
NARCISSISTIC MOTHERS



**HOW TO HANDLE
A NARCISSISTIC PARENT
AND RECOVER FROM CPTSD**

CAROLINE FOSTER

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Caroline Foster

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AUTHOR'S NOTE

I write books for people who are dealing with narcissists in different situations. I don't write to display my knowledge or to brag about my credentials. My books are simple and do not contain bibliographic references, because victims of narcissistic abuse are not interested in academic works references. They simply recognize the truth while reading it, because they have experienced the topics of the books throughout their lives.

Moreover, I am not a writer. If you are searching for well-written novels, my books might not be for you.

Dear victim of narcissistic abuse, I care about you, and even if you cannot heal simply by reading a book, I hope that my work will make a positive difference in your life. This is my ambition, and I wish you all the best.

INTRODUCTION

I'm going to open this book by first talking about how difficult it is to view a mother as a source of something negative because, regardless of the religion you practice, the culture you grew up in, everywhere in the world, the mother is worshipped. And this is a beautiful thing! But we must also be very careful because this same mother worship protects bad mothers, allowing transgenerational traumas to linger on and on, oblivious to most people.

The "taboo" of speaking badly about mothers makes it more difficult for people who have been affected by narcissistic mothers to seek healing. Adult children of narcissistic parents are often plagued with so much guilt and sense of deep obligation and shame that they feel duty-bound to keep whatever happened in the family secret, even when it is shredding their lives. Unfortunately, trauma and these kinds of negative emotions can (and if left unchecked will) rob us of the joy of life. These kinds of negative emotions thrive when we don't talk about them or when we do not make enough room for them to dissipate. This issue of toxic mothers challenges the status quo in so many ways but does need to be addressed. The problem

with experiencing narcissism from a mother is that you will feel oftentimes unloved and unacknowledged. It's difficult to share your experience because narcissists, and especially narcissistic mothers, can be very good at creating the perfect image of the family for outsiders. The idea of something bad going on inside the family can seem almost unbelievable to an outsider, especially when it is coming from a child, and as children it's just difficult to get validation and acknowledgement for many reasons. First, the mother can create a very difficult barrier to penetrate. Second, children often do not have the competence or the ability to state their needs and understand what's going on in a way that makes other people receptive and respectful of their young voices. And in so many cases it just gets worse and worse over time. There are so many men and women that are suffering in silence. Even in the last years of life their mothers are still tormenting them with guilt. Even when they're on their deathbed, these mothers are still emotionally treating their adult children like doormats and just act horribly.

Therefore, it is important to state that there are lots of invisible wounds, because when you grow up in a narcissistic family there are toxic dynamics that are not all that apparent. These are the most painful situations and leave the most Complex Post-Traumatic Stress

Disorder (CPTSD) residue. It's so difficult to live with these invisible wounds because you can't quite pinpoint what happened. It could be a series of small but repetitive traumatic events in your life that have made you feel continually worthless, have silenced you, or made you feel like there's something wrong with you and that you are somehow damaged. This is the message you get from growing up in these dysfunctional families. You can't even think for yourself because you are over-reliant on the opinion of others. You suffer in silence and sometimes don't even admit this to yourself. The healing journey will be long and difficult, impossible without the help of a psychotherapist.

This book is the first step forward, a step that I hope will make a difference in your life, because you deserve to finally find happiness.

PART ONE

RECOGNIZING THE PROBLEM

1.1 What is Pathological Narcissism

Let's start with this: narcissism is a mental illness and only a qualified mental health professional can diagnose a person with narcissism. The rest of us only use this "label" based on our limited knowledge of the subject, which is often informed by what we have heard from others, seen on the Internet, or have personally experienced, all of which may not always be an accurate picture. Therefore, it is important first of all to start this book by explaining what narcissism is and isn't.

You cannot diagnose a personality disorder by just reading the search engine result pages. This requires a professional who has had extensive training on this subject. In a manner of speaking, it is a disease, a psychological affliction. Narcissism has different levels, and professionals use various tests to determine where on the narcissism spectrum a person falls. Even with all of this, it is still not easy to officially diagnose a person with a Narcissistic Personality Disorder. The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual for Mental Disorder published by the American Psychiatric Association provides

professional information on how to identify a person with pathological narcissism. This book, also known as the Bible of Psychiatry, explains that for someone to be diagnosed with Narcissistic Personality Disorder (NPD), that person has to meet at least five out of nine criteria set out in the book.

NPD is defined in the guidebook as a pervasive pattern of grandiosity in fantasy or in behavior, a constant need for admiration, and a lack of empathy beginning in early adulthood and is seen in a variety of context as indicated by the presence of at least five of the following signs:

- Has a grandiose sense of self-importance; for example, exaggerates achievements and talents, expects to be recognized as superior.
- Is preoccupied with fantasies of unlimited success, power, brilliance, beauty, or idyllic love.
- Believes that he or she is "special" and should only associate with other "special" or high-status people or institutions.
- Requires excessive admiration.
- Has a sense of entitlement, an unreasonable expectation of favorable treatment, or automatic compliance with his or her

expectations.

- Is interpersonally exploitative and takes advantage of others to achieve his or her own ends.
- Lacks empathy and is unwilling or unable to recognize or identify with the feelings and needs of others.
- Is often envious of others and believes that others are envious in return.
- Shows arrogant, haughty behaviors or attitudes.

This information is available for anyone to look up and use for his or her own research. Therefore, it might be a good idea for you to educate yourself and see how this applies to your situation.

Narcissism is not selfishness. Too many times, people confuse self-love, contentment, being given the cold shoulder, being inconsiderate, opinionated, and attention-loving with narcissism. The problem with this is that some of us from time to time quite naturally exhibit this behavior. Are we all narcissistic? Of course not! The fact that someone exhibits one or two of these traits does not make that person narcissistic. Misinformation like this on the Internet waters down the true meaning of pathological narcissism.

Narcissism is more than just traits or moods. Pathological narcissists will constantly try to erode their victim's will to live. They are like a malignant cancer. Since narcissism occurs on a spectrum, it takes a combination of several factors to know where on the continuum a person falls. Therefore, it is not just enough to label an abuser as a narcissist, even though all narcissists tend to be abusive in one way or another. Day-to-day problems are a common feature of narcissism. NPD is known technically as a Cluster B personality disorder. That is to say, people who fall on this spectrum often struggle to regulate their feelings, are over emotional, erratic, dramatic, and often unpredictable.

In order to more accurately understand the person you are dealing with, it may be helpful to know more about disorders in Cluster B. Generally, people in this cluster have impaired relationships, are incapable of intimacy, and find it difficult to maintain long-term relationships. People with this kind of personality disorder may also find it difficult to understand themselves and have difficulty relating to others. For a sound diagnosis to be made, the symptoms have to cause day-to-day problems with a person's functioning or behavior.

1.2 Inside the Mind of a Narcissist

Now, let's analyze what goes on in the mind of a narcissist.

“I am the best.”

One prominent behavior of a pathological narcissist is a bloated sense of self—the big ego, the idea that everything and everyone should revolve around him or her. Because of this, the narcissist will feel naturally entitled to special privileges and have very poor boundaries when it comes to relating to others. This person will most likely have very little regard for etiquette or protocol, expect to be treated as special and will want you to see, notice, and even worship him or her for their achievements. A pathological narcissist may also exhibit arrogance, which is often nothing more than deep-seated fear.

“I can’t be wrong.”

A narcissist is not easily influenced by day-to-day experiences like you and me. Experiences in daily life come with ups and downs and these often help us in our daily lives to become more mature emotionally and psychologically—we gain a more realistic view of life, how it works, and what to expect and not to expect. But narcissists are resistant to introspection and to the thought that they could be wrong, since they have an inflated sense of self. Instead, they will project this failure onto others. Beneath the narcissist’s

facade of arrogance and self-aggrandizement is a feeling of emptiness and the lack of introspection.

“You should be like me.”

When relating to others, narcissists will use the same strategy with different people. They are often very good at putting people on a pedestal. They will overvalue you—and devalue you just as quickly. You might be humiliated and treated in a passive-aggressive fashion and even abused. This is also why most narcissists are domestic abusers. They view others as an extension of themselves. They see people as their mirror image. If you are smart and beautiful and clever, they are attracted to you and will idealize you. But as soon as you do something that they do not want you to do or disagree with them, they become quickly disappointed and will often try to put you down. They are not able to understand that people might have a view that is different from theirs, or have a life, or live in a way that is different from what they consider correct. The narcissist is good at devaluing others.

1.3 Types of Narcissism

Although narcissism exists on a spectrum, there are two major subcategories of NPD: Overt and Covert Narcissism.

Overt / Grandiose Narcissism

The overt or grandiose narcissist displays very clearly an over-inflated sense of self. Narcissists think they are extremely brilliant and have a high sense of superiority. In their relationship with others, they dominate and exploit. They will fiercely compete with others. They are intensely aggressive and will seek to ascend any hierarchy in the shortest amount of time possible. Eventually, they will banish you by treating you condescendingly or treat you like you don't exist.

Overt narcissists often display their emotions, can show excitement and even be charming. They can't cope with boredom and are not capable of deep mental introspection. They will display anger at the slightest resistance, particularly if they don't get their way. They are also jealous. The overt narcissist is an extrovert, bursting full of energy, approach people easily, are often impulsive, take a lot of risks, are low in self-awareness, and will always look for the shortest way to get what they want while looking good doing it.

Covert Narcissism

Also known as the vulnerable or shy narcissist, the covert narcissist tries to hide his or her narcissism. Now, this does not necessarily

mean that these kinds of narcissists consciously try to hide their narcissistic behavior. It is more like they do not have the personality structure that makes their behavior very visible.

Unlike the grandiose narcissist, covert narcissists are aware of the effect of their actions and will from time to time present themselves as superior, at other times as inferior. The covert narcissist behaves in very subtle ways. They are often self-referencing but can be painfully sensitive. They are hurt by criticism and do not do well with insults. They do not rapidly ascend the hierarchy because they are very sensitive to criticism, which creates feelings of a lack of fulfillment in their lives. Their inferiority is easily triggered, and they are very jealous of you if they believe you are more powerful, richer, or more accomplished than they are.

They do not use charm to manage people; instead, they tend to seek pity and will present themselves as victims in order to get you to do their bidding. Covert narcissists are aware of social laws and display a high level of social conformity and engage in upward social comparison. They will only disregard social norms when they are confronted with enmity. Then their aggression shows. That means when you are in public with covert narcissists, they will not display their aggressive self because they are aware of social norms. But

they will unleash aggression in private. They are masters of sarcasm and backhanded compliments and despise dominant hierarchies. Dominant hierarchies remind them of where they are on the totem pole. You will find them in middle management, positions that give them just enough power to inflict pain on others. They also tend to be neurotic. They are obsessive and often depressed. They are shy and soft-spoken and often very disagreeable.

You can identify covert narcissism on three levels:

Hypersensitive Introvert

You will see these people as introverted and shy, as people who tend to have a negative outlook on things. They are sensitive to criticism and may often feel that they are being outcast by others. They may experience self-loathing and self-inadequacy and even display signs of hatred of others.

The Envious Scapegoater

At this level, narcissists have lost touch with the ability to better their own lives and tend to play the blame game. They begin to see themselves as an outcast or as long-suffering, which leads to feelings of intense hostility further fueled by their lower social status.

They are also tricky and sinister and use covert aggression and manipulation to punish their victims.

Narcissists at this level don't often have the guts to confront the people they feel have wronged them; instead, they will find a scapegoat to use as an outlet for their bottled-up rage. They will often use this scapegoat to regulate their emotions when things do not go well. If you are a victim of this person, you will experience sadistic punishment.

They will frustrate themselves and continue to engage in self-defeating and masochistic behaviors. They will lash out at their scapegoat for their own behaviors. They will misuse their powers to demean, malign, confuse, and frustrate others.

The Punitive Avenger

At this level, the narcissist has moved from merely lashing out at scapegoats to destroying perceived enemies. This is where they descend into a dangerous and deranged level, driven by a mixture of psychopathy, Machiavellianism, and narcissism. Their victim complex becomes delusional and takes on the role of judge, jury, and executioner.

They begin to show a strong and active desire to punish people. For those at this level, you may observe them in reclusion, isolation, or engaging in some sort of revenge fantasy. Crisis at this level is dangerous. A loss of job or relationship can cause them to initiate a catastrophic event. They may engage in murder, mass murder, or shooting.

If you are a victim of this narcissist, you will see a progression from introversion, neuroticism, a sense of worthlessness to a desire to punish or frustrate those whom they perceive as having blocked them. You will also notice that they always want to make a scapegoat out of everything and become masters at scapegoating individuals.

1.4 Narcissistic Strategies of Manipulation

All narcissists crave control no matter where they fall on the spectrum. And whatever control method they decide to use depends on the type of narcissist they are. But the most destructive of all is the control method that makes the victim question his or her own sanity. Individuals with covert NPD usually employ passive-aggressive behavior to control their victims. The silent treatment is fairly common. They will sometimes pretend not to hear you or walk

away mid-conversation, especially when the conversation is about something that is very important to you.

The silent treatment is a form of inner invalidation. It is the way they withhold giving you feedback, approval, or response because they know that you want their attention. By not responding, narcissists believe that they are punishing you, that you are not worthy of their attention, or that you are insignificant. The more upset you become about their not validating your reality and disengaging from the conversation, the more they feel powerful about themselves, proving how easily they can control you.

Other passive-aggressive methods include dominating stances and body language that communicates displeasure. Narcissists may try to stand over you and give you a very deep cold stare. What many people don't get over is the need to get closure. They want to know why the narcissist is giving them the silent treatment; they don't know what they are doing wrong and want answers. The truth is, it's the narcissist's nature to use invalidation and withdrawal to nourish a feeling of grandiosity. Usually, this has very little to do with your actions, and no matter how much you try to find closure, you will most likely not get it. The narcissist is a master of manipulation. Some narcissists are very adept at playing the victim. If they can tell

you sob stories, failures, misfortunes, and exaggerate the suffering they experience and manipulate your empathy, then you can remain their savior and rescuer forever. They trap the victim in their web of manipulation by playing on the victim's empathy. In the long run, you will experience situations that will seem like a test of your loyalty. You will end up most likely spending a huge part of your life proving how unique and special your narcissist parent is. This is a superiority complex that leverages your empathy as a person. The narcissist will never be satisfied with your effort, no matter how hard you try to prove your loyalty. You will be compared with someone else, and the narcissist will withhold the acknowledgment of all the help you have rendered in times past. In the end, it will make you feel that you are not quite good enough. Playing the victim is a very effective method of control.

Mockery, public humiliation, and criticism are tools that the narcissist uses to establish control. A snide remark here about your appearance, a comment there about how silly you are, are indirect tools the narcissist uses for personal gain. They may say things in front of an audience like, "Oh, it was just a joke," "Oh, don't be so sentimental," "You are just overreacting," or "It's just for your own good, the truth is bitter." By doing so they appear respectable and if

the audience laughs, the narcissist feels a boost of power by seeing your discomfort. Narcissists get their ego boost from tormenting, taunting, and punishing whoever is their chosen target. They gain control by getting an emotional reaction. They will create dramas and fabricate stories. They may recreate history just to provoke an emotional reaction. They look for your exposed emotional buttons so they can press them for fun and entertainment. They assure themselves of how easily they can control you. Your reactions validate the narcissist's power and dominance, proving once again how important she is.

A narcissist will also want to control your level of self-confidence and self-worth. If you speak up for yourself in situations like this, they will project their aggression on to you by saying that you are aggressive when you are just trying to be assertive and get your message across. So, the narcissist will establish control using power struggles, games, and other subtle methods. Narcissists are also good at using fear as an instrument of torture. They will use warnings and forecasts, predicting how bad things are and how terrible they were and how your actions will only cause you pain in the long run. The reason is simple. If you are fearful, you are more easily manipulated and are more likely to believe their horrific

predictions. If this is matched with your own paranoia, a bond is formed between the two of you.

Therefore, if you see them as your only source of wisdom, hope, and security, they have control of you. Seeds of doubt will be planted, and narcissists will watch you question your own sanity because if their doubts can influence your decision, then this proves how powerful they are in your life.

They will intimidate you into making a choice that suits them. They will do whatever it takes to sabotage your success because this is evidence of their power over you. They want you to turn to them only and see them as an authority on everything in your life. The more dependent you are on them, the more they are able to control you.

Showing an emotional reaction to the apprehensive rage of the narcissist opens you up to his or her control since your emotions are a key thing they prey on. Your reactions demonstrate their superiority and affirm your inferiority. Therefore, be mindful of your emotional reactions. Learn discernment and how to manage your emotional state. This may take some practice, but it can be done and it's a skill worth mastering that will benefit all areas of your life.

Some narcissists thrive on secrecy. They will intentionally confuse you by implying that privacy and secrecy are one and the same. But they are not. Secrecy is used to hide something, while privacy is used to protect something. Narcissists might imply they are protecting you from something for your own good, when in fact they are hiding something that would devastate the illusion of power they have created.

It could be addictions, history of abuse and violence, financial status, issues with the law, marital status—basically anything. They will also use secrecy to remain mysterious and invasive, which can be alluring to the unsuspecting person. They are capable of anything, even if it means your never finding out the truth. Secrecy is what a narcissist uses to preserve control. Secrecy involves turning a blind eye to wrongdoing. It is not unusual for a narcissist to tell his or her victims to prove their loyalty by turning a blind eye to abuse or some kind of injustice that is being perpetrated. Since narcissists lack empathy, you are going to be saddled with the burden of participating in some kind of wrongdoing every time you prove your loyalty to them by keeping their secrets. It is important to note that secrecy is not a component of any truly healthy relationship. Narcissists will also expect you to keep their episodes of rage a secret, so they terrorize

you into secrecy, even if you so much as utter a word to another party. Therefore, if narcissists expect you to keep a secret, they are expecting you to participate in a lie and their game of manipulation.

Gaslighting

Gaslighting is a form of psychological manipulation where perpetrators seek to sow seeds of doubt in an individual they have targeted. The aim is to make their target question their memory, perception, and sanity. Narcissists attempt to psychologically destabilize the victim and seek to invalidate the legitimacy of the victim's experience of their own reality. It is a form of psychological bullying. Other words that are associated with gaslighting are brainwashing and crazy making.

You can identify gaslighting narcissists when they accuse you of issues that they themselves have. They may spread misinformation about you and start a smear campaign to ruin your reputation. If you do not have a firm grip on facts and a rock-solid self-esteem, this tactic may destabilize your sanity.

Gaslighting narcissists may propagate fear; they may fill your mind with all manner of stories that will undermine your self-confidence

and instead sow seeds of doubt that will erode your self-worth. Once fear is propagated, you become easier to manipulate.

Propaganda is also an effective tool for the gaslighter. They make you believe that their perspective is the only way to view a situation. This perspective will either contain half-baked facts, exaggerated ideas, rumors, and unverified allegations with the aim of indoctrinating and coercing you to mistrust your own inner authority while surrendering your free will.

This is a method of mind control that creates a dependency on someone or something as an authority. It's basically a strategized effort at manipulating another person's beliefs, attitudes, or actions.

Gaslighting can include not telling the whole truth, making generalizations, insisting only on one version of events, conveniently taking things out of context, or changing the facts about conversations you have had or omitting certain important things in order to discredit you and make sure that you feel crazy and look crazy to others. Relationships with these people will make you question your sanity.

The gaslighter is very effective in the use of isolation. If you try to involve external help in the relationship to make sense of difficult

situations, they will shoot this down and discredit these external influences. For instance, if you say you want to see a therapist for your problems, they will most likely tell you that the therapist is unqualified, or they will use that as an opportunity to validate your insanity. Gaslighting narcissists may say something like this: "See, that's why you are seeing a shrink, you can't think for yourself.". This is another method of gaslighting known as the double bind where you get the same reaction regardless of whatever action you decide to take. The narcissist enjoys seeing you in this kind of distress. The gaslighting parent intentionally causes emotional distress for a child by placing him or her in difficult situations where all the outcomes are bound to yield negative consequences.

Projecting faults

Narcissists are experts at projecting all their faults onto the victim. For instance, if they cheat, they will accuse their partner of snooping around their business and not trusting them. This is called narcissistic projection, where the narcissist uses guilt and shame to cover up his or her own shortcomings.

This ensures that they keep control of the dynamics of the relationship and assure their dominance. Projection is a defense

mechanism. Often, narcissists will project the emotional rejections they suffered in their own childhoods onto their children.

They may say something like, "You are just like my father.". It is important to say here that having a difficult childhood is not enough reason to justify or excuse someone when they abuse others. There are many people with horrific childhoods but yet choose to never behave the way their abusers did. Since narcissists will not own up to their faults, it is quite easy to see faults in others and use it to guilt trip or control others to do their bidding. Through projective identification, narcissists can effectively control their victims. For instance, if you are constantly told that you are jealous, anxious, and have deep seated anger issues, after a while, you may start to actually exhibit these behaviors. Narcissists may have a hard time understanding projection, depending on where on the spectrum they fall. This is because their strategies are based on them convincing the world that they are victims. They cannot be reasoned with whenever they are in these throes of aggressive projection. People who engage the narcissist in situations like this often find themselves in distress.

Confusing Conversations

Since narcissists always feel the need to dominate, whether overtly or covertly, they will always employ strategies to ensure this. In conversations, narcissists will cause so much confusion in the discussion that at the end of the day the only viewpoint left will be theirs.

Invalidation

One of the core strategies the narcissist uses is invalidation. When you acknowledge someone's point of view, you validate them. You don't necessarily have to agree with them but it means that you welcome diverse viewpoints. Narcissists never validate. Instead, they shift blame. Narcissists are also very good at bringing something unrelated into conversations that will get other people's mind stuck, hereby taking the problem off their shoulders.

Hurt and Rescue Situations

Narcissists are also adept at what is termed hurt and rescue situations. This is where the narcissists hurt their victim but still rescue them by coming up with solutions that will be only on their own terms, which often ends with the victim feeling defeated.

They may offer to take you to therapy for the anxiety they have diagnosed you with. The goal is to make you think that there is

something wrong with you. In fact, they will deliberately cool down their rage in heated conversations in order to make the victim look like the aggressive one, so that by the end of the conversation the victim is overwhelmed emotionally while they are so calm.

Narcissists also use the victim's emotional state as a tool of oppression. By using invalidation, blame shifting, projection, and gaslighting consistently, the victim is guaranteed to be in a state of emotional chaos. By the end of a conversation, the victim is completely overwhelmed and exasperated, and that's when narcissists move in for the kill.

They will attempt to point out that the victim's reactions and emotional state are the reason for the problems. It is a classic masterstroke of manipulation. At this point, victims start to actually feel that maybe they are the source of the problem, since they are the ones yelling and raising their voices.

1.5 Pathological Narcissists as Parents

When pathological narcissists become parents, they will deploy all these behavior patterns in the relationship with their son or daughter.

We can identify two main types of narcissistic parents.

The first one is the **engulfing narcissist**. This type of parent is obsessed with the child, seeing children as an extension of themselves. They have no boundaries. You might have heard of the idea that someone hasn't yet "cut the apron strings.". This saying applies to the children of this kind of narcissistic parent.

They may appear close to the child—but not emotionally. Physically they cannot stay out of their kids' lives. On the surface, everything may seem great and there's all this attention, but the child does not feel like an individual, only like he or she is just part of the parent. They cannot express their own wishes or feelings; the parent makes all of their decisions. And as the children grow up, they seek a great deal of independence and are constantly tired of bringing their parents along for everything. The child struggles with getting the independence that should be a natural part of adult development.

Engulfing parents need that closeness; they need their child to provide them with emotional support. This can create a co-dependency that can be incredibly damaging to a child's development. Engulfing narcissist parents want to be involved in every single aspect of their children's lives. They will probably over-involve themselves in their kids' school activities. But they may from time to time undermine their children in order to maintain control

over them. If the child wants to spread his or her wings, be independent or normal, the narcissist parent will lay down guilt trippers like “after all I’ve done for you!” in order to control them.

The second type of narcissistic parent is the **ignoring narcissist**.

These parents don’t care about the kid. They are neglectful and are only interested in what the kid can supply them. The child in this case feels rejected, abandoned, and will show signs of incredibly low self-esteem. These kids are often anxious because they don’t know where comfort is coming from—or if it is going to even come at all. They often experience a lot of trauma because many times the people they are left with to supervise them can do whatever they want with them since their own parents appear not to care much for them.

Therefore, the only time the child gets attention is when the narcissist is angry, and so the child learns that anger is the only real emotion. The child doesn’t understand much of the parents’ other feelings. This can lead to problems later in life when the child tries to interact with other people but cannot do so efficiently since he or she has not been taught the right way to do that.

1.6 Signs of Narcissistic Parenting

Narcissists can inflict pain on people and still get a good night's rest because they can't empathize with other people's pain. The reason they will actually inflict pain on people is something called narcissistic supply: narcissists always have to feed their ego.

Narcissistic personality disorder could be rooted in childhood abuse. The narcissist has grown up without developing a personality. Instead of a real person, multiple psychic functions will work only if the person receives emotional energy from the outside. This is why narcissists consider others as an extension of themselves. Without the relationship with the victim, their psyche disintegrates. They create a web of tormented relationships and intrigues that they need to survive, causing emotional reactions in their victims.

Narcissistic supply can either be positive or negative. Positive narcissistic supply would be like a desire or need to be admired. When a narcissist abuses someone and that person has a strong emotional reaction to that abuse, the narcissist feels powerful. And when they get off on that while being able to control people's emotions, this can be a negative supply.

Narcissists lack empathy and therefore may not display validation of love to their children, so if you were raised by a narcissistic parent, then you were deprived and starved of love and most likely you were emotionally abused. So, not only was their love withheld but they also played games with you and tormented you, so that they could fill that negative supply from your emotional reactions. Usually children are not aware of the psychological and emotional abuse they suffer, and they realize that only in adulthood. Many adult children of toxic parents have not yet realized that their parent was a pathological narcissist.

You can recognize narcissistic parenting from these signs:

1. Narcissistic guilt trip.

Narcissistic parents act like they're doing you a favor by feeding, clothing, and giving you a home. Whenever they want something from you and you say no because you have the right to say no, they'll remind you of how much they gave up to raise you or how much they have sacrificed for you, saying, for example, "If I didn't have you my life would be better."

This is a form of emotional abuse, so if your parents do that, then that's a red flag of narcissistic personality disorder.

2. Conditional love.

Parents who are emotionally healthy love their children no matter what. When their children do something wrong, they'll punish them but it's still obvious to the children that they are loved. Narcissists don't display love for their children. They don't have the ability to love their children, so they will only give out conditional love, like when you are succeeding in something or when they can brag about you to their friends. That's when they'll show you love and affection, but the minute you do something that embarrasses them or rebel against them, they will cut off your supply of love completely. They'll give you the silent treatment and might even do underhanded things to get you back. And when a parent like this raises you, it's easy to see why when you become an adult you turn into a classic people-pleaser. You grow up thinking that all love is conditional, because that's what your parents taught you and so you constantly feel like you must prove your worth in order to be loved. You constantly feel like you have to make everyone happy in order to earn love. The sense of shame is always there inside of you, making you feel like you're not good enough.

3. No boundaries.

Narcissists see their children not as individuals but as extensions of themselves, so they see their children as their property. They don't see their child as a thinking human being that deserves privacy and respect. So, a narcissistic parent will always cross your boundaries, and that includes buzzing into your room without knocking, not respecting your privacy in the bathroom and so forth.

One common and disturbing situation with girls who are raised by narcissistic mothers is the issue of a virginity check. You can imagine what goes on in the mind of a teenage girl when her mother forces her to take a virginity test in order to prove her sexual inactivity. It's traumatizing, but narcissists don't care because they see it as, "You are mine, that's my body, that's my virginity; you're an extension of me so I can do whatever I want to you." This can be quite damaging.

4. Jealousy.

When mothers look at their daughters, they see youth, they see beauty and so a normal mother would want to nurture that and help that flourish and grow. But a narcissistic mother is jealous and will actively try to destroy her daughter's self-esteem, even competing with her. Narcissistic mothers especially are in competition with their

kids the minute the child is born. If someone pays more attention to the child than her, she will resent the child.

5. Taking credit for your accomplishments.

Narcissistic parents usually do this in public but not in private.

6. Lack of empathy.

These parents do not have the ability to feel other people's pain and, even worse, often get a kick out of other people's pain.

So, if you've ever been in a situation where you just needed your parents to empathize with you and tell you, "Everything's going to be okay," and they genuinely could not do that, that's sometimes a sign that they could have a narcissistic personality disorder.

Even worse is the fact that they may even appear to enjoy your pain. It's weird for a parent to do that and that's why it's called a personality disorder.

7. Infantilization.

Narcissistic parents will always do their best to keep their children in a child-like dependent state. They don't want their children to grow up and gain their independence because that means their children would go off on their own. And they can't let that happen because how could they fill their supply from their children then? So, they

want to keep their children around for as long as possible, and the best way to do that is to basically train their children to be helpless. They will not teach their kids how to cook or the other basic things that you're supposed to teach your child. In the end, the child will always feel like, "I'm dependent on my parents and I can't make it without them." There is also mental abuse as well because they'll constantly put their child down while reminding them that they're helpless.

In this state, you will never even try to reach out for help; you'll always feel like you have to come back to your parents because your self-esteem is low and so shoddy. You feel like the whole world is against you. The truth of the matter is that there are people in the world who would be happy to help you and who would love you more than your parents could, but narcissistic parents do not want you to know that, because that means you will leave them and then they have no one to abuse and they lose a source of supply.

8. Never admitting wrong.

Never expect a narcissist to apologize. They won't because they don't feel bad about what they have done. Sometimes they will acknowledge something and then later they'll tell you that it didn't happen. If they're not gaslighting you, they're probably turning it

around to make themselves the victim. They will never admit their wrongs.

9. Projecting bad traits on to you.

Your parents could be visibly selfish, inconsiderate, evil, and negative. But for some odd reason they will throw those things onto you as if you are the one with these traits.

10. Destroying your self-esteem.

A narcissistic parent can openly call you a fat slob, but some will do it more subtly, like "Oh, are you going to wear that shirt outside? It's a little bit small around your waist." This is underhanded and passive-aggressive but subtle enough to plant small seeds of insecurity in your head. These seeds germinate and push your self-esteem into the ground. As a result, you grow up having no self-love, self-esteem and can't stop paying attention to that voice in your head that tells you that you're not worthy or good enough.

Another way they will lower your self-esteem is by comparing you to other people. They compare you to other kids, making it seem like they got the short end of the stick by having you: "Why couldn't I have a child that acts like that or acts like this?". Even if you did the best that you could, it will never be good enough for them because

they'll always find a person to compare you to. They just have to make you feel bad about yourself because, don't forget, they have a wound within themselves. They have shame within themselves and so to quiet that, they try to throw that shame on you.

11. Causing drama.

These parents enjoy drama because they feed off emotional responses. For example, if you have siblings, nine times out of ten, your narcissistic parent will try to make you two not like each other, especially because narcissistic parents tend to have a favorite called "The golden child," so they often then need "The black sheep."

Narcissistic parents make the black sheep feel like trash, like this person does not matter and is inadequate. They will then put the golden child on a pedestal. But remember they don't really love the golden child; they just love the image that the golden child represents. They'll try to pit siblings against each other and since they live for drama, they thrive in situations with potential for high explosive emotional reactions. They'll sit you down and actually talk about your problems and make it seem like they're trying to get in your head to help you, but they're trying to get an emotional response out of you and make you upset. You will probably leave in tears a conversation that started with just a question. Often they

need to call family meetings because they are running low on drama and are searching for an emotional response.

PART TWO

NARCISSISTIC MOTHERS

Your narcissistic mother most likely will never be officially diagnosed, but you will eventually recognize her for the crazy- making trail she leaves behind, the mind games, the covert manipulation ever so subtly causing conflict between family members and playing her own children against each other. A narcissistic mother is extremely damaging and causes her children a lot of pain. When a narcissistic mother has children, she doesn't have them for the same reason a healthy mother does. When a narcissistic mother has a child, she does so in order for that child to meet her own unmet needs. Some narcissistic mothers want a real-life extension of themselves, and they hope that their children will satisfy that need. Unfortunately, the narcissistic mother's love is usually very volatile and conditional. A narcissistic mother is not able to unconditionally love her children.

Before speaking about the narcissistic mother, we need to consider the role of the father, who is almost always an enabler. This role will help you fully understand the dynamics of the toxic family dominated by a narcissistic mother.

2.1 Enablers

Enablers are the people who support and defend the narcissist. These are the people narcissists recruit to their side. They enable narcissists by putting up with their behavior or rescuing them or bailing them out of the catastrophes they manage to create in their lives.

These are the people who say, “She’s your mother; you need to forgive her.”. Enablers usually don’t have a malicious motive and often think that they’re helping—but they’re not. They reinforce the narcissist’s behavior and make the problem worse. They’re simply doing what they think is right. Nothing is happening to prevent the narcissist from having his or her way, however. They are still receiving the attention that they seek. There are no consequences. This enables the narcissist, whether people choose to believe that or not.

Every time an enabler draws a line in the sand, the narcissist crosses it—and the enabler just keeps on drawing more lines. Eventually they’re going to realize that these lines mean nothing. The only reason enablers put up with abusive behavior is that they have been conditioned to believe that this behavior is okay, that they have to continue relationships with a toxic and abusive person. Enablers

believe they're proving something to the narcissist by staying in the relationship. Well, all they are proving is that narcissists can treat them however they want and they'll put up with it because the narcissist's well-being matters to them more than their own. Enablers are telling the narcissists that they don't have to treat them any better because they don't believe they deserve better treatment. This is unhealthy and toxic; it's also exactly what narcissists want. Narcissists want enablers to set themselves on fire to keep them warm; nothing will ever be enough. Narcissists have to take emotional supply from other people abusing them and enablers are teaching the narcissist that this behavior is okay. More than that, they're teaching it to themselves.

There's a large amount of guilt involved in relationships with narcissists. The relationship with a narcissist is like a relationship with an infant; it is completely and totally one-sided. Infants simply need no reciprocation, and narcissists stay in that infantilized emotional state forever, simply needing and taking without seeing other people as people at all.

This is where boundaries come in. Boundaries are the lines in the sand that we draw, and we say "If you cross this line I will leave.". Boundaries work with narcissists because they could change their

behavior when properly motivated, and they know the difference between right and wrong; they know what consequences are. People who enable narcissists generally do not have clear boundaries and do not pose a threat when the narcissist crosses a boundary. This teaches the narcissist that the enabler's boundaries don't mean anything and consequently the narcissist doesn't have to respect them. In this way, you respect yourself, you protect yourself and you stop enabling the disorder that is controlling and ruining everyone's lives.

No-contact will be the best strategy for dealing with narcissists and their enablers. A narcissist cannot exist alone, so there are always enablers. When these enablers are identified, they should be subject to the same rules as the narcissist, because they are damaging you as well.

The Enabler Father

Narcissists can be very clever and cunning when choosing a mate. They look for somebody that's weaker than them, who will abide by their rules. They look for someone that they can manipulate; they look for somebody who will overlook the abuses they do to others, somebody they can control. The narcissist is able to change the way

someone else thinks, and if others do not think for themselves, they are called the enabler.

The narcissistic enabler allows the narcissist to do dirty deeds. They will keep their mouths shut, overlook the indiscretions of the narcissist even when they know fully well that the narcissist is doing something horrible and even abusive.

The enabler father will in fact allow the abuse of his own children. The narcissistic mother will create triangulation between her enabler husband and his children. The enabler will simply turn his back on his own children. Once the narcissist is then able to control all relationships, she sees the enabler as yet another plaything. The narcissist mother will create a divide between not only all the siblings but also between the siblings and their enabler father. Usually, the enabler is frightened of something. He is afraid that he's going to lose money, he's afraid he'll lose the social status that the narcissist is providing, he is frightened he will not be cared for, and he is most frightened that his narcissistic wife will turn on him, making him a victim.

The enabler will sit by and allow his children to be abused; he is simply too frightened and will do anything that the narcissist demands of him. He will turn his back on his own children, even

though they are being abused physically, emotionally or sexually. He will completely abandon his children, even if they are suffering. The enabler father has no excuses for his behavior; he watches his children abused in so many horrific ways and could have done something about it but refuses to do so. After brainwashing, the enabler will agree with the narcissist's lies; he'll encourage the lack of communication between his own children because that will keep the narcissist off his back and happy.

2.2 The Narcissistic Mother and The Roles She Chooses for Her Children

A narcissistic mother assigns a role to her children and this has a tremendous effect on them. There are typically three major roles that she'll put their children in: the golden child, the scapegoat, and the invisible or lost child.

The scapegoat is the child that is "never good enough." No matter what these children do, they never satisfy the narcissistic mother's needs, and she will always find ways to undermine them and stop them from feeling like they have achieved anything. If the child ever expresses any anger or resentment towards the mother, then she would severely punish him or her.

The golden child is a representation of the idealized self of the mother. The mother might put all of her attention on the child, something even more dysfunctional and deeper than the relationship she has with her husband. The golden child is the opposite of the scapegoat child. The golden child can never do any wrong; the narcissistic mother idolizes him, and she will always pay a lot of attention to any tiny accomplishment that this child will achieve.

The invisible or lost child is the child that is very much neglected. The narcissistic mother is not very interested in this child. She will just forget to do certain things with this child, or she just won't think of things that this child may need. She may forget that this child has the same needs as other children.

Let's analyze these situations one by one. Labelling these familial roles can assist us in detaching and gaining a wider perspective. We are not meant to adopt these labels permanently but temporarily to help us identify something that we were not conscious of, because understanding allows us to disengage from the blame game.

The Golden Child

The narcissistic mother worships the golden child. This child is a reflection of everything she wants for herself, particularly in the area

of an emotional relationship. Therefore, her view of her child is what we would call a perverted view. It's an unhealthy view and is being strengthened based on the fact that the mother has a tremendous void in her own life. The golden child could be a son and the last kid of the family, but not always.

When she looks at this golden son, she sees him through a perverted lens. She looks at her son in an unhealthy way. She looks up to him to fulfil her emotional emptiness and provide the attention she craves. She also looks to her son to validate and support her emotionally.

The narcissistic mother desires a husband she can look up to, someone she expects to fulfil her dreams and expectations. Most of the time, the man is incapable of this, and the narcissistic mother turns to her son to make this happen. The golden son then becomes meshed with his mother emotionally.

A narcissistic mother will look at her golden son as a trophy while consistently reinforcing that her son is perfect, superior, charming, and handsome. There's nothing too good for him. This is what's being instilled in him emotionally and intellectually at a very young age. So, he's not getting the things that he needs: love, validation, attention, protection, support, affirmation, and correction where

necessary. What he's getting is a lot of toxic emotions coming from his mother, who is simply looking to him to fill a need. Therefore, the mother begins to look at him as her trophy. He can do nothing wrong.

The narcissistic mother makes her golden child feel superior to everybody else and, as a consequence, that young child grows up to potentially become a narcissist or at least to have narcissistic traits. It's important to know that everything she's doing is about her; it's not about her son. The son is basically being used as a tool and again it comes with a price.

A narcissist's biggest fear is their supply being cut off, so to counter this, a narcissistic mother will deploy psychological warfare strategies that will be used against the golden son at an early age. The first strategy is called emotional incest. We're talking about seduction: the mother seduces the golden son as a replacement for the male figure in her life. The mother is looking at the golden son as a replacement for a father that didn't give her the things that she needed or as a replacement for the husband she now has.

The mother emotionally marries the son and, of course, the golden son is expected to meet her emotional needs. If she's married, she emasculates her husband and chooses the golden son as

replacement emotionally. While for the most part the relationship with her son isn't sexual, it is nonetheless perverse, meaning that it is not the normal way a mother should relate with her children. Therefore sometimes you'll see a mother with her golden son at a young age (even into the teen years), flirting with and touching him inappropriately.

Now, that may not be strictly sexual, but it is very inappropriate, especially if that son has gone through puberty and into adolescence. As the son grows intellectually and physically, his emotions are basically arrested, and he always feels like he needs to satisfy the mother's wishes and demands. This golden child is never able to grow emotionally outside his mother's control. His confidence, self-respect and clearly his identity are all tied to his mother's approval, so everything he does, even his relationship with his spouse when he marries, is all based on his mother's needs. And of course, he will also experience difficulty connecting emotionally with people in a healthy way.

If the golden son tries to pull back and be independent, that decision will be met with vengeance from his mother. She may employ a lot of different tactics, including drama, manipulation, control, and lies. But it's going to be vengeance that basically brings hell into his life

because he is looking to emancipate himself and the narcissistic mother is going to have a serious problem with that, even to the point where she will sabotage his independence, dreams, and visions.

The Scapegoat

The scapegoat gets the blame for the family's problems. The family's burdens and responsibilities are usually placed on this child. If this were you, you might have had the courage to speak out but were bullied, threatened, and dominated back into submission. There are a lot of unspoken rules in narcissistic families and emotional pain is hidden. There's an undercurrent of competition and sibling rivalry. And it seems like everyone constantly needs to fight for a parent's love and attention.

Narcissistic parents feel very threatened by black sheep because they are the only ones with enough strength and courage to expose them for who they are. The scapegoat is very sensitive and aware of the truth about what's going on behind the impression of the family that the narcissistic parent is trying to make. If you were the scapegoat or black sheep, you might have felt like nothing was ever good enough. Your narcissistic mother may have been happy with you one day and bitterly disappointed the next. If you spoke out

about how you felt, that perhaps you've been treated unjustly, then your narcissistic mother was quick to put you in your place.

Because the narcissistic mother avoids taking responsibility and refuses to be held accountable for her unfair treatment of her children, unpredictable mood swings and bullying tactics are what she relies on when dealing with the scapegoat. You may have always been the one to blame for everything that goes wrong; you may have been picked on and repeatedly put down.

The narcissistic mother will take credit for everything that goes right but it's the scapegoat's fault for anything that would make a bad impression of the family. This dysfunctional parenting style creates a separation between the children as the mother chooses one to be the negative example in the family. A narcissistic mother will often fail to protect you when the other family members taunt and verbally brutalize you because she has set this dynamic up, so it plays out exactly as she expects.

The scapegoat is a role a mother specifically assigns to a child that is more outspoken, extremely intuitive, and the first to notice a problem. Because the scapegoat is the whistle blower, he often gets accused of being a liar, mentally ill, or over-exaggerating. And of course, outsiders who aren't aware of the narcissistic parent's tactics

to control the family will believe that. Therefore, the scapegoat often feels rejected, isolated, and alone, as if he does not belong anywhere.

The scapegoat experiences childhood feeling extremely burdened with all the faults, wrongdoings, and neglect of the narcissistic parent. The scapegoat tends to act out and unknowingly transmutes all of the tension in the family dynamic, and this provides a good distraction from what's really going on. If you are the scapegoat, no matter how many A-plus grades you get on your school report, or whether you win a trophy, or are recognized for your excellent achievements, you will be minimized, unacknowledged, or completely ignored by the narcissistic mother.

You'll never meet your mother's expectations. It is impossible to meet her standards and of course you'll never be as good as her favorite and chosen golden child. In adolescence, the scapegoat's inability to get parental approval and attention may mean that he or she will continue acting out in other ways. Scapegoats often carry heavy feelings from their childhoods of guilt, shame and not ever being good enough well into adulthood. If you're still in contact with your narcissistic mother, she will continue to imply that you are to blame for all that's wrong in the family and everything that's wrong

in her life. You may still be the one that the narcissistic mother is most ashamed of and disappointed in. The narcissistic mother will manipulate other family members to gang up against you by focusing on everything that's wrong with you. This conveniently takes the focus away from the real perpetrator, which is of course her. It's interesting to think about the manipulation that's going on. So, if you have been labelled as the black sheep and that has been your permanent role in the family, it allows all the other family members to start feeling better about themselves. They start to believe that they are healthier and more obedient to the narcissistic mother than you, and again this creates a division within the family. Another important point is that if a child is scapegoated from an early age, he or she may fully internalize all their narcissistic mother's criticism and shame. This means that the scapegoats develop this harsh inner critic that will continue that inner dialogue that constantly reminds them of how bad and flawed they are. I guess you could call that "inner scapegoating," and it is extremely toxic to a young impressionable child whose identity is still being formed. So, the scapegoat may struggle with low self-esteem and often continues to feel deeply inadequate and unlovable. Adult scapegoat children also tend to suppress a huge amount of

abandonment anxiety because they were emotionally or even physically abandoned by the narcissistic mother over and over again.

Adult scapegoat children therefore become super sensitive to observing any potential signs of approval or disapproval. These are all important aspects of the profound impact that a toxic family dynamic may continue to have on adult relationships. Perhaps you may still have issues with authority. Maybe you're still used to justifying yourself or somehow proving your worth. This is an unconscious pattern that you may still not be aware of and that you are perpetuating because you don't realize how powerful these dysfunctional family dynamics still are. And once you wake up and understand you can let go of that label, you can break that pattern by choosing to think and behave completely different. You can learn to choose your battles and do not always have to be defensive. You do not always have to feel victimized. You need to become more self-aware and notice if you are still trying to get your parents' approval or validation.

Maturing into adulthood means that you may need to understand that you may never have a healthy relationship with an intentional perpetrator of abuse. You need to process your feelings of frustration, loneliness, rage, and grief.

On a positive note, the scapegoat is the truth-teller. They are the ones who are unable to tolerate lies and injustice. Scapegoats often show tremendous strength because they've survived a lot of criticism, shaming and are used to being threatened by the narcissist. They're accustomed to being shunned by the rest of the family. The scapegoat refuses to stay silent and often initiates change. They are the ones most likely to escape, heal and bring an end to this transgenerational dysfunction. You have lots of strengths that can be drawn on if this has been your allocated role.

So, I guess you know why I wrote this book, because I feel deeply inspired to contribute something to help others break these narcissistic patterns of behavior.

The Lost Child

The lost child is often quiet. That child has his or her back up against the wall, doesn't cause a lot of waves, does pretty well in school, and might even be a bit artistic. Often, the lost child is so quiet that the parents often say, "Oh, that child is such a blessing; she never causes any trouble." There's no big deal but then when these children do find themselves in trouble, it's serious. The lost child is the child whose needs are not being met on any level. It's like they're invisible and get neither blame nor praise from the

narcissistic mother. This is the child who just seemingly doesn't exist in the family. The basic needs of this kid are ignored across the board. Essentially, this child is just alone and finds it really hard to let anybody in to his or her private world. There are no natural or easy connections between these children and other people because they feel very lonely and isolated.

They get depressed, but they are also very independent. Since they never felt valuable as a kid, they don't feel valuable as an adult. As they become a teenager, they feel unlovable and undeserving of trust. They don't even think that their thoughts are worth hearing. Unfortunately, these children fall into substance abuse, drugs, alcohol, sex addiction, eating disorders, gambling and other kinds of addictive behaviors.

You have to understand the roles the narcissistic mother gives these children: the scapegoat, the golden child, and the lost child have nothing to do with benefiting the child; it's all about self-service. It's all about what the narcissistic parents want and need from their family. Since lost children are not used to having any sort of attention, they don't expect it and don't seek it out in their lives. These are generally not the kids who later become narcissists, but since they become self-reliant, they sometimes have twisted ideas of

what life is all about because they came out of a toxic home. When they leave home, a lot of times the family forgets they're even gone. At school, they might be the kid in the back of the room that nobody speaks to or thinks about. They don't join clubs or groups. These are the kids who are out back smoking. If they do get involved with others, they're involved with kids like them, the outcasts. This is dangerous and a part of the reason that sometimes they get on the wrong side of the law as they get older.

Then there are those who choose to throw themselves into school, get good grades, go to the best college, do all the right things, but still never get noticed. These are the ones who are driven by the need for the approval they never got and never will get from their parents.

If you meet a lost child out in the world, he or she probably will appear shy and introverted, but in reality, the lost child is not just quiet but disconnected from other people. Lost children will display this isolation throughout their lives, even when they do become adults and get into relationships, which is very sad for them. Also, they are soft-spoken and are more likely to read a book or watch TV or play video games or do anything to avoid conflict. They often don't want to deal with others, since they don't like conflict. They

may also be artistic and might be musical and quite often they're genuinely talented individuals, but since they don't want to be hurt, they're always looking to avoid getting too close to anyone. And if they happen to trust someone enough to get into a relationship, they will be dependent and needy.

Unless lost children understand what they're dealing with, if they never get healed, if they never go through the healing process that they need, they are in great danger of becoming addicts. But the saddest part of this whole story is that their cycle continues, so they often become the absentee parent or the parent who can't be emotionally connected to their children, which is terrible.

Obesity can be an issue for the lost child, as well as anorexia, addiction to the Internet or video games. They might become workaholics, but whatever it is, they're going to throw themselves into something, and we just have to hope it is something healthy—which it is usually not. The upside is that they do work well alone, are self-reliant, very often quite intelligent, and well read. If you give them a chance and they get close enough to you, they can become great listeners.

So how does a lost child recover? The first thing is getting into counselling or therapy to get in touch with the rage that must have

been building up over all of these years. There's a significant amount of fear in a lost child, because quite often they have questions and concerns. They have things they want to talk about and there's nobody to listen to them.

Lost children have to recognize the pain of the past. They must acknowledge their core wound and take it to the next level of healing. If you yourself are a lost child, you've got to realize the emotional emptiness that you have carried with you throughout your life and acknowledge that you are indeed lost.

Acknowledge, recognize and own the fact that you came out of a toxic home; don't deny it anymore. Once you have recognized the pain and the situation and own it for what it was, then you can face it. You can begin to form deeper relationships in your life and with yourself. You have to get to know yourself first. If you have noticed yourself playing the victim, it's time to let go of that feeling. Learn to make decisions and set long-term personal goals.

You have to understand that as you heal, you're going to find out that you're not weird, you're not bad and there's not anything wrong with you. The fault was just your family and the broken person in your family that caused you to feel like the lost child. You can start healing by changing your perception of yourself and the world

around you. If you previously thought, “If I don’t get emotionally involved I won’t get hurt,” or “I can’t make a difference anyway,” or “It’s better not to draw attention to myself,” now begin thinking, “I deserve attention,” “I do make a difference,” and “If I don’t get emotionally involved I’ll never have meaningful connections.”. You can’t allow yourself to be defined by a narcissist. None of us can allow ourselves to be defined by a narcissist, because the narcissist looks at us through an ugly dirty broken lens. Every lost child on the planet must realize that nothing the narcissist told us was true about the world, and we owe it to ourselves to rediscover the world for what it really is and who we really are—then rediscover ourselves.

2.3 Types of Narcissistic Mothers

If you’ve dealt with a narcissistic mom, chances are that one of two things happened: you were very controlled, or you were ignored. Or you could have been a combination of both of those, but in any case, you were robbed of a healthy normal childhood and very often face more struggles as an adult.

Narcissistic mothers exist on a spectrum and this spectrum ranges from neglectful to tyrannical. The first step of the healing journey is becoming aware of all abusive situations you might have suffered.

The Severe Overt Narcissistic Mother

This kind of mother is going to make you feel unloved because she is so self-absorbed. She's completely self-absorbed and always seeking attention. Life for her is a stage where she always has to be the star. Such mothers can bring up their kids, show them off to their friends and tell them, "You see what I have produced; my kids are my pride and joy.". This can be very damaging for boys because then the boys are learning that this is the only way to be in the world. To always be the kind of a man she expects him to be, he can't be fully himself.

When her daughter becomes a young woman, the overt narcissistic mother begins to compete with her, which can turn nasty very quickly. This kind of mother is going to show you also how much burden you are to her. Once again self-absorption takes the upper hand, and she will tell you how much money it caused her to raise you and how much you are draining her because she just never has time for herself. One day the narcissistic mother will push you out of the nest. She will want you out as soon as possible. She will want you to grow up without giving you the proper tools to go out into the world and succeed.

Other overt narcissistic mothers are the opposite; they want to keep you with them always and forbid you to leave them because they will feel so abandoned. So, she will reward you with co-dependency.

Another kind of overt narcissistic mother wants to feel needed and yet at the same time she's going to push you away when your needs become too much. She does not want you to be too self-reliant or independent, because then there is the threat of you not meeting her needs.

The overt narcissistic mother will not acknowledge your emotions; there's no room for you to fully express yourself basically because the moment you take up too much space, you're threatening her. So she will always try to tear you down, but she will not acknowledge when she hurts you. She will say things that should never be said.

After you reach that competitive level with her, when you begin to turn into an independent teenage girl who now has her own life, she will continue to tear you down so she can keep building herself up. This woman has to always be on top. She will try to hang out with your friends, and she'll even try to take over your peer group. She is the kind of woman who always wants to be perpetually young. She will also triangulate between siblings.

Triangulation is incredibly toxic especially in a family. Narcissistic mothers will whisper one thing to one child, another thing to another child, set them against each other, create conflict, and sit back to enjoy the drama that they have just created. But of course, if you tried to confront her about this, she will deny everything. She's the saint. She is always blame shifting and guilt tripping everybody around her. She's the center of attention, and it's all about her. This is what triangulation does.

If later in life you've been able to dig for the truth and figure out what really happened, you can confirm your stories with the stories of your brothers or sisters or cousins—the more the better—then you'll be able to hopefully see a much more accurate picture. Of course, that picture is going to be tainted if the other people have become flying monkeys, meaning that they have the same distortion of reality, in which case the conflict only mounts.

Unfortunately, the dynamics of the average family these days is often more or less divided and usually there's more dysfunction and less sanity, because being the outspoken person will cost you so much. This may cost you banishment, which is encoded in our genes as the worst form of punishment. When you're outside of the clan, when you've been pushed away from the tribe, you're out and

therefore can be threatened by all sorts of predators. This is why loneliness also can feel so devastating to us because we feel threatened and exposed. You'll never feel heard or seen or be able to succeed, so you're going to be trapped between the shame and guilt. If you don't do enough, you're going to be ashamed, if you do too much you're going to feel guilty. Either way she will make you feel awful. I've heard of young daughters being very successful only to find that their success threatens their relationship with their mother. What happens is that the mother feels she is not able to enjoy the full harvest of her daughter's success because the daughter has made a choice between her success and her mother. Now, if the daughter knew the person she was dealing with, it may be much easier to make the decision of not going back to the toxic mother. But because of the idea that mothers need to be revered and you dare not separate yourself from them, the daughter is in conflict.

The overt narcissistic mother will give conflicting messages, like proudly showing you off on the one hand, then subtly cutting you down on the other.

The Severe Narcissistic Sadistic Mothers

These mothers lock up their kids in their rooms. They are often alcoholics and completely neglectful. They let the streets raise their children and don't care what happens to them. There is a tremendously deep level of abandonment.

Sometimes there are a series of new husbands. These step- fathers sometimes sexually abuse these kids, creating an unhealthy environment to raise a child. So many families don't deserve to raise kids because they simply will not provide a safe environment. Unfortunately, the result of that is a very high number of people raised this way learn to fend for themselves. They have been shattered inside because they haven't received the sustenance, love, compassion, and protection they needed as children by virtue of being born.

Adult children of this kind of narcissistic mother will surely have a Complex Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (CPTSD).

The Enmeshed Mother

She is the most covert narcissistic mother. Instead of teaching you to build a life of your own, she snaps on the emotional handcuffs and never lets you go. Enmeshed mothers can seem like they're just

perfect, always taking care of their kids, but instead are turning their children into lifelong infants.

The enmeshed mother will never allow you to grow up. If you're a man, you'll always be stuck between this half man-half child situation. Children in this situation are emotionally stunted in so many ways because they have been imprinted with the message that it's not safe outside of the home, and that it is always better to be here with mom.

This is a form of co-dependency training that doesn't allow the children to go out there and learn the skills of survival and assertiveness in order to succeed. Their independence is not being supported and instead they are being punished for trying to be self-sufficient. This can be extremely damaging for men, especially boys, because there's a borderline component here and that is the fear of abandonment. The narcissistic mother wants to pour all of her love, all of her attention into the kids and make them the center of her world and oftentimes this is a result of a bad relationship with the father of her children.

If the father isn't gone, most of the time he neglects the children. He neglects his wife especially, and she will turn him into a monster in the boy's eyes, and the boy is then going to take over the burden

of the dad who is not present. So the son is going to have to grow up very quickly and will be rewarded for being there for his mommy. He will essentially become her surrogate husband. It's something that's called parentification.

This sometimes creates sensitive, openhearted and giving men, but the problem is that their boundaries are very permeable. There is not enough give-and-take in the relationship, and they will just work themselves to the bone to satisfy a woman, because that's what they did for their mothers. They will take that outside of the relationship with their mom and continue this dynamic in their romantic relationships.

The problem with this is that it's very easy for other narcissists, sociopaths, psychopaths, and borderline women to be attracted to this kind of man and then destroy him. These adult children of enmeshed narcissistic mothers will feel hurt deep inside because they are like, "I'm doing everything I can, I'm the better version of myself, my mom raised me with the right values and yet I keep getting my ass kicked. Why?" Now you know why. So, the enmeshing mother may think in her mind that she's doing the right thing but she's not; she is suffocating her children. A healthy relationship between a parent and a child, especially a mother and a

child, has to come from respect and the giving of space. Children need to feel like they can fully be themselves and develop to whatever seed they were, so they can become the person that they were meant to become. A good healthy parent will support that independence and that separation.

2.4 Narcissistic Mothers and Their Sons

The relationship that a man has with his mother is as complicated, just as a relationship with a daughter and her mother. I think that what will happen is as we move forward more and more, men are going to have to face what is at the root of some of the things that they're struggling with. A narcissistic mom is someone who is not capable of attuning herself to her children, so her children are like things she owns—her property.

A first specific area of the relationship between the male child and the narcissistic mother is her behavior with all the people who have a relationship with her son. The overt narcissistic mother is aggressive, abrasive, and intolerant. For her everybody else is an asshole, everybody else is stupid—especially other women. So, it's a little bit easier to see that this person is narcissistic, but you could have narcissistic moms who are not so easy to spot.

A covert narcissist mother can come off like she actually cares about her son and you might not be able to witness or understand that there is a dependency that's being fostered.

In both situations—overt and covert—narcissistic mothers are using their sons for a source of supply. There is an investment happening; there is an unconscious desire to consume the son and to create a dependency that always provides a source of supply. The son never has the ability to go out and become a separate individual from his mother. A narcissistic mother's agenda is to make sure that she's number one, to ensure that this young man never goes out and leaves her. So other women are considered a threat; she'll also consider his friends a threat, and she'll find something wrong with every person that her son brings in the house. She'll have a problem with his friends' mothers or his friends' fathers, and she'll have a problem with every teacher her son has.

Another big trouble is the relationship with her husband, the father of her son. Often a narcissistic mom has married a very co-dependent man. She puts him down in front of the children and makes fun of him sexually. Lots of men have witnessed how their narcissistic mothers have battered their fathers in front of them—

perhaps not in front of the neighbors and other family members but behind closed doors, definitely!

This is the kind of chaos that happens when you have a narcissistic mother and a father who is co-dependent and has been emasculated and constantly beaten down.

If you're the son of this couple, you probably have no idea how to go up against this type of personality. You are being abandoned emotionally by this man, who has just run out of steam. He goes to work, comes home to be criticized and has to sleep on the couch.

Nothing he does is ever good enough. There's always something to complain about and so this man, who should be teaching you how to stand up for yourself and not be abused, has abandoned you. On the flip side of the coin, this is your father whom your mom is putting down and you don't realize that what she's doing is conditioning you to be afraid, to be like him. She's trying to make sure that you feel dependent upon her and obligated to her and you have the feeling of disappointment. She's trying to find a way to make sure that you don't do to her what your dad has done to her, which is abandon her, because that's the way she sees it. Mom needs to believe that her son has put her in the center of his life. Therefore, the son of a narcissistic mother is terrified, living in a

state of survival. There's also the loss of the self and this is a problem in terms of emotional development. The young boy is not permitted to feel free enough to explore his environment without fear and so there's a lot of insecurity in the young boy who has a narcissistic mom and that carries over to adolescence when this young man wants to bring home a date.

The mom will find a problem with the date and will actually gaslight the date, creating a lot of problems. The son will get the message that the mom is not happy that he brought the girl home. Statements like, "That girl only wants you for your money," "That girl's going to go out and get pregnant by you," or "You're going to have to support her and some kid for the rest of your life," will be floated around. You could be 12 and that's the kind of crap that your mother will be telling you, so you're getting the message.

It also happens that the narcissistic mother would always play sick the minute her son wants to go out to play baseball or tell her he has a girlfriend. Mommy would get sick and the boy would have to abandon everything and prove to his mother that she is number one in his life and this just gets repeated over and over. There's a lot of fear of disappointing mom. You feel obligated to put her needs first and when you're focusing on trying to please mom, you're losing

yourself. When this becomes an issue for you, you don't have the ability to connect to it, so you feel like you have low self-esteem and lack an identity. Now, when you're around other people you feel insecure, you have anxiety, but it's absolutely not your fault.

As you get older, get married and have children, your narcissistic mother will be a problem because she wants to make sure that you understand that she comes first and she wants to make sure that the women in your life and even your children know that mom comes first before everything.

A narcissistic mom will see the women in your life as competitors. Your wife will definitely feel like there's a mistress in the room and even though you are not sleeping with your mom, this energy will be a part of your life. You will be conflicted if you're not aware that mom is a narcissist and that she's trying to control you and she wants to take center stage and she doesn't care about the chaos she's creating in your life. Then if you're not aware of that, you might be confused and might push your wife back because you have all these conflicts and you've been groomed since you're a little boy to worry about mommy.

You might also have tremendous fear about cutting your wife off, which is what your mom wants you to do. When that happens, she

has gained control over a very primitive fear, which is the fear of being abandoned by the person who created you. That's like death to a newborn.

You might not realize that your mother is intrusive, that she talks bad about your wife, that she has no compassion or empathy for you, nor does she have compassion or empathy for your wife. You might not recognize that mom talks bad about everybody. You might not recognize that mom has a difficult time maintaining friendships.

You might not realize that mom has to prove herself superior to everybody, that mom might have a drinking problem, a shopping problem, a gambling problem, or that there might be some underlying addiction that you're not aware of. And because she has primed you to fear being able to set a boundary, you as the son of a narcissistic mom may have marital problems or relationship problems with females who are feeling this heat from mom. This tug-of-war in the mind of the sons of narcissistic mothers could be serious. They love their mothers who have conditioned them to be afraid too much to let them go. Also, they are struggling with addiction or low self-esteem, or that situation where you feel like an alien in your own skin.

If you are a son of a narcissistic mother, you may have tremendous cognitive dissonance. You might love and hate her at the same time. You might have tremendous rage when it comes to women because you're so angry at your mom, but you might not understand where it's coming from—and that rage is valid. This doesn't mean you abuse women or blame your girlfriend, or daughter or the cashier you know at the corner store. What it means is that as a son of a narcissistic mother, you recognize that you have been abused. It means that you recognize that you have not been permitted to grow, develop and attune yourself to what is right. You have not been permitted to be who you are. You have had your emotions screwed with. You have been manipulated and toyed with for this woman's agenda and the anger and the rage that you feel are valid and that's why it's important to work this out.

In psychotherapy, it's important to work this out with somebody who gets it right. It's very important that if you're going into therapy you find somebody who is well versed in narcissism, especially when it comes to working with the child of a narcissist. This person should be able to allow you to express your anger and rage—to get it all out. You can work it out so that you can be more logical and rational about how you feel so that you can make decisions regarding your

future. It's not your fault if you've experienced co-dependency. Lots of men who have narcissistic mothers find themselves co-dependent. They tend to be the type of men that women walk all over, are afraid of making women angry, attract women who lie and take advantage of them.

There is also another take on this: some of these men end up with high narcissistic traits themselves. Where in some situations, mom has put her son on a pedestal and mom seems very sweet and very coddling and very nurturing and all of that, but there's almost an emotional incest that can happen and mom isn't as overt as another narcissistic mom. She's kind of passive-aggressive in her comments about women. She's passive-aggressive about being left alone but the message is, "Don't ever leave me, I have to come first." So, she might say things like, "That girl's not good enough for you" or "She should treat you better."

But then, what happens could be like a mother-son tag-team and if you're not aware of the enmeshment and the dependency upon mom's approval and need for validation and the way she's manipulating the situation, you make sure that she's the goddess of your life forever. If you're not aware of what's happening, if you don't know that's dysfunctional and that you have not cut the cord

to mom, then when you attract a woman into your life there will be a competition and it will be you and your mother against this woman.

If you are the son of a narcissistic mother, there are so many ways this can play out. If you have an overt narcissistic mother it might be easier for you to see it and you might be able to recognize that your mother turned you against every woman you ever brought in the house and she talked bad about everybody—every man, every woman, every child. She just infused you with the idea that the world is a scary place because she wants you to be the number one in her life and be sure that she always has this source of her narcissistic supply.

A healthy mother knows that it's her job to prepare her child for when she is no longer here on planet Earth. Narcissistic mothers don't care, they feel entitled to exploit you emotionally, they will guilt trip you and make you feel like you're not making the right decisions, they will create great guilt inside of you, great shame inside of you. It will be difficult for you to make a decision without your mother, so as an adolescent she will beat you down and insinuate that you're not doing anything right. That's the overt narcissistic mother that is easier to see. If you want to do things on

your own, she will find ways to gaslight you, she will find ways to insinuate that it is a stupid idea, and she will find ways to clip your wings. As you grow up and attract females, you will probably find something wrong with every female. If you get married, your mom will be a constant source of pain for you and your wife; she will resent your children, she will resent your wife, and she will resent you.

When you tell her that something wonderful happened, she'll find a way to downgrade it. Her agenda is to get you to worry about her, so if you give her any idea that she is being replaced there's going to be an issue. It is important that if you're the son of a narcissistic mother you may feel very conflicted and may have anger and rage that you are not aware of.

There are adult children of narcissistic mothers who become people-pleasers and doormats for women, and they actually will attract women who are abusive towards them, because they won't know how to set boundaries. And it's just a repeat, it's like they marry their mom. And then there are men who take on narcissistic traits, so they feel conflict with their mother. They felt controlled by their mothers, so their agenda is no woman's going to control me, no girlfriend or wife is going to control me because they are aware

dimly of how they feel about their mother. They might even hate their mother. They still might want a relationship with a woman and a sexual relationship even, but they might struggle with conflict because their mother was such a tyrant. There are so many ways this programming can manifest in your life, so it's important that we understand what happened to us in our childhood, because it affects us as adults.

You must understand what has happened to you as a result and you must understand the tremendous consequences that having a narcissistic mother has had. You have been told that life is scary and when it comes to getting married there's always a chance that you could get divorced and there's always a chance that you could be abandoned by a woman.

There is always a chance for abandonment issues to manifest themselves. That's something we need to heal from, especially if we have narcissistic mothers because that fear might cause us to be emotionally avoidant and unavailable. It might cause us to be highly narcissistic because we're afraid of being abandoned.

It's so important that all of us recognize how having narcissistic parents affects us as adults and we have to heal this gaping wound inside of our hearts that has been created by this narcissistic parent.

We have a need to be vulnerable, but we're frightened; we're afraid of being engulfed and enmeshed with. We have a need to trust people, but we don't trust people. We have a need to be loved but we don't love ourselves.

This is what happens as adults, but if you are the son of a narcissistic mother, there is help. The most important thing that you can do is researching and understanding the consequences of what has happened to you. Understand that if you've had a dad who has been beaten down by a narcissistic mother and you haven't seen a man assert boundaries and as a result you don't know how to reserve boundaries with a female or with other people, it is not your fault. It's not your fault if you have a mom who puts you on a pedestal but now you're starting to realize that she created a dependency on you so that you would never leave her and no one, no other woman would ever replace her. When you're starting to become aware of that, you might start to feel angry, and that's normal because your childhood was robbed from you. Your innocence and ability to feel vulnerable was robbed from you. So, your anger is valid, but that doesn't mean now you go kick the dog or take it out on innocent females. It means you do your work. It means you figure it out with a wonderful psychotherapist. You might

need to talk to specialists and psychotherapists that are skilled in the area of narcissistic abuse and childhood trauma and those that you feel can attune themselves to you. You must think about all of that before you go into therapy.

It's very important that if you're going to deal with a psychotherapist, you deal with somebody you feel has the ability to be attuned to you because what's happened to you is that you have had your feelings completely invalidated and marginalized. You have a great conflict inside of you. You have a need as a man to feel right.

You have a need as a man to be able to express how you truly feel, how you feel about your mother in a safe place without being judged. Your friends could say you shouldn't feel that way about your mother, or you could have a therapist saying you have to forgive your mother. But with the right therapist you can actually learn to set boundaries with other people and know that whether you are in a relationship with someone or not you are enough, that you have your identity, that you have a right to be happy, a right to attune yourself to your innate gifts, and you have a right to joy.

So, there is hope that those of you, those sons with narcissistic mothers, will feel heard. It's not your fault; you were raised by a

narcissistic mother and the good news is you can heal. The good news is that you can reclaim your right to a healthy and happy life. You can learn to love yourself and have healthier relationships with other women; you can attract different types of females. You absolutely must know there is hope for you.

2.5 Narcissistic Mothers and their Daughters

The relationship between a narcissistic mother and her daughter revolves around two dynamics: manipulation and control. Under manipulation, the narcissistic mother is constantly making the daughter feel guilty about something. Whether it's how much she's done for the child, or how much she has done for the family, or how much she's sacrificed, or how much she has put out, or how much she makes herself available. The manipulation is always about guilt. Also the manipulation comes in the form of pretending to care deeply about this child, buying her things that she usually doesn't even need at the time, but buying her things and making it seem like the mother is completely invested in her and giving her things because that part of the manipulation is very important.

Once the mother gives to the daughter, it seems to the outside world that she's doing this from a genuinely caring place; later on, she can start the guilt trips. That's how the manipulation works, which brings

us to the second point of this dynamic, which is control. The guilt trips are meant to control the daughter's emotions, how the child feels, how the daughter behaves towards the mother and it's a very confusing thing to the daughter. The control shows up in two forms: withholding and the silent treatment.

The manipulation takes place first to get the child emotionally invested in the mother and then when the child does not do exactly what the mother wants at the exact time she expects, the withholding of love and the silent treatment takes place. Narcissistic mothers may go weeks and months without speaking to the child. They may send a text telling the child that she's so ungrateful if she asks for something as simple as lunch money or they just withhold attention. They will withhold that love and would hold that affection, and even if they are there in the daughter's life, they're there but they're holding back. It's almost like there is this superficial kind of relationship and that is very painful for the daughter.

The narcissistic mother sabotages her daughters in many ways:

1. Gossip.

The narcissistic mother thrives on gossip. It is almost their energizing battery. That's what gets them going and moving and the

narcissistic mother will behave one way in front of her child and then behind the child's back complain and gossip to anyone who cares to listen about her own daughter.

She says, "Can you believe what she's done to me after all I've given to her?" and "Could you believe that she didn't do this?" The narcissistic mother sees the daughter as an extension of herself. Narcissists have difficulty seeing people as individuals with autonomy, so the narcissist mother will see any achievements that the daughter makes as her own, as well as any failures that the daughter makes as her own and so this is where the gossip comes in. It is very painful for the daughter because she has to hear from family members that her mom is upset with her, while the mother doesn't say this to her face. The mother constantly gossips behind the daughter's back and sabotages her.

2. Undermining.

The narcissistic mother undermines her daughter's intimate relationships. She undermines her daughter's growth and career. She undermines her daughter's general overall happiness and growth. The narcissistic mother will undermine the daughter at every point. She will give advice that the daughter never asked for, especially in intimate relationships: "Oh my gosh, you don't want to marry now,"

“You shouldn’t be having kids now!” or “What about that guy you were dating?”. The narcissistic mother can be very intrusive. She sees that relationship as an extension of her own and so she believes that the daughter should be married even though the daughter doesn’t want to be married to that man. The mother will always give advice, sometimes done deliberately to undermine the daughter so that she can come back and say, “I told you, I told you he wasn’t worth having a relationship with. I told you that you shouldn’t have wasted your time with him.” The mother always has to be right and she always has to make the daughter feel as if there’s some sort of flaw within herself.

3. Projection.

The narcissistic mother operates always in the same way. If you want to know how narcissists feel about themselves, listen to what they project on to you. The narcissistic mother would call the daughter a whore or think that the daughter was surely promiscuous and things of that nature when the daughter wasn’t even thinking about this kind of stuff. The daughter might not even think about this, so in this way, narcissistic mothers sabotage their daughters.

4. Playing the victim.

Narcissistic mothers are good at this. They play the victim, and everyone will think they are martyrs. They say, "My daughter, she doesn't even come to visit me, after all that I've done for her" or "They won't even stop by and have dinner and check up on me and I can't believe that they're like that.". To anyone who will listen they are the victims.

They have been gold star mothers. They have been the A-plus mothers to their children, but the children are so ungrateful, the children are so mean and disrespectful that they will have nothing to do with the mother and so the narcissistic mother looks as if she's the martyr and she's always playing the victim. This is supposed to invoke guilt in her children, especially her daughter, and it's again another form of manipulation.

5. Triangulation.

Narcissistic mothers make you feel insecure about yourself and your situation, because in a sick way that brings them joy. They love to triangulate their children, especially their daughters, with other people, to break down their self-esteem, so that the daughter becomes dependent on the mother and her approval to the point that the daughter will get to a place where she can't even make a decision until she speaks with her narcissistic mother. So then, the

daughter is also on the hamster's wheel, always looking for the approval, love, and affection from the mother that she has never received.

6. Competition.

It seems counterintuitive to us that a mother would compete with her daughter. It's counterintuitive to emotionally healthy people that a mother would compete with her daughter, but most daughters who were raised by narcissistic mothers will tell you that this competition starts very early on in life. It starts at a very young age and then once the girl begins to grow and develop, the mother sees herself in that daughter and the realization hits her that she is no longer youthful or she is no longer beautiful and she's watching her daughter blossom before her eyes and it's a constant reminder that her youth has slipped away and so she goes into competition with her daughter.

Being in competition ties directly into the sabotaging of the daughter, because the narcissistic mother does not want the daughter to be anything better than she herself was. The narcissistic mother does not want the daughter to achieve anything that she hasn't achieved. She wants to stunt the growth of the daughter so that she never outshines her because she is in direct competition

with her. Direct competition comes from a place of envy and jealousy. The mother is envious and jealous of her own daughter and this is very painful for the daughter. It impacts the daughter in a way that is very hurtful. If the daughter does not become completely dependent on the mother, she will develop self-esteem and trust issues. "How can I trust anyone if I can't even trust my mother?"

If you are an adult daughter of a narcissistic mother you can turn out in two ways: you can either become narcissist like the mother that raised you or be better than that and be the most loyal, loving, and giving person that anyone has ever known, especially to your children.

2.6 Effects of Narcissistic Abuse on Adult Children

When we grow up with a narcissistic parent, what we struggle with most is emotional neglect. If you grew up with a mother who is narcissistic, this could mean that she was not able to do anything more than keep you alive. As a result, having a narcissistic mother can lead to being unable to take care of yourself and constantly trying to satisfy the needs of others while putting yourself in the background.

Adult children of narcissistic parents have common issues.

They often forget their needs and desires.

Narcissistic people always need attention, are arrogant and like to manipulate others because they feel they deserve the best. Translating this into the family context, one of the effects of having a narcissistic mother is that children grow up with the need to please them.

In this process, children do not perceive themselves as individuals who have their own desires and needs. They become a reflection of what the mother wants, carrying out all the activities that are expected of them. In obtaining the results and the imposed goals, the mother rewarded them, so they learned to constantly seek that affection. When they grow up, they have no awareness of their space and try to satisfy others rather than themselves.

They have low self-esteem.

A narcissistic mother gives affection to children only when she wants something from them. She is so demanding that it is difficult to meet all her expectations. As a result, she will send her children signals or messages that tell them they are not good enough. This results in

adult children who always feel incompetent, incapable, anxious, and have low self-esteem.

They can't love themselves.

The narcissistic mother doesn't allow her children to love themselves and to accept who they are. One of the effects of having a narcissistic mother is that her adult children will have difficulty finding something to feel comfortable with. Even if they reach big goals or do everything, they set out to do, nothing will ever be enough for them.

They became too helpful.

Because of the great attention that a narcissistic mother requires, her children's lives revolve around her, her problems, her needs and her happiness.

For this reason, children turn into emotionally supportive humans and get involved in situations they shouldn't take part in. They take on so many responsibilities forgetting they are children, to the point of becoming more like a partner. Adult children of narcissistic mothers feel they have spent a lifetime solving problems. Although this may be positive, because they have surely learned to resolve

difficulties and be self-sufficient, they will carry a great burden within themselves and will hardly trust others.

They think negatively.

Having a narcissistic mother translates into continuous negative messages. For this reason, these children must learn to turn off criticism and harmful words. There is a mirror effect. Since they received negative messages, they treat themselves in the same way.

They learn to hide their true essence.

Children learn to deny part of their essence to show what the mother expects from them. Over time, this process of rejection becomes a habit. As adults they may have trouble recognizing who they are, what their real desires are, and what they expect from life and from others.

They self-sabotage.

Having a narcissistic mother always means hearing the message that you are not good enough. This prepares children to always expect the worst from every situation. Growing up, they will avoid expressing their emotions to stay as safe as possible. For example, they will avoid falling in love, so they don't get abandoned. Naturally

this generates a vicious circle that generates further anxiety and insecurity.

In the third part of this book I will show you some solutions to dealing with a narcissistic mother.

PART THREE

SOLUTIONS

3.1 Protect Yourself from Narcissistic Mother

A narcissistic mother has no ability to show you empathy or compassion and it's a dirty secret because when you talk about it people who don't have a narcissistic mother will totally judge you: "It's your only mother" or whatever it is, having no idea of what it would be like to have a narcissistic mother. Having a narcissistic mother means that everything is about her, so your wedding will be about her. Your relationship is about her, and sometimes she will be a friend of your friends. Your accomplishments of course become hers. Every talent you have is something you got from her, and she is jealous of you. It's super counterintuitive because normal and healthy parents hope that their kids are more successful than they are.

So, let's get into how to protect yourself from a narcissistic mother. This is difficult because the little kid in all of us wants to be wrong about our mother being a narcissist. When you're younger you just take it in and bring it on yourself. "If I were better, if I were different, she wouldn't be the way that she is." But you're not a child

anymore and so being grown-up it is up to you now to take over because the child in you doesn't want to give up.

If your mother is a true narcissist, her ability to love you is very limited because narcissists love you for how they see themselves in you. If you're the golden child, then they get their narcissistic supply from you, so they want you to listen to their long stories, they want you to feed their ego, and tell them they're right about all the fights they're having with other people. If they're that kind of narcissist, they know how to manipulate you. They are master manipulators and the moment you start changing the dance with them, they will notice and start guilt tripping you. They will humiliate and embarrass you.

Narcissistic parents are great at putting up a façade. They're very interested in what people think and are judgmental about you and everything and everyone.

In order to deal with this situation, you have to first be in acceptance because it's only from this place of acceptance that you can start to build a real plan to save yourself. And the reason you need to save yourself is that there will never be enough sacrificing that you can do for her. There won't be enough feeding her ego, and there won't be enough of you acquiescing to what she wants.

Sacrificing your entire life and happiness to try to please this person, who will be pleased momentarily but not ultimately, is like just bashing your skull against a brick wall. Don't do it. You don't have to, and in the end it will never be enough for her. She will want her narcissistic supply from you and if she is not sucking it out of you she will be sucking it out of someone else, so acceptance is the first thing.

The second thing is knowledge. You must become knowledgeable about mental illness. Therefore, spend more time learning about narcissistic mothers so you can know specifically the type of narcissism you are dealing with. It will also help you feel that you are not alone. You are in the world and there are millions of other people who are having the same experience right now. Whether you are trapped living at home with your narcissistic mother because you don't have enough money to move out, or you're not old enough to move out or she somehow manipulated you to move across the country to where she lived because she wanted to be closer to you, and now you're miserable because of it, knowledge is power and so your job is to get super knowledgeable about narcissistic mothers.

The next step is setting boundaries. This is the hardest part because you have to take action and this is the person that you fear the most

and you're terrified of having her disapproval but you just want to fix it. If she is torturing you, you've got to draw boundaries for yourself, so if that means limiting contact, stepping back, not picking up the phone and taking a break, then do it. If the situation is toxic for you and there's abuse, you do not deserve it and it is your job to protect yourself and if that means cutting off contact, then do it. If she has any kind of disability, she could be very frustrating. So, the boundary thing is important and even though it'll be challenging in the beginning, you have a right to do it in the extreme. When you create boundaries with your narcissistic mother, don't tell her anything about yourself, don't tell her anything that's important to you because you know that will come back later to haunt you. When it comes to a fight, she will just put it in that file cabinet and whip it out to throw it at you at a later date.

The last tip is to focus on you, put all of your energy into your own healing; join a group or get into therapy, because you deserve your own love and attention. Focusing on you also means building healthy relationships with other people. You can find other mother figures, women who are older, who are good and who are actually good moms to their kids.

Find a mentor, someone whose energy you're attracted to that you feel would be kind, compassionate, empathetic, and build relationships with him or her. A lot of us do that naturally, but do it consciously, so part of the focusing on you is getting the help that you need, that you deserve, because this is curable, like you can protect yourself and go on to thrive in your life and not hand this down.

Another way of focusing on you involves looking for any remnants that might be in you from her. You don't need to become a narcissist and just because you were raised by one doesn't mean you are one, but you did learn a lot of dysfunctional ways of responding to things that it would be good if you could bring them into your conscious mind and get honest with yourself. Seeing any of those crumbs in you or in your behavior is part of focusing on you. And the next step is figuring out how to stop that now, so it doesn't grow and get any bigger than it already is.

3.2 How to Handle a Narcissistic Mother If You Live with Her

Narcissists are purposely provoking a situation in order to feed their narcissistic supply. For example, your narcissistic mother provokes a situation by asking an innocent question, a viewpoint question, or

your opinion on something, and it's just setting you up so that you give a negative response and she gets her narcissistic supply.

A narcissistic mother gets her narcissistic supply by making her children feel negative emotions. If your narcissistic mother can make you cry, angry, frustrated, feel bad, she will do it to take a hit of narcissistic supply off of you.

So that's the first fundamental truth you have to recognize.

Once you recognize the truth, going in no contact mode is the best solution to save yourself from narcissistic abuse. But this is often impossible for many reasons and we must find alternative solutions. Since you can't cut off contact, the first helpful thing to do is to avoid giving negative emotional responses, no matter what happens. That's a way of you not allowing yourself to provide that hit of narcissistic supply for your narcissistic mother.

So, you're probably thinking, "How am I going to do that when she's constantly provoking situations?"

Since you can't change the narcissist, what you can do is reframe the experience: instead of feeling powerless and angry you can reframe the experience. You change the meaning of the experience. For example, when she comes into your room and interrupts you,

the first thing that probably happens is you get tensed and your negative emotions arise. Your fight or flight system kicks in because you know that it's not going to end in a positive way. If you can change and reframe that instead of focusing on the negative, you shift your focus on something positive. For example, you can say in your mind, "This is an opportunity for me to show myself that I'm in control of my emotions and that I can decide how to feel about what's going on."

Now, when she asks you her question and whatever you answer she will walk away and not care. So once again you reframe that in your mind and you say, "I wonder how many words I'll be able to get out before she walks away." Don't waste your energy; you can give a generic answer and at the same time you're in your mind and you're using that to reframe the situation. By viewing it this way instead of the negative tensions and anger and feeling of powerless coming up, you're viewing it as an opportunity, and you're viewing it in a more positive light. Well, the narcissistic mother wants you to feel emotionally negative so that she could feel better about herself; she gauges her emotional health by making her children feel bad. It's sick, it's awful but it's a reality and once we realize that, we can start taking our power back. So, you're refusing to be the narcissists' hit

at that moment. You also don't feel powerless; you feel your own power—a more positive experience.

You can't change the experience. You can't change the circumstances, but you can change the meaning of the experience by changing your viewpoint into a more positive one and this leaves you feeling better. You feel more empowered, you feel more positive. Reframing is an NLP technique, and it's very helpful when you can't change a circumstance. You no longer want that circumstance to leave you feeling negative and you're able to change the meaning of that circumstance.

Another good strategy is sudden emergency, having a valid reason to excuse yourself. A sudden emergency could sound something like this. "That's a good question, but unfortunately I just got a call from my boss, I have to head back to the office; maybe I'll have a chance later to answer that." And you leave. Another sudden emergency could be as she's asking you that question, you're looking at your phone and saying, "I would love to answer that right now. I just got a text and I have to do this, but maybe later I can get back to you." Or as she's coming in, if you already know what's going to happen before she even gets to the question, you could say something like, "Hey, I'm sorry to interrupt you but I have to go jump in the shower.

I'm kind of in a rush but you know we'll talk later" or something like that. So those are two separate techniques that you can use. A sudden emergency isn't something you can use every single time because your narcissistic mother will catch on, but it's just a mindset. And also, the first technique regarding reframing is a temporary solution.

These are temporary solutions to help you deal with your current situation and in the future once you're out of being under the same roof as the narcissistic mother, then you can move towards establishing boundaries. But for the moment, these are two possible things that you can employ that will help prevent you from being a narcissist's victim.

3.3 No Contact with Narcissistic Mothers

It is imperative to understand that even if you did cut off contact you might continue to feel tormented mentally and emotionally. You need to know that you're not alone here. A lot of us went through a very similar situation. There are cases when it was just such a heavy crushing sense of guilt that it feels like it could suffocate your heart quite literally.

There are other cases where minimal contact can work. Sometimes, we call that “mitigated contact,” meaning you’re very cautious about the kinds of contact that you have with your narcissistic mother and you’re very cautious about what you’re sharing, what you’re allowing her in on and what you’re not; you know where the boundaries are set. These kinds of situations are major lessons and because she will always push and push those boundaries this decision is ultimately one that only you can make. I can’t tell you what is right for you.

Dealing with a narcissistic parent can be so stressful on your physical health and not just your psychological health. When your body begins to take on the stress that’s in your mind, sometimes the easiest thing to do in the ideal situation is just to completely cut off contact.

But then there are situations where you can’t entirely cut off contact with your abusive mother. So, you have to master your boundaries so that you can externalize that abuse and not internalized it, allowing it to direct and control your life.

You must learn not to take negative comments personally. Creating mental boundaries can help you drop these negatives while working on your response. It is also important to recognize that this person is going to keep pushing your buttons. Therefore, it’s up to us to do

the work and get rid of those buttons. This doesn't mean we have to keep those people in our life just to prove that we've mastered our buttons. It just means you want to do this for your own healing. If you don't work it out with your mom and you cut off contact with her, somebody else will show up in your life with the same patterns and they'll push those same buttons because inevitably you have to deal with it. You know everyone who is standing up has the bravery to face that. These are challenging things to stand up against because you're talking about a whole family who has been excusing and enabling that abuse for generations. It doesn't make it OK that their parents did it to them and they are victims too. Been abused is never an excuse to abuse someone else. You are an adult now, and you can't keep blaming the generations before. It's important to recognize abuse when it's there and to not tolerate that abuse when you see it.

But it's also important to empower ourselves and recognize that this is a transgenerational pattern and the only way it stops is when we stop it.

Going forward, a lot of forgiveness might be needed. But you can't force yourself to forgive somebody; you will forgive somebody when you are ready. Sometimes, we get confused around forgiveness and

abuse and we think that forgiveness means saying that it was OK but it's not. Forgiveness is not saying that it was OK. Forgiveness is not condoning that behavior and sometimes we are afraid that if we forgive, then it means we have to keep that person in our lives. It doesn't mean that either. You don't have to keep that person in your life. You can forgive that person without ever having a dialogue with her. The person could be dead, and you can forgive her because this is about you.

Forgiveness is about you, not her. It doesn't do anything good for her. Forgiveness is for your benefit so that you can free and liberate yourself from those heavy feelings of resentment, regret, bitterness, and loathing. There might be some people that can forgive a lot sooner and it might also be part of their abuse training. They might have been taught to forgive and to keep accepting that person in their life, to keep allowing this person to hurt them and then forgive again. So, you might have been taught that pattern. But recognize that's a dysfunctional pattern of forgiveness.

Forgiveness doesn't mean you're going to keep turning the other cheek or you're going to keep allowing the other person to hit you on the head. Your forgiveness is to set yourself free, to release those heavy feelings. It's like sending back to that person all of those

heavy feelings that she has transferred to you through projection and abuse, which caused you to take on those heavy feelings. Forgiveness is like the lubrication that sets that stuff free. Your mother's physical presence should have nothing to do with how you feel. If you cut off contact while she's alive, you won't be continually traumatized and triggered every time she continues the abuse.

Even after she dies, those feelings of imprisonment will still exist inside you until you set yourself free and remember those prison bars aren't real. They're holographic and they appear to be so real, so you sit in the cage and feel helpless and hopeless like you can't get out and then that learned helplessness makes you not even try so you just sit in the corner and you just keep accepting it. And so, one day something happens, and you stand up and have this new sense of courage and you just make a run for it and realize that you just passed right through those bars. They weren't even real; it was just a hologram, an image, a cage that didn't really exist. It's your responsibility to stand up and get out of that prison when you're tired of being in there.

3.4 Taking Back Your Power

Adult children of narcissistic parents are stuck in awful relationship patterns. They also feel and believe others take their power away

and that happens time and time again.

Narcissists are very good at targeting people who can be made to feel a certain way. They don't enmesh with people who are self-differentiated and can't deal with this. Growing into self-differentiation is the process of beginning to realize that no one can make you feel anything you don't want to feel. You feel these things by choice, and the narcissist is a trigger or catalyst for this choice. There are some situations where I would be interacting with someone and would immediately feel an intense negative emotion. Obviously, they're causing it but do not realize that there is a me involved in their behavior and my emotional response to it. That is, there is a me in there that's also causing that to happen.

The more we are emotionally enmeshed with someone, the more we feel like that person makes us feel and think in certain ways. If you have people in your life that make you feel guilty or think, "I'm worthless" or "I'm unworthy" in an automatic way, then that indicates that you need more emotional distance between you and them. The more we can see those things, the more we can reframe and begin to get a detachment from the people we are enmeshed with.

So, how do you gain emotional freedom and detach from a narcissistic mother?

Think about this: if you did not invite your mother to lunch every Friday as she always expects, the planets would stay in orbit and the sun would still come up. The universe won't stop and she might begin over time to get used to a new you. Don't get intimidated.

One of the best ways to deal with the "I'm a horrible child" situation is to just be the bad child and accept it. Embrace it and challenge the narcissist to do whatever she wants to do with it. You can start taking back your power and stop giving your power away to your narcissistic mother by following these tips:

1. Don't let your emotions run your life. Emotions may be important for healing and living life, but if you focus too much on your feelings when dealing with the narcissist, then you will be in trouble. Most of your feelings from the interactions with narcissists are false. They're not real feelings and they come out of the relationship system.

2. Analyze your feelings. Ask if you are feeling a false or an appropriate response to the situation. For example, no adult needs to feel guilt over choosing to do something they would like to do or

not like to do. They're false feelings because they come out of the interactional pattern with your family.

3. Make yourself safe and secure through your own efforts

and friendship of your own choosing. If you are financially dependent on your narcissistic mother, work to break that financial dependency. If you are isolated and your strongest social connections are unhealthy family members, begin to build other social networks, support groups, and healthy friends. Change whatever you need to do to begin to build a support group, so you're not just totally dependent on unhealthy family members.

4. Stop negative thinking from playing over and over again in your head. For example, "My behavior will cause my mother to have a stroke," "I have always been the crazy one," "Everybody in the family thinks I am wrong." That's not always easy to do but we do have to resist. Get a reality check from healthy friends, support groups, coaches, therapists or other professionals.

Check to see if you're depressed and if your depression is causing the endless tape to play over and over again. Because one of the things we know about depression is that it is very negative thinking and hard to get rid of.

5. Train yourself to endure abstinence from the love and approval of your narcissistic mother and toxic family members. Go slow, because the ability to not care so much about love and approval of others takes a strong emotional backbone.

And this is very important because we've kind of been addicted to this love and approval although we've never gotten it. You are still addicted to trying to get it and so you might face the temptation of coming back for your fix.

6. Work on self-approval, self-love, and self-care and use your healthy support group as positive reinforcement. They don't need anything from you and don't require obedience or loyalty like the narcissist does, they won't reject you like unhealthy families.

3.5 Move Out from Toxic Environment: Practical Tips

When you move out of a normal family that has healthy values and encourages their children, you build up your self-esteem. But a narcissistic family is not encouraging, and it's not supportive. You're constantly being broken down and you have self-esteem issues because of it. You're just constantly being told that you can't do things, that you can't do anything with your life or that you're not

worth anything or that you're never going to be able to move out. Narcissistic families are unique, so that's why these tips are going to be a little bit different than if you were moving out of a normal supportive family.

Because you have a narcissistic family, you're going to be met with a lot of resistance when it comes to moving out, because you're taking away their supply; you're still in a way threatening them. I am completely aware of the fact that your guardian has control over you till a certain age. But these tips that I have for you are going to be from the age of 16 to 18, building up to that point where you're finally able to move out.

1. Get a job.

Unless you have a large sum of money tucked away somewhere, get a job as soon as possible. If you're looking to move out, a job is literally the most important thing. You must search for a job as soon as you can.

I would recommend getting a job so that you can take that job experience with you. If you were to move to a different state or a different city, then you can take that previous job experience and use that to get yourself a better job in the future. If you are still

attending high school, I recommend part-time jobs. It doesn't have to be an actual conventional job; there are many online jobs you can do.

2. Replace anything that's not technically yours. Especially your car and phone.

Replace anything that you are going to need when you live on your own. Your car and your phone are the two most important things because if you were to move out, your narcissistic parents would probably want you to give those back as soon as you move out. To avoid that, before you think about moving out, you're going to replace your phone if they own it and replace your car if they own it too.

3. Find a place.

When it comes to moving out and you are renting out a place somewhere, chances are they're going to want a guarantor or a co-signer. If your parents refuse to do that and all of your relatives also refused to do it, you must be your own guarantor. And if you don't have a credit card at the time, you must pay your first three months of rent upfront. So, get yourself a credit card in advance, and build up your credit before you leave.

4. The savings account.

It's a sum of money that you have to put away just in case something bad happens. Because life happens and when you're left with no money, there's nobody to help you. This emergency account is something that I recommend putting together before you move. Get a savings account and start putting away a little bit of money, maybe put away like 10% of your income.

5. Mirror the moving process.

The moving process is like the second most stressful part because you must get all of your stuff out of your room and into a new place. Depending on how controlling your parents are, that's either going to be hard or going to be quite easy. This is why I said before you move, if your parents are very controlling, replace everything that's theirs.

When it comes to moving out, psychological tactics and everything will be used by your narcissistic family trying to prevent you from moving out. You can't rely on anybody in the family for help; it's just you on your own.

You must do it by yourself. There isn't going to be anybody out there to help you. When you have toxic parents that just don't have any

part in your life, you just have to do that all by yourself. But there's a lot of personal self-esteem and confidence that you gain from becoming your own person and doing that all yourself. When you come of age, know what's best for you and there shouldn't be anybody out there telling you to doubt yourself or telling you that you're not capable of anything or that you're not worthy enough.

It's totally your decision whether or not you want to cut off contact. You are the only person in control. That's the wonderful thing about finally being an adult, about finally having the freedom to get away from that kind of environment. You are absolutely 100% in control of your life and nothing and nobody out there can control you anymore. This is literally the most beautiful thing you can experience.

3.6 Caring for Aging Narcissistic Mother

Unfortunately, at some point in life many adult children of narcissistic parents find themselves having to take care of them because they are old, sick and have little time left to live. Now, this is such a challenge because the child has not only endured a lifetime of abuse but now is a caretaker for somebody that continues to make him or her feel so much guilt and shame. Unfortunately, narcissistic parents, regardless of their age, always have that desire to make you feel as

if nothing you do is good enough. When they are now dependent, no matter what you do, it is never enough, and they will make sure you are aware of that fact every second of the time you spend with them. So, it's very discouraging and disheartening. It just dumps shame on you in a way that's overwhelming.

The first thing that you have to understand is to separate yourself emotionally so that you're not constantly being emotionally battered. You have to recognize that "I'm never enough," "I never do enough" and whatever thought that the narcissist wants you to feel is not something you can ever fulfil. It doesn't matter if you are awake 24 hours a day, seven days a week, not even eating or drinking or breathing. For the narcissist, it still would never be enough. Trying to fulfil the narcissist's demands is like trying to fill a glass with a hole in the bottom. You can keep pouring and pouring, but it will never fill, and the lack is not on the liquid pouring into the glass. The glass is broken and that's how you have to view the narcissist. It's not that you're not doing enough; it's not that you're not a good child or that you can never do exactly what they want. It's that they're broken to the point that they will never see all that you do. They will never value all that you do but it's not because of any lack on your part; the issue is with the narcissist.

Even though we know this but the reason why the insults of the narcissist hurt us to such a deep degree is that there's a tiny piece inside of us that believes those insults. The narcissistic parent may say you're an awful daughter. And if you are 100% committed to knowing inside of yourself that you're a great daughter, that insult won't carry the same stain as if you wonder whether she could be right. That doubt makes the stain of abuse even worse.

So, one of the ways to deal with the guilt is to begin to realize who you are, to see your value not through the eyes of your narcissistic parent but through your own eyes. "What kind of daughter or caregiver am I?" Everyday find three to four things that you do that show you that you're doing a great job and that you are a loving person. You don't need the narcissistic parent to realize that you're a great child or a great caregiver. The only person you need to convince in order to heal and not be so ridden with guilt is yourself and so the narcissistic parent has trained you to only find fault with yourself. The stronger self-image we have, the less the insults and put-downs by the narcissistic parent will affect us. If you want to not be ridden by guilt you have to understand and get to the bottom of the truth through your eyes, not through the eyes of a person that's emotionally abusive. You have to train your mind to find who you are

in a positive way, so that when others doubt you, you don't doubt yourself. This is important for people with aging narcissistic parents. They have to be with these parents, and they hear a lot of negativity. Having a strong core self-image and working on it on a daily basis is going to help combat those feelings of guilt.

Another thing that will help you is learning how to manage a conversation that is negative. A narcissistic parent is always throwing jabs and darts at you, especially when you least expect it. If you learn how to manage the conversation you can avoid getting into another drama battle. There are some sentences that you can say when the narcissistic parent begins to attack your way of taking care of them and make you feel as if nothing you do is enough or you're not good enough. When the narcissistic parent goes on rants you can say something like, "Well, you're entitled to have your own opinion," or "It's such a shame, you view things so negatively, looks like you're very angry," or "If that's the way you choose to view things you are entitled to have those views," or "I'm sorry it's so difficult for you to feel contentment." So those statements are great when narcissists say something negative, because you should understand the reason why they are saying something negative.

The reason they're jabbing at you is that when you feel negative and you have a negative emotional response, they are taking a hit of narcissistic supply; they can see it in your face and in your tone. The more you respond to them with a negative emotional response the higher they get and then they're addicted to that high so the next day you go back and it's the same if not worse. If you have chosen to take care of your old narcissistic mother, you will be able to do it without being a victim by detaching yourself from her judgment and neutralizing her complaints.

PART FOUR

HEALING

4.1 Complex Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (CPTSD)

Complex post-traumatic stress disorder is a result of exposure to prolonged repetitive abuse, and this is exactly the kind of abuse you have suffered from your narcissistic mother every single day since you were born. Almost all adult children of narcissistic parents develop this disorder and can only be cured with the help of a psychotherapist. I want to talk about the five symptoms of Complex PTSD and then I want to dissect them and understand what's needed in order to overcome them.

So, here are the five symptoms of CPTSD: emotional flashbacks, toxic shame, self-abandonment, vicious inner critic, and social anxiety.

Emotional flashbacks

Emotional flashbacks are the most noticeable symptom of Complex PTSD. When they're happening a lot of people don't realize what's happening and the reason is that emotional flashbacks don't have a

visual component. So, it's not like something happens and you have this automatic and very clear flashback of something that happened during your childhood and you understand that you're being reminded of that.

What happens is, there's no visual component, there's only this residual emotion, this overwhelming emotion that overcomes you. Something happens that strikes a memory but again without that visual component; you're not understanding why you're feeling what you're feeling. For example, you just know that you're all of a sudden hyper-aroused, your fight or flight system has kicked in and you're feeling overwhelming and intense emotions that are far deeper and greater than what the situation at the moment is warranting, so that's very confusing. It's also important to remember that emotional flashbacks vary in degree of intensity and they also vary in the emotions they provoke in you.

For example, if whatever happened at the moment provokes feelings of fear, all of a sudden you are overwhelmed with anxiety. You may feel panicky and may not understand why whatever's happening at that moment is provoking so much panic. If whatever happened at that moment provokes despair, you might suddenly go into a dissociative state and not understand why you feel very numb and

detached. If what happens provokes pain, you may react with rage and protect yourself. You may not understand why you are angry and blowing steam over something so small.

Often times, when you have those overwhelming feelings that don't seem to make sense with what's going on in your current life, it's because you're having an emotional flashback. The interesting thing with CPTSD is that it doesn't just go away until you work on it. It does not go away until you recognize that what's happening in your present is because of unresolved issues of the past.

We get those emotional flashbacks because of those unresolved issues that we had. If you are with the narcissist and they treat you horribly you can't go to them and say, "Hey, that hurt, and I didn't like that." Narcissists never validate your emotion, so you're carrying all of that pain around and stuffing it inside of yourself.

Then, when you're out of the situation with a narcissist, it doesn't just go away. Emotions are like, "Hey, now that you're out of that, please acknowledge me, please heal me so that we can go on and feel healthy and confident inside of ourselves." Everything that comes up when you're having an emotional flashback is because of unresolved pain, circumstance, despair that you felt, and unresolved

fear. And the best way to overcome that is to take the time to recognize what's going on.

So, if a narcissistic parent raised you, you're probably suffering Complex PTSD.

As you begin to heal, your emotional flashbacks happen less and less frequently, but until you're fully healed one can catch you by surprise. The overwhelming emotion of rejection is an emotional flashback and you are feeling rejected because of what happened to your childhood and the feelings of being rejected by a narcissistic parent and how overwhelming it was for that little child inside of you to have to deal with that. After that you will feel much better and that's the interesting thing about healing from emotional flashbacks: it does bring up pain, it does hurt, it does make you feel anxiety but you always feel better when you learn how to acknowledge what's going on, validate the emotion that you're feeling and remind yourself that was your past and now your life is different.

But you first should allow yourself to feel the emotions and don't view them as a bad thing. It's not fun but it's a part of recovery and you cannot break out of CPTSD and get back fully in touch with yourself until you heal those unresolved issues that are demanding your attention by means of emotional flashbacks.

Here are some steps to overcoming emotional flashbacks.

1. Save yourself. Emotional flashbacks take you into a timeless part of the psyche that feels helpless, hopeless and surrounded by danger, as you were in childhood. The feelings and sensations you're experiencing are past memories that cannot hurt you, to remind yourself you feel afraid, but you are not in danger and are safe in the present.

2. Have boundaries. If someone is provoking these feelings, remind yourself you don't have to allow anyone to mistreat you and you're always free to leave dangerous situations.

3. Speak reassuringly to your inner child. Children need to know that you love them unconditionally and that they can come to you for comfort and protection when feeling lost and scared.

4. Remind yourself that you're in an adult body with the resources to protect yourself.

5. Ease back into your body. Fear launches us into our head with worry, numbing, and spacing out. But we can ask our body to relax. We can breathe deeply and slowly. We can slow down and stay in the present, which tends to make our flight response go away. We can find a safe place to just unwind.

6. Resist the inner critics. Channel the anger of self-attack into saying no to your critics. Instead of unfair self-criticism, replace negative thinking with a memorized list of your qualities and accomplishments.

7. Allow yourself to grieve. Flashbacks are opportunities to release old unexpressed feelings of fear, hurt, and abandonment.

8. Cultivate safe relationships and seek support. Take time alone when you need it but don't isolate yourself. Feeling shame doesn't mean you are shameful. Educate your friends about flashbacks and ask them to help you talk and feel your way through them.

9. Learn to identify types of triggers that lead to flashbacks.

10. Figure out what you're flashing back to. Flashbacks are opportunities to discover, validate and heal your wounds from past abuses and abandonment. They also point to your still unmet developmental needs and can provide you with motivation to get them met.

11. Be patient. The recovery process takes time. It takes considerable time to gradually decrease the intensity duration and frequency of flashbacks. Real recovery is a gradually progressive

process. It's often a "two steps forward, one step backward" situation. So, don't beat yourself up if you have a flashback.

Toxic Shame

Toxic shame is important to examine because sadly, narcissistic parents have their children marinating in shame. Shame is that feeling that accompanies the admission of guilt when you've done something wrong and are sorry. There's nothing wrong with that; in fact it's healthy. However, it becomes toxic shame when you're no longer feeling bad about what you did but you're feeling bad about who you are. In other words, you don't view your actions as bad, you view yourself as being bad and that's what makes it so damaging. Toxic shame is when you feel as if your core is bad, like you're just dark and evil and there's something wrong with you and you feel that all the time.

Often times parents that are narcissistic will make their children feel shame because instead of teaching the children that their actions are wrong, they tell the children that they are bad. Instead of helping the child to understand that, "OK, you made a mistake, but you are not a mistake," they steep the child in shame and regret. As a result, the child never learns how to deal with the feelings of

shame that come up because they're just marinating in it for so long that it becomes a part of their core personality.

Unlike normal shame, toxic shame becomes a part of our self-identity. A person suffering from toxic shame experiences a chronic sense of worthlessness, low self-esteem and self-hatred, all connected to the belief that he or she is innately shameful or bad. There is a difference between shame and guilt. Guilt is feeling sorry for something you've done while shame is feeling sorry about who you are as a person. Toxic shame is feeling sorry about who you are all the time.

Here are some symptoms you want to look out for if you think you are experiencing toxic shame, especially if you suspect or have been diagnosed with CPTSD. Here are a few signs:

- You frequently relive traumatic memories from the past that caused shame. You're always looking at the past and ruminating over it, which is just fueling that toxic shame inside of you.
- You have a general suspicion and mistrust of other people, even when they're trying to be nice; you're always expecting somebody to hurt you because you don't think that you're worthy of having healthy relationships.

- You have chronic self-hatred and very low self-esteem.
- Feeling chronic unworthiness, you may suffer from dysfunctional relationships with other people.
- You engage in self-sabotaging behavior.
- You have shame anxiety, which is the fear of experiencing shame. This might even be what fuels your social anxiety.
- You feel like you're a fraud or a phony.
- You might feel like you have to settle for less.
- You have an angry or defensive persona; it's your defense mechanism and your fight response.
- You might be very strong, may have a people-pleasing personality, which is why you are compulsively trying to make yourself feel better by pleasing other people. You may also have addictive tendencies in an effort to escape and numb the shame.

Something to remember if you are dealing with toxic shame is that it affects the beliefs that you have about yourself. Your belief system may be very negative, so some of your beliefs may be: "I'm stupid," "I never do anything right," "I'm a bad person," "I'm defective," "There's something wrong with me," "I hate myself," "I'm a failure,"

“No one could ever possibly really love me,” “Nothing I do is right,”
“I should never have been born.”

If you have CPTSD or if you suspect you have CPTSD this is one of its side effects and it's important if you want to overcome your CPTSD to examine it from every angle from the five symptoms. So, sit down, get out a piece of paper and write down what your core beliefs are about yourself. Write down how many positive core beliefs you have and how many negative core beliefs you have. See if you can tell if the core beliefs are mostly negative. If not all negative, OK. Go through the symptoms and see if you exhibit symptoms. Once you know what it is that you're feeling what you're going through, then you can begin to take steps and learn tools to overcome it.

Self-abandonment

Your love is betrayed because you have trusted your mother and you're expected the love to be reciprocal. The most painful betrayal is that a narcissist pushes his or her family member to engage in is self-betrayal or self-abandonment.

So, let's talk about what self-abandonment looks like in children as well as in adults.

What about children that receive anger from their narcissistic mother anytime they are attempting to act as their own individual selves? A child that's trying something new or has a passion for something and yet every time he or she engages in it, he or she is treated harshly? Those children will start to feel stifled, angry, and emotionally controlled without understanding why this is happening or without the mental ability to understand that it is wrong and unhealthy. It is common that the children will turn their anger inward and so they stop doing the things they liked because it makes their mother mad. Over time, children begin to lose their identity and confidence and begin to sense that their only purpose is to please their narcissistic mother.

For adult children of narcissistic mothers: if you are someone that engages regularly in self-abandonment, here are some **symptoms** to look out for.

1. You say yes when you want to say no. In fact, we could even combine that with the inability to say no. If we feel like there's something wrong or we feel bad and so we always feel like we have to say yes, then most of the time we're abandoning ourselves because we're not listening to how we feel. We're only concerned about how the other person feels.

2. You don't express how you truly think and feel. Maybe you adopt other people's thoughts because you're too scared to show how you feel about the matter, or you're too scared to speak up because maybe you feel that by exposing your true thoughts or true feelings you'll be rejected in some way. So rather than be rejected by others, you wind up rejecting yourself by stifling your true feelings and thoughts.

3. You settle for less than you deserve. Maybe there's someone in your life that does not treat you well and yet you stay with this person thinking that you don't deserve better or that this is the life you deserve.

4. Doing what you don't want to do just to please others. Once again, you follow the crowd, you never want to be the one to give a different opinion or follow a different route because of that fear of rejection. Once again, you compromise instead of staying on course.

5. Allowing someone to mistreat, criticize, or ignore you, or call you names and yet you are never assertive to put a stop to this behavior.

6. You let fear govern your decisions. Everything you do is motivated out of fear.

7. Numbing out with addiction. It could be with alcohol, sex, drugs, shopping, binge watching TV or YouTube—anything that just allows you to kind of vegetate and not have to focus on your feelings, your thoughts or anything about yourself; you just numb out with one of these addictions.

8. Putting yourself last on your list of needs, wants, and desires and never caring about what you want while being overly concerned about what others want.

9. You judge yourself negatively and have a negative inner critic that's always saying things like, "I'm not good enough," "I'm inadequate," "I'm a loser," "I'm ugly," "I'm stupid and can't do anything right," "I always make the same mistakes over and over," "I'm never going to be a good person," or "I'm never going to be loved."

10. You're always ruminating about what others think of you, ruminating how others are going to view you to the point that you never even notice your own feelings because you're so caught

up in your head and what others are thinking. It is not a healthy habit.

11. You make other people responsible for your feelings.

A narcissist makes you feel responsible for their feelings; for example, you're constantly trying to please this person, chasing after her, yanking your personality inside out to please her and it's making you miserable. At the same time, you're abandoning yourself because you're not realizing that you can feel that way whether the narcissist views you that way or not; you don't need that person's approval to know who you are and what kind of person you are. Therefore, recognizing your responsibility when it comes to your feelings and recognizing your part is huge and important.

Now some emotional symptoms of self-abandonment are anxiety, depression, exhaustion, unexplained pains, even chronic illness. So, if you have the majority of these symptoms and examine yourself and you realize that "OK I'm in self-abandonment. What can I do?"

The purpose of figuring out if you are doing self-abandonment is to recognize what's broken in order to fix it.

Here are some tips that you can begin to engage in that can help you to put an end to self-abandonment.

1. Be compassionate to yourself. Don't put yourself down on your healing journey. Don't view your healing as the end or the finish line or as the only positive thing that you're hitting on this journey. Develop self-compassion.

2. Find out why you engaged in self-abandonment: when did it start? What are you afraid of losing or not getting? Is it approval? Safety? Money? Love? Get to the root cause of your fears and write it out. Journaling is very helpful in this regard.

3. Do an inventory of your life. Is there anything you're giving your time and energy to that you know you need to let go of? It could be a belief that you have about yourself or a behavior that you're engaging in. Identify what it is you need to let go of. What are the steps you need to start doing in order to let go? What do you need to start giving your attention to in order to change your thoughts or your beliefs? Again, journaling the answers can be very helpful.

4. Every day make time for self-care. Do things that honor you every day. Honor yourself physically. Take care of your body, exercise, eat healthily, and dress in a way that makes you feel happy. It doesn't have to be expensive but look nice and show yourself you're worthy of giving time and attention to make yourself

look nice. Honor yourself emotionally by developing a compassionate dialogue instead of negatively judging yourself all the time. Look for the positive things in yourself at night. Think of three things that you like about yourself that you found good in yourself that day. Once again keep track of them every day so you train your mind to start being more positive. Start looking at yourself in a more positive way; start noticing yourself and giving yourself credit for the positive things you do possess. Say, "I'm imperfect and yet beautiful just the way I am."

5. Every day write down how you feel in your life. What are your thoughts? What are your emotions? What are your desires? What's important to you? The list doesn't have to be long and could be one or two sentences at that moment. The whole purpose is to start getting you to notice you, to be concerned about your thoughts, desires, interests, and what's important to you. As children of narcissists, we were taught that putting the focus on ourselves is selfish and wrong and so we overcompensated by completely abandoning ourselves. We should realize that there's nothing wrong with putting the focus on ourselves.

Having balance in life is very important.

6. Taking time to read or listen helps you to learn healthier ways to think and to view yourself. Once again, if you suspect that you have CPTSD, this is one of the features and it is one you don't want to overlook. Each time we break down CPTSD and we work on one aspect of it, it's taking another step forward in our healing journey.

Inner critic

People who have experienced early childhood attachment trauma have a very strong inner protector that they developed to protect them from further criticism, ridicule, and feelings of abandonment. Even people with secure attachments can have some of these parts of themselves and that's healthy and normal. What is not healthy and is a feature of trauma is when this inner critic becomes very strong to the point that it controls and runs our life.

In a person who has a history of trauma, the inner critics are not able to just stop with, "Hey you made a mistake." They go all the way. "You are a mistake, you don't deserve anything good, you're always going to be lazy, you're always going to be unlovable and unwanted"—that kind of thing. So, the critics take a specific situation and generalize it to self-worth.

Now if you have experienced early childhood attachment trauma, there might be a part of you that is still stuck in that emotional developmental stage and so there are situations that will still trigger that little child because it is stuck in that emotional stage.

The inner critic that we will talk about is that part that hates the inner child because it feels like it is immature, out of control, sensitive, weak, and emotional. Often a person with trauma can go between extremes: they can go between inner critics who hate themselves and beat themselves up and constantly criticize them, or they can just swing to the other extreme and develop a level of self-tolerance and let themselves do whatever they want. These inner critics are doing their best to make you feel unwanted, rejected, abandoned, and criticized by other people.

There are many **types of inner critic voices**.

1. The perfectionist. It tells you that you always must do everything perfectly. You should look perfect. You have to be perfect or nobody will want you and this level of perfectionism can often result in paralysis and procrastination because you don't want to do anything unless it can be done perfectly and so you end up not doing a lot of things because of that fear.

2. The moulder. It's very similar to the perfectionist but with a slightly different take. The moulder's job is moulding you into whatever other people want you to be so that you will be liked by them and they will accept you. So, it does create this disconnect between actually knowing who you are and even knowing the types of things that you like to do.

3. The guilt tripper. It's the voice that says, "You're bad, you don't deserve forgiveness, you don't deserve this because not only did you make a mistake, you are a mistake." This can be a more prominent inner critic type that develops especially in situations where there is religiosity mixed in with the attachment trauma.

4. The underminer. This inner voice keeps you from moving forward, becoming successful, and following your dreams because it claims that failure is inevitable. It claims that you're not good enough and so rather than have you go out and fail and be rejected and be made fun of, it's going to convince you that you're not good enough in order to hold you back and keep you where you are safe.

5. The taskmaster. This is the voice that tells you that you always have to work harder. You are never allowed to rest to take a break or have time for yourself just to relax. You always have to be doing something. You always have to stay busy. This can be a part that

develops especially in response to parents who are always pushing their children to do more, to accomplish more and so the children always feel like they have to be doing something because their parent will not accept them if they see them playing or relaxing.

6. The controller. The voice that controls every single thing you do. It's constantly telling you, "You're not doing that right, do it this way." "You're not putting your clothes on right, you're not doing this fast enough, you're not eating the right food, you're disgusting." Again, it's meant to protect you from the criticism of other people, but it controls your life and is constantly telling you that you're doing things wrong and this is how you should do things. This can be another prominent part that develops in response to a narcissistic parent who was controlling every little thing that his or her child did rather than being able to sit back and let the child explore life.

7. The destroyer. This is the harshest inner critic and is the voice that wants to just crush the life force out of you. It tells you that you don't even belong in this life and that you don't even deserve to exist. While that sounds harsh and almost suicidal, it does not always result in suicidal ideation or suicidal attempts, but it does develop into a lot of self-punishment and self-sabotaging.

It's important to understand that inner voices are not your parents' voice but are a self-protecting mechanism. I suggest knowing them as if you are getting to know a new friend and that's really what it is. Even though what they do sounds harsh, they have intended only good things, they have intended to protect you, so appreciate them for their role in your life.

It also helps to ease up a lot of that inner tension that these inner critics can cause and get to a place of self-compassion, curiosity and acceptance that is needed to continue the journey towards healing from trauma.

Social anxiety

Social anxiety can be quite debilitating, and it can arise for less than obvious reasons but have obvious symptoms and can affect how we feel greatly.

Social anxiety occurs when we're interacting with others and we're in social situations. It may be on an individual level or it may be with groups, it may be with people we don't know, or it may occur with people we do know and even our own family members. When we experience social anxiety, we can feel a certain way; we might feel small or child-like. Now this can occur because the origination of the

social anxiety can be from in the past, and very often is due to on-going circumstances or events that went on that caused us to feel a certain way with other people.

Another way we might feel when we're experiencing social anxiety is, "Why would they be interested in me?" This can be quite bad and when we're interacting with someone it's hard to know what to say because we don't believe they would be interested in anything we've got to say. It is sort of a feeling of unworthiness. One possible origination of this could be that in younger years, let's say in your family environment, you're told to shut up a lot or told to go away a lot, so no one's interested in anything you've got to say.

Now children and adolescents soak up reality like sponges, and so if in reality we are trained to think that what we have to say is meaningless and no one wants to listen to what we have to say, we carry that conclusion into adulthood. Children construct their reality from perceptions. Perceptions about ourselves and perceptions about others and the way we interact with people and how they interact with us. If the conclusion we drew is, "What I say is pointless, nothing I say is meaningful, no one wants to listen to me," then we carry that with us and feel the same way in adulthood.

Another thing we can feel when we're experiencing social anxiety is unworthiness. You think, "I'm not worthy of being in this situation and I am not good enough to be in this situation." Let's say in your younger years, you were told to go away a lot or a sibling had preferential treatment over you, or you were humiliated in front of others at home or at school. Things like these can cause feelings of unworthiness and then when you go into social situations in adulthood, you feel the same way because that's how your brain is trained. It's how your mind perceives reality.

Another way we can feel when we're experiencing social anxiety is that we are being evaluated. There's a subconscious feeling that people are evaluating you. So, you might meet some new potential friends or new people at work, and you feel like they're evaluating you in some way: "Do they think I'm an idiot? "Are they thinking I look awkward?" "Do they think I'm strange?" All of these can actually happen as an intrusive voice in your mind or it can just be a feeling. Feeling like you're being evaluated or sized up in some way can be a result of excessive criticism in younger years. Perhaps as a child you always felt like you were being evaluated by your parents; they were always on your case and you weren't ever doing good

enough, and all your siblings and everyone were sizing you up all the time. This can be taken to adulthood and that's the way reality is.

When we're experiencing social anxiety, we can feel like an impostor. Like "I don't belong here" or "I can't relate at all." A cause of that could be that in your younger years, you weren't exposed to many social situations and are just not used to them. You didn't socialize with many children, had some anxiety, and stayed at home a lot. Therefore, not being used to socializing with others can cause you to feel like an impostor.

It's almost like you subconsciously feel you don't have the correct social skills to fit in and you feel awkward and shouldn't be there. You don't feel good enough for various reasons. If you've lacked validation, reassurance, and guidance on social skills in your past, there might be confusion as you grow up if you've always been on the receiving end of criticism. You feel like no matter what you do, it's not good enough. So, when you're going into adulthood, social situations can cause you to feel like an impostor.

Another way we can know when we're experiencing social anxiety is that after an interaction, we find ourselves beating ourselves up about what we've done. In that interaction, we start questioning how we performed. It's an inflated out of proportion way of looking

at the self because we lack confidence and we've received a lot of criticism. As an example, we haven't received the support and validation we've needed in the past to know that we're socially acceptable. Sometimes, when we are experiencing social anxiety, we can feel intimidated or persecuted. We can start finding offense where there's none. Humans are largely social beings, and if we've been on the receiving end of a lot of intimidation and persecution, then it can make us defensive in social situations. So, we feel anxious that it is going to happen again. Oftentimes, people with social anxiety find themselves being a bit of a chameleon, changing their personality to suit the person they're with. If they are with one person at that time, it's easier to change the way they're behaving to suit that one person. If in a group, it's harder to change yourself to suit everyone in the group, to become what you think is more socially acceptable. So, people with social anxiety can end up being a bit of a chameleon in social situations.

It is important to watch out for **symptoms of social anxiety** so that you can be more aware. I will discuss some of them briefly.

One of these is **tenseness in the whole body**. Your voice can start to go, or you feel like you must speak quietly, or you end up speaking too fast. You can also end up blushing, not knowing how to

position your body. So, you can end up very tense-looking like a robot because you don't know how to stand or seem to think about trying to relax the body.

We can end up with **quick shallow breath, sweating, fidgeting, inability to think, struggling to find words, stuttering, and an inability to make eye contact.** These are the symptoms of social anxiety.

Many people think that social anxiety is just that we care too much what other people think but it's a lot more than that. If a family member has always made fun of us in front of others, that teaches us that when we're in front of others we get humiliated. So, it could be a fear of humiliation not just a fear of what people think.

It isn't always conscious. We might just feel and have strong emotions and symptoms and just not know why. We get triggered in social situations because they remind us of something that's happened before. It's not necessarily going to happen again but the whole situation just reminds us of something in our past. We don't necessarily have the memories come up from the past; it's just that the subconscious gets triggered, so we have the emotions.

So, we get this feeling of wanting to run away or don't even go because the subconscious is trying to prevent more pain, the subconscious mind thinks it's going to happen all over again, anticipates it and tries to protect itself.

Healing from social anxiety takes time and we can't just have a quick fix.

There are things we can do in our day-to-day life: **conscious work and subconscious work**. When we're doing subconscious work, it means going back in time and this often means going back to the memories of the things that happened to us and using various healing techniques to heal from it. You can find a therapist who uses hypnosis or EMDR techniques to heal these memories. There are also some things you can do yourself to heal from these memories. You can visit these memories in a relaxed state because then the subconscious mind is dominant, and you can look at them again. You can do this during meditation, relaxing, concentrating on your breath and then opening your mind to allow memories to pop up in a good way.

You could also **meditate on the experience of feeling humiliation** just by imagining what it's like in the social situation and then setting the intent to retrieve a memory the earliest time

you ever felt that way. You can do that through meditation or through hypnosis, which is deep guided relaxation with a professional and you'll find your subconscious mind starts to bring up these things a lot more because it's been given permission to do so.

It can also help to **write it out so you can have a conversation with yourself on paper**. Ask your subconscious mind to take you back to the earliest time you felt this way and then start writing out what you're thinking and feeling and memories coming up. It's a good way to get things out and heal them.

So if you do happen to come upon a memory you were receiving, some unkind words from siblings telling you that you were worthless and useless, or something like that and it was especially making you feel bad, then you can go into that memory, and re-examine those memories, so you can go back into that memory as a third person and be there with your younger self. Freeze-frame the memory and talk to your younger self, reassure your younger self, and tell him or her what he or she needs to hear to feel better. For example, "They don't know what they're saying, they don't really mean it; when they grow up, they're going to be sorry about it." If you say, "You are loved," "You are worthy," or "You are wonderful" keep it all in the

positive because the subconscious listens to positive commands. Give your younger self a big hug; the key is by going back into memory. If this would be very painful, don't attempt it yourself; seek professional help or a counsellor to go through it with you.

Other ways to heal from social anxiety are to do some work daily with the conscious mind, which does sink into the subconscious mind. You can **do affirmations** and tell yourself things like, "I am a strong and confident person," "I am worthy of these social situations," "I have lots of interesting things to say," whatever it is you need to hear, talking to your subconscious mind is talking to yourself. So, reassure yourself and do it repetitiously in blocks of three blocks of 10 times, reassure yourself with whatever affirmation you need in order to feel better and in time the subconscious mind accepts that.

Lastly, **talk to yourself in the mirror**. You can ask your subconscious mind what's wrong in certain situations. "Why did I feel that way in that social situation?" or "Why am I dreading this social situation?" and listen to what your subconscious mind says. You might suddenly feel emotions, or you might hear a voice in your mind saying, "Oh, it was terrible" or "I worry that I'm going to make an idiot of myself." Talk to yourself or reassure your subconscious

mind: “You’re not going to make an idiot of yourself, you’re a wonderful person, you’re great in everyday life.” You talk to yourself and reassure your subconscious mind that is still reeling from events from the past.

Take a **hypnosis session or see a Counselor**. It’s important to get things out and go over them again. Expose them to the light of day with your conscious mind once more and reason them again with the new reasoning that you’re capable of.

Give yourself time; bit-by-bit you’ll feel better.

4.2 Self-healing Tips

Even if CPTSD must be treated by consulting a professional, I want to give you some tips on how to start healing yourself from narcissistic parental abuse.

Understanding and Acceptance.

The first advice is to understand your narcissistic mother, understanding why she did certain things, why your parents are the way they are, and why anyone is the way they are. Understanding why a certain behavior happens and where it came from is always helpful. It helps you to be able to get to the point of acceptance because you can now accept why someone does what they do

without accepting that their action is right, nonetheless. It also helps you to realize now as a grown adult that anything you didn't get from your mother had nothing to do with you.

You can be able as an adult to be logical and self-aware, to understand that wounds came from this, but now you can heal from this and the only way you can heal is in the moments when the wound comes up and you self-parent yourself through this.

This may not be the quickest way to heal from your relationship with your mother, but the first thing you have to do is accept her for who she is. She's incapable of giving, having a real connection, or being there for you. So, when she does something hurtful or shames you, you can remove yourself from that situation because you know that you didn't cause her to be this way. This was who she was, and it doesn't really matter.

This is step number one, accepting who she is and her inability to be there for you emotionally. If the behavior is too bad, you can choose not to have a relationship with her. Just because we have parents doesn't mean we have to have relationships with them. When we become adults, we get to choose who is a part of our lives and who is not.

Get rid of negative thoughts.

A lot of the negative stuff that's playing in your head comes from the relationships that you had with your parents because they didn't teach you how to stay connected to yourself.

Therefore, when that negative thought comes, you have to know that it's part of your programming. It's part of that wound that is triggered time and time again as you were growing up and that is the "I'm not enough" story. When you understand the origins of your thoughts and you know this negative thought is not you, you are not going to attach yourself to this thought because that's not who you are. Learning how to monitor the thoughts that come through allows you to live a peaceful happy life.

Stand up to your parents.

The last thing towards healing is you should learn how to stand up to your parents and this doesn't mean that you just tell people what you think and how you have become angry.

Standing up for yourself is being able to love yourself, express to others what you need out of the relationship and if they can't respect boundaries, then you alter that relationship and your expectations of who that person is and what he or she is capable of.

Reparent yourself.

Being neglected and abused in childhood makes you lack a good internal parent, so you don't have something inside that is directing and caring for you. In order to heal and function properly, you have to re-parent and take care of yourself as if you were a child, because if you didn't get that when you were a child, you need to get it now or you're going to hurt for the rest of your life. Reparenting yourself is a very complex process. It comes on multiple levels in various ways, regarding every single aspect of your life. It starts with being mindful of what's going on and then validating yourself instead of the invalidation you've been getting your whole life.

First of all, you must be aware of what you're thinking and what you're saying to yourself. Secondly, think of comfort. When you think about repairing yourself, think about how a good parent would feel concerning a baby.

What did you want to get from your parents? What did you want your mom to say to you that she didn't say to you? How did you want her to treat you? That's the first step to parenting yourself. I think it's more about learning about yourself and what you need in order to self-soothe. What are the things that you need to say to yourself that are helpful and encouraging? Think about it.

You can start encouraging yourself by saying things like, "You used to do that, but I've noticed that lately you've been doing a little better." You must have this dialogue inside that is constantly making you feel better and overcoming the other dialogue, which may be the negative inner critic from your childhood.

Never forget that your comfort matters. Reparenting means taking care of your comfort. You have to start moving through the pain and doing good things for yourself.

Still on the issue of reparenting is discipline. If you've suffered any kind of neglect, you probably didn't get disciplined and so having discipline in day-to-day life becomes very difficult if you were not raised that way. If in childhood you didn't get any discipline, you will grow up without an inner parent that is a disciplinarian. Discipline lets you know where to hold yourself accountable as you are going through the healing journey.

CONCLUSIONS

We can't constantly live in the past. There's a wound in you that was created by your narcissistic mother, but you have to be able to know that this is where the wound is, this is what it looks like, and this is what you need to do in order to heal it. And just like any wound, you must take the band-aid off after a couple of days, clean it again, and re-dress it so it can fully heal.

That's the kind of work that goes into healing and if you really want to heal. It starts with accepting your narcissistic mother for who she is, accepting that she was your past and working on creating a better future for yourself. And the only way you can do that is learning to have that relationship with yourself, giving yourself those things, you wished she had given you, to allow you grow up and not be co-dependent and have this emotional wound. It might be a very long journey, but you need not be alone. Ask for help and you will get it.

Remember that a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step and I hope this book will be a good step for you.