

## Handout 1: How to Spot a Narcissistic Person

### 1. RED FLAGS — VISIBLE FROM THE START

|                                 |                                                                                                                                                |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Magnetic presence</b>        | Commands the room. Charismatic, larger than life. People feel privileged to be near them — something magnetic pulls you in.                    |
| <b>Love bombing</b>             | Excessive attention early on: remembered preferences, extravagant gifts, intense declarations of connection. Too much, too fast.               |
| <b>Grandiosity</b>              | Self-assured to the point of arrogance. Brags, takes credit for others' work, exaggerates achievements. Convinced no one can match them.       |
| <b>Rushing the relationship</b> | Moving in together, marriage, children — or intense work partnerships, best friends over night — early on.                                     |
| <b>Blame shifting</b>           | It is always someone else's fault. They are the superior victim in conflicts.                                                                  |
| <b>Need for control</b>         | Monitors whereabouts, contacts, activities. Often mistaken for care or protectiveness.                                                         |
| <b>Gaslighting</b>              | Systematically rewrites what happened. The other person begins to doubt their own memory, perception, and sanity.                              |
| <b>Entitlement</b>              | Expects special treatment. Bends rules. Often in conflict with the law.                                                                        |
| <b>Need for attention</b>       | Need to be in the center. Feeds of other people's attention (narcissistic supply). Will exaggerate, lie and cause drama only to get attention. |
| <b>Lack of empathy</b>          | Often cold, disinterested or even cruel in their emotional response. Subtle put-down disguised as a joke.                                      |

With **covert narcissists** the abuse is largely energetic: felt by everyone, impossible to name. They tend to not raise their voice — yet shift the emotional climate of a room through a look, a sigh or silence. Often appear overly sensitive, or hide behind a spiritual facade. Withdraws, appears wounded, leaves others searching desperately for what they did wrong — with no answer given.

**Covert narcissism** is much easier to miss. Whereas **grandios narcissistic people** are easy to spot once we know what to look for (see list above).

#### Key insight

What the narcissistic person shows in public and what happens behind closed doors are two entirely different realities. The gap between them is not incidental — it is the architecture of the abuse.

## 2. HOW YOU MAY FEEL IN THEIR PRESENCE

|                               |                                                                                                                                |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Planning conversations</b> | You rehearse what to say, choose the right moment, carefully calibrate your tone before addressing a difficult topic.          |
| <b>Tip-toeing</b>             | You scan their mood, clear difficulties out of the way, and adjust how you dress, talk, and behave.                            |
| <b>Appeasement</b>            | You cancel your plans, cook their favorite food, use intimacy — anything to keep the peace in order to stay safe.              |
| <b>Self-doubt</b>             | “Maybe I am not forgiving enough.” “Maybe I just need to change.” Their narrative has become your inner voice.                 |
| <b>Confusion</b>              | You doubt your own memory. You want to record conversations to make sure you remember correctly.                               |
| <b>Second chance</b>          | You give second chances again and again, hoping for that loving person he/she was in the beginning to return.                  |
| <b>Lack of safety</b>         | One wrong word can set off hours or days of devaluation. You are always braced for it. Your nervous system does not feel safe. |

This handout is not a diagnostic tool. Narcissism lives on a spectrum. However, anyone with strong narcissistic traits can cause profound harm. What matters is not the label, but the pattern. And the pattern tends not to change.