

Getting To Know Yourself After Narcissistic Abuse

When a person is raised with narcissistic parents, they don't have a normal upbringing in any way, shape or form. Everything is fodder for the narcissistic parent to invalidate or criticize, from the child's looks, to grades in school, to interests & even emotions. A common way children cope with this is to lose themselves in an attempt to become what their parent wants them to be.

When a child's identity is lost in this way, that child grows up with no idea who they really are. They are simply that person the parent created, not the person who God made them to be.

As an adult, once they learn about Narcissistic Personality Disorder, the adult begins to understand the tremendous amount of damage done to her as a child & wants to heal. One important way to heal is to get to know the real you, not the person your narcissistic parent wanted you to be.

This task actually can be quite fun, although rather intimidating at first. When you grow up being told what you do & don't like or how you feel about everything, getting to know yourself feels scary. For me, I felt like I was betraying my mother by questioning things that she told me. Like countless other narcissistic parents, she instilled in me the belief that she knew everything & I should blindly obey her. Even though she wasn't a part of getting to know myself, I still felt wrong & scared of her disapproval at first. You have to realize like I did, that getting to know who God made you to be is important & has nothing to do with your parent. This is something you are doing for you, & you need no one's approval but God's. Remind yourself often no one else's approval is necessary for you to do this. Ask God to help you.

To get started getting to know yourself, pray. Ask God to guide you, to give you courage & strength & enable you to do whatever you need to do. He will do just that.

Start to pay attention to how you really feel about things. Do you really like your job or are you doing it only because your narcissistic father said you should? Do you like the style of your clothing or is it your narcissistic mother's taste? Are your hobbies something you enjoy or are they what your narcissistic parents said you should enjoy? Question everything & pay attention to how you really feel!

Step out into new adventures, big or small. If you usually watch drama movies, opt for a comedy or horror for a change of pace & see what you think of it. Go to a car show, a museum or historical sight if you normally don't visit such places & see if you enjoy them. Try participating in a sport.

Try new things. Go bowling if you've never gone before. Play video games. Try painting—walls or pictures. Try photography or drawing. Try writing poetry, a short story or even a book. The point is think of something you haven't tried, & try it.

Then see how you feel about it. Even if you didn't like it, it wasn't a waste because at least you learned a little something about yourself.

When you were growing up, did you have any interests or goals that your narcissistic parents criticized or didn't allow you to do? Think about how you feel about it now, as an adult. Does it still appeal to you? If so, why not give it a try now?

The more you do these things, the more you'll get to know yourself. As you do, accept these things about yourself, without judgment. These things are just what make you, you. I found out I have very few interests, but I'm quite passionate about the ones I do have. You may be that way too—there is nothing wrong with that. Just enjoy the things you learn about yourself. God wants you to love yourself & there is nothing wrong with doing so!