



**Divorcing a Narcissist:  
Who They Are  
And  
What to Expect**

# Introduction

Whether your ex is a true narcissist or someone who has allowed the chaos of divorce turn them into someone with the inability to co-parent in a civil manner, this guide is for you.

We hear a lot about divorce statistics. How 40-50 percent of marriages end in divorce. We don't, however hear much about the 10-15% that are high conflict divorces.

Divorces that cause the most damage to children. That is what this guide is about, the high conflict ex who, if not dealt with properly can leave lasting negative impacts on your and your children's lives.

It's my hope that through this guide you take away information needed to help you lessen the stress of dealing with an ex who insists on turning everything to do with you and your children into a battle of wills.

It's my hope that you learn techniques to help you lessen the harm done to yourself and your child. And, that the information here arms you with knowledge of what to expect during the divorce process or, if you're already divorced, helps you understand what goes on in the head of your narcissistic ex.

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## 10 Behaviors of a Narcissistic Spouse

**1. The narcissist demands that you tolerate and cater to his every need and always be available when it works for him. He, of course, never has to be available for you.**

**Moreover, if you dare to even question his unavailability or show a “negative” emotion towards his behavior, you will quickly be punished with narcissistic punishments such as the silent treatment or a cold shoulder or the withholding of sex and affection as a reminder of who has control.**

**2. To test the mental limits of your patience the narcissist will continually behave in a manipulative manner. The partner of a narcissist often feels that something is slightly off and obsesses with finding answers to the odd experience of being in a relationship with the narcissist.**

**And, in most cases you will look inward for answers to the questions you have. The narcissist is talented at causing you to question your own sanity and instincts.**

**3. Most narcissists will cheat...a lot. And when caught cheating will turn their behavior around on you by dismissing your feelings, telling**

**you, you are making a big deal out of nothing or, even accusing you of being the one who has cheated. Once again leaving you to question your on sanity.**

**4. Because a narcissist knows he is emotionally incapable of providing support, sympathy, or empathy to a partner he will use his indifference of your life to keep you unbalanced and confused as to his intentions.**

**For example, the narcissist appears to be incapable of making plans with you and keeping them. If you question this, he will act as if he hasn't a clue to what you are talking about. The truth, of course, is that to follow through with plans concerns pleasing another person and, therefore, he wants no part of it.**

**The narcissist is all about pleasing themselves, not others!**

**The narcissist is always late or, if not late, not clear about when he will be there or forthcoming with definite plans. He keeps you guessing.**

**For example, my ex would forget to tell me about work functions we were expected to attend. He would casually say, "Oh yeah, we have a formal dinner to attend tomorrow night. Ugh!!**

**That meant me finding a dress to wear and a babysitter with 24 hours' notice. I excused it because I thought he was busy and those were small details to him. It took me years to realize, he enjoyed watching me panic at the last minute.**

**5. Over time, a narcissist slowly manages down your expectations of the relationship by putting forth only the most minimal efforts required to maintain his part in the relationship. The narcissist's main**

**motto is “just enough, just in time” to keep you hanging on and hanging in.**

**You become so used to receiving so little that you actually begin to believe you don’t deserve more!**

**6. The narcissist is very good at mimicking “normal” emotions. When needed, they can appear to be truly genuine and engaged in the relationship.**

**This is one of the things that keeps you hanging on...those glimpses of a normal man, with normal feelings. And, he shows you this side of himself just enough to keep you reeled in and hoping for change.**

**But it’s all an act to get the desired results he wants. He can play the good guy, get you jumping through hoops because you’re so happy with his apparent caring and concern. It doesn’t take long for him to pull the net out from under you and revert back to the genuine narcissist he is.**

**7. The narcissist believes that all he must do is show up in a relationship. His mere presence, in his mind, means you should be loyal, loving, kind and caring toward him.**

**And, you become so addicted to him that you continue to reward him with loyalty, love, caring and kindness for just showing up.**

**8. Narcissists have no problem performing normal human obligations in other areas of their lives and with strangers. Therefore, the narcissist appears to get along with everyone except you.**

**The truth is that with you he finds the expenditure of civil treatment taxing to his mental reserve and not necessary in the grand scheme of things because you are already his sure thing.**

**9. Narcissists will never accept blame for anything that happens in a relationship. They will always blame you, his employer, his parents or siblings, co-workers, ex's, etc. The narcissist is ALWAYS the victim of someone else's bad behavior!**

**10. A narcissist, in a very passive-aggressive way, expects to be the center of attention always and have his every wish fulfilled by his partner. And, you feel an obligation to jump through any hoop necessary to please him even if doing so complicates your life or leaves you feeling used and abused. In the back of your mind, you always feel threatened in some strange and often unexplainable way.**

**Do any of the above narcissistic behaviors trigger you? I can remember doing my research shortly after my divorce and being stunned by the reality of how little my ex had truly cared for his family.**

**I was trying to understand how a man who had seemed so devoted could walk away from his own children. What I finally understood is, he can do so because he had very little emotional investment, to begin with.**

**Life with a narcissistic partner isn't easy, divorce can be even harder. The trick is to accept who they are and to keep your expectations low. Doing so will mean less questioning, less stress, and less emotional pain especially should you decide to divorce.**



## 6 Things you Sould Never Expect from a Narcissistic Spouse

*Have a narcissistic husband? Don't expect him to "have your back." Don't expect him to care. Don't expect him to feel. Don't expect him to understand. Don't have any expectations!*

I'm not a woman who needs or wants to be rescued, not now, not before I married. My life was not mundane, it was not filled with struggles and I definitely didn't marry so some strong, financially viable man could rescue me. I was great until I attached myself to a narcissistic husband.

I married for love and partnership not out of the need to have a man in my life. That being said, once I married I expected my partner/husband to have my back, figuratively and literally. It's something all of us should expect, an assurance that the one you love is watching out for you and your interests and you doing the same in return.

My problem? I married a narcissist. He didn't have my back, wasn't by my side and if times became troublesome or I found myself in an

**unpleasant predicament he was nowhere to be found...unless it was beneficial to his agenda. On top of that, he felt my desire for him to come to my defense was weak and judged me as too "needy."**

**This is typical narcissistic bullshit. Someone who is unable to ever empathize with others is in no position to judge others as deficient in any way.**

**To the narcissist the idea that they have even the simplest responsibility to a wife is intolerable so judge is all they are capable of.**

**Do you have a family member who mistreats you?**

**Don't expect your narcissistic spouse to have your back.**

**Ever been hit on relentlessly by some sleazy bar lunk?**

**Bet your narcissistic spouse didn't have your back.**

**When the chips are down, when it is time for them to step up to the plate they just can't do it.**

**By "they", I mean that my narcissist is like your narcissist is like her narcissist is like his narcissist. They all do the same things, exhibit the same behaviors, say the same words, inflict the same passive aggressive pain, follow the same narcissistic patterns all the time, every time.**

**They end up being the person you need someone to cover your back from!**



**They are worse than the abusive family member and the sleazy bar lunk and you are in it on your own. They aren't by your side or on your side; instead, they are, more than likely, BEHIND your back waiting for the opportunity to twist the knife they just embedded there.**

**What else should you not expect from the narcissistic husband?**

**1. Respect for you and the marriage:** The narcissist will side with others against you, talk behind your back about you and all the while smile like a Cheshire cat at you.

**2. Kept promises:** A promise, is a promise, is a promise, unless you are married to a narcissist. They make promises, to you and your children, and when those promises are broken deny making them or, act as if you are in the wrong for holding them to such high standards.

**3. Doing something for the sake of doing something:** If he washes the dishes, mows the yard, attends a parent/teach conference he wants credit and stroking. Buy a pack of gold stars make a chart with his name and treat him like the child he is.

**4. Humility in any aspect of life:** No one is more important than the narcissist! Enough said.

**5. Respect for boundaries:** The narcissist crosses personal boundaries with specific intentions. He may wish to hurt you for some unknown harm he feels you've done. Whatever his reasons, there is no line between you and him getting his narcissistic needs met.

**6. Unconditional love and caring:** The narcissist's feelings (what little there are) are based on conditions. The main condition being, your

**willingness to mirror back to him his grandiose view of who he is, or thinks he is.**

**I received an email the other day from a woman who is desperately in love with a narcissistic ex. He chose to divorce her and in doing so simply dismissed her and their child from his life.**

**She wrote, "Is it hard to wrap my head around the fact that love was a lie for the best years of my life? That the narcissist never even so much as cared about us? That I and my son were a convenient game, easily disposed of, easily erased? That he could have cared less at any given point over those years if we lived or died?"**

**Yes, it is hard to wrap your head around those facts.**

**After 15 years of being divorced from a narcissist, it is hard for me to write about the subject, it takes me right back to that time in my life. But, unlike the narcissist, I've got your back. I will continue to write because of women and men like the one above and, children who are harmed daily by narcissistic fathers and mothers, because knowing we aren't alone is the only comfort to be found when tossed away by a narcissist.**

**AND, in the hope that fewer of you will give a narcissist the opportunity to toss you away.**



## **Divorcing a Narcissist? Keep Your Expectations Low**

**A narcissist has an inflated sense of his own importance. In his mind, you are supposed to roll over and often during the divorce process.**

**You rolling over or giving in only cements his belief that he is all important and his needs must be catered to. He will have pretty much the same attitude during divorce that he had in th emarriage.**

**And his belief that you are to cater to him only gets you more of the same emotional abuse you suffered in the marriage during and after divorce.**

**You play fair during the divorce process expecting the same in return. A sensible expectation to have! He has his own expectations...you do as he feels you should do.**

**Take it from me; his expectations will be met before yours if you continue to roll over and expect fairness.**

## **Things You Should Not Expect When Divorcing a Narcissist:**

**1. Civil discourse.** He doesn't have it in him, let go of expecting him to converse with you as if you are an equal. To feel good about himself, he has to treat you as if you are beneath him. Don't buy into!

Behind his mask of superiority lies a fragile self-esteem, vulnerable to the slightest criticism. He knows it, you know it but humbling himself and admitting it would be tantamount to emotional destruction for him.

Take it from me; he will attempt to destroy you emotionally and financially to keep from having to face his own emotional frailties.

He can't feel good about himself unless he is actively trying to make you feel bad about yourself. Every email you receive, every conversation you have will be him focusing on putting you down.

Your best defense against his degradation is a "whatever" attitude. If he is nasty in an email, don't respond. If he is disrespectful face to face, shrug your shoulders and walk away.

**2. Negotiation of any kind.** The narcissist is out for number one, themselves. If it's you who wanted the divorce, you must be punished. If it's them who wanted the divorce, you're of no value to them any longer so, why should they negotiate a divorce settlement with you?

Your efforts to compromise for the sake of all involved, especially your children will fall on deaf ears.

Some narcissists will be so vindictive and so invested in causing you harm that they will not be able to focus on the gains they can achieve

through compromise and negotiation, and will instead leave you with no recourse but to march into a courtroom with swords drawn.

If push comes to shove and it means protecting you and your children's legal rights, you have to be willing to fight fire with fire.

**3. Healthy Co-Parenting.** This isn't going to happen. The narcissist can't separate his relationship with his children from his relationship with you. In his mind, you and the children are one package. And he has no qualms when it comes to using his children to further destroy you emotionally and financially.

The narcissist views his children as objects to be used to further his own agenda. This makes it impossible for him to engage in healthy co-parenting. He is a fine father as long as those objects (his children) fit into his agenda or reflect positively upon him.

When those objects no longer fit into his agenda...when he moves onto another relationship, remarries and needs to focus on his step-children or suffers the wrath of his own children after mistreatment **WATCH OUT.** This is when your children will begin to feel the full force of his narcissistic abuse.

This is also when you have to put your guard up. It will be your place to guard your children's hearts against the damage a narcissist father can do. You are the healthy parent, the parent who will teach them what unconditional love is.

The parent who will teach them their values by role modeling how to respond to those who do them emotional harm.

The parent who will keep them from becoming adults with fragile self-esteem and emotional vulnerabilities. You are your children's only defense against the narcissist. **On Guard!**

**4. Concern for Your Well-Being.** Once you stop feeding the narcissist's ego your needs and the needs of his children become inconsequential to him. I've been divorced from my ex-husband for 15 years.

Our sons were 7 and 14 when we divorced. Their father has not once shown concern for whether or not they have what they need since we divorced. No phone calls or emails asking, "Can I do anything for you son," or, "I'm here for you if you need me, son."

I had custody of our children, due to this in his mind they were an extension of me, the woman he wanted destroy. They became collateral damage in the war he waged against me. They become pawns in his attempt to punish me and as a result, he cut them off totally.

My children would tell you that the total of nearly 12 years of no contact from him does not feel like an attempt by him to have a relationship with them, my narcissistic ex would tell you differently.

The narcissist doesn't care about how someone else perceives a situation. Their perception of the situation is the only perception that is valid. They don't care about the thoughts and feelings of others and are unable to listen to, validate, understand or support others.

My ex-husband and all narcissists are not capable of stepping outside themselves and seeing a situation from the other person's perspective. The world revolves around them and their feelings and due to that, others aren't allowed to feel, unless of course, they are expressing concern for the narcissist's feelings.

The narcissist, my ex-husband, for example, can't view ten years of no contact with a child as abandonment or abuse because those ten years are not about his children, they are about him. And I'm certain that a narcissist would find it highly offensive that a child would not

**express concern for the narcissist rather than expect a show of concern from the narcissist.**

### **Outfoxing the Narcissist:**

**You will never be as cunning as the narcissist. You can't outfox him. You may be crafty, clever and shrewd but you also have the ability to empathize with others and it is that pesky aspect of your personality that will keep you from ever being able to outsmart the narcissist if you engage in conflict with him.**

**The only way to get one over on the narcissist during divorce is to disengage, distance yourself and don't feed the tiger. As I said before, have no expectations of the narcissist. But the big one, the one I struggled with myself was the need to do something, to find a solution, to fix the problems between him and me for the sake of our children.**

**Few things are as emotionally painful or produce as much fear and anxiety than being in a high conflict relationship with a narcissist. It is the emotional pain, fear, and anxiety that spurs you into action, into attempting to fix the situation. After all, how are you ever going to have peace of mind and heart again if the situation isn't fixed?**

**No matter how much you try to fix him, outsmart him, or stay one step ahead of him, the narcissist will always trump, one-up, escalate and create more damage in response. To stop the continued emotional damage to yourself and your children you have to exit the stage, step out of the ring and take back your power by letting go of your need to fix the problem.**

**When you do that, you show the narcissist who is in control of YOUR life. You show the narcissist that no one has power over how you live your life and the narcissist is completely out of his league when faced with true power...especially YOUR power over his ability to cause you pain, fear, and anxiety.**

A woman with long brown hair, wearing a grey off-the-shoulder top and dark pants, is sitting on a brown suitcase. She is looking to the right with a thoughtful expression, her hand resting on her chin. The background is a dark, solid color.

## **Divorcing a Narcissist? 10 Survival Tips You're Going to Need**

**From: Karen Covy**

**Family Law Attorney**

**When you're divorcing a narcissist, the rules are different.**

**In a "normal" divorce (if there is such a thing), people get angry and then they get over it. They do stupid things, but then they feel sorry about it. Their divorce craziness is more like temporary insanity than a permanent mental illness.**

**Divorcing a narcissist is a whole different ball game.**

**When you're divorcing a narcissist, they never get over it – even if getting divorced was their idea! They will consistently do what's best for them, no matter who they hurt in the process – even if it's their kids.**



**What's worse, they never feel sorry for what they do. Never.**

## **10 Rules for Divorcing a Narcissist**

**Barbed wire with sign: If being married to a narcissist is hell, divorcing a narcissist is hell on steroids.**

### **1. Forget about having an amicable divorce.**

**If being married to a narcissist seemed like hell, divorcing a narcissist is hell on steroids! Separation and divorce trigger the narcissist's deepest insecurities and fears of rejection and abandonment.**

**While no sane person wants to spend years of their life and tens (or hundreds!) of thousands of dollars on legal fees in their divorce, narcissists are different.**

**For narcissists, divorce is not just the end of their marriage. It is a full-blown existential crisis. Don't expect them to go down without a fight.**

### **2. Don't take the bait.**

**Narcissists feed on your emotions. They enjoy getting a reaction when they push your buttons. They LOVE drama! So, the more you act and react to what a narcissist says and does, the more the narcissist wins.**

**The only way you can come close to "winning" with a narcissist, is not to engage in their battle in the first place. If you fight, you will lose. Controlling your own emotions, and refusing to allow yourself to get sucked into the drama, is the only way you stand a chance at coming**

**out of your divorce with your sanity and self-respect intact. (HINT: Get a therapist now. You're going to need the support.)**

**3. Accept that everything is going to be your fault ... at least according to your spouse.**

**Narcissists don't accept responsibility for their own bad behavior. Ever. They are also hyper-sensitive to criticism. That means that, at least as far as the narcissist is concerned, nothing bad is ever their fault. By default, that means that if something bad happened, it must be your fault.**

**If you get all tied up in knots trying to prove that you are "the good guy," you will waste an enormous amount of time and energy.**

**Nothing you can ever say or do will make the narcissist believe that s/he is wrong. What's more, unless the "bad behavior" you are contesting is legally relevant, the judge probably doesn't care about it either. (Sorry!)**

**4. Don't even think about what's "fair."**

**In divorce, "Fair" is just another four letter word that starts with "F." Nothing about divorcing a narcissist is going to be fair. Period. Full stop.**

**The more you focus on how unfair your situation is, the more miserable you will become. It sounds corny, but your mindset makes an enormous difference in the amount of pain you feel while you are going through a divorce.**

**In the long run, you will be much happier if you focus on your own goals, than you will be if you focus on all the crap that your spouse is “getting away with” in your divorce. (And your spouse will very likely get away with a lot. Again, sorry!)**

#### **5. Do your best to limit your court time.**

**The legal system is a narcissist’s Disneyland. They thrive on conflict and court room drama. The same legal hearing that has your stomach tied in knots for weeks in advance, gives them an emotional high.**

**The problem is, none of the alternatives to going to court are going to work well when you’re divorcing a narcissist either. (Another, sorry!) Plus, they are all voluntary. So, no matter what you do, you’re likely to end up in court.**

**While you can’t stop your spouse from going to court every other day, you can work on dialing down the drama on your end. Don’t initiate court action unless you have no choice. When you do go to court, keep your cool.**

#### **6. Don’t assume that the judge will see through the narcissist’s B.S.**

**Narcissists, especially those who are attractive, successful and financially well-off, excel at charming people. Remember: they charmed you, too! They WILL charm the judge ... at least at first.**

**The only way to show the judge your spouse’s true colors is with evidence. You will need to present the court with cold, hard facts. Making impassioned, emotional pleas to the judge only makes you look crazy.**

**Plus, your spouse is probably doing his/her best to manipulate the judge into believing that YOU are the real bad guy! You'll be much better off keeping your mouth shut until you can prove every word you say.**

## **7. Document everything.**

**One of the narcissist's most common tactics is known as "gaslighting." S/he will purposely say or do things to make you question your own sanity. A narcissist will lie or "change the story" in order to manipulate you into believing what s/he wants. What's more, narcissists can be so convincing at doing this that eventually even you start doubting yourself on an epic scale.**

**The only way you stand a chance at combatting a narcissist's manipulation of the truth is by documenting everything you can. Keep records of everything. If you have to talk to your spouse face-to-face, always do it when someone else is present. That way, there is always someone who can verify what your spouse really said. (NOTE: Do NOT use your children for this!)**

## **8. Rally your troops around you as soon as you can.**

**Expect your spouse to try to separate you from your family and friends. S/he will play the victim to everyone, and will try to make everyone see you as the bad guy. What's more, your spouse will try to get to your family and friends first, so that s/he can convince them that you are horrible, while s/he is innocent.**

**The sooner you can build your own divorce support group, the better off you will be. It doesn't matter if some of your family and friends side with your spouse. All you need is a core group of people who know you, believe you, and can be there to emotionally support you as you go through your divorce. Plus, you are also going to need a good therapist, someone who understands narcissistic behavior, and can keep you from feeling like you're the crazy one.**

## **9. Minimize your face time.**

**Engaging in daily battles with your spouse will drain your energy and keep you from making forward progress on the things that really matter to you. Unfortunately, if you have kids, you are going to need to deal with your spouse all the time. You will have to communicate with your spouse, whether you want to or not.**

**Do your best to limit your communications to email and text. That serves two purposes: 1) it eliminates verbal confrontations every time you see your spouse; and 2) it creates a record of everything that each of you says. That eliminates a lot of the “he said/she said” battles in court.**

## **10. Set boundaries and stick to them.**

**Narcissists have no boundaries. They have an extreme sense of entitlement. They believe they deserve everything they want. Other people, including their kids, exist simply to serve their needs. What’s more, because they lack empathy, they can’t even understand that anyone else has needs.**

**If you don’t set firm boundaries with a narcissist, you will forever be a pawn in their own private chess game. You need to establish what you will and will not tolerate. When you make agreements, you need to put them in writing and make them as detailed as possible. Then you need to enforce your agreements all the time.**



## 10 Commandments of the Narcissistic Parent

**My son walked into the room and handed me the phone. "Dad can't talk right now; he just poured a bowl of cereal and doesn't want it to get soggy." My ex, who hadn't talked to his son in twelve days, was more concerned about his cereal becoming soggy than a few moments of communication with his child. That is what it is like to co-parent with a narcissist.**

**In fact, there is very little co-parenting that occurs, most of your time is spent attempting to undo the damage a narcissist can do to his children. The narcissistic parent isn't capable of "normal" paternal instincts. They view their children as objects meant to fulfill the narcissist's needs, instead of the other way around.**

**A couple of years ago I found the list below on a blog that is no longer online. I've not read a more appropriate description of how the narcissistic parents. If you are divorced from a narcissist, I suggest you print out The 10 Commandments of the Narcissistic Parent and tape it to your frig. You will be referencing it often!**

## **Why?**

**Because you'll constantly be cleaning up the messes and emotional damage done to your children by their narcissistic parent. It's a harsh reality to adapt to but, it will become your reality.**

## **The 10 Commandments of the Narcissistic Parent:**

- 1. I am who I tell you I am.**
- 2. You will tell me things I want to hear or you will not be heard.**
- 3. You will feel the way I want you to feel or you will be forsaken.**
- 4. Love is conditional upon the aforementioned.**
- 5. Intimacy is vulnerability, and thus, death.**
- 6. There is only one road in and out of here.**
- 7. Children are like toys that become useless when they break, which is why they must be replaced with better toys.**
- 8. Parents are really one person in two bodies. When they individuate, they die.**

**9. Conversely, siblings are really one person in several bodies. When one individuates, that person shall be hunted down and slaughtered for the greater good.**

**10. Narcissism is a myth.**

**Let's go over each briefly. Allow me to add my own two cents to what Jay wrote based on real-life experience.**

**I am who I tell you I am:**

**Our children learned this about their father the hard way. I don't suppose there is an easy way! Their father would say one thing, do another and when they questioned his behavior, he would become highly offended. He thinks of himself as a loving, involved father even though he goes years without contact with his children.**

**In his mind, he is loving and involved but doesn't see or talk to his children because they have the audacity to point out to him that "loving and involved" fathers behave in a loving and involved manner. Since his children are people who know he is not who he tells them he is, he chooses to surround himself with people who will believe he is who he tells them he is.**

**Confusing huh? Imagine being a child and attempting to intellectualize and rationalize such behavior from a parent.**

**You will tell me things I want to hear, or you will not be heard:**

**Refer to the example above. Our children didn't tell their father he was a loving and involved parent, so he know refuses to hear anything they have to say. He ignores text messages, doesn't respond to emails. He is completely out of touch because they failed to tell him what he wanted to hear.**



**You will feel the way I want you to feel or you will be forsaken:**

**This is the one that does the most damage. The narcissistic parent places no value on his children's feelings. When we don't value other people's feelings our actions can do irreparable damage to those people.**

**Our son was upset over something his father wrote him in an email. He responded and told his father, "Dad, when you say things like that, it hurts my feelings."**

**His father responded and told our son, "I am not responsible for your feelings." And then he went on to explain to the child just how unreasonable it was for his son to expect him to care about his feelings.**

**You can't tell a child in one voice, "I love you" and then tell them "If your feelings got hurt it is your fault" in the next and expect that child to not be emotionally damaged.**

**Love is conditional upon the aforementioned:**

**Yes, if a child refuses to feel the way the narcissistic parent needs them to feel, love, attention, caring, concern, all will be withheld. The bad news for the narcissist, children eventually adjust and move on.**

**That old saying, "out of sight, out of mind" works against the narcissist. I can, thankfully say that as adults our children rarely think about or mention their father. When you withdraw your love from someone they will eventually "let go" of their love for you.**

**Intimacy is vulnerability, and thus, death:**

**The narcissist alludes to intimacy without becoming fully engaged in intimacy. True intimacy with another person means allowing yourself to become vulnerable, emotionally dependent.**

**Vulnerability and dependency are the kiss of death to the narcissist. Your child will love the narcissistic parent; the narcissistic parent is only able to love what the child can do for him.**

**There is only one road in and out of here:**

**And, it is a bumpy road! The road out is far more difficult to navigate.**

**Children are like toys that become useless when they break, which is why they must be replaced with better toys:**

**My ex replaced our children with a step-daughter. She reveres him, she extols his wonderfulness. She is much like his children were before the divorce. She will forever be the recipient of his goodness, until she questions a behavior or, disagrees with a belief. When that happens, she will learn how bumpy that road out can get.**

**Parents are really one person in two bodies. When they individuate, they die:**

**When my ex and I divorced in his mind I was dead. I was no longer an object that was of any use to him so any needs, feelings or desires I had become of no consequence to him. Since I was no longer important to him, he felt our children should view me through his eyes...I was someone who didn't matter.**

He could not co-parent with me; doing so would mean acknowledging me as an individual outside himself. To him I am not an autonomous human being, I'm something he tired of and discarded. The fact that our children love me and refused to also abandon their relationship with me plays an important role in his inability to continue to have a relationship with them.

**Conversely, siblings are really one person in several bodies. When one individuates, that person shall be hunted down and slaughtered for the greater good:**

When we divorced our children were 14 and 7 years old. The older child was quick to call his father out for hurtful behavior. The younger child made excuses and did whatever he could to keep his father happy. All the younger child cared about was spending time with his Dad. Due to that he detached himself from the emotional pain and focused on pleasing his father.

Our older child individuated, became separate from his brother and had to be done away with emotionally. Our older son is now 34-years-old. His father has rarely acknowledged him since the divorce. He came to his high school graduation after 4 years of never attending a parent/teacher meeting, extracurricular activity, regular visitation and refusing to enter into counseling. That is the only time since our divorce that he has shown interest in our older child.

This child was "hunted down" and "slaughtered" emotionally.

**Narcissism is a myth:**

I believe that a narcissist knows they are different. They realize they are unable to form normal emotional attachments with others. Admitting to that difference would mean becoming vulnerable to the opinions of others. It is for that reason that most narcissists will deny their disorder.

**The narcissist is awesome, just ask him. Awesome people don't have personality disorders dontcha know? For the narcissist, any relationship problems are about YOU, certainly not about them and their awesome selves.**

**I tell clients who are co-parenting with a narcissist to keep their expectations low. Don't expect the narcissist to tackle parenting with the same parental instincts they have.**

**And, never believe that you can "get through" to the narcissist and hold them accountable. Focus on your parental duties, be diligent in cleaning up the emotional messes the narcissist leaves behind and get your children into therapy. They are going to need it!**

**CATHY  
MEYER**

## Empowered Divorcee

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