

— LIFE ESSENTIALS FOR THE HIGHLY SENSITIVE PERSON —

SENSITIVE

ISSUE 02

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LIFE ESSENTIALS FOR THE HIGHLY SENSITIVE PERSON

SENSITIVE *living*

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EGOMANIA



METER

IDENTIFYING AND PROTECTING YOURSELF FROM NARCISSISTIC PERSONALITIES

By Maura McMahon

The deeply caring and sensitive nature of being an HSP can feel like both a blessing and a curse. On one hand you want to heal all the pain and suffering in the world, and on the other you want to hide from it. Trying to find the balance in an imbalanced world can be a major challenge.

HSPs are innately attuned to nature and creative pursuits, while connecting with other humans can take a lot of effort. Holding a high vibration, the HSP soul gives of itself freely, as they understand we are all part of the same divine source energy.

Unfortunately, the kind, compassionate nature of an HSP is exactly what attracts narcissists to them. Recognizing the signs of narcissistic personalities, along with the tactics they use to control and manipulate, will empower you in protecting yourself as an HSP – so you can experience healthier, happier relationships!

Recognizing narcissists

Narcissistic Personality Disorder (NPD) occurs on a spectrum and has many variables. Some narcissists are grandiose, bragging and entitled. Others are quiet and vulnerable, with identities constructed around being victims of their own sad life events.

Whatever the type, they share common traits that can be severely damaging to those around them. Lack of accountability, shifting blame, making excuses for their actions, and undermining or dismissing the feelings and experiences of others are some of the behaviors they engage in.

With a constant need for admiration and attention, narcissists crave praise and validation from almost anyone who will give it. They're true energy vampires.

Some common red flags to watch out for include manipulative tactics like gas lighting, mirroring and projection.

'Gas lighting' is a tactic used by narcissists to gain control over others. It involves causing someone to question their own perceptions, memories, or sanity by distorting reality. It can include denying previous agreements, minimizing the impact of their words or actions, and making their victims doubt themselves. Feeling confused, anxious, upset or uncertain after interacting with someone can be a sign of gas lighting.

Narcissists are masters at luring people in by 'mirroring' their values back to them. If you say you value honesty – the NPD will say they do too! If you tell them kindness matters to you – the NPD will agree wholeheartedly! Many have been tricked into thinking they've found a deep, mutual connection when it's actually a narcissist reflecting yourself back to you (of course you're amazing!). Mirroring can create a sense of betrayal and grief as the victim starts to realize their trust has been misplaced.

When NPDs accuse others of doing shameful things they are doing (or thinking of doing), it's called 'projection.' These interactions are intended to shock and confuse their victims, preventing them from seeking help or advice from others. Over time, narcissists slowly break down the self-confidence, self-respect and self-identity of their victims, who start to think they are the problem.

Narcissists are chameleons

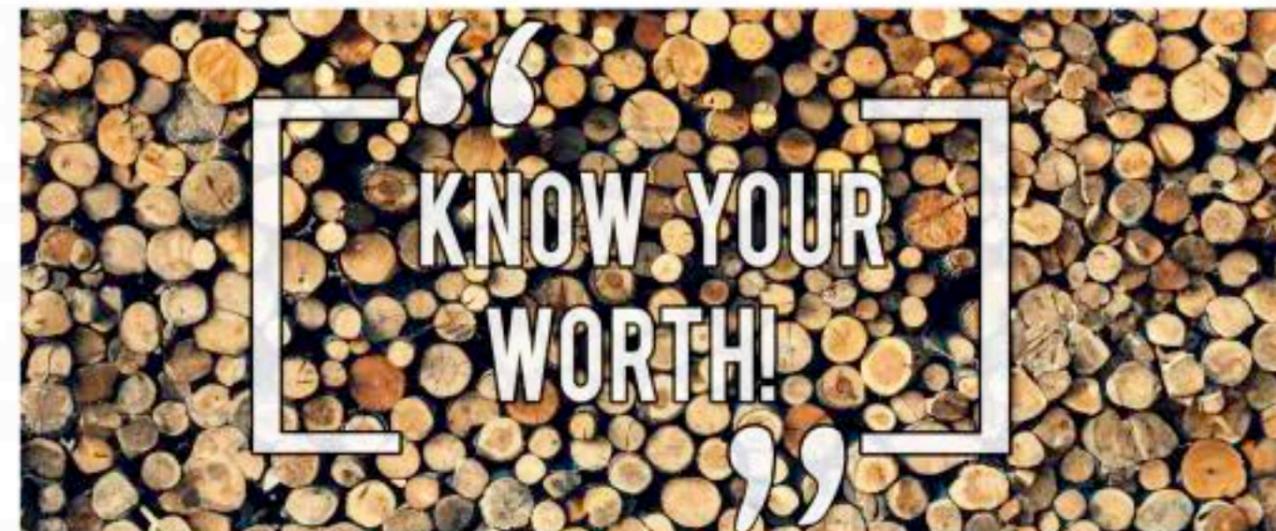
It can be difficult to spot a narcissist. They'll come across as well groomed, sociable and charismatic, saying and doing all the 'right' things, this is part of the mask they wear. In public everyone loves them, but in private they'll turn into monsters.

NPDs cannot connect deeply or intimately, but they're very good at faking it. Their cognitive empathy is used as a tool for seeking energetic supply, as they lack genuine empathy. Transactional and superficial relationships are how they tend to engage with others.

If you do try to get to know an NPD on a deeper level, beware of their inconsistency, lack of boundaries and emotional unavailability. These are all warning signs pointing to the deep insecurity they hold. Narcissists live in a constant cycle of shame, fear and negativity.

There's a strangely magnetic attraction that occurs between HSPs and NPDs, due to their opposite energies.

HSPs love to give, and NPDs love to take. HSPs are self-less and NPDs are self-ish. HSPs hold a positive charge, while NPDs hold a negative charge. These energetic polarities create a strong attraction that may seem like a perfect pairing, except for the fact that it's severely imbalanced and can become abusive quickly. If you're not experiencing equal give and take in a relationship, pay attention.



With an inability to be emotionally healthy, those with NPD create situations of drama, chaos and conflict. HSPs tend to be self-reflective and may believe they're responsible for the problems that inevitably arise in the relationship. An HSP will want to act with integrity and think they can 'fix' it, but nothing can be further from the truth.

If you're not aware of this toxic dynamic, you may try to do more, give more and be more – to satisfy the over-demanding narcissist. While it's natural to want relief, notice if you're bending over backwards and not seeing any improvement. It can be easy to fall into the trap of narcissists who prey on unsuspecting givers, until they have nothing left to give.

Narcissistic personalities do not change

Narcissism is considered a personality type, and as with all personalities, it's complex and formed over time. A myriad of behavioral, psychological and emotional factors shape them. Many experienced trauma, abuse and neglect early in childhood. Others may not have had a secure attachment with their mother as an infant, and may have a genetic predisposition to be narcissistic, as it has been found to run in families.

Those with NPD simply don't see their own toxicity. As a result, they're unable to acknowledge or accept responsibility for the destruction they cause. They create repeating loops of abusive behaviors unconsciously reliving the unresolved, internalized trauma they hold. Don't try to confront a narcissist, it will only backfire on you.

When HSPs are aware, they can take a step back

Many lifetimes have been lost to settling for unfulfilling, narcissistic relationships. The behavior dynamic between HSPs and NPDs creates a state of intense and ongoing stress, eventually leading to all kinds of physical, mental, emotional, financial and spiritual problems. The soul lesson for HSPs is to understand their own strength, take their power back and know their worth!

If you're an HSP in a relationship that's making you feel bad, get curious. Tune in to your emotions and notice if you're feeling defensive, depleted or defeated when you interact with another. Instead of instantly thinking you're to blame, consider the behaviors of the other person too.

Do you see any repetitive patterns in relationship conflicts? Do they dismiss your thoughts and feelings? Do they refuse to be accountable for what they said or did? Do you find that you go in circles and never resolve anything? These are all signs of being stuck in the cycle of narcissistic abuse.

Early childhood conditioning

Our family of origin can make us susceptible to narcissists. If you were raised by narcissistic or codependent parents who were emotionally immature, you could have been conditioned to abandon yourself. This would look like being raised in an environment where your parents used fear and shame to control you.

If you were trained to be 'good,' do what you're told, be quiet, and not to talk back or question authority figures, you were taught to neglect yourself and your needs. This will have created a feeling within you that you're going to get

into trouble if you say or do something wrong. It's a trauma response that can make you a target for narcissists.

Learning to protect yourself

The best defenses against being the victim of a narcissist are learning about NPD, self-awareness, healthy boundaries and self-love.

Don't allow shame to control you and don't feel guilty for doing what's best for you. Stand in your own truth and power, knowing your intuition will never lead you astray.

Become your own best friend. Speak kind and loving words to yourself. Encourage yourself. Unapologetically put boundaries in place to keep yourself safe. Acknowledge your own divinity and tell the universe: I am love, I deserve love and I reject anything that is not love! Then watch as the magic of your life unfolds before you.

About The Author

We Are The Mothers is a group coaching program for empathic mothers who have divorced (or are divorcing) toxic narcissists, Founded by Maura McMahon.

Click here to take the quiz: "Was it Really a Narcissistic Marriage?". For more information go to 