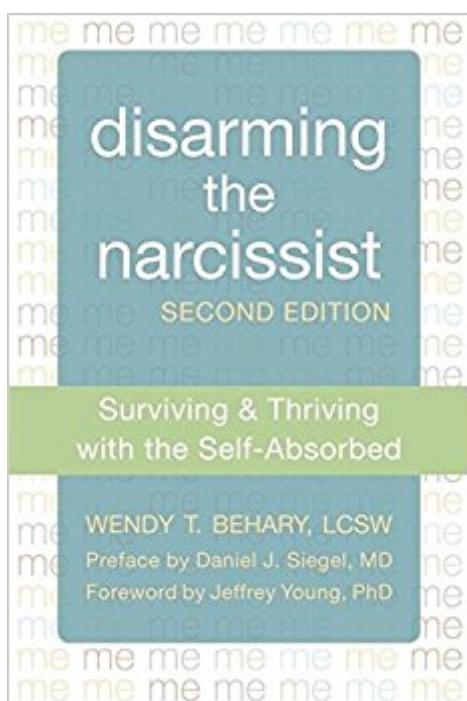


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# Disarming The Narcissist: Surviving And Thriving With The Self-Absorbed



## Synopsis

Do you know someone who is overly arrogant, shows an extreme lack of empathy, or exhibits an inflated sense of entitlement? Do they exploit others, or engage in magical thinking? These are all traits of narcissistic personality disorder, and when it comes to dealing with narcissists, it can be difficult to get your point across. So how do you handle the narcissistic people in your life? You might interact with them in social or professional settings, and you might even love one. Ignoring them isn't really a practical solution. They're frustrating, and maybe even intimidating, but ultimately, you need to find a way of communicating effectively with them. *Disarming the Narcissist, Second Edition*, will show you how to move past the narcissist's defenses using compassionate, empathetic communication. You'll learn how narcissists view the world, how to navigate their coping styles, and why, oftentimes, it's sad and lonely being a narcissist. By learning to anticipate and avoid certain hot-button issues, you'll be able to relate to narcissists without triggering aggression. By validating some common narcissistic concerns, you'll also find out how to be heard in conversation with a narcissist. This book will help you learn to meet your own needs while side-stepping unproductive power struggles and senseless arguments with someone who is at the center of his or her own universe. This new edition also includes new chapters on dealing with narcissistic women, aggressive and abusive narcissists, strategies for safety, and the link between narcissism and sex addiction. Finally, you'll learn how to set limits with your narcissist and when it's time to draw the line on unacceptable behavior.

## Book Information

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[View larger](#) From The Book: Is the Difficult Person in your Life a Narcissist? Read through the items in the list to the right and check off any that apply to the difficult person in your life. Only check off a trait if it is expressed excessively, meaning it occurs more often than not.

Everyone knows a narcissist, one of those vainglorious individuals in desperate need of constant affirmation and attention. Cognitive therapist Behary's book argues that by modifying your own behavior, you can manage your relationship with such a person. Separating narcissism into categories (spoiled, dependent, deprived and combinations thereof) and exploring the causes of the disorder, the author hopes to assist the reader in overcoming the emotional obstacles involved in interaction with a boss, spouse, friend or relative. Rather than focus on changing the narcissist (which may be impossible), this book aims to help the reader improve self-knowledge to see why the narcissist pushes his or her buttons and how to cope. Some of the instruments Behary provides—such as checklists, flash cards, journal writing—are useful for determining the type of narcissist you are dealing with and how your past experiences affect your responses. The author acknowledges that her book is no panacea, and she doesn't present the reader with strategies for when the narcissist isn't responsive to the actions she has suggested.

Notwithstanding this caveat, Behary's book will surely provide help to many in need of a confidence booster in the face of provocation. (Mar.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Wendy Behary has dedicated decades to understanding narcissism, both as a clinician and a scholar. In *Disarming the Narcissist*, she distills these hard-won insights into a very readable form. This book is a terrific resource for those looking to better understand narcissism. —W. Keith Campbell, PhD, professor in the department of psychology at the University of Georgia and author of *The Narcissism Epidemic*

This is not just a bad review; this is strong advice to not read this book, for your own good. This book is dangerous because it convinces people in relationships that they can learn to manage the narcissist's behaviors. If you really do believe the person in your life has Narcissistic Personality Disorder, you should get resources to leave the relationship as soon as feasible and get help to

recover from the damage that's already been done before you've been hurt more. Moreover, the advice wouldn't even work because it requires confronting them about how their behavior hurts you, and narcissists can't handle that. This book asks you to consider what about YOU triggers these reactions in you when the narcissistic acts in erratic and hurtful ways. No. Anyone would react like that to this systematic pattern of damaging behavior. Other reviews here are totally accurate when they say it is victim blaming, but when I was still in the situation I was willing to blame myself just like the narcissist I was dating did constantly. I regret having read this book because I stayed in a relationship based on its advice and now I have suffered for much longer than I needed to. I started re-reading it recently, now that I understand the behavior better, and realized what terrible advice this is and how this advice kept me in a damaging situation thinking I had some power when I didn't. If you are considering getting this book, instead pick one about how to recover from breaking up with or divorcing a narcissist. Also, I would be willing to bet you are keeping secret from your friends how bad the person's behavior really is in order to protect them or so you won't be embarrassed. Write an honest email to your friends telling them what you've been going through and asking for their support. They will be there for you more than you know. I promise you that staying is worse than you think right now and that leaving now is so much better than you realize. Please don't even read this book. I do not want you coming back in six months or a year saying how the advice in this book gave you false hope that things could be alright if you tried hard enough to deal with the narcissist's volatile behavior. When I bought this book I thought I needed to make it work, but I was wrong. I needed to protect myself and this book will give you the opposite advice. The dangerous part is that after the narcissist already has manipulated your thinking, you will believe that there is hope like the book says but at best it will prolong the crash and burn ending, with untold nights of wondering what you could do better between now and then. Other reviews said this and I thought I would be able to handle it better, but once the narcissist had already begun to affect me, this book just pulled me deeper in to thinking there was logic behind his pathology.

I'm horrified that this book was written by a professional claiming to be an expert in Narcissism! I nearly bought this book for my mother who is trapped in an abusive marriage with a toxic narcissist (my father). This book encourages exactly the kind of enabling, self-immolating behavior that she is currently ruining her life with. Thank god I didn't send her this "expert" endorsement of her destructive, co-dependent fealty to someone who is a true psychological predator and parasite. Now, I understand this is a pop-psychology self-help book, and thus shouldn't be held to a very high standard. The problem is, it's written about such a dangerous group of people that it becomes

flagrantly irresponsible to be so naive, vague, and incomplete when instructing the partners of these serial abusers. Additionally, the author claims to be a professional expert with 20+ years of experience dealing with this specific personality disorder. This to me, crosses the line. I find this book to be literally dangerous reading material for a VERY vulnerable target audience. The book is also pretty poorly written. Most of the advice is so vague it's nearly useless (general visualizations, basic communication skills like mirroring, advice on finding your authentic voice with no tools to actually get there) and the descriptions of narcissism are far too generalized for a one-topic book. The whole section on "schemas" (presented as ground-breaking and utterly brilliant) is simplistic and in no way specific to narcissistic relationships. I'll summarize for you everything you need to know about schemas - 1) You have buttons, created in your sad childhood. 2) Sometimes people push your buttons, which makes you feel flustered. Wow. Mind blown. That's 40+ pages of a 150-page book. What's worse, she goes off on these flights of inept descriptive language, and includes a truly self-indulgent introduction about how she always dreamed of writing a book and displayed such an early talent for language, but "never actually intended to become a writer." A bit ironic to include this in a book about narcissism. Some choice quotes to give you a taste of how naive and ridiculous this book is: "The philosophy of the Jedi knights suggests that a sentient, interplanetary energy lies within us all, binding us together and giving us the power to withstand opposition and create light in moments of darkness." "You extend a loving imaginary arm to wrap around the pained heart of little you." "With awareness and flexibility, you enlist the possibility of seeing with abundant clarity the depth, color, and movement of, for example, the ocean." "Your distress now slides away like a fluffy omelet departs a well-prepared pan." This might all be forgivable, if she didn't go on to present so many ideas that are downright dangerous: "You model an apology [to the narcissist] that is based in a compassionate understanding of how and why certain messages hurt him." "You work very hard at protecting his inner child from experiences that would trigger these haunting feelings of fear and humiliation." "You don't want him to experience you as uncaring and demeaning." This mindset plays into the fundamental destructive dynamic of narcissists - that it's all about their needs, that everyone else has to compromise to keep them comfortable, that the world should walk on eggshells in fear of their temper and their disapproval. Partners of these people are already well-trained in how to accommodate their fragile egos. What they need is instruction in how to hold these people accountable, and let them know their sadistic tactics are transparent and unacceptable. This book pays brief lip-service to the idea of accountability, and spends most of the page count instructing people on how to coddle the delicate sensibilities of the poor, damaged narcissist. Worst of all, it takes the author until page 114 to make

the following one-paragraph disclaimer: "This approach is inappropriate with anyone who makes you feel unsafe or abused. [...] If the narcissist in your life is violent, abusive, or threatens your safety in any way, please seek assistance immediately." She then refers to the Domestic Violence hotline, and then promptly returns to descriptions of how to "empathize with" and "re-parent" your poor narcissist. The problem is, this disclaimer implies that physical abuse is the only unacceptable form of abuse. People with true NPD are often flagrant psychological and verbal abusers, but too strategic to resort to physical abuse. In fact, many of the example scenarios later detailed in the book involve or reference verbal abuse. Yet the author says almost nothing about protecting oneself from this kind of abuse, or how to identify what might qualify as abusive behavior. People who are in romantic relationships with full-blown narcissists often don't have an accurate sense of where healthy relationship boundaries should be set. They don't understand what is acceptable or not acceptable treatment in a relationship. Yet the author never defines what might be accepted within a reasonable relationship, and what should not be tolerated. This book was woefully short on the concept of personal boundaries - that everyone has a right to set personal boundaries, or how to set a boundary with someone who habitually violates them. When the subject is addressed, it's done in such a limp-wristed, ineffectual way that it's truly laughable to imagine saying some of the suggested monologues to an actual narcissist. It's also woefully short on ego-strengthening techniques for partners of narcissists, or tools to build a psychological foundation/identity apart from the destructive influence of their narcissist. In case it wasn't already obvious, this book made me completely furious for being so irresponsibly and poorly written on such a sensitive topic. If it were up to me, I would have this woman professionally reprimanded and her license reviewed. One smaller note: As other reviewers have noted, this book is directed almost exclusively at romantic partners of narcissists. There are a few token mentions of narcissistic co-workers. But there's virtually nothing about parent-child relationships, siblings, authority figures, or other relationship dynamics. Also she operates under an assumption that "If you're reading this book, chances are you've chosen to stay connected to the narcissist in your life." Thus, there's not a lot of material for managing relationships in which one is obligated to stay, despite a desire and justification for leaving.

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