

Behaviors and Attitudes of the Narcissist

(as posted in this blog: <http://joyfulalivewoman.wordpress.com/2009/11/08/behaviors-and-attitudes-of-the-narcissist/>)

See if you recognize any of the following. The Narcissist will have many of these traits. It is not necessary to have all of them for Narcissism to be present. Several or many may well indicate an HNP: a Highly Narcissistic Person, but one or two traits does not necessarily constitute Narcissism. Remember, the Narcissist in your life may have several, many, or all of these, but it is not necessary to have all of them for the person to have full-blown Narcissistic Personality Disorder (NPD). If there are only one or two traits, they may not have full-blown NPD but simply a few narcissistic traits.

- When they are good, they are wonderful. When they are bad, they are a waking nightmare.
- They are always right and everyone else is always wrong. They defend their opinions and habits to the “death.”
- They will not accept criticism of any sort. Narcissistic Rage is often the result of even the most gentle and diplomatic critique.
- They do not and will not respond to requests for heart-to-heart talks about your relationship. This is done by stonewalling and/or causing arguments in order to distract from the issue, and keep avoiding it. It’s also done by minimizing and “gaslighting.”
- Their public image and how they are perceived is extremely important to them – far more important than genuine interactions and relationships. If someone agrees with them or does not challenge them, all is well. If challenged, they “devalue and discard” and often “defame” or “assassinate the character” of the challenger. The Family Scapegoat is usually the main target of this behavior, though others can be a target as well.
- They get angry in an instant – usually when challenged, pressed, for things they have imagined, or for no apparent or reasonably valid cause.
- When they are angry for something that they have imagined or misunderstood, you can try to prove the facts to them, you can drag in a hundred witnesses, present undisputable evidence – they will still not change their mind.
- They twist facts to suit themselves and often “rewrite history” to match what they want others to believe.
- They have a natural tendency to believe the worst about you, while often denying it outwardly – especially if they are involved in religious or spiritual pursuits. Their private disdain is couched publicly to others as spiritual concern, pity or fatalism (poor so-and-so, they have such bad luck/they’ll never change, etc.) Secretly they enjoy your misery and even do things to perpetuate it.

- They are an extremist and fickle. They can be absolutely loyal to someone, sing their praises and defend them to the death – then at the slightest disappointment, turn on them completely and in an instant.
- They are not there for you in a medical emergency some other legitimate need, whether it's an emergency or not. If this happens more than once, take note.
- Their conversations are usually about themselves, but also often about criticizing someone close to them, and running them down. This is especially true of the people who are their victims. When they do this, it is with an air of authority as if they really know what is going on inside that person – better even than the person does. They know exactly what the other person's "problem" is, as well as the solutions.
- Their conversations revolve around themselves: their thoughts, their opinions, their life, their feelings, their attitudes, their woes, their ailments, their achievements, and their cleverness. "Me, I and My."
- They will ask you how you are, and then carry on speaking before you can answer, or cut you short and speak over you – or never ask in the first place.
- They are not a good host or hostess. They take long phone calls while you are visiting, watch their TV shows while you are there, offer you refreshment then take forever to serve it, etc.
- If you speak loud enough and they are forced to listen (because someone else is nearby who doesn't know the real them and they're "posing"), you can tell that they are not listening at all. They are distracted, possibly looking around and shuffling, tapping their feet, making faces or nodding their head too vigorously to speed you up. Perhaps they have gone glassy-eyed or simply turned away. You get the distinct feeling that they just want you to shut up so that they can speak again. (This is called being "devalued and discarded.")
- When they respond to something you have said, it is often either just a kind of grunt or it seems over the top, or they are correcting you or they give a look that says "that's not something I agree with" or "you don't know what you're talking about". (Again, "devalued and discarded.")
- On the few occasions they do praise you or acknowledge something you have done, it will normally be cursory, condescending, grudging, sarcastic or a backhanded compliment.
- Often, what they say and what they do is like two different worlds. Sometimes this is not readily evident. You just sense something isn't right. Pay attention!
- When they are with outsiders they are such a charming, friendly person. People tend to like them and admire them. You are continually amazed at how rational they are with these people, how phony it is, and different it is from the person you know privately. In other words, they treat you differently than outsiders.

- They are often in a position of leadership. They are very possibly a type of pillar of society (for example: any position of authority, including religious or spiritual). They are often looked up to by those who deal with them, but actually they are not close to these people, there is no genuine interaction between them. (the Royalty/Slave dynamic)
- They have had power struggles and failures with peers, such as fellow teachers. These fellow teachers (or whomever) have often seen right through them, sometimes because they have many of the same traits.
- They go on at length and with quite some passion about things that they themselves do. For example, a man might loudly complain about men who beat their wives and speak about what harsh punishments they should be subjected to – then go home and assault their own wife. A spiritual person might criticize someone who is outwardly doing something they themselves covertly do.
- They know how to do everything better. They can preach better, run the church better, do a job better, run the country better, analyze politics better, play board and computer games better ...
- They know the answer to all of the world's biggest problems ... if only someone would listen to them/finance them/whatever.
- They are a victim of everyone and everything: those in authority over them, their family, their circumstances, their health, their past. They are a victim and a martyr, period. What other people accept as part of life, they take as a personal affront, if not attack. People “just don't understand” them.
- When something bad happens to someone even remotely close to them, they make it about themselves and create huge drama around the situation to elicit sympathy from anyone who will listen.
- When someone close to him achieves something noteworthy, they make it about themselves and in some way will take the credit for it, ensuring that they are in the limelight, not the person who actually deserves it.
- They ask for feedback (such as in a class setting), then don't really listen to it.
- They inflict pain on others and actually enjoy doing it.
- They strategically plan how to break people down and hurt them or make them weak. This is done in either a surreptitious manner, an overt manner, or both.
- They are control freaks.
- If they know something is important to you, they will use it to punish or control you, or try to prevent it from taking place (such as an important goal you are working toward).

- If they see you about to accomplish something that will elevate you over them, they will undermine your efforts to prevent you from succeeding.
- If they know something is important to you, they will in some way try to deprive you of it or make you jump through hoops for it.
- They are the worst possible gift giver – if they even give gifts at all – seldom if ever giving you what you really want. Most times, you will get something that you really don't want or an extremely inferior version of what you want – then woe to you if you are not overcome with gratitude for it.
- They give you their discards and expect you to be really grateful. After all, even their junk has more value than anything new you could buy or own.
- They do you favors that bear a high price, and often that price is simply providing them Narcissistic Supply via the dysfunctional relationship. They may expect outrageous things in return (i.e., your time, your never-ending public gratitude, etc). Everything they do for you requires your eternal gratitude and any “debts” to them are never paid off, no matter what you do. And whatever you might do to reciprocate is inferior and never good enough, or not really welcomed.
- They'll say they forgive you when asked for forgiveness, but it isn't genuine.