

The Narcissist In Your Life

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Covert Narcissists Induce Shame in their Spouses

Posted on [March 2, 2014](#) by [Linda Martinez-Lewi, PhD](#)

The covert narcissist is the trickiest and most subtle individual to identify as a personality disorder. He or she appears to be impeccable in facade, character, integrity, professional status, values, morals—the list is a long one. You have met many covert narcissists without knowing this. Don't blame yourself or expect that you would recognize these individuals. It takes a lot of research and deep observation to identify one of these hidden in plain sight toxic people. Many of them wear the robes of holiness and goodness. They are beyond reproach. Often they hold unquestioned authority as members in high standing of spiritual movements or religious organizations. This makes it very difficult to question the true content of their characters. Those who are very powerful and influential covert narcissists in the world are also viewed as “heroes” in many people's eyes. Don't be fooled by the titles, degrees, professional training, adulation, prizes, medals, public praise that others receive. For the covert narcissist this is a perfect setting for him or her to get the ego supplies that are so desperately needed to fulfill an extreme sense of self entitlement.

Being married to a covert narcissist the spouse is continually subjected to injected feelings of shame. They might even use the old phrase: “You should be ashamed of yourself.” You say to yourself—“For what?” But beneath the surface you feel on a visceral level that you are wrong and that there is something intrinsically the matter with you. This is a horrible trap. You have no reason to feel shame and to be emotionally burdened by a dreadful lie. The narcissist is bullying you with this powerful cruel projection to control you and make your life a living hell. Those who have a conscience feel shame from time to time. The narcissist does not have a conscience and is shameless. How absurd when you look at this rationally and understand that you have been terribly wronged and treated with complete disrespect.

There is a time of decision when being married to a covert narcissist is no longer an option. The loud siren is going off. “Leave, let go and lead your own life!” Study the narcissistic personality in-depth so that you understand their true nature, including that one who is hiding behind “goodness and “perfection”—the covert lying in the weeds ready to ambush you. Learn to appreciate your true nature, to become more entitled to true respect, to recognize your many creative gifts, to become more acquainted and comfortable with your true self—the authenticity of you as an individual.

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10 Responses to *Covert Narcissists Induce Shame in their Spouses*



Liz's says:

March 19, 2014 at 7:34 pm

Comment: From Liz's

You capture covert narcissism better than anyone. My ex fit all the signs of a narcissist but had that quiet, insidious evil that was so hard to spot. I knew the crazymaking, silent treatments, unsteady feeling of other women was not normal but I couldn't put my finger on what was wrong. Every time I tried to escape he would come on strong with gifts, fake empathy, attention.....back in web. Never did the rage thing so often described. Cool, calm,a predator in disguise. Please keep writing. You have this down to a science. I just keep shaking my head as I read your posts. Finally out of the web and fighting the Hoovering. I will never go back to that dark place.

[Reply](#)



Jen says:

November 13, 2014 at 9:56 pm

How long did it take you to realize what was going on?

[Reply](#)



Roscoe says:

October 5, 2014 at 11:43 pm

It is as if you know my mother. We had secret conversations when she would say to me all sorts of horrible things. I call them The Mommy and Me Talks. We don't speak anymore. Thank you for your site and hard work.

[Reply](#)



jt says:

October 25, 2014 at 6:42 pm

Yes good description. It is called closet narcissist by dr masterson. My mom is like that. Ive been diagnosed with schizoid pd. Now on the path of recovery. I used to be fused with my mom and others. As if i didnt had a place of my own in this world. I could only relate to others as an extension of them. Feeling as if i were everybody elses their property. Narcissist make your way of existence a living hell. Though this is surprisingly unknown by most psychologists.

[Reply](#)



David says:

November 12, 2014 at 6:32 pm

I may be a covert narcissist riddled with low self esteem. 31 years old longing for a relationship but never attaining Just wanting the admiration of someone. I suppose you think it is 'good' that I am not in a relationship with someone wreaking my toxic ways upon some unsuspecting woman. Good for you yes but the feelings of suicide are only going to get stronger... or is that just my narcissitic self just trying to make you feel guilty, you decide 😊

[Reply](#)



Teboho Motaung says:

December 23, 2014 at 3:35 pm

You are an angel sent;what you have explained has been baffling me for years with this person i am having kids with.She

came out as being picture perfect and emotional stability and yet was an emotional rack ,which was never satisfied,he more i do for her the more she does not see value and the more it seems that i have to carry the burden of loving her on my shoulders without her reciprocating.Leaving her has been a freedom personified,though it was difficult in the beginning with surrendering my kids to this woman. i have seen the light and your article reinforced my commitment not to go back.She is never satisfied and finds fault with everybody and everything.Thank you in South Africa.

[Reply](#)



todds says:

December 25, 2014 at 9:41 am

Even now, after 3+ yrs divorced, I look DOWN when my BPD ex looks at me in front of the kids during visitation with her accusing eyes .

How well conditioned am I ? What the he77? how to recover self worth?

thanks

[Reply](#)



Susie says:

February 3, 2015 at 3:50 am

Liz – I had a similar experience too...my narc was always seemingly in control, but couldn't speak directly about issues. Instead, he directed sarcastic comments to the kids, the dog, or whoever may have been around, just loud enough so I could hear and very passive-aggressive in other ways – but no rage...rather gritting-teeth control. In retrospect, I now realize that when he was involved with women, he became smug, empowered and the devaluing increased. If I confronted him about my uneasiness (even directly asking him about cheating), he would lie. He somehow enjoyed pulling one/many over on me although I don't see how it could be that satisfying if I didn't know (suffer) the reality. He was sadistic and living with him was craziness. Yet other times he was fakily "nice" so it was confusing for me (and the kids).

[Reply](#)



Diane says:

February 9, 2015 at 2:09 pm

Is it possible to stay with a narcissist and break his narcissistic habits? If I have good support?

[Reply](#)



Lorie says:

February 12, 2015 at 7:02 pm

Hi Diane, After reading some of this I was just wondering the same thing. I just figured out after almost 15 years of marriage that I am married to a Covert Narcissist. It has always been about him & I feel like I am crazy & an emotional wreck.

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