

111 Quimby Street, Westfield NJ 908.403.9300

CONNECT

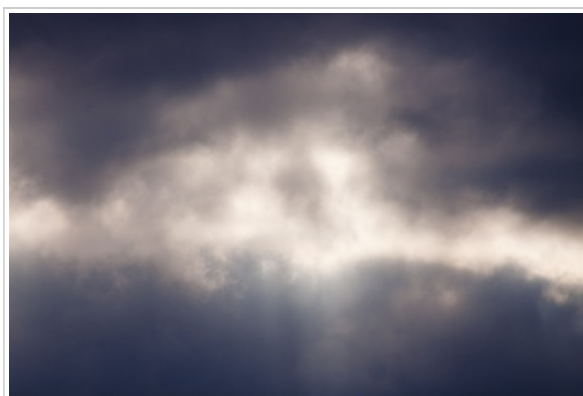
WELCOME HOME THERAPIST SERVICES TALKS BLOG SUPPORT CONTACT US POLICIES & FEES

## Upon Discovering That You're Married to the Most Dangerous Type of Narcissist: [Covert] Narcissists Are Mental and Emotional Rapists

04/10/2013

2 Comments

[NOTE: Click on the underlined words and phrases for embedded links on the topic.]



You feel like you're walking on eggshells -- all the time. Life is a high-wire act. Your spouse rages at the drop of hat over small and insignificant matters. You are constantly blamed, criticized, ridiculed and humiliated. Your spouse requires total control of all situations and outcomes. You and your wishes, needs and thoughts are overlooked, ignored,


minimized, twisted and stomped on. You conclude it's best to keep quiet, duck-and-cover, distract yourself and do what you can to 'keep the peace'. When you share with your spouse how her words and actions negatively impact and hurt you, there is no response as they are completely lacking in empathy. Eventually this takes a heavy toll on you as your life, well-being, career and sanity are all jeopardized.

To cope with the insanity you devise ways to deny, intellectualize, rationalize, sublimate and otherwise manage the craziness -- but the battle is constant, never changes or ends and utterly fatigues. There are times when you feel good but they are brief and are not sustainable. You feel like your life is passing you by and you are dying a slow death.

As your mate is always right and never wrong -- you lose all arguments all of the time. Your spouse is unable to take any responsibility for the problems in your relationship -- it's always your fault. Always. No amount of reason, logic, evidence or proof convinces otherwise.


You piece all these experiences together and arrive at the conclusion that your mate is not just 'a difficult person' or someone 'hard to get along with' but is a true narcissist. Ongoing interactions

**Tweets** Follow



**Open Door Therapy** 1 Sep  
@OpenDoorTherapy

"I agree that the fleeting glimmer of self-awareness is..a trap...the self-awareness [quickly] vanishes"  
[shrink4men.com/2012/06/](http://shrink4men.com/2012/06/)



**Open Door Therapy** 1 Sep  
@OpenDoorTherapy

Even when they "win," they're not happy.  
[shrink4men.com/2012/06/](http://shrink4men.com/2012/06/)

with a narcissist results in **you feeling bad about yourself** and you feel chronically depleted, empty, sad and humiliated -- as they go on their merry way, unaffected.

No matter how strong, how spirited, how positive and how much you are **willing to tolerate-- living with a narcissist will eventually wither you down and become too much to bear.** They will break you. And, if and when you part ways they will just move on to their next victim and repeat the pattern.

### "Covert Narcissism": The Most Dangerous Kind

The covert narcissist is among the worst of the worst. While they impact you in all the ways described above, **they are trickier, more manipulative and more subtle.** With covert narcissism it's easy to believe that the problem is you just as the narcissist says and that they are pure, correct and righteous -- yet nothing could be farther from the truth! **Covert narcissists are much more difficult to identify** making their impact on you harder to recognize and grasp -- and **the consequences to their victims that much more potent, hurtful and damaging.**

In "Recognizing Narcissistic Abuse: Malignant Self Love" covert narcissism is described as follows:

*Most people who have never experienced it first-hand fail to realize the sheer severity and **covert nature of narcissistic abuse, particularly that of the covert narcissist.** **Covert narcissism is undoubtedly the most damaging form and also the most under-cover form of Narcissistic Personality Disorder (NPD) and many victims go decades without consciously realizing what it is that's being done to them.***

*The emotional and mental abuse that a narcissist inflicts on their victim is based on **the power of subtle suggestion.** **The power of suggestion is one of the most powerful psychological tools known to man and should never ever be underestimated.** The narcissist presents to their victim, usually their relationship partner, **a false self made up of a collection of simple and subtle pathological lies. Lies which make them seem angelic and builds them a reputation of being 'as good as gold' and 'would never do anything to hurt anyone'.***

*As an example, if the narcissist hears a rumor of someone they know cheating on their partner they may make statements in front of their own partner such as 'how could they do that to him/her? That's disgusting' making out that they wholly disagree with such*



**Open Door Therapy** 1 Sep  
@OpenDoorTherapy


Blog comment: "Sadly, all it takes to buy into it is a trusting nature and a shred of self-doubt."

[shrink4men.com/2013/05/](http://shrink4men.com/2013/05/)

Tweet to @OpenDoorTherapy

### Author

Terri DiMatteo, LPC  
Helping people feel better about themselves and one another through counseling, talks and workshops.



**Terri DiMatteo ...**  
★★★★★  
(7 reviews)  
Trust, safety and security are severely tested whe...  
**Contact Live**  
\$2.20/minute  
Powered by **LivePerson**

### Categories

All  
Affair  
Blame  
Bossy  
Child Custody  
Control  
Co Parenting  
Cope  
Custody  
Denial  
Divorce  
Divorce Proceedings  
Doing What's Right  
Dominate  
Dysfunction

behavior. However, this is often **only to fool their partner into believing that they would never be capable of doing such a thing** yet the lie is usually a cover to hide the fact that the narcissist is doing, or plans to do, exactly that in reality. These **subtle lies** go on and build up over the years gradually pulling the wool over the victim's eyes leaving them **blind to the narcissist's true hidden**

**self.**

**Money, friends, finances, identification, thoughts and emotions are all eventually stolen from the victim leaving them in a position with no resources to leave and no-one to turn to for help yet they do not realize it until it's too late.**.....[Covert] **Narcissists are extremely dangerous, they would rather allow their partner to get beaten up for making accusations or even let their partner die rather than reveal their true hidden self.** It took them all their life to build up **their 'good as gold' reputation as a cover for the evil emotional and mental rapist that lies beneath** and nobody is ever going to wear them down.

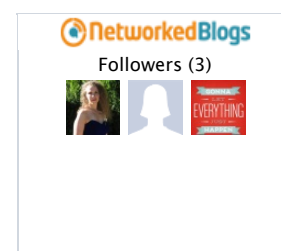
[>Read the rest here... ]

The author of "Emotional Abuse" from the website [www.heartless-bitches.com](http://www.heartless-bitches.com) has this to say about the emotional manipulator [NOTE: the gender pronouns have been reversed from the original passage]:

Emotional abusers are very insidious - some of them are much harder to spot than others, because **they mingle their abuse in between acts of generosity, and often employ emotionally manipulative tactics, and passive-aggressive behavior.** Not all emotional abusers overtly belittle and verbally harangue their partners - some are much more perfidious and as such, **their partners may not realize that the source of their distress and an unease over the relationship has been coming from abuse for quite some time.** **The longer a man remains under the grip of an emotional abuser, the more he will start to question himself, his actions and his beliefs.** It is the abuser's goal to make him believe that he deserves her cruelty and that only through his actions can she make it stop. It is his intent to

get him to feel that he is the cause of any relationship problems, and that her (abusive) behavior is simply a response to him, and therefore acceptable. It is **true**, that only through his actions can she make it stop - **he must have the courage to leave the relationship and avoid further contact with the abuser.**

Emotional Needs  
Exit Affair  
Ex Spouse  
Family  
Forgiveness  
Guilt  
  
Indecision  
Infidelity  
In Laws  
Intellectualization  
Irresponsible  
Life Changes  
Manipulative  
Marriage  
Moral  
Moving  
Narcissism  
Parent Child  
Passive Aggressive  
Practical  
Pre Divorce  
Rational  
Rationalization  
Roles  
Self Care  
Self Care  
Shame  
Split Self Affair  
Split Self Affair  
Spouse  
Starting Over  
Stress  
Support  
Transitions  
Victim  
Worry



Abusers, physical or emotional, are abusive because of their own self-hate and internal issues - not because of anything their partner did. No amount of work or attempting to please will stop an abuser from abusing. They have to be willing to recognize and actually work on their own issues before they can stop inflicting cruelty on the people who love them. In many cases, they don't even love their partners, because they can't even love themselves, and don't feel that they deserve love, even though they crave it. Abusers may genuinely feel bad that they committed another act of abuse, not because they have any real compassion for the person they hurt, but because they get angry at themselves for "screwing up" again. This drives them further into self-loathing, and further into a cycle of abusive behavior.....

A common misconception is that emotional abuse has to take the form of a partner yelling over every little thing, belittling or constantly criticizing a partner. Other forms of emotional abuse, can however, be just as damaging, and far less overt. They can include being disrespectful, discourteous, rude, condescending, patronizing, critical, judgmental, "joking" insults, lying, repeatedly "forgetting" promises and agreements, betrayal of trust, "setting you up", and "revising" history.

To outsiders, abusers often appear as decent, successful, sensitive, calm and nondescript. To their families, they are often controlling, self-absorbed, hypercritical, compulsive, childish and mean-spirited. Most of abusers are actually BOTH. It is the disparity between the one they love and the one that harms them that keeps the man confused. She may intersperse episodes of abuse with words of love, telling him that he is "the best thing that has ever happened" to her, and that he wants to start treating him that way, confusing him further. He keeps hoping that if he does enough, if he gives enough, she will stop hurting him and the loving, caring side of him will prevail. Unfortunately, this is a fallacy that often keeps the man in the relationship for far too long. Ask yourself: Do you have a drawer or closet full of "apology" gifts?

One of the most difficult things about identifying and leaving someone who is a psychological and emotional abuser, is that the REALLY successful abusers are highly intelligent and hide their abuse incredibly well. They may have shelves filled with

Follow this blog



## Archives

August 2013

July 2013

April 2013

March 2013

February 2013

August 2012

April 2012

9

 RSS Feed

 Linked in

their abuse incredibly well. They may have shelves lined with psychology books; many are well-read and very well spoken. They know how to twist and manipulate language and people. They present an exterior of calm, rational self-control, when in reality, they have no internal control of their own pain and chaotic self-hate, so they try to control others, and drive others to LOSE control. If an abuser can cause YOU to lose control, it proves how healthy SHE is, so she can say, explicitly, or implicitly (it's amazing how sighs, and rolling of the eyes can accomplish as much as words), "There you go again, losing it, crying and yelling. I'm not the one who needs therapy, \*you\* are." Unfortunately, if an outsider sees the abuse at all, all they see is an outburst from you, NOT the abuse that triggered it. It

may make you feel as if you have had all your lifelines withdrawn, as if you are going crazy, because nobody believes you that this charming, "nice", helpful, successful woman could be so incredibly psychologically cruel and deliberately hurtful.

Abusers play the push-me-pull-you game threatening to withdraw their affections, dropping statements out of the blue intended to destabilize. This has the effect of making their partners insecure and uncertain, but that plays right into the abuser's hand as he then can accuse the partner of being "too needy". Ploys such as casually talking about how she's thinking of taking a job in another city are one such example of destabilizing talk. In this kind of case, it doesn't start with any discussion of your relationship, or what might happen to it - she talks only of the cool job opportunity, with no recognition of the impact it might have on you, your relationship, or your family.

An emotional abuser may make fun of his partner, or make subtle or not-so-subtle disparaging remarks about him while with other friends, and encourage the friends to make disparaging remarks. She will then be sure to tell him about the jokes they made and act surprised when he doesn't find them "funny". She may even tell him that he is overreacting and that it was "all in fun" and that no harm was meant by the "joking".

Not all emotional abusers criticize their partners directly - sometimes it can be as simple as constantly criticizing how someone keeps a kitchen, or complaining about the mess in the house, or continuous grumbling about the laundry, or

NBI

complaining about the noise and mess the kids make. She will make him think it is his job to keep him happy, and imply that household things are contributing to her unhappiness and bad temper.

An emotional abuser will **seem** to encourage his partner to grow, to develop new skills and expand her horizons, but then will do things to impede or prevent that progress. She will mope and sigh about how little time he has for her now that he is working more or taking that course, or back in school. Or, she will "encourage" him to advance herself, but refuse to provide any additional assistance around the house/family to ease her workload, effectively making it impossible for him to take that course or job. If she DOES provide assistance, she will let him know how HARD it is for her, and how MUCH she is doing for him, every step of the way... she will play the "sad puppy" to the hilt, trying to get him to feel guilty for the burdens he has put on her.

With these highly manipulative, sinister and subtle forms of abuse the covert narcissist wears down the victim's very soul to the point that the narcissist's victim loses interest in things they used to feel passionate about. Once the victim has had enough and tries to leave -- the narcissist goes to extreme lengths not only to pull the victim back in by making **false promises** that she will never deliver on (and *can't* deliver on) and surrounds herself with an army of friends she has turned against you. Not only that, but she has also taken full economic control so that you are left penniless and without resources to leave.

If you're thinking that going to marriage counseling with the narcissist is a good idea -- think again. *Going for relationship counseling or therapy with the narcissist in your life is a bad idea. Narcissists have what is commonly referred to as a **super-human capacity for manipulation, they are cold and calculating and often manipulate the therapist or counselor into taking their side and then they both the narcissist and the therapist proceed to tag-team the victim.*** [1] Even skilled therapist can get caught up in their 'charms' -- which speaks to their high level of manipulation, skill, subtleness and believability. The personality disordered are known for their ability to elicit sympathy from others, appearing altruistic as they demonstrate concern for others while simultaneously committing vile acts against their victims making it a living hell for them.

### The Double-Whammy: When the Narcissist Abuser is Female

The female abuser is protected by society because the popular notion is that males are abusers and females are the victims. The **facts**, however, contradict this assumption: *male victims of*

**domestic abuse wrongly suffer from gender bias despite the appropriate research indicating the complete opposite.**

**The studies clearly show that women are more abusive than men and that 70% of non-reciprocal abuse is actually initiated by women. Further research conducted by the University of Florida shows that women are 70% more likely to physically/sexually abuse their children than men.**

**It is well known that whereas a man has the physique and necessary strength to protect and provide for his family, a woman is naturally more psychologically and emotionally defensive and is therefore more likely to employ deceit and manipulation in order to protect themselves (narcissism) whereas a man may resort to physical violence. This explains why **most physical abusers tend to be male and most emotional/mental abusers tend to be female.****

**There is one main and very significant difference between these two types of abuse. Physical damage results in physical scars whereas emotional and mental scars remain invisible except to the victim who often ends up **remaining silent** because they know from the start that they probably won't be believed. **Mental/emotional abusers get away with their acts much more commonly than physical abusers do.****

On of the leading experts and advocates for the [male victims of female abusers](#) who are narcissistic, borderline, histrionic and anti-social is [Dr. Tara Palmatier](#) who runs the wonderful site: "**Shrink4Men: For Men Who Are Recovering From Relationships With Abusive Women and the Non-Abusive Family and Friends Who Love Them**". The compassionate and grounded philosophy of Dr. Tara's website is described in this way, here:

#### **The philosophy of Shrink4Men is as follows:**

- Abuse is unacceptable from either sex.
- **Abuse is unacceptable even when the perpetrator has a personality disorder or other mental illness.**
- **Tolerating abuse from your wife or girlfriend doesn't make you a good guy; it makes you a victim.** If you remain in the relationship or don't take steps to stop the abuse once you recognize you're being abused, manipulated, controlled or terrorized you are enabling your own mistreatment.
- **Ending a relationship or a marriage in which you're**

**actively being emotionally and/or physically abused**

**doesn't make you a "bad guy"--even if you have children.**

- Double standards and inequities in relationships are unhealthy and unacceptable. You shouldn't have to "take it" or shoulder the entire financial burden because you're a man.
- Both partners' needs and feelings are equally important. Both partners come first in a relationship. Both partners need to compromise.
- **Allowing yourself to be devalued in a relationship is not okay. Relationships should ultimately be a source of comfort and support not a series of endless hostilities, psychological castration, no-win situations, hoop jumping, emotional withdrawal, transactions and resignation.**

When a man is abusive, he's designated a jerk and we encourage his wife or girlfriend to end the relationship. Abusive men are publicly humiliated, vilified and often imprisoned for their violent behavior. When a woman is abusive, we advise her male target that she's just emotional, she was abused as child, so he needs to be patient and sensitive to her feelings and stick with her no matter the personal cost. When a woman is violent toward a man in the context of an intimate relationship, it's still the man who usually gets carted off to jail even when he's the one with the cuts and bruises.

Dr Tara J. Palmatier is in no way minimizing the legitimate abuse many women suffer in their intimate relationships from men. She is, however, trying to *shine the spotlight on the abuse suffered by men who are targets of their female intimate partners and exes, which is just as real and just as painful, if not worse, due to the lack of ready social and personal support.*

### **Leaving Your Abuser: A Monumental (yet Essential and Possible) Task**

One man's story:

She screamed, **"I have never forgiven you for the way you looked at me the first time I abused you."**

"How did I look?" I asked.



*"You looked hurt and shocked and angry and disgusted."*

*"How should I have looked?" I asked.*

*"I needed for you to understand how I was feeling at that time. I needed your support, not your anger," she said.*

*I understood then why she had never apologized for that or for any of her many other vicious assaults on me and why I had to get out.*

If you no longer want to be **abused**, then you have to leave your abuser. If you stay, the abuse will continue. It's really that direct and straightforward.

Here's a good affirmation to keep in mind for those who are beginning the process of departure:

**"I may miss your smile... but I miss mine more." -Laurel House**

To part from your female narcissistic abuser you will need a **team of experts** who understand the unique and deep challenges associated with covert narcissist abuse. This means not going to just *any* therapist but selecting one who is specially trained in males victimized by female abusers who are covert narcissists. It also means gathering up a team of social support -- family and friends -- who will help you through this very difficult process of departure.

What is true for clinician selection is also true for legal counsel: you need legal representation that is especially trained in dealing with parting from spouses who are borderlines, narcissistic, anti-social, etc. There are attorneys who specialize in this.

In short make a plan and build your team of professional and social support. Gather your finances. Tell your story to others. Upon departure and separation plan ways to have 'no contact' with your covert narcissist and ask your lawyer and the courts to assist with this provision. Do your homework, break your silence, plan and begin it -- and take every measure to protect yourself during the process.

For help and guidance see "Leaving an Abusive Wife: Pre-Divorce Checklist" [here](#).

Item #11 on the checklist states:

**Tell it like it really is.** You've probably become an expert at making excuses for your wife's behavior and hiding the truth from everyone outside of your marriage. Now it's time to **expose what's really been going on**. That's not to say that it's wise to parade around with a victim sign across your chest, but now it's important that you face the truth yourself.

It may also be necessary to expose the truth in situations where your wife embarks on a smear campaign against you. It's not uncommon for this type of woman to tell lies about you to your family members (her in-laws), your children, the kids' teachers, your mutual friends, the parents of your kids' playmates, therapists, pediatricians, social workers and whoever else will listen.

You can defend yourself by exposing the truth. This is especially important in the legal context—it's crucial that you control misinformation that could negatively affect you in court.

### End thoughts/ Summary

- The first step is coming to terms with -- and admitting -- the reality of your covert abusive mate, the truth about your situation and the reality about how you've suffered and the fact that you have been victimized by your mate resulting in negative consequences to your life and well-being.
- Learn all that you can about female abusers and their male victims.
- Gather the support of friends and family who care.
- Seek out both a therapist and legal counsel who are experts in dealing with male clients who are victims of psychological and emotionally abusive females.
- Create a plan of departure that **insures your safety**.
- Do all that you can to insure and protect your economic and financial solvency.
- Ask legal counsel about the most potent forms of restraining orders and inquire about a "No Contact" request from the court in your state or jurisdiction.
- Seek out post-departure therapy as you process your years of abuse and your new, abuse-free life. Imagine a life free of abuse and harm.
- Discover ways to live a healthy, fulfilling and satisfying new life as you heal from your abusive relationship.

### FOR FURTHER READING

#### The Unburdened Mind

- Despite this emotional deficiency, most psychopaths learn to mimic the appearance of normal emotion well enough to fit into ordinary society.
- Some psychologists go so far as to label the psychopath "a different kind of human" altogether.
- They lack of empathy yet does not necessarily imply a desire to do harm.
- The same discovery awaits most anyone who becomes close to such an individual. In romantic relationships, a psychopath may be charming and affectionate just long enough to establish intimacy with a partner, and then suddenly become abusive, unfaithful, and manipulative. The bewildered partner might turn to friends and family with their story only

manipulator, the abusive partner might seem to merge and rally that when they, only to be met with disbelief—how could the warm, outgoing individual everyone has come to know possibly be guilty of these acts? All too often, the abused partner blames the situation on themselves, and comes out of the relationship emotionally destroyed.

- <http://www.damninteresting.com/the-unburdened-mind/>

### Leaving Your Abusive Wife a Pre-Divorce Checklist

<http://www.shrink4men.com/2010/10/27/leaving-an-abusive-wife-pre-divorce-checklist/>

### Married To A Narcissist and Waiting for the Good Times to Return?

<http://www.narcissismaddictionsabuse.com/Narcissism-Narcissist%27s-Abuse-Likely-to-Continue.html>

**Emotional Abusers** [http://www.heartless-bitches.com/rants/manipulator/emotional\\_abuse.shtml](http://www.heartless-bitches.com/rants/manipulator/emotional_abuse.shtml)

### Economic Abuse by the Narcissist

<http://www.narcissismaddictionsabuse.com/Is-this-Economic-Abuse.html>

### Is your Narcissist depleting you?

<http://www.narcissismaddictionsabuse.com/Narcissist-Depleting-Emotional-Bank-Account.html>

### Healing After Ending Your Relationship With a Narcissist

*The Path Back to Self: Recovery From Narcissistic Abuse*

<http://www.narcissismfree.com/index.php>

### Is your Partner Obsessed With Controlling All Outcomes?

<http://clintonpower.com.au/2012/01/7-signs-youre-sharing-your-bed-with-a-narcissist/>

## Comments

Anon

09/02/2013 10:14am

Fuck this article, I've been trying to work through covert narcissistic tendencies in myself and I found this while doing research. I'm not a monster, I don't read psych books to find new ways to 'emotionally rape' people. You can help victims of abuse without abusing people that have mental health issues. Some of us are aware of what we are and try every day to change

... to change.

[Reply](#)

**Rune Fardal**

09/07/2013 8:25pm

very good description, CN can often be confused with depression, but they have this grandiosity, hypokonder traits and hysteric traits. They also show help searching attitude, make people feel sympathy for them. They are emotional predators, playing the victim role.

[Reply](#)

## Leave a Reply

Name (required)

Email (not published)

Website

Comments

Notify me of new comments to this post by email

**Submit**

Content copyright 2013. opendoorthery.net All rights reserved.