

Dysfunctional Behaviors Of People Raised By Narcissistic Parents

Being raised by a narcissistic parent or two causes a person to act differently than people raised by healthy, functional parents. Aside from the most obvious common problem, C-PTSD, being raised by narcissists creates certain unique behaviors that almost every victim exhibits.

Being afraid to say no. Narcissists don't allow their children to have boundaries. "No" can be met with abuse- name calling, scathing criticisms, guilt trips & even physical violence. Children use "yes" as a survival skill as a result. They learn early in life that it's easier to do whatever their narcissistic parent wants than to say "no" & face the consequences. This behavior becomes such a habit that it is often carried into adulthood. While it served a good purpose as a child, it no longer does as an adult. Being a healthy adult means having healthy boundaries. You need to start asking yourself why are you saying yes? Are you saying yes because you want to or because you're afraid of disappointing someone if you say no? Start saying no when you're saying yes when you don't want to. Some people won't like it, but one thing to keep in mind- healthy, good, caring people respect boundaries. Users & abusers don't. If someone gets upset with you for having a healthy boundary, that isn't the kind of person you need in your life.

Apologizing too much. Narcissistic parents blame their children for every single thing, so their children learn to apologize for everything, whether or not it's their fault. This dysfunctional survival skill also carries into adulthood, & needs to stop. When you feel the urge to apologize, pray. Ask God is this truly your fault? Should you apologize or are you only doing so out of habit?

Being unable to express emotions in a healthy way. Narcissists can't handle the emotions of other people, including their children. They force their children to stifle their emotions, often by shaming them for having them. This tells children their emotions are bad. To cope, may continue to repress their emotions while others express them in inappropriate ways such as getting angrier than is appropriate for the situation. It can be hard, I know, but you need to learn to get in touch with your emotions & give them a healthy outlet. Ask God to help you to do this, because it will get scary, especially showing anger after a lifetime of stifling it. Journaling can be helpful, too- seeing things in writing brings clarity.

Not trusting your intuition & perception. Constant gaslighting is possibly the most cruel form of abuse there is, & also a favorite of narcissists. Gaslighting makes a person second guess everything about themselves- their instincts, perception, feelings, thoughts- because it makes a victim feel that they are wrong about everything or even crazy. The fact is though that you aren't wrong or crazy- you are FINE! The gaslighting made you doubt these things but it doesn't mean that they are actually wrong or flawed somehow. Your instincts, perceptions, feelings & thoughts are just fine. They are trustworthy! Ask God to help you to learn to trust yourself.

Pay attention, too. You'll see that the more you you're right about little things, the more you learn to trust yourself.

Over explaining yourself. Narcissistic parents demand their children behave in certain ways that are acceptable to them, no matter how their child feels about it. When the child fails to meet the impossibly high expectations, the parent demands an explanation for the failure. One more dysfunctional survival skill children of narcissists learn is to explain anything & everything, & again, this often continues into adulthood. It feels strange at first to stop over explaining yourself, but if you stick with it, it gets more comfortable as time goes on. Always remember, not everyone needs an explanation for what you do.

These behaviors, although dysfunctional, don't have to be permanent. With prayer & work, you can make healthy changes.