

## When Narcissistic Parents Try To Keep Their Children, Children Forever

Today's podcast is about when narcissistic parents try to keep their children, children forever.

One subtle way narcissistic parents abuse their children as adults is called infantilization. This means that the parents continue treating them like they're much younger than they are. While this may not sound so bad, it truly is because of the damage it causes. It often creates severe anxiety, insecurity & lack of faith in one's abilities to the point they can be debilitating. It sets a child up for failure as an adult by making sure that child can't do what they need to. Even if that adult child has the ability to do something, they honestly believe they can't. This means that adult child settles for relationships that are at best mediocre or at worst abusive because they don't believe they can attract good people. Even worse, they don't believe they deserve to be in relationships with good people. They also settle for dead end jobs or careers they hate because they don't believe they're smart or talented enough for anything better. They settle for much less than they deserve in all areas.

Possibly the saddest part of this particular type of abuse is that it is rarely acknowledged. Parents who behave this way are seen as overprotective or maybe even a bit eccentric, but not as the vicious predators that they are. The adult child often suffers alone & their feelings are invalidated.

Narcissistic parents accomplish this subtle & sinister form of abuse in many ways.

Starting in childhood, these narcissistic parents don't let their child do much. They may start to do something but their parent takes over because they say the child is doing it wrong. Rather than let the child learn from their mistake or simply do the activity a different way to get the same result the parent clearly sends the child the message, "I have to do things for you because you aren't capable."

Normal age appropriate activities are discouraged. Attending school activities, attending sleepovers or even simply spending time with friends are frowned upon or simply not allowed. As children get older, narcissistic parents often discourage them from working, getting a driver's license, going to college or even moving out.

Narcissistic parents trying to infantilize their adult children will tell their children how they feel about things. An especially good example of this behavior that I witnessed was when my mother did this to my father. At a restaurant one evening, he wanted to try something different for a change of pace. My mother told him he didn't want that, & to order what he usually ordered. They were both over 60 years old!

Another thing they do is discuss things with the adult child that they liked when they were children & act as if they still are into those things. They don't acknowledge that their child is now an adult with adult interests.

Telling embarrassing stories about their adult children is another tactic designed to keep the adult child childish. It is designed to humiliate that adult child. When the adult child speaks up about their feelings, their narcissistic parent will shame them for not having a sense of humor or being too sensitive.

Remember how in Genesis chapter 3 how the serpent spoke to Eve to manipulate her into disobeying God? He instilled doubt in her by saying, "Did God really say that?" That is much like how narcissistic parents make their children feel incapable of doing things even as adults. They often say things like, "Do you really think you can handle doing that?" "Aren't you a little young to do that?" The underlying message is "You're too stupid to do that." The questions are asked to make you doubt yourself & look to your parent for answers. The more someone relies on another for answers, the more that someone can control the one looking for answers.

If you are in this situation, you need to remember what is happening. Your parent is trying to control you. Whatever your parent says isn't true- it's said for manipulation only. You are capable! You are smart! You are talented!

I also found it helpful to ask God for creative & effective ways to handle the situation. He definitely will provide them!

Lastly remember, never let your narcissistic parent see how they hurt you. If they do, they'll only do that thing again & again. Don't let them have that opportunity! Act as if their words don't affect you in the slightest bit while you are in their presence. Later when you're alone, you can deal with the emotions however works for you.

I wish you the best in your situation!

Thank you for listening to my podcast!