living with, or have lived with, friends with, or have been friends with, working for, or working with, someone who has this disorder, you may have noticed them to be preoccupied with power, prestige, vanity, and they may think they deserve special treatment and fame.

However, don't confuse NPD with high self-confidence and self-esteem. Those with high self-esteem are still humble.

What Are The Symptoms Of NPD?

You are probably familiar with all of the symptoms, but just in case you're not, they are :

- fantasies of unlimited success
- belief of great self-importance
- only understood by individuals of high-status
- only associate with individuals of high-status
- expectations of being realised as superior
- in need of and requiring constant admiration
- exaggeration of achievements and talents
- a sense of entitlement
- envious of others
- believe others are envious of them
- think about themselves the majority of the time
- talk about themselves a lot
- set unrealistic goals
- believe others should do special favours for them
- believe nobody should question their motives
- believe others should follow their requests
- take advantage of others to get what they want (with no remorse toward the ones they stepped on to get there)
- display arrogance
- easily rejected and hurt
- unemotional
- power seeking
- demonstrate superiority

- respond to criticism with shame, anger, and humiliation
- easily jealous

Are There Different Types of Narcissists?

Absolutely! We all know someone who fits all the above criteria, and displays it without a care in the world ... just look at some of the world leaders! This is an **'Overt'** narcissist.

But there are quieter narcissist's – maybe even appearing introverted, shy and vulnerable. These are **'Covert'** or **'Vulnerable'** or **'Introverted'** Narcissists. They share the same traits as Overt Narcissists, both having a grandiose sense of entitlement which covers up a fragile self-esteem. But the traits of the Covert Narcissist are more hidden : they may have a quiet superiority, they're judgemental, and their mannerisms hint at condescension and disapproval. Covert Narcissists are poor listeners, as there is a withdrawn self-centredness about them. They're quick to judge and if they don't deem you to be someone they need or want, they'll block you. They're highly sensitive, responding poorly to perceived slights and handle criticism badly, often by a sulky withdrawal. A Covert Narcissist can be passive-aggressive. They may also appear aloof or smug, which hides an inability to genuinely connect with others.

And at the extreme end, narcissists can be outright dangerous. This is what is known as **'Malignant'** Narcissism. Malignant Narcissist's mood and behaviour is dependent on external factors and those around them. They need positive feedback and can feel anger, stress and shame if what they get back is at odds with their inflated sense of self. They need to guard their true self at all costs, which at the heart of lies a fragile self-esteem. Malignant Narcissists have a desperate need for total control. They have a grandiose sense of self-importance and entitlement and are intolerant of others' opinions, particularly when they differ to theirs. If faced with facts, they'll lie and change their reality, rather than accept the truth. They **gaslight** those who confront them with it. They have no empathy. They do not understand the impact of their behaviour on others who love them, live with them and/or work with

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them. Malignant Narcissists can destroy families and work environments. Everyone is left walking on eggshells around them. They'll confuse you. You'll feel sorrier for them than the abuse they mete out to you. Don't let them fool you with their charisma and charming personalities.

What Damage Can An NPD Do?

Sadly, lots! And the damage often takes a long time to work through. Don't be fooled, this is not like leaving a 'normal' relationship – it takes much longer to work through, it causes much more hurt, and in most cases, it completely destroys an individual's sense of self.

A person with NPD will always be looking for their Narcissistic Supply (NS) – think of this like oxygen. A true Narcissist needs NS to survive, in the same way that we all need oxygen to survive. NS is interacting with others to get their own needs met (to feel better about themselves, to build up their self-esteem, to feel superior). NS may come in the forms of high achievement, flirting, 'doing good', professing undying love, or anything similar. *But be wary : they do it not because it's what they genuinely feel (although they may try to convince themselves, and you, that they do).*

More specifically a person with NPD will :

- **test you early** : they will test you to see what level of their bad behaviour you will accept, if you take the blame then they'll keep walking all over you
- **control** : they need total control of everyone and everything around them so that they will always feel superior
- **manipulation** : they will lie, cheat, and do anything to get their NS
- **you will be blamed** : it will always be your fault, somehow, because they are always right
- **you will never do enough** : whatever you do will always fall short, because you will never meet their demanding needs
- **you will never be enough** : who you are will never meet the standards of a person with NPD, because you can never, ever, be better than them
- **you will always be put down** : whether this is obvious, or by a slight that leaves you

questioning what they've just said, because you can never, ever be better than them

- **your feelings will never be validated** : they don't care how you feel, they only care how they feel
- **there will always be double standards** : the rules they set for you never apply to them, because they will always do what they want to get what they want
- **you will have no boundaries** : whatever you want will never be respected, they continually violate boundaries, because it's always about getting their NS

And at their worst, they will achieve all of this by **Gaslighting**. Gaslighting is a term that was coined from the play Gaslight, which was created into films in 1940 and 1944, and follows the story of a husband attempting to convince his wife that she is insane. Gaslighting is defined as a form of psychological manipulation that results in someone doubting their own sanity. This leaves individuals doubting themselves, doubting what they know to be the truth, and leaves them asking themselves, "Am I crazy?".

The Take Away

A person with NPD can be persuasive and sweep you off your feet. When they're interested in you they know how to make you feel special and wanted. But it's a lie. It's not about you at all. It's about how you make them feel. They come first and that's paramount to them. Anyone else is irrelevant. Like Vampires, they feed off you to make themselves feel good. Once they reel you in with their charismatic personality at the start, they then switch to their manipulative tactics to control you. They need that total control over you to feel good about themselves. Deep down they are actually needy and lacking self-esteem.

Remember, a person with NPD will only do the things that in turn will make others make them feel good about themselves. You'll never fill their unlimited need for love, appreciation and approval. It's an impossible task. They suck everyone around them dry. If they're not getting enough of what they want, they'll simply discard you and move on to their next supply. Sad, isn't it?

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Finally, know that the longer you stay in a relationship with a narcissist, the harder it will be to leave. Get out while you can.

Talks

The Psychology of Narcissism by W Keith Campbell

https://www.ted.com/talks/w_keith_campbell_the_psychology_of_narcissism?language=en

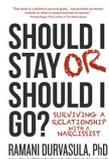
Narcissism isn't just a personality type that shows up in advice columns; it's actually a set of traits classified and studied by psychologists. But what causes it? And can narcissists improve on their negative traits?

How To Deal With Gaslighting by Ariel Leve

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v4P2Qwh1QCU>

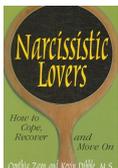
Gaslighting is an emotionally abusive tactic that makes the victim question their own sanity and perception of reality. In this important talk, Ariel Leve shares some of the life-saving strategies she adopted as a child to survive her mother's gaslighting.

Books



Should I Stay Or Should I Go by Ramani Durvasula

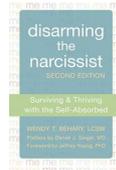
Sometimes leaving is the healthiest option. But sometimes it doesn't feel like an option, and you may have powerful reasons for staying. This book provides a realistic roadmap of how to navigate this landscape and reclaim your true self, find healing and live an authentic and empowered life. Whether you stay, or go.



Narcissistic Lovers by Cynthia Zayn and Kevin Dibble

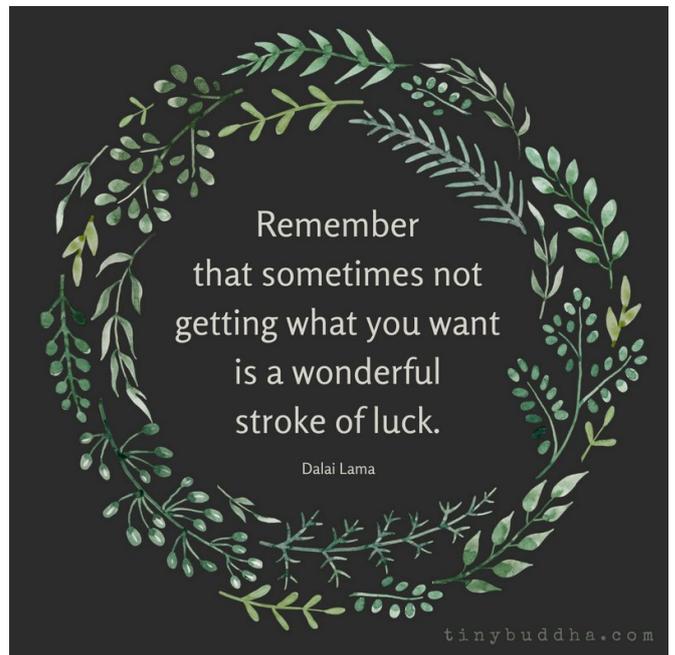
In a revealing study of relationships where partners love themselves first, last, and always, this book helps readers determine whether their

partner is over the line and has NPD. Featuring compelling stories and scenarios, Narcissistic Lovers helps victims understand the pain brought on by their abusers, shows why these self-loathers can't change, and offer hope for healing from their "N-fiction".



Disarming the Narcissist by Wendy Behary
A practical, step-by-step communication guide for coping with and confronting a narcissist. This book includes new information regarding how to deal with narcissistic women, aggressive and abusive narcissists, strategies for safety, and the link between narcissism and sex addiction.

As always, if you would like some help, please feel free to contact us on 0488 954 195, admin@awakenpsychology.com.au or [click here](#)



If at any stage, you find you need urgent assistance – go to your closest **Emergency Department**, call the **Mental Health Emergency Line** on 13 14 65, or call **Lifeline** on 13 11 14.

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