



# NARCISSISTIC PARENT

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

## HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?

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# MOM – DAD – OR BOTH CAN BE ABUSIVE

Everything You Need to Learn About Your Narcissistic Parent

## OVERT OR COVERT?

An **overt narcissist** is the typical self-centered person that doesn't hide their own self-love or their need for admiration. They demand loyalty and people are pawns for them to get what they need. They are often easy to spot with their "full-of-themselves" mannerisms.

The **covert narcissist** is more like Wonder Woman's invisible plane. On the surface they are loving, caring parents that want the best for you but beneath the charming façade they harbor jealousy and do everything to manipulate your lives and create division.



## HOW CAN A PARENT DO THESE HORRIBLE THINGS?

I always knew my family wasn't like my friends' families, and I spent a lifetime comparing and questioning. Why can't we have holiday dinners together? Why does everyone hate each other? Why don't we play board games, go to movies or vacations together? Why is everyone always fighting? Why am I always the one to hold the family together? I grew up with two sisters. I am the middle child. I had one crazy mother, a stepfather, and added to the mix was a biological father that left us when I was six.

The confusing part was that there was this illusion that even I didn't know was a deception. On the surface we seemed to have it all: the perfect home, the summer home and the boats. To the public we were the perfect family living the dream, but the reality was, that isn't how any of us experienced life.

This was the only life I knew, yet it wasn't until I began my recovery after an abusive marriage and relationship that I stumbled upon the term "narcissistic personality disorder" that the pieces of the puzzle of my life all started to come together.

I had been raised in a home where my mother was narcissistic, so her behaviors were what I thought were normal behaviors, so much so that I married and dated narcissistic men. This is so common. Victims do not recognize the childhood behaviors as abuse. If you are like me and just thought your family was crazy, you have some learning to do.

Understanding and making peace with your childhood, your parents and quite possibly your siblings will be a long, hard journey, but eventually the healing and peace will be empowering and set you on a different path.

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## *Here are some of the signs and behaviors of a narcissistic parent:*

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### **GRANDIOSITY & SUPERIORITY**

All narcissists feel they are superior and have a false and inflated self-image, but a narcissistic parent flaunts this sense of superiority to their children, creating a kind of competition that is unhealthy and a game that the child will never win.

### **LACK OF EMPATHY**

When a parent has Narcissistic Personality Disorder their only concern is about taking care of themselves. Having empathy means someone shows care about what you are going through. They might support you verbally or emotionally to get through a tough time. When a parent is unable to show empathy to your concerns, fears, or immediate life issues, it leaves a victim unable to deal with life in many ways. Children need the empathy and unconditional love from a parent to thrive; without it they can become uncaring of others and become narcissistic themselves. Or they might go to opposite end and be people-pleasing and always needing validation to survive. The feelings of the child get dismissed as 'nothing' and the child learns quickly to not to have needs or wants.

### **NEGLECT**

"Children are to be seen and not heard," echoed the halls of our house daily. The exception for this was when we had guests, then we were expected to show up and be perfect. It was like a role we were being forced to play. We had to fight for every crumb of attention because in their eyes we were just there to make the parents look good and give them bragging rights to keep up with the Joneses. The rest of our days we were forced back into the box of not being seen or heard. Another way parents can neglect you is to make a young child parent them and cater to their needs as if you were a slave or employee. When this happens, a child is forced to grow up faster and they learn to ignore their own needs. I understand that my personal example is Heaven compared to many others who have endured a narcissistic parent, especially where neglect meant not getting basic needs like food and clothing met.

### **JEALOUSY AND COMPETITION**

This one hits home for me in so many ways. I watched my mother be jealous when I got married to a man she perceived as a better catch than she had. Her jealousy reared its ugly head in the form of little things like purposely knocking over a priceless piece of art at my in-law's house to never willing to spend time with us and putting my husband down to try to take him off the pedestal she herself had put him on. My sisters and I were very smart, but my mom never finished school (it's all our fault because she had us). She devalued everything we all did and made our achievements unimportant. If my sister came home with a 4.0 report card there was always something, she could have done to be better and a 4.0 was never enough.

Competition is different for everyone. The need to always win and to have the better things is an unhealthy practice that on the surface looks like they are encouraging you and pushing you to be a better you! The reality is that when forced to compete we created a lifelong competition with everyone, because you think that is what you are supposed to do. When you are forced to compete with the love of your spouse or with your parent that is crossing the line. "How dare you let that woman break up our family!" I heard that all the time. Your parent is creating a competitive situation to try to steal the love you feel for your spouse or children. This behavior is heartless and crippling. You can love them all, but the narcissistic parent makes you feel like you must pick them only.

### **SPOTLIGHT THIEVES** – They need to be the center of attention

At your own birthday party, wedding or celebration, you should be the center of attention and yet a narcissistic parent will steal the attention from you. As an example, at my own wedding my mother faked being overheated and faked a faint – just as I was about to walk down the aisle. I had to go back inside while everyone tended to her, then throughout the entire event she got all the attention as everyone stopped to make sure she was okay.

If you get an award or had an achievement did, your narcissistic parent shout out that "You got that skill from them and then they might tell a story about their award-winning basketball days." If the wind was always being taken out of your sail, then your parent was stealing your attention.

If you are doing what they want, then you are loved

These types of parents are all about them. If you do what they say, then they show you that you are loved. If you deviate from what is expected from you, then you can expect them to show you that you are not loved. It's a reward system of love that is not that far from a dog getting a bone if they roll over; this is not unconditional love. This keeps the child always needing to prove their love. This hot and cold mixed message confuses children and makes them get used to this intermittent type of love, and so victims often marry someone that treats them the same way.

### **SIBLING DIVIDE**

Siblings are often pitted against each other; we call it triangulation. Somewhere in the back of their evil minds they know that if all the siblings got along, they would be stronger together. Together you could stand up to the parent, so they divide siblings to maintain control. Look at your sibling relationships. Were you always having to earn your parents love? Was it a competition?

### **THE DANCE OF CONVERSATION AVOIDANCE**

Narcissistic parents get aggressive and twist things if you are talking about something sensitive that they don't want to hear. Your need to talk about something might not be important to them, so they bow out of real conversations. This leaves the child feeling like nothing they have to say is worth saying because if your own mother or father doesn't care, who will? As a narcissistic parent ages their tolerance for even faking that they care gets less and less that they prefer to talk about neutral topics like the weather. Conversations become eggshell land mines as we try to navigate having an adult conversation with them. Does your parent cut you off as you try to tell a story and make the conversation all about them? When victims see patterns that what you have to say is not important to their own parent, they get the message that they are unimportant.

### **THEY PLAY CHILDISH GAMES**

Narcissistic parents might play the game of "getting even" if they perceive you wronged them or caused them embarrassment. This is called a 'narcissistic injury'. When you were younger, they might have punished you with consequences ranging from no TV to groundings or in severe cases with a smack or beating. Later in life they might have hid something you loved and added gaslighting to tell you that you lost it. Sometimes they sabotaged your relationships with friends and siblings, telling lies about you to turn them against you. Spreading lies about you gives them supply because it hurts you. Even if they feel wronged, they are entitled to do this to you. It's like a game of revenge with their own children.

### **NAME CALLING**

Another childish tactic to devalue you and keep you small. If you have an insecurity or weakness, they will latch onto it like a mighty sword to cut you over and over, further injuring you and exploiting the weakness. They know exactly how to hurt you, and what names to call you that will trigger you. These names they called us affected us negatively. What names were you called? Were they associated with your weaknesses?

### **GASLIGHTING**

A tactic that almost all narcissists use to make you doubt your own sanity and leave you feeling like the crazy one. Think of Gaslighting as another form of lying, but with a twist. They might move your schoolbooks or toys and then blame you for losing them. The blaming you is the part that makes it gaslighting. This type of abuse can lead to self-doubt. Projection is when they accuse you of something, they themselves are doing.

### **BOUNDARY BUSTERS**

Personal space is something that everyone needs to find sanctuary. When you were young and played in your room with your dolls or action figures, your room was your personal space. As you grew up you might not have wanted your parents to invade your space, but they may have gone through all your papers while you were at school, maybe your diary and then they yelled at you for something they read. Did your parent feel entitled to your belongings, clothes,

electronics or money? When you tried to set boundaries, like “I don’t want you to go in my room” or “don’t wear my clothes” how did they react? If they got angry or just broke your boundary and went into your stuff you probably felt less safe and powerless.

### **IGNORING THEIR OWN CHILDREN**

Narcissistic parents ignore their children’s feelings, desires and dreams for their future. If the career or the mate they choose isn’t cleared by them, they will forever be on the naughty list. The difficult part is the other side of life, the in ‘front of other people’ part where you did get attention, you were shown off like a shiny object that confirmed for the world what wonderful parents they were. This gave the child this intermittent love that the child came to believe is how all love is. My mother ignored us unless she needed something, but she also triangulated us with strangers. She proudly called friends daughters ‘her other daughters’, people we never met, that we always felt like we were in competition with for her love.

### **LIVES LIFE THROUGH THE CHILDREN**

Instead of raising a child to be independent with their own thoughts and needs, the child becomes an extension of the parent. If dad played football or mom was a cheerleader, the children were expected to follow in their footsteps. The child was never given the opportunity to be themselves or feel they had a choice or voice. Children must comply with these guidelines, and this creates unspoken life crushing limitations that most children cannot break free from until they become adults.

### **MIRROR, MIRROR ON THE WALL – YOU REFLECT THEM**

Narcissistic parents use their children to show the world, that they are a good parent. They show off your wins and hide the fact that you have any weaknesses. The child must be perfect, or it reflects on them. This pressure leaves the child that can’t fulfill this expectation as the scapegoat, that way they can call you the black sheep to justify to their friends the behavior they determine will reflect badly on them.

### **MARGINALIZATION**

While the narcissistic parent wants the world to think their child is great, the rules are they cannot outshine them. To keep the child in their place narcissistic parents, use the tactics of name calling, put-downs, judgements, nit-picking, criticisms and comparisons to let the child feel like they are never enough. The child that gets this message usually pushes themselves further with hopes of pleasing the parent, never realizing that they will never measure up to these expectations.

### **MANIPULATION**

We have all heard of the parent’s guilt-trip tactics, like “After everything I have done for you, you can’t do this one thing for me?”. A narcissistic parent pushes the envelope, to intimidate and make the child feel obligated or unlovable - “If you loved me, you would do this”. Blaming the child for ‘their’ failures is also quite common. “It’s all your fault I could never get a better car, you always need things, you are so needy.” Shame is a tool that leaves the child feeling like nothing s/he does is ever good enough. “If you get another C on your report card, they will kick you out of school and then everyone will know how stupid you are, and that will embarrass me. It that what you want?” Negative comparison to other siblings is another form of shaming, that does two things. First, it creates a shame wound to the child, but it also creates a rivalry that isolates the siblings against each other, losing any sense of family. Verbal abuse and threats are another way a narcissistic parent manipulates a child. “If you don’t clean up your room or get straight A’s you will be punished.” Did you ever have those if you don’t, then... type of verbal abuse? This is control and manipulation with a side of fear, threats and abandonment.

Children of narcissistic parents tend to have a weak sense of self, poor boundaries, emptiness, shame, trust and guilt issues. All too often the child of a narcissist has felt “less than” enough and they become people-pleasers and marry abusive people because that is the behavior they knew.



## FIND SUPPORT

<https://narcissistabusesupport.com>

## TALK TO ME

<https://narcissistabusesupport.com/narcissistic-abuse-coaching-sessions/>

describe your story it would be filled with emotions and drama. As time passes the story fades, but the lesson is still there. Perhaps you learned to be more careful or wear proper shoes when climbing a tree; it was a lesson and that scar reminds you of it.

When we encounter someone with narcissistic personality disorder, people often get wounded, hurt and broken. Victims live through abandonment, betrayal and disappointment and there is a healing lesson to be learned. A lesson can simply be to understand what happened or the lesson we must learn is to protect ourselves in the future from never letting this happen again.

Like that scar, the pain from this emotional abuse will be forgotten in time and the lessons will be what remains. Your job is to educate yourself to understand everything you can about this type of personality disorder, so you can learn the lesson, and never have it repeat again.

Sadly, most victims of narcissistic abuse get stuck in a cycle of attracting the same type of person and the cycle continues. The “story” often told to survivors is that they are attracting them. The truth is you were prey, being hunted because of your vulnerabilities and what type of supply you will make. The formula is simple: since narcissists are takers, they look for givers.

If you are ready to understand what your vulnerabilities are and if you are ready to break the cycle, I would suggest that you take my online workshop called “Change the Story”. Your wounded story gives the clues to a new narcissistic person that attracts them to begin this cycle again with you.

This is just a short list of the things narcissistic parents do. If these things rang true to you, I encourage you that you get help. See a therapist or coach and continue learning about this to understand why you are who you are. My recommendation for additional reading is [Dr. Karyl McBride’s book, Will I ever be good enough](#). Her book is targeted towards daughters of narcissistic mothers, so if your narcissistic parent was your father or you are a male and think you can flip her references, I still suggest the book. It has helped many of the men in my support groups.

## WHAT DO YOU DO NOW?

I believe that people come into our lives for a reason, and both good and bad experiences bring us lessons we must learn. If we don’t learn the lesson, life tends to repeat itself until we finally learn that lesson. That said, it is usually the more difficult lessons, the ones that scar our souls, that are the hardest to understand and heal from. These lessons, while extremely painful, are here to warn us, teach us, and enlighten us to the fact that not everyone is created equally or meant to stay in our lives forever. A mistake that many people make when it comes to understanding these lessons is that they think doing something repeatedly is learning the lesson, while in fact we are just repeating familiar patterns. Learning how to protect yourself from ever letting this happen means doing the work, educating yourself and changing things about yourself.

It is fair to say that most people have a physical scar somewhere on their body. That scar had a story, the story of when you fell out of a tree and broke your arm. If I were to ask you the day you fell out of that tree to



Healing from emotional abuse is not something you can rush; there is no 'Betty Ford Clinic' to check into to get fixed. Each person's wounds are different despite the similarities of the abuse, so each person's prescription for their recovery journey is different.

Stop the cycle for you and your children. I am living proof that the stories fade, and you can create new chapters in the story of your life.

## **CHANGE THE STORY WORKSHOP**

Victims of narcissistic abuse stories are all different and yet so similar. You have endured verbal abuse with lies, gaslighting, underhanded tricks and general confusion of the abuse.

You might have a terrible story and have good reason to hold onto the full-blown crazy story. I get it, but if you want to heal, you need to learn a new skill to control the triggers and protect yourself. Every time you share the crazy drama with someone, you risk getting triggered and causing the cycle of abuse to hold you stuck in that place and time. In this workshop, you will learn how to take control and CHANGE the story.

To be clear, you are not sweeping your story under the rug. You are not denying what happened. You will learn skills to extract the lesson and shorten the story, so it doesn't throw you back into the pain cycle. A story has the power to hold us in that story and live in that time as if it was today. The opportunity to create a new life (new chapter) is not possible because we are busy reliving the pain and horror from the wounds of abuse.

**A WOUND STORY ATTRACTS NARCISSISTIC PEOPLE.** If you are one of those unlucky survivors that keep repeating the patterns by being in relationships with narcissists, you need to understand that your story is the magnet that drives them towards you. You aren't picking them they are picking you and you gave them everything they need to abuse you again!

### **In this course you will learn:**

- The six reasons your story is hurting you
- What secrets your story is revealing
- What are 'Green Flags' and why you should never give anyone the ammunition to hurt you
- What vulnerabilities your story shows
- What assets you have that made you a perfect supply and how not to be targeted for those
- How important it is to understand the "lesson" and how to find it
- How do you rewrite the story? You will be provided with over 50 examples of survivor's stories to illustrate how you can rewrite your story.

I am very proud of this workshop. There are six videos with worksheets to help you craft your new chapter.



## LEARN HOW TO HEAL

<https://narcissistabusesupport.com/stories/>

I have been teaching and perfecting this workshop for many years and I am finally able to bring it into your living room. These skills are simple once you understand the concept. they will free you from triggering yourself and all your friends and family. When you change the story, your friends will have their friend back and you too will notice a change right away.

Check out this workshop - <https://narcissistabusesupport.com/stories/>

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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*Tracy Malone is a surTHRIVER who is passionate about raising awareness on the subject of Narcissist Abuse Support. She is excited to share the empowering hero's journey story of how she turned her life around to help others do the same.*

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work can also be found on her podcast.

Tracy's website concentrates on educating survivors and leading them to the resources they need to heal. Her passion is coaching survivors with a compassionate understanding heart. Tracy has been successfully running two in-person support groups. She understands the important value of finding community to heal, so her website maintains a support group directory as well as state by state domestic violence agency listings where people can get access to counseling, legal services and support.

Tracy is currently completing her first book on divorcing a narcissist and the tricks they pull during the divorce.

**Become more than a survivor. Be a SurThrivers!**

## FOLLOW THE LINK TO RESOURCES.

Visit my website - <https://narcissistabusesupport.com/>

Subscribe to my YouTube channel to listen to the over 400 videos on Narcissistic abuse - <https://www.youtube.com/c/TracyAMalone>

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Need extra support? Join my Facebook Group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/getnarcissistAbuseSupport/>

Download my Free Red Flags Checklist - <https://narcissistabusesupport.com/free-red-flag-checklist/>

If you are struggling and want to know what to do next, I suggest my coaching sessions. Every session is geared to educate, validate, and get you started on healing. I coach people by video all over the world; it's your turn.

<https://narcissistabusesupport.com/narcissistic-abuse-coaching-sessions/>