



NARCISSISTIC PERSONALITY TRAPS

After enduring narcissistic abuse from caregivers during childhood, it will require considerable effort to unlearn the lifelong maladaptive patterns of thinking, feeling, and behaving that ensue.

A VIEWPOINT →

Narcissism, a hot topic in our world currently, has many ways of affecting all of us, often unconsciously. Being raised by narcissistic parents can have profound effects on a person's ability to form healthy relationships, particularly when it comes to choosing a life partner. From a young age, children of narcissistic parents are often subjected to conditional love, where their worth is tied to achievements and appearances rather than inherent value as a person. This sets the stage for a pattern of seeking validation and approval from others, which can lead to a cycle of toxic relationships.

Narcissistic parents view their children as extensions of themselves, valuing them primarily for their ability to reflect positively on the parent rather than for their individual qualities. As a result, children raised in such environments learn to prioritise pleasing others over expressing their true selves. They develop a deep-seated need for admiration and validation, often at the expense of their own well-being.

In order to maintain the facade of perfection demanded by their parents, children of narcissists learn to suppress aspects of themselves that are deemed unacceptable. They become adept at hiding their vulnerabilities and weaknesses, fearing the repercussions of revealing anything that might tarnish the image their parents expect them to uphold. This constant pressure to perform and conform can lead to feelings of inadequacy and self-doubt.

As these children grow into adults, they carry with them the scars of their upbringing into their romantic relationships. Unable to recognize and assert their own needs and boundaries, they are drawn to partners who mirror the same superficial qualities valued by their narcissistic parents. These partners may initially appear charming and attentive, but ultimately they lack the empathy and emotional depth necessary for a healthy relationship.





In a relationship with a narcissistic partner, the patterns of dysfunction from childhood are often repeated. The individuals raised by narcissistic parents may find themselves once again striving to earn approval and validation, only to be met with criticism and manipulation. Any attempts to express their true thoughts and feelings are met with resistance or outright rejection, further eroding their sense of self-worth.

Ultimately, the cycle perpetuates itself, with the individual repeating the same dynamics they experienced in their relationship with their narcissistic parents. They may struggle to break free from the cycle of abuse and codependency, unable to imagine a different way of relating to others.

Breaking free from the influence of narcissistic parents and choosing healthier relationships requires self-awareness, therapy, and a willingness to challenge deeply ingrained beliefs and behaviors. By recognizing the impact of their upbringing on their choices and seeking support to heal from past wounds, individuals can break free from toxic relationship patterns and create a brighter future for themselves.