

Narcissism

Book of Quotes

*A SELECTION OF QUOTES FROM
THE COLLECTIVE WISDOM
OF OVER 12,000 INDIVIDUAL DISCUSSIONS*

*"I was married to a Narcissist for 16 years.
It's the closest thing there is to
HELL ON EARTH."*

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SUITE 101

[NARCISSISTIC PERSONALITY DISORDER TOPIC DISCUSSIONS](http://www.suite101.com/welcome.cfm/npd)

<http://www.suite101.com/welcome.cfm/npd>

Narcissistic Personality Disorder

An all-pervasive pattern of grandiosity (in fantasy or behaviour), need for admiration or adulation and lack of empathy, usually beginning by early adulthood and present in various contexts. Five (or more) of the following criteria must be met:

- Feels grandiose and self-importance (e.g., exaggerates achievements and talents to the point of lying, demands to be recognized as superior without commensurate achievements);
- Is obsessed with fantasies of unlimited success, fame, fearsome power or omnipotence, unequalled brilliance (the cerebral narcissist), bodily beauty or sexual performance (the somatic narcissist), or ideal, everlasting, all-conquering love or passion;
- Firmly convinced that he or she is unique and, being special, can only be understood by, should only be treated by, or associate with, other special or unique, or high-status people (or institutions);
- Requires excessive admiration, adulation, attention and affirmation - or, failing that, wishes to be feared and to be notorious (narcissistic supply);
- Feels entitled. Expects unreasonable or special and favourable priority treatment. Demands automatic and full compliance with his or her expectations;
- Is "interpersonally exploitative", i.e., uses others to achieve his or her own ends;
- Devoid of empathy. Is unable or unwilling to identify with or acknowledge the feelings and needs of others;
- Constantly envious of others or believes that they feel the same about him or her;
- Arrogant, haughty behaviours or attitudes coupled with rage when frustrated, contradicted, or confronted.

Summarized from:

American Psychiatric Association. (2000). Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders, fourth edition, text revision (DSM IV-TR). Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Association.

[Malignant Self Love – Narcissism Revisited](#) by: Sam Vaknin, Narcissus Publications, Skopje and Prague, 1999, 2001, 2003.

<http://samvak.tripod.com/npdglance.html>

There have been well over 12,000 individual discussions posted at the [Suite 101 Narcissistic Personality Disorder Discussion site](#) over the past 18 months. In the preparation of this document, we encountered victim's reports of attempted murders, physical assault requiring hospitalization, mental abuse requiring hospitalization and medication that span many years, severe financial loss and consequences, stalking, workplace bullying and harassment, sexual abuse, incest, vindictiveness in child custody court battles, repudiation of pension contracts, and non-payment of child-support, all as a result of involvement with persons with Narcissistic Personality Disorder. For obvious reasons these quotes cannot be used. For equally obvious reasons, what has been inflicted upon them cannot be ignored.

The Editors.

Acknowledgement

I would like to express my appreciation to the hundreds of posters who contribute at this discussion site, and to those who participated in producing this document.

[Sam Vaknin, Ph.D.](#)

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Abbreviations Used:

N = Narcissist, Narcissism

NS = Narcissistic Supply (the attention, admiration Ns want)

NPD = Narcissistic Personality Disorder

PD = Personality Disorder

The Narcissistic Predator

"The narcissist inflicts pain and abuse on others. He devalues sources of supply, callously and off-handedly abandons them, and discards people, places, partnerships, and friendships unhesitatingly. Sudden shifts between sadism and altruism, abuse and 'love', ignoring and caring, abandoning and clinging, viciousness and remorse, the harsh and the tender - are, perhaps, the most difficult to comprehend and to accept. These swings produce in people around the narcissist emotional insecurity, an eroded sense of self worth, fear, stress, and anxiety ('walking on eggshells'). Gradually, emotional paralysis ensues and they come to occupy the same emotional wasteland inhabited by the narcissist, his prisoners and hostages in more ways than one - and even when he is long out of their life."

Article: [Other People's Pain](http://www.suite101.com/article.cfm/npd/76632) by Dr. Sam Vaknin
<http://www.suite101.com/article.cfm/npd/76632>

"The brutal change in him was all the more shocking because of what he had appeared to be. The devaluation was indescribable, unnerving, frightening. His N rages used to burst forth several times a day. I found I was married to a total stranger, a Jekyll and Hyde who sometimes looked at me as if he didn't even know me. Exhausting is an understatement - it was like clinging to the edge of a cliff 24 hours a day."

"I suppose you can tell I'm scared. I believe I will end up either dead or in a mental hospital very soon if something drastic doesn't happen. He is so diabolical and so convincing to other people that my own family has abandoned me. My kids have also been brainwashed, something I would have bet my life could never happen. All of my financial means have been exhausted. Child support should have been more than enough to make it until I could finish my degree, but he quit his job to keep me from having money, and no matter what I try to do, I hit a big brick wall."

"The night he dumped me, the last thing he said to me before wandering out was 'protect yourself'. I've always puzzled over exactly what he meant, and those words have come back to haunt me now – that warning to get away from him. Without a doubt, the worst had yet to come..."

"Narcissists are great con-artists. After all, they succeed in deluding themselves! As a result, very few professionals see through them."

"I keep stressing that people with NPD do not present with the traits of their disorder. Far from it. How could any normal person take up with someone who had his NPD traits on show at the outset of a relationship? I suppose my husband had lots of practice, and had his supply-hunting tactics down to a fine art. This is the case with the real thing, full-blown NPD."

"Where would these Ns be without women, kids and the elderly to pick on?"

"I feel like I have extricated myself from a cult."

"I stood there thinking: 'He can't mean it.' I had the shudders, my skin was crawling. This N-from-hell exuded pure evil. Over the next 5 years he kicked his father out of the house, cut off his pension and slandered him. He cheated his first wife and his kids of money he should have paid, manipulated his business(s), lied to his separate little groups, split away from former friends and family, got 'religion', verbally abused his kids, turned other people into his little evil-doer proxies, hired and fired people on a regular basis. He'd cheat himself to satisfy his own greed if he could. About every three months I'd hear about some treachery he was inflicting on someone, somewhere."

"They think they are untouchable, inhabitants of a special world, one parallel to ours but never touching. Outlandish behaviour is the N's hallmark. They can draw other unsuspecting, and usually respectable, people into their criminal or pseudo-criminal activities."

"N's count on our shame to keep their secrets. They know that exposing them means exposing our own failings. That's what makes them so powerful. They manipulate us into these situations then sit back and watch us squirm between protecting ourselves or blowing the whistle."

"You have to live through the horror of the N experience to be able to understand it. People say: 'But he's mad about you.' The only pertinent word in that sentence is 'mad'."

"The relationship with the N was too good to be true. They want something from you. When you finally wake up and confront them on their bad behaviour, it's something you do, for yourself. You get it off your chest. When the N asks how you are doing, they are taking your emotional temperature to see if you are reacting, because they are looking for that reaction from you. When you finally give them a piece of your mind, they're not even listening. It goes in one ear and out the other. They sit, rather impassively, appearing like they are taking it in, but if you do a test, you find that they were not listening at all, because they can not quote back to you, anything you said. So consider that action as an exercise for yourselves. Nothing you will ever say to that person will make a difference."

"Yes I told him exactly what I think of him, his lies, his deceit, his lack of emotions, he is just an image not a real person ... and I realize that not only did this not bother him, it actually made him feel great! He knows that he has a dramatic impact on my feelings and since he won't let me love him anymore, now he makes me hate him. This must really make him feel like he's one damn special and unforgettable person!"

"I went back to him a dozen times, each time somehow thinking it was different, that maybe now that we had addressed all the issues and brought everything into the open, and he admitted he had treated me badly... it would change. And it WOULD go back to (almost) how it had been, but each time that honeymoon period would last a shorter and shorter amount of time. It absolutely wrecked me – my self esteem has never been lower than during my years with him."

"But these qualities, are indeed 'charm'. The proof of the power of this brand of charm is that you, and I, both women who are probably reasonably alert, failed to see through this well-constructed mask."

"Maybe it is bad for me to wish her unfortunate times, but, that is what she deserves. I have never met anyone more evil than she is. It's the kind of evil that masquerades as good."

"It was the losing of myself that caused me the most anguish. I could feel it, like a brain washing, like a vampire, and he claimed he didn't know anything was wrong, didn't know what I meant when I said I was sad all the time and couldn't trust a word he said."

"I have always felt like they did this on purpose - like they were the most cunning people I've encountered to orchestrate all this turmoil, but through this website, I've come to learn that I'm wrong and that there truly are deeper reasons an N acts out like they do. The key for you is to learn as much as you can as fast as you can, and protect yourself financially and emotionally. Not too many people survive the devastation of a tornado."

"NPD is actually quite simple. When they want supply (adoration/veneration) they put on the whole show to obtain that supply. As the supply wanes, because no one can sustain all the time that high-octane adoration the N requires, then the N begins to get uneasy and devaluation sets in, followed by confusion and bewilderment on the part of the spouse/partner, who thinks s/he has done everything 'right!'"

"In order to overcome one's enemy, one must study diligently to understand how he came to be your enemy, what his motivations and goals are. Fully understanding your enemy and then rational planning based on that knowledge is the only way to emerge the victor. We are learning about those with Narcissistic Personality Disorder, Antisocial Personality Disorder, Borderline Personality Disorder, Histrionic Personality Disorder, as well as those with Sadistic and/or Masochistic Personality disorder - the psychopaths in our lives, learning to defend ourselves against their destructive forces and how to avoid them in the future."

"I read [Sam Vaknin's book](#) first, that's when I finally knew it wasn't me for the first time. Knowledge is power, know everything you can about Narcissism."

"I raise a glass to all the other warriors on here, and to [Sam Vaknin](#) too, for providing [this forum](#), and so much useful information. His writings are powerful and painful, and marked the first turning on the road for me. I can remember reading and re-reading the [FAQs](#) in a mesmerized daze, as I saw my experience and the disaster that is NPD unfold in black on white before my eyes."

"The withdrawal from my N has been terrible and hard on me but it is getting better. I no longer have anger and rage and my mind is settling down. And I no longer think of him 24 hrs. of the day. I never thought that would ever happen just a couple of months ago."

"I loved him, very much, but no way was I about to be obsessed. I also lived for my work, for myself, for all manner of things, friends and family included. This, the N cannot take at all, and will try to drive in that wedge, in order to get ALL attention for himself."

"My ex-N would constantly talk about himself. Every type of conversation, somehow always came back to him talking about him. It would be embarrassing, when friends would need to talk about something happening in their lives, he could not listen, or be supportive. He never got it. He would quickly turn the conversation back to himself."

"The other thing he did was leave me in all kinds of situations to go find someone to charm. If we went to social things, he would not talk to me all night. He would need to be the centre of attention in some group. Usually women."

"He will have a new female N supplier ASAP and you can bet he'll be parading her in front of you too."

"I wish I could offer you any encouragement with your NPD/Bi-polar loved one, but in the 11 years I've dealt with them in my life, I've only known grief, lies, distorted realities, schemes, police, chaos, courts. I often feel like they sit in the eye of a self-created tornado and watch their loved ones circling around in total chaos, and if the winds ever die down, they find a way to get them whirling again."

"My ex-girlfriend seemed for nearly six years to be a kind, caring, supportive person... and then did a 180. Trashing me and, trashing (it turned out) at least one other person that I know of. Extremely rude and cruel behaviour, calculated to cause me extreme pain."

"If you want something to cry about, cry for the N's new victim(s), the innocent, unmarked, un-inoculated prey. The victims are carefully chosen, and I feel sad for them."

"In fact I didn't even realize how badly he was abusing me. I didn't know that all of the silent treatments I got and the alienation from my friends and family were all forms of abuse. Which made me even feel more victimized when I put two and two together."

"The abuse doesn't happen because the victims volunteer for it. The abuse happens because the abusers lie, manipulate and speak in mixed messages, and out of love and a sense of fairness we trust them."

"Towards the end of my relationship with N, he told me: 'Your father couldn't break your spirit, and as hard as I've tried, neither can I.' About sums it all up wouldn't you say?"

"He would tell women he loved them all at the same time, keeping each woman separate from the others, trying to get one of them to marry him."

"She said she was like a recorder that took everything in and reported it just like a recorder. What I was slowly realizing was that yes, she was like a machine - a recorder that took the info in, twisted, spun it into whatever, and then used it as a weapon to stir up controversy or create problems."

"The N has no feeling of any kind, you must absolutely remember that. Any 'feelings' or emotions shown are like those put on by an actor on stage. They look good, but are only an act."

"The person with NPD is unpredictable, that is part of the disorder. Their world is a heaving, restless, unquiet place, full of anxieties and unknown quantities. And when they withdraw the 'caring' and the 'loving' and start on the devaluation stage, then the contrast is so appalling that we are wrecked, unable to understand (at this stage most of us had never heard of NPD) so naturally we thought we were at fault in some way."

"When I met my N I thought I had just met the most wonderful person ever born! Nice, kind, talented, intelligent, even caring and concerned. It wasn't until a few months had passed that I began to feel something wasn't right and I was confused. I felt like I was on the verge of a nervous breakdown but couldn't put my finger on the problem (because I thought it was me) until I came here. I still can't figure out what the telltale signs were that I apparently missed. It took a long time for the confusion to build up. And I still haven't had the courage that a lot of you have had to make the complete break."

"You cannot understand his mind, the disordered mind, because you are normal. How could you? You can believe it - he is not real, and nothing is real to him. That is his tragedy."

"As I said, it is only lately that I heard about how she hates him to this day, after twenty years or more."

"Anyway, the uneasy was always there for me too. It was just easy to ignore in the beginning. As I got to know him, the uneasiness shifted to a feeling of walking on eggshells since I never knew what action or word I might do would trip over one of his innumerable emotional landmines."

"I made a huge mistake today. After receiving the latest personal assault from my N, I tried to arrange an amicable settlement without having to go to court. My biggest concern was that he not get overnight visitation. Well, he agreed to my terms and our lawyers placed a conference call to the judge to adjourn our 'motion'. Soon after that, my N backed out of the whole deal saying he didn't see why he shouldn't have our child overnight. Now we don't go to court for another 3 months!! They will use anything and everything at their disposal."

"He is a very insecure (and jealous) man, but he is also a dreadful coward. The Ns usually are."

"If some man were to say to your daughter: 'Here's the deal, sweetie. For several months or so, I'm going to pretend to be everything you ever wanted. I'll shower you with attention, affection and all manner of stuff to make you feel special. Then, once I know you're depending on me as your significant other, and have made a commitment, I'm going to quit pretending and be who I really am. I'm going to start treating you really badly, I'll say insensitive things, I'll lie, I'll cheat, I'll be really cruel, possibly humiliate you in public. Hey, I might even beat you. Your job will be to figure out what happened and do everything in your power to restore the relationship to what it was, until you either die, try to kill yourself, or collapse and get sent to hospital, which will be pretty funny because there's no chance whatsoever I'll ever pretend to be that 'nice guy' again - and by the way, it WAS a pretence. So what do you say, sweetie? Do we have a deal? Several years of hell in exchange for a few months of fantasy?'"

If your daughter whipped out the pen to ink the deal, you'd smack her and say, 'What are you, NUTS? This guy's a lunatic!!!' Right? But that IS the deal. That is the contract. If that contract wouldn't be nearly good enough for your daughter, why would it be good enough for you?"

"I went along with him once and he said: 'Hey I like the way you talk!!!' He actually praised me when I agreed with him that a person who causes an accident should be left on the highway to die and just drive on by. What a polished piece of work! I swear I met the devil."

"What I'm wondering right now is... in the beginning when he was treating me like a Queen, was there a hidden agenda there? Was it always in the back of his mind that he would soon unleash the hidden fury to hurt me? He acts like I am 'the one', the 'kindred friend' that he's never had before. Is this all a lie? I seem to be hanging on to the hope that it will be different for me. Am I fooling myself?" (cont'd.)

(cont'd. reply:) "Does he want to hurt you? Well, now, that would imply that he thinks of you as a human being – an N doesn't. What he wants is to secure supply. If he cannot do it by means of flattery, he will do it by means of cruelty. The goal is to get you to give him what he wants. He doesn't especially care which method he uses, so long as he finds one that works. I know that sounds cold. It is cold. That is the mind of a Narcissist. Cold and devoid of empathy. Because he lacks empathy, he probably doesn't know or care if he hurts you, unless he's using bullying as a technique for extracting NS from you. Even then, he couldn't care less what that does to you, apart from eliciting the desired response. If it makes him feel better about himself to belittle you, he will do that, but the ultimate goal isn't to make you feel bad, the goal is perpetuate the myth of his own perfection and simultaneously control you. If by hurting you it gets you in check, makes you take on his failings as your own, and make you work twice as hard for his approval, it's a bonus for him. If he doesn't need to employ cruelty in order to accomplish either of the above goals, he won't. It's that simple."

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