

Synopsis

Do you know someone who is overly arrogant, shows an extreme lack of empathy, or exhibits an inflated sense of entitlement? Do they exploit others, or engage in magical thinking? These are all traits of narcissistic personality disorder, and when it comes to dealing with narcissists, it can be difficult to get your point across. So how do you handle the narcissistic people in your life? You might interact with them in social or professional settings, and you might even love oneâ€”so ignoring them isnâ€™t really a practical solution. They're frustrating, and maybe even intimidating, but ultimately, you need to find a way of communicating effectively with them. *Disarming the Narcissist, Second Edition*, will show you how to move past the narcissist's defenses using compassionate, empathetic communication. You'll learn how narcissists view the world, how to navigate their coping styles, and why, oftentimes, it's sad and lonely being a narcissist. By learning to anticipate and avoid certain hot-button issues, you'll be able to relate to narcissists without triggering aggression. By validating some common narcissistic concerns, you'll also find out how to be heard in conversation with a narcissist. This book will help you learn to meet your own needs while side-stepping unproductive power struggles and senseless arguments with someone who is at the center of his or her own universe. This new edition also includes new chapters on dealing with narcissistic women, aggressive and abusive narcissists, strategies for safety, and the link between narcissism and sex addiction. Finally, you'll learn how to set limits with your narcissist and when it's time to draw the line on unacceptable behavior.

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Customer Reviews

I'm horrified that this book was written by a professional claiming to be an expert in Narcissism! I nearly bought this book for my mother who is trapped in an abusive marriage with a toxic narcissist (my father). This book encourages exactly the kind of enabling, self-immolating behavior that she is currently ruining her life with. Thank god I didn't send her this "expert" endorsement of her destructive, co-dependent fealty to someone who is a true psychological predator and parasite. Now, I understand this is a pop-psychology self-help book, and thus shouldn't be held to a very high standard. The problem is, it's written about such a dangerous group of people that it becomes flagrantly irresponsible to be so naive, vague, and incomplete when instructing the partners of these serial abusers. Additionally, the author claims to be a professional expert with 20+ years of experience dealing with this specific personality disorder. This to me, crosses the line. I find this book to be literally dangerous reading material for a VERY vulnerable target audience. The book is also pretty poorly written. Most of the advice is so vague it's nearly useless (general visualizations, basic communication skills like mirroring, advice on finding your authentic voice with no tools to actually get there) and the descriptions of narcissism are far too generalized for a one-topic book. The whole section on "schemas" (presented as ground-breaking and utterly brilliant) is simplistic and in no way specific to narcissistic relationships. I'll summarize for you everything you need to know about schemas - 1) You have buttons, created in your sad childhood. 2) Sometimes people push your buttons, which makes you feel flustered. Wow. Mind blown. That's 40+ pages of a 150-page book.

One never "disarms" a narcissist, and narcissists never voluntarily disarm unless one has leverage over them--in an arena that they care about, which isn't much other than themselves. The best part of the book is the cognitive-behavioral orientation that one uses in treating a narcissist. The narcissist's "schemas" do not allow the narcissist to "care" (about others), and since they are unexpressed and largely covert, therapy involves making the narcissist's "assumptions" and "schemas" explicit. In so doing, the therapist maintains a balance, always trying to "side" with the narcissist's desire to be loved, admired, etc., but not caving into the narcissist's grandiose demands

and ultimately. I am skeptical about the subtitle, "Surviving and Thriving with the Self-Absorbed," in addition to the use of the term "disarming." I have never known anyone, and especially children, who has learned to "thrive" with a narcissist. The only question in living with a narcissist is how large the collateral damage extends in terms of relationships and time-through-life. My brother was a flagrant narcissist. Yes, he had all the "little boy" defenses that Ms. Beharry describes. He was divorced twice, fathered two children out of wedlock in a third non-married relationship, lost jobs due to his unpredictable nature, threatened to sue his brothers and sisters, and was a serious substance abuser. Yes, he was also a lawyer, which is a profession loaded with professional narcissists. He hated therapists. He raised one borderline survivor of his narcissism, a young person who truly is crippled, and who also hates therapists. Could he have been disarmed? Absolutely not. Could any of his wives, live-in's, girlfriends, or children "thrive"? Absolutely not.

I really wanted help dealing with my abusive narcissistic spouse but this is completely unhelpful. The reason is because, although we all have schemas that affect our interactions, we do not all operate based on them and we can control our schemas. I have the abandonment/self sacrifice schemas, and I recognize that this makes it uncomfortable to be assertive and stand up for myself. However, I have stood up for myself numerous times when dealing with my narcissistic spouse. Unfortunately, compassionate standing up for your needs does not seem to get through to a narcissist. You can speak up in the way that the book suggests but this will likely be ineffective. Dr. Beharry seems to suggest that people are unaware of their own schemas and that they operate behind the scenes (I think these are her exact words) but this is not always the case. When I feel discomfort I know it's because I fear abandonment and I stand up for myself anyways. But the narcissist has always raged against me for trying to convey my dissatisfaction with his behaviors. Also, I am quite sure my spouse also knows his schemas because he is well aware of his damaging childhood memories yet he chooses to act out on it in narcissistic and abusive ways. The thing about narcissists is that they choose to belittle, lie etc.. And know they are doing it..but they will justify it and blame everyone else. Others have been abused and do not end up narcissistic. This book focuses too much on changing how you interact with your abuser in ways that blames you for putting up with the abuse. No one asks or allows themselves to be abused. Everyone makes their own decisions and abusers are the ones who choose to abuse. And no matter what their childhoods were like, they have to decide how to behave.

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