

A woman with curly hair is in the foreground, looking angry with her arms crossed. In the background, a man is smiling and gesturing with his hand.

# What Is Narcissistic Personality Disorder?

**A comprehensive guide to helping you understand narcissistic personality disorder and abuse**

# Even though abusive partners may have narcissistic personality disorder, abuse is still their choice.

Narcissistic personality disorder is a mental disorder that many survivors of abuse come across in their search for answers when questioning why their partner is making the choices they're making.

This toolkit will provide you with these insights and more. Inside you'll find:

- Helpful Articles
- Recommended Books
- Lists
- Danger Assessments
- In-Depth Videos
- Survey Results
- Support Communities
- How to Find Help



There are hundreds of articles on DomesticShelters.org covering the many facets of domestic violence. Here are links to those that will help you answer the question, “What is Narcissistic Personality Disorder?”

[A Narcissistic Abuser Will Never Change](#)

Why no amount of love, counseling or batterer intervention is guaranteed to end abuse.

[What Is Narcissistic Personality Disorder?](#)

A guide that answers the question “What is NPD?”

[Are Abusers Narcissists, Psychopaths or Sociopaths?](#)

The differences between these three personality disorders.

[Abuse Cannot Be Blamed on Mental Illness](#)

Getting help for mental illness doesn't mean abuse will end.

## [20 Ways Manipulative Narcissists Silence You: Part I](#)

Learn the ways some abusers with mental illness negate responsibility for their choices.

## [Ways Manipulative Narcissists Silence You: Part II](#)

Does your abuser shift blame, change the subject, name-call or nitpick?

## [Ways Manipulative Narcissists Silence You: Part III](#)

Toxic partners tend to insult and devalue their exes, which is a warning sign for your future.

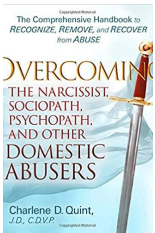
## [Ways Manipulative Narcissists Silence You: Part IV](#)

Narcissists enjoy making malicious remarks at a survivor's expense.

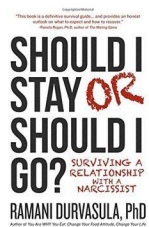


Reading books can be a helpful resource to understand if you're a victim of abuse and understand the abuser's behavior.

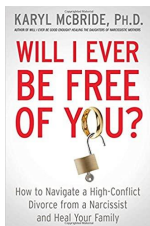
## Here are our recommended reads:



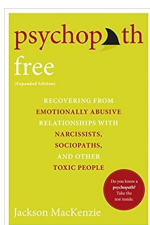
*Overcoming the Narcissist, Sociopath, Psychopath, and Other Domestic Abusers: The Comprehensive Handbook to Recognize, Remove, and Recover from Abuse.* a ground-breaking comprehensive handbook that contains everything a woman needs to know about how to recognize abuse, break free, and thrive. This landmark definitive guide details the entire process of identifying abuse and abusers' tactics, describing the practical steps a victim must take to leave safely, and guiding victims through the steps to find hope.



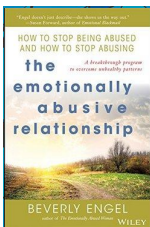
*Should I Stay or Should I Go: Surviving A Relationship with a Narcissist.* Do you feel like you are talking and talking and your partner is never listening? Do you feel like you keep saying the same thing over and over again? Does your partner make promises, only to break or betray your trust repeatedly? Is your partner controlling or just plain mean?



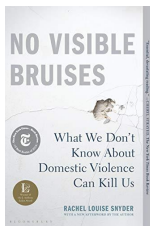
*Will I Ever Be Free of You?: How to Navigate a High-Conflict Divorce from a Narcissist and Heal Your Family.* The author offers advice that will help you protect and nurture yourself and your children through your difficult divorce, from separating from your narcissistic partner and navigating the court system, where a narcissist can be especially destructive, to a restorative healing program of trauma recovery.



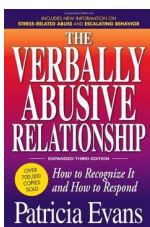
*Psychopath Free (Expanded Edition): Recovering from Emotionally Abusive Relationships With Narcissists, Sociopaths, and Other Toxic People.* Have you ever been in a relationship with a psychopath? Chances are, even if you did, you would never know it. Psychopaths are cunning charmers and master manipulators, to the point where you start to accept the most extreme behaviors as normal. Even if it hurts you. Guide for survivors written by a survivor, offering hope for healing and thriving after psychopathic abuse.



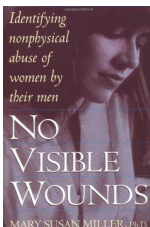
*The Emotionally Abusive Relationship: How to Stop Being Abused and How to Stop Abusing.* Whether you suspect you are being emotionally abused, fear that you might be emotionally abusing your partner, or think that both you and your partner are emotionally abusing each other, this book is for you. In this breakthrough book, Beverly Engel, one of the world's leading experts on the subject, shows us what it is and what to do about it.



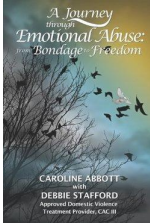
*No Visible Bruises: What We Don't Know About Domestic Violence Can Kill Us.* In *No Visible Bruises*, journalist Rachel Louise Snyder gives context for what we don't know we're seeing. She frames this urgent and immersive account of the scale of domestic violence in our country around key stories that explode the common myths-that if things were bad enough, victims would just leave; that a violent person cannot become nonviolent; that shelter is an adequate response; and most insidiously that violence inside the home is a private matter, sealed from the public sphere and disconnected from other forms of violence.



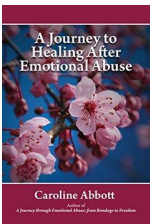
*The Verbally Abusive Relationship, Expanded Third Edition: How to recognize it and how to respond.* Learn why verbal abuse is more widespread than ever, how to recognize and deal with it safely, and most important, how to lead a happier, healthier life. Also, outside stresses driving the rise in verbal abuse, mitigate the effects on relationships, levels of abuse (insidious put-downs, tantrums of name-calling, screaming, and threats that can escalate into physical abuse).



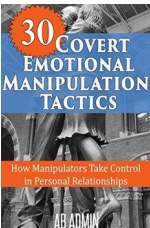
*No Visible Wounds: Identifying Non-Physical Abuse of Women by Their Men.* Does your partner become jealous, prevent you from seeing friends, deny you access to bank accounts, credit cards, or the car, call you derogatory names, humiliate you in front of the kids or turn minor incidents into major arguments? If you answer "yes" to the questions, chances are you are suffering from nonphysical battering, controlling, tyrannical behavior that is domestic violence.



*A Journey through Emotional Abuse: From Bondage to Freedom.* Many Christians believe domestic abuse doesn't occur in Christian homes. Sadly, religion is not a deterrent. The author answers the difficult question: Am I being abused? along with theological questions like: Do I have to submit to this? Does God care about me? Does the Bible say I can leave him? This book provides Christian people the guidance needed within the religious context.

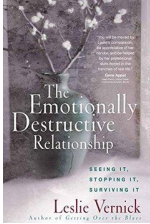


*A Journey to Healing After Emotional Abuse.* Coming from a Christian perspective, the book is a holistic journey of healing the mind, body and soul for women who have suffered emotional abuse. Helps readers set boundaries with a former abuser, learn self-care, strengthens the relationship with God, create a path to forgiveness, explore readiness for new relationships, if not, contentment as a single person who brings glory to God.

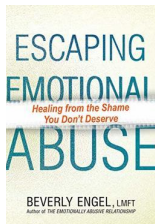


*30 Covert Emotional Manipulation Tactics: How Manipulators Take Control In Personal Relationships.* Learn the manipulator's game, so they can't play it with you. Identifying covert manipulation is tricky. This short but powerful 33-page book will teach you how to identify the 30 tactics manipulators use to get what they want. You'll also learn to spot the warning signs within yourself that expose covert manipulation is taking place, even if you can't identify the specific tactics being used.





*The Emotionally Destructive Relationship: Seeing It, Stopping It, Surviving It.* Leslie Vernick, counselor and social worker, has witnessed the devastating effects of emotional abuse. Many, including many in the church, have not addressed this form of destruction in families and relationships because it is difficult to talk about. With godly guidance and practical experience, Vernick offers an empathetic approach to recognizing an emotionally destructive relationship.



*Escaping Emotional Abuse: Healing from the Shame You Don't Deserve.* In *The Emotionally Abused Woman*, therapist Beverly Engel introduced the concept of emotional abuse, one of the most subtle, yet devastating forms of abuse within a relationship. Now Engel exposes the most destructive technique the abuser uses to break our spirit and gain control--and guides readers on how to free themselves from the shame that can keep them from the life (and the love) they deserve.



Sometimes lists are easier on the mind because they are uncluttered and to-the-point. If you'd rather read a few items versus articles or books, these lists are for you.

To view all list items at once, click the SEE ALL button located below the list text.

- [35 Ways to Recognize Emotional Abuse](#)
- [25 Risk Factors for Domestic Violence](#)
- [19 Myths About Domestic Violence](#)
- [20 Things Abusers Say](#)



There are two well-known, free, online assessment tools available that can help you understand the level of danger that may be present, and how abuse can escalate.

### The Danger Assessment

The free tool helps determine the level of danger an abused person has of being killed by an intimate partner.

### MOSAIC

Using a series of questions, this tool assesses how similar a situation is to other situations that have gotten worse.

Click video thumbnail to watch





A lot of lessons can be taken from people who have been through it before. Check out the following survey results to learn from the experiences of others.

- [Which abuser\(s\) have you encountered?](#)
- [Did an abuser ever use sleep deprivation as a form of abuse?](#)
- [Which type of abuse did you experience first?](#)
- [Did you find verbal abuse more or less damaging, long-term, than physical abuse?](#)



**Online forums and chats can help you connect with others who are in or have faced similar situations, and find support and ideas from the survivor community.**

[AfterSilence.org](https://www.aftersilence.org) aims to help victims become survivors and to communicate in the recovery of domestic and sexual violence. It offers an active message board and chat room for rape, sexual assault, sexual abuse, incest and molestation survivors. There are over 31,000 members and about 1,000,000 posts, including recent posts and many useful posts from days and months past.

[Pathways to Safety International](https://www.pathways.org) If you're an American overseas, your situation is different than 99% of your fellow citizens, and this site will be a wonderful resource for you. Among the services is a 24-hour response to emails, as well as international phone options.

[DomesticShelters.org Facebook Page](#) offers one of the most active places where domestic violence survivors connect. You'll find conversation, past experiences and unvarnished stories, and occasionally advice from professionals who have joined in on a topic.

[DomesticShelters.org Facebook Group](#) is a private group designed to be a safe space for domestic abuse victims, survivors, advocates and others affected by abuse to support one another through meaningful dialogue and helpful insight.

[Fort Refuge](#) is a clever, grassroots site run by survivors for fellow survivors as a safe place to come together and discuss their struggles and victories in healing from various types of abuse. Though the forum and chat do not boast the same numbers as some of the larger organizations, they are one of the more active conversation places on the internet currently. They also add new content to their site regularly.

Love is Respect - National Teen Dating Helpline focuses on teen relationships and can be accessed by phone, text or live chat. It offers real-time, one-on-one support by trained peer advocates who offer information and advocacy to those involved in dating abuse. They also offer support to parents, teachers, clergy, law enforcement, and service providers.

National Domestic Violence Hotline offers confidential, private, one-on-one chats with advocates every day 24/7.

OnYourMind.net is a safe and anonymous place for teens to get information and support from other teens in an online chat room, covering topics such as relationships, school, depression, stress, suicide, parents, cutting, identity and health.

Pandora's Aquarium is an online forum with around 2 million posts and over 70,000 members, and is run by Pandora's Project, which provides information, support and resources to rape and sexual abuse survivors and their friends and family.



When accessing hotlines, chats or forums from a computer, tablet or smartphone, please remember to take the necessary precautions to keep your activities confidential from your abuser. Learn more about how to stay safe online [here](#).

Also, keep in mind that local shelters may offer in-person or virtual support groups. You can find shelters in your area at [DomesticShelters.org](https://www.DomesticShelters.org).



## Another way to determine if you're experiencing abuse is to contact a trained domestic violence advocate near you or through a national service.

To search for domestic violence program staffed with trained advocates, visit [DomesticShelters.org](https://www.DomesticShelters.org) and type either your city and state, or ZIP code, into the search bar at the top of the page. A list of organizations and contact numbers near you will be displayed. To reach an advocate, reach out directly by calling the phone number listed. Most are open 24/7.

To speak to an advocate at the National Domestic Violence Hotline, also 24 hours a day, seven days a week, call 800-799-SAFE (7233) or visit [thehotline.org](https://www.thehotline.org) to chat online.

It's important to know that your call is confidential and you can choose to remain anonymous when speaking with an advocate. To know what to expect when calling, read [this article](#).