

Borderline and Narcissistic Personality Disorders Reviewed

Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) show good evidenced-based results
The client learns to Observe/accept thoughts, internal messages and accompanied behaviors, yet this is typically a long-term therapy process, due to the resistant nature of this disorder.

In some cases, Internal Family Systems approaches that connect with the somatic anxiety, combined with various forms of authentic movement exercises have shown good results.

Fear on client's part if they don't seize control their world will fall apart. Thus impulsively, over reactive, getting into relationships quickly, feeling emptiness, and paranoid ideation are typical patterns. Additionally they display risky behavior, ie: driving under influence.

As partner or support person you will need to set/have healthy boundaries. Don't get sucked into their need for attention, they are bottomless pit, they will suck you dry. Don't normalize their behavior.

Don't allow boundary crossing, calling you at 3am for example. They will not snap out if it. You can assure them a 1000 times, that's enabling them. They need professional long-term help. Make it very clear you have compassion for them, but do not say it repeatedly-because cause they need endless reassurance-they become addicted to reassurance. They only improve in qualified treatment, long-term.

They also will attempt splitting, playing someone against another. As in case of co-parenting for example, they will play other parent against child, or place child in adult situation, and play child against the other parent etc. There is a significant lack of empathy and inability to self regulate, thus the external locus of control create a chronic dependence on others to prop them up emotionally as a way to ease internal conflicted stated mentally and somatically.

Observe the formation the Triangle where the personality disordered person plays the role of Persecutor, then Victim, and then either rescuer, or seeks to be rescued.

Remember if in a relationship with a person with BPD:

- You Didn't cause it
- You Can't cure it
- You Can't control it

Classic narcissist and malignant narcissist:

They need to be center of attention, everyone else is a threat. They need to have others tell them how wonderful, smart, funny etc they are. Otherwise they react and lash out.

They don't have ability to reflect feelings, or be empathetic. This is why it's hard to have close relationships. They are arrogant, don't read the room (unaware of their impact on others-only see themselves as charming), not interested in what others think. All they are looking for is attention. If you stand up to them they will try and take you out of their world, gossip and silence you.

Their one go to way of "interacting" is to gaslight, making you the problem.

- they will talk to you in a way that everything is your fault.
- Why are you so sensitive, what's wrong w/you, your making this too big of a deal, it's all your fault! You don't like it when I'm happy, you just want to punish me, it you, not me that's wrong!!

The more serious category is the malignant narcissist. They dwell in what is oftentimes called the dark triad:

- psychopathic, narcissistic, Machiavellian. "Machiavellians are sly, deceptive, distrusting, and manipulative. They are characterized by cynical and misanthropic beliefs, callousness, a striving for ... money, power, and status, and the use of cunning influence tactics.

Get them before they get you mentality. In attack mode constantly! They exploit others, brag about hurting others! They will use/abuse you-get them out of your life. They make up 10-15% of population, even higher among popular people. The world rewards aggressive, bad behavior (loud mouth, self aggrandizing, cunning, boss etc).

Note: Psychopaths or antisocial PD do not feel anxiety or fear of getting caught. Narcissists feel anxiety.

These individuals cannot give in w/ discussion, they have to win or they will become unraveled and deep insecurities will be exposed. So false sense of security is always afoot.

When you leave relationship that's highest risk time to get others back under their control. Domestic violence requires safe exit plan for at least several weeks minimum.

Do not confront them, or criticize-it won't get you anywhere. They will attack others and gaslight (what's wrong w/you, why can't you just get along with me?)
Don't defend yourself, if you start, you'll never stop. It doesn't matter what you say, it will not change them, they are just gathering ammunition! They will share something with you to gather ammunition to use against you later.

Covert narcissist:

Difference between NPD and narcissist behavior.

Grandiose-they think they're something special and need to be center of attention. Can they give/take relationally? Do they need something emotional from others. Do they have empathy?

There is the presence of an identify disturbance, which manifests as hard to attach, chronic boredom, need a lot of stimulation. Real feelings of inferiority, and this is masked by superiority! They are shallow, empty. If you challenge them, they may rage, challenge you. May leaders socially show narcissistic traits. They are bold, brash, leaders, and their self absorbed behavior is reinforced! They have a platform to rule and people praise them, place them on a pedestal.

Healthy individuals don't need this. They know their worth!

Guidelines:

- Ask open ended questions by expressing yourself briefly, then follow up w/what did you hear me say? Otherwise the narcissist will interpret it as I'm bad, or feels misunderstood.
- They require perfect mirroring, and then pick apart any paraphrasing and expect others to do it perfectly.
- There is a severe lack of empathy when in presence of Borderline or Narcissistic PD individuals, hence they energies that are directed toward being validated, and when others do not meet them perfectly, they feel justified to discard others or abuse them on various levels.
- You may well feel like you are the one with the "problem" due to being gaslighted. The more one is around the dysfunction, you may feel worse, more crazy. This is a sign you have lost your center, and perhaps fell into the trap of becoming isolated from healthy social support and reflection of what healthy interaction feels and looks like.
- Seek out professional help or support groups to validate feelings, while developing plans to reclaim your independence, healthy boundaries and process through what might manifest as guilt while you recover your independence from unhealthy influences of those who present with these various personality disorders.
- Those with these disorders, when recognized and take ownership of their dysfunctional behaviors can engage in relationships with close monitoring. However the malignant narcissists and certainly those coupled with psychopathic traits, need to be avoided unless very closely monitored by professional supervision.
- In some cases, polygraph exams are warranted to monitor behaviors and self reporting.

References:

1. The Narcissistic/Borderline Couple, A Psychoanalytic Perspective on Marital Treatment, by Joan Lachkar, Ph.D.
2. Personal Perspectives over 30 years in private practice working with couples and individuals individually and in group settings.
3. Dr Phil website and podcast discussions.

