


Clinical Features Arrogant/Overt . . . Shy/Covert Narcissism

	Arrogant/Overt	Shy/Covert
Self-Concept	Grandiosity; preoccupation with fantasies of outstanding success; undue sense of uniqueness; feelings of entitlement; seeming self-sufficiency	Inferiority; morose self-doubts; marked propensity toward feeling ashamed; fragility; relentless search for glory and power; marked sensitivity to criticism and realistic setbacks
Interpersonal Relationships	Numerous but shallow relationships; intense need for tribute from others; scorn for others, often masked by pseudohumility; lack of empathy; inability to genuinely participate in group	Inability to genuinely depend on others and trust them; chronic envy of others's talents, possessions, and capacity

	activities; valuing of children over spouse in family life	for deep object relations; lack of regard for generational boundaries; disregard for others; time; refusal to answer letters
Social Adaptation	Socially charming; often successful; consistent hard work done mainly to seek admiration (pseudo-sublimation); intense ambition; preoccupation with appearances	Nagging aimlessness; shallow vocational commitment; dilettante-like attitude; multiple but superficial interests; chronic boredom; aesthetic taste often ill-informed and imitative
Ethics, Standards, and Ideals	Caricatured modesty; pretended contempt for money in real life; idiosyncratically and unevenly moral; apparent enthusiasm for sociopolitical affairs	Readiness to shift values to gain favor; pathological lying; materialistic lifestyle; delinquent tendencies; inordinate

		ethnic and moral relativism; irreverence toward authority
Love and Sexuality	Marital instability; cold and greedy seductiveness; extramarital affairs and promiscuity; uninhibited sexual life	Inability to remain in love; impaired capacity for viewing the romantic partner as a separate individual with his or her own interests, rights, and values; inability to genuinely comprehend the incest taboo; occasional sexual perversions
Cognitive Style	Impressively knowledgeable; decisive and opinionated; often strikingly articulate; egocentric perception of reality; love of language; fondness for shortcuts to	Knowledge often limited to trivia (◆headline intelligence◆); forgetful of details, especially names; impaired in the

	acquisition of knowledge	capacity for learning new skills; tendency to change meanings of reality when facing a threat to self-esteem; language and speaking used for regulating self-esteem
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 NOTE: This chart originally appeared in Akhtar, S. J. (1989). Narcissistic personality disorder: Descriptive features and differential diagnosis. *Psychiatric Clinics of North America*, 12, pp. 505-530.

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