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Garden-variety narcissism

- Is oblivious to fairness
- Thinks, talks about self most of the time
- Craves attention
- Demands admiration
- Exaggerates talents and achievements
- Believes in own uniqueness
- Wide, fast mood swings
- Difficulty understanding or considering others

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Extremely self-righteous and judgmental

- Prone to bully others
- Often believe the victim deserves the treatment or brought it on themselves
- Never take responsibility for actions that hurt others

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For narcissists, whether online or in real life

- It's all about micromanaging and controlling others
- To their advantage

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Manipulative narcissists

- Are covert aggressors
- They use subtle tactics to charm, disarm, and take advantage of you
- They also enjoy pitting people against one another

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30 year study of narcissism and empathy

- NPI-Narcissistic Personality Disorder
- Correlates with real-world behavior
 - Overrate their own ability
 - Lash out angrily to slightest criticism
 - More likely than average to bully
 - Less likely to volunteer to help others

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NPD

- Does not react well to criticism or critique
- Troubled relationships throughout life
- Goal to be more powerful, successful, desirable
- Manipulates others to gain success
- Jealousy is pervasive
- Obsessed with themselves
- Cannot set realistic goals
- Constant hunger for attention, admiration
- Easily hurt or feel rejected

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Narcissism is marked by

- a sense of entitlement
- a sense of superiority
- a willingness to exploit
- impulsiveness
- a lack of empathy
- retaliatory aggression when the inflated ego is threatened

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Narcissistic Injury

- Any threat (real or imagined) to the narcissist's grandiose self-perception
- Or anything less than the special treatment he or she believes is deserved.
- Even a slight disagreement can be perceived as a humiliation or rejection.
- The narcissist is constantly on the lookout for slights; is hypervigilant.

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The self as world view—as an infant...

- Infants don't give thought to the convenience of others.
- Are programmed to think only of their needs and wants.
- Are not programmed to think of the needs of others.

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The difference between empathy and compassion

- Is the difference in knowing and doing



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Why are we talking about this?

- 70% of college students
- Score higher on narcissism and lower on empathy than did the average student 30 years ago.

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Carte blanche esteem

- The current definition of self-esteem used by educators and psychologists seems to be...
- Feeling good about oneself regardless of social attributes.***

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What caused this rise in narcissism?

- Far less social pressure to demonstrate character than in past generations.
- Children who once would have been disciplined for spoiled behavior are now allowed to dictate the dinner menu, or veto a family move.



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Probable causes

- Excessive praise fostering an unrealistic view of self
- Overindulgence and spoiling with the expectation of continuance from others
- Failing to impose adequate discipline which prepares one for maturity and adulthood
- Idealization of the child which sets unrealistic expectations

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Free play versus “play dates”

- In free play children learn to control their own lives, solve their own problems and deal effectively with fear and anger—thereby protecting themselves from anxiety and depression.
- Learn how to win *and lose!*
- Free play expands options and creativity
- Free play overcomes narcissism, builds capacity for empathy.

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In free play you can quit

- All kids have a biological drive to play with other children
- To keep fun going each child is motivated to keep the others happy
- They must learn to listen to one another, understand one another.
- If a child fails at understanding others, they will quit and the child won't be able to play.

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Free play teaches

- Empathy
- Negotiation
- Cooperation
- Impulse control
- Emotional regulation

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By depriving children of opportunities to play on their own away from adult supervision and control

- We are depriving them of opportunities to learn how to take control of their own lives

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We may think we are protecting them, but...

- we are diminishing their joy.
- preventing them from developing self- control
- preventing them from discovering what they most love to do
- and increasing the odds they will suffer from anxiety, depression, and other disorders.

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Children who engage in free play

- Demonstrate more empathy
- More ability to take other's perspective

- When play is added, these abilities increase and children get along better with others.

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Probable causes of narcissism

- The combination of indulgence and coldness may be a potent brew for cultivating narcissistic personality disorder.






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In the US

- Young kids are learning to code
- But not contribute or cooperate

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Subgroups of the family

- Executive  
- Parental  
- Sibling 

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The roots of narcissism

- **Placing momentary emotional needs over the feelings and wishes of others**
- Failure to play by accepted rules of the game
- Selfish behavior which defies logic

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Self esteem

- Psychoanalytic theory: narcissists actually have low self-esteem and that their narcissism is just a cover.
- New research: narcissism actually correlates quite positively with positive self image.
- Deep down inside, narcissists think they're awesome!
- You cannot cure narcissism with greater self image.

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School of hard knocks
 ("Psychology of Victimhood," 2003).

- "Psychotherapy sees many normal life events as trauma rather than as character building experiences.
- This has political consequences.
- Individuals are freed from moral responsibility for what they do or what happened to them and therefore are no longer citizens, but patients or victims"

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Imperative clinical note!

- Narcissism thrive when people allow themselves to be scape-goated for the narcissists bad behavior.
- *It is a condition that appears in relationship and not in isolation.*
- It takes more than one person for this pattern of behavior to continue.

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Therapy goals: what you change

- ***is how people deal with NPDs, not the narcissist.***

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The cheating narcissist research

- More likely to cheat on their partners
- Not very susceptible to guilt
- Tend to get a “thrill” from keeping their others guessing
- Like to feel in control of their relationships
- Simply feel entitled to things they want

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What to do

- **Do not take it personally.**
- If someone you know talks with minimal listening, first and foremost do not take it personally.
- Dismissing what you say as wrong or irrelevant says more about that person than it does about you or what you have said.
- **Repeat what you said.**
- Just as you would repeat, perhaps more loudly, what you were trying to say to a hearing impaired person, find ways to repeat, tactfully, the message that you were trying to communicate.

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Treatment in a nutshell

- *Respect*
- *Reality check*
- *Regulation of emotions*

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Earn it to own it

- Entitlement is the feeling that we deserve something, whatever it may be, regardless of what we may or may not have done to earn it.
- People's lives become more meaningful when they have constructive goals that make a difference for others.

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Compassion requires us

- To grow up
- To step out of self-as-context
- To have clear boundaries
- To be curious about others' experience
- To imagine yourself as the other
- To understand others enough to determine their needs

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Daniel Goleman

- A 'reparative relationship' can be very beneficial in personality disordered individuals.
- True self esteem includes a deep-down self acceptance which includes one's flaws.

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