

## Ways Narcissists Try To Silence Their Victims, part 1

Silence is one of a narcissist's best weapons. They do NOT want their victims to talk to anyone about what the narcissist is doing, nor do they want their victim to feel safe enough to confront them on their abusive behavior. To prevent those things from happening, they use various ways to silence victims.

Probably the most common tactic narcissists use is gaslighting. If a narcissist can convince a victim that something happened differently than they remember or it didn't even happen in the first place, the victim won't discuss the event. Why would they? Convincing victims that they don't remember things right or are making up some wild stories definitely will keep them quiet. They feel crazy enough- why should they say things that would make them look crazy too?

Shaming is an effective weapon to create silence as well. If a narcissist can convince a victim that the victim is a terrible person, that victim will be quiet. The narcissist has made that person feel as if she or he is stupid or crazy or even unworthy to "burden" other people with their petty problems. A person who carries shame is a quiet person. I know- I have been there. Granted, I'm quiet by nature anyway but prior to learning about shame, it was much worse. As one example, I felt there was something deeply wrong with me for being upset about the terrible things my ex did to me, so I kept most things to myself. As a result, when we separated, no one cared to hear my side- everyone took his side with only a couple of exceptions. They never heard me complain before, so they figured everything must have been OK between us.

Another facet of shaming is when a narcissist is confronted about their behavior & states that behavior wouldn't upset her. She has no idea why you're upset. My mother did this one to me regarding her nastiness about one of my cats. Chester is a big cat, but he's very muscular. My mother called him fat more times than I can count, knowing how much it bothered me. I'd told her to stop being so mean repeatedly with no results. Eventually I complained about it to my father, who told her what I said. She called me & said she had no idea why I'd be upset. She actually said, "If someone called me fat, I'd just tell them they were right. I certainly wouldn't be angry about it!" I knew immediately that statement was absolutely wrong for one thing. It also was supposed to make me feel shame for being angry with her. It didn't work. It just made me angry she would try such a ridiculous tactic.

Projection is also effective for silencing a victim. When a narcissist accuses a victim of some terrible behavior, it usually stuns a person. Most people will assume the narcissist is right, examine their behavior & try to make improvements. That is, at least until they learn about projection & understand what is being done to them.

Triangulation is another effective way narcissists silence victims. If a narcissist can convince their victim that other people would think, feel or respond as the narcissist, that makes the victim feel isolated. The victim may think he or she is crazy, stupid,

oversensitive & a host of other awful things. Who would want to talk when they feel that way?

## Ways Narcissists Try To Silence Their Victims, part 2

Invalidation is another excellent way to silence a victim. Invalidation basically says that every single thing about you is wrong, flawed & even crazy. It makes a person feel as if they cannot trust their own thoughts, feelings or perceptions. No one who feels that messed up is going to feel able to confront a narcissist or tell others that they are being abused. In fact, invalidation makes people feel as if they are NOT being abused, & they are completely wrong & crazy for thinking such a thing in the first place.

Creating anxiety & fear in a victim also makes the person quiet. If a victim is afraid their abuser, that victim isn't going to want to do anything that may provoke that abuser's anger. In fact, they will do anything to avoid that anger. That often includes refusing to confront their abuser or tell anyone about the abuse. After all, what if the person they tell confronts the abuser? It's much safer to keep the abuse a secret.

Narcissists also love to wear a person down to make them easier to force into silence. They can do this by sleep deprivation if they live with a victim or by harassment if not. They constantly call, email or text. The sheer volume of calls, emails & texts can wear a person down. It takes a great deal of strength to ignore your phone's constant ringing or alerts to receiving new emails & texts. It probably doesn't sound so bad, but I can tell you after being on the receiving end of this, it really is stressful & exhausting!

No one can forget a narcissistic rage. These happen when a narcissist receives a narcissistic injury of some sort, which basically is a blow to their self-esteem. Talking to others about the narcissist's abusive ways or confronting a narcissist about them is definitely a narcissistic injury & will result in a rage. The rage of an overt narcissist is usually loud & vicious. Name calling & cursing aren't above them. Sometimes they become physically abusive as well. The rage of a covert narcissist is much quieter, & it involves the silent treatment & scathing criticisms to make you feel intense guilt. A person would do about anything to avoid either type of rage, & that includes suffering in silence, not telling anyone about the abuse they endure or confronting the narcissist about it.

Diversion is another excellent way to silence victims. Anyone who has confronted a narcissist has no doubt seen this in action. The conversation starts out with a victim stating that they have a problem with the narcissist's behavior, & the conversation ends up discussing something entirely different. Often, it ends with the narcissist accusing the victim of some awful or even abusive behavior, & the victim apologizing. The original topic was abandoned, & naturally no problem was solved. Sometimes diversion isn't so obvious though. Sometimes, the narcissist simply changes the subject & continues to ramble on & on, leaving the victim so frustrated that they just give up.

Lastly smear campaigns are very commonly used. If a narcissist can't stop you from confronting them or telling others what they have done to you, they will not hesitate to tell everyone they meet what a terrible person you are. They'll have plenty of evidence to prove their point, too, even if they have to lie about it. If they can discredit you, they know others won't believe what you say. It also is revenge. You made them look bad, so they are returning the favor.

When these things happen, remember that these are simply tactics that are supposed to silence you. Don't give in! You have every right to talk to whomever about whatever you want. It's your life, the narcissist is only a part of it. If that person wanted you to speak kinder about or to her, she should treat you better.