

## How To Deal With Guilt Trips

One very popular weapon in the narcissistic arsenal is guilt. Covert narcissists in particular are very fond of using guilt as a means of control. It's understandable it's such a common weapon considering how very effective guilt can be. It also is unfair & even cruel.

So how can you cope when your narcissistic parent uses guilt trips?

First, pray. Ask God for wisdom & discernment so you understand when guilt is being used on you. Also ask for creative, effective ways to cope with it.

You also need to recognize what is a guilt trip & what isn't. You need to know when someone is saying something to manipulate you or to help you to change & improve yourself. Statements like, "It hurt my feelings when you said/did...." can help you. They point out a bad behavior that you can change. Although they make you feel sort of bad, they don't make you feel ashamed of yourself, only of your action. Statements that simply make you feel guilty like, "After all I've done for you, this is how you repay me?" however aren't to help you, but to control you. If the statement makes you feel obligated to a person or even ashamed of yourself, that is about control.

You also need to be aware of the fact narcissistic supply is at the root of every single thing a narcissist does. Guilt trips are a part of that. Being able to control someone via guilt provides supply by making the narcissist feel powerful. Seeing that person upset about the guilt also provides supply because the narcissist again feels powerful for being able to affect a person so profoundly. The more you allow the guilt trips to work on you, the more the narcissist will use them on you. The best thing you can do is to pretend not to notice the guilt at all when you're in the narcissist's presence. Later, when away from her, vent to your heart's content of course, but when in her presence or even on the phone with her, pretend you didn't notice a thing. If she realizes guilt trips don't work on you, she'll stop using them eventually once she sees they aren't effective.

Don't justify yourself or your actions. If you do, you're only making yourself look guilty to the narcissist, which could mean the narcissist will get meaner. Probably my most successful interaction with my late covert narcissist mother in-law involved guilt from her. She wanted me to do something for her one day but I had plans. Granted, I could've changed them, but I didn't want to. Not for someone who hated me & treated me so poorly. She kept trying to find out what my plans were. She said things like, "You sure must have something important to do if you won't do this for me." "I guess you're doing something for your parents since you won't help me..." Rather than explain my plans (which weren't her business!), I ignored her. She got mad, but couldn't be mad at me without looking foolish in front of her husband & mine. By not justifying my actions, I protected my privacy, avoided more nastiness from her & she never tried to guilt trip me again. In fact, I found the entire thing

funny because her behavior was so ridiculous. Much better to laugh than to be angry or hurt!

Remember, if you have done something wrong, you should feel some guilt since it will help you to improve your behavior. However, if you haven't done anything wrong, then do NOT allow any guilt trip to work on you.