

When You Think Sacrificing Yourself Is The Only Way To Save Your Marriage

Today's podcast is about when you think sacrificing yourself is the only way to save your marriage.

Not long ago, something crossed my mind. I thought it may help anyone who follows my work who is still married to a narcissist.

During my first marriage, I was so dysfunctional I wasn't sure exactly why it wasn't a good marriage, but I still knew something was wrong. My ex said it was fine, but I didn't buy it. I took my vows very seriously so I spent a lot of time reading marriage books & trying to figure out what I could do to fix these problems that I couldn't identify. It was always my job to fix things in relationships, as is often the case of those who have narcissistic parents. Plus, it seemed logical at the time that if I was the only one who had a problem, I should be the one to deal with the problem.

After my reading & contemplating things, I came up with a solution that I was certain would fix everything. If I could just ignore any of my own identity, needs, wants, opinions & feelings in favor of his, I just knew that would fix everything.

Obviously, this didn't work. Although I was successful at doing this for a while, even that wasn't enough. By the time we got a divorce, I felt like an utter failure & carried the guilt & shame of that for quite some time.

I mentioned this to my best friend recently who admitted she had a very similar experience when married to her ex husband.

If you are married to a narcissist, I would love to help prevent you from going through this pain. Please, listen to the voice of experience when I tell you that although it seems like simply giving in to a narcissist in every way is an "easy" way to keep the peace, it's not.

Losing yourself in this way is a lifetime job, not something you do once & it's done. When a narcissist sees you are willing to do this, he or she will expect you to do it over & over, every single day of your relationship. It makes you miserable & erodes you into a shell of your former self. As the saying goes, it's like a death from a thousand cuts.

Narcissists also are like endless voids when it comes to things that provide them with their narcissistic supply. Nothing is going to fill that void. You simply can't give a narcissist enough supply. Even when you give everything to a narcissist, it isn't enough. I was basically a robot that my ex could control, & it still wasn't enough. He still wanted more even though I had nothing left to give, & was angry when I wouldn't give it. This is typical!

Also, behaving in this manner enables the narcissist to be the abusive monster that he or she is. There are no consequences when someone tolerates abuse, so abusers naturally see no need to stop. In fact, they often step up the abuse because they know they can do anything they like without fear of repercussions. In the end, this will destroy you. It may not physically destroy you, although the stress of living this way certainly has the potential to create an overabundance of health problems, but at the very least it will emotionally destroy you. By the time my ex & I separated, I lost so much of my identity. I had no idea who I was, what I really liked, wanted, felt, or needed. I was well aware though that I carried a great deal of guilt & shame for being entirely at fault for our failed marriage. If I had any doubt, his friends & family no doubt would have been glad to remind me that everything was my fault.

If you are in this unenviable situation of being married to someone who wants everything from you while giving nothing in return, please don't give that person everything! It doesn't help the marriage & only creates problems! Learn from my mistakes & don't give in. Instead, take good care of yourself. Question everything your spouse says about you & demands of you. Surround yourself with healthy, functional, caring & supportive people. If your spouse has isolated you from friends & family (as abusers do), there are online support forums full of amazing people who can help you. And most of all, stay close to God. Lean on Him, & let Him help you in this painful situation.

I wish you all the best!

Thank you for listening to my podcast!