

# THE JORDAN HARBINGER SHOW

## Worksheet for Wendy Behary | Disarming the Narcissist (Episode 246)

Narcissism is a word thrown around a lot these days — so much that it's almost lost all meaning. However, I think we've all known, dated, or possibly even married someone on this spectrum, and we've all felt the sting that results.

On this episode Wendy Behary, author of *Disarming the Narcissist: Surviving and Thriving with the Self-Absorbed*, delivers strategies and tools to identify when we're dealing with a narcissist versus just your run-of-the mill selfish a-hole, how we can spot their tactics (such as gaslighting) in real-time, and how we can defend ourselves against their machinations.

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## Spotting a Narcissist

Because narcissists can be very charming when you meet them — to the point of coming off as superheroes — the original title for [Wendy's book](#) was *A Nightmare in Shining Armor*. But the shine wears off soon as you spot one or more of the following typical narcissistic tendencies:

- They get overly defensive when you disagree with their solutions or question their motives as being anything but altruistic.
- They blame you for their mistakes.
- They're grossly self-absorbed.
- They don't make good listeners.
- They have trouble making eye contact.
- They're impulsive.
- They're interruptive.
- They shut down and tune out of conversations that aren't about them, waiting impatiently for the chance to break in and grandstand.
- They're big on self-soothing when they're not engaged in something that's giving them direct approval for their wonderfulness.
- They always have a justification for their sense of entitlement.
- They use [gaslighting](#) — encouraging your view of reality to skew in one direction and then denying that reality to make you question your own perceptions (and perhaps even your own sanity).

**Do you know anyone like this? Are you close to anyone like this? How do your interactions usually go?**

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## Healthy Narcissism?

Is a little bit of narcissism good for you? Wendy admits that it *can* be instrumental in someone's drive and help them excel (though just because someone's a high-achiever doesn't mean they're a narcissist). You might want them to be your surgeon for a life or death operation, but they're probably not fun to hang out with on a social level.

"Give me the surgeon who has worked his or her butt off to overcompensate by being the best of the best. I just want them to be the best technician when I go under anesthesia and I'm being operated on. But I don't want to go home with them! I don't want to live with them. I don't want to be in a relationship with them."

**Do you regularly interact with anyone who you believe may fall into this category of narcissism? Do you trust them on a professional level without feeling the urge to know them further on a personal level?**

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## Are You a Narcissist?

Being self-absorbed doesn't necessarily mean someone is a narcissist, and even if someone is a narcissist, it doesn't necessarily mean they're a bad person.

"We all carry traits that happen along the spectrum of narcissism," says Wendy. "There are mildly annoying, narcissistic-like people who can be a little too self-absorbed over overzealous, embellishing stories in ways that become boring and off-putting. The higher end of the spectrum — where you'll find a more clinical diagnosis of narcissistic personality disorder — that's where you're going to see, in very exaggerated terms, life patterns that probably started early on and have evolved to an adult who is super self-absorbed, seemingly incapable of empathy for other people or appreciating the impact of their behaviors on other people."

**The good news: If you think you're a pathological narcissist, chances are you're not — otherwise you'd be denying it or be completely blind to it. And if it turns out you are, at least being aware of it and willing to change allows you to work through it in therapy. What narcissistic traits in your own personality can you identify, and would you be willing to address them with a therapist to investigate their causes (and cures) further?**

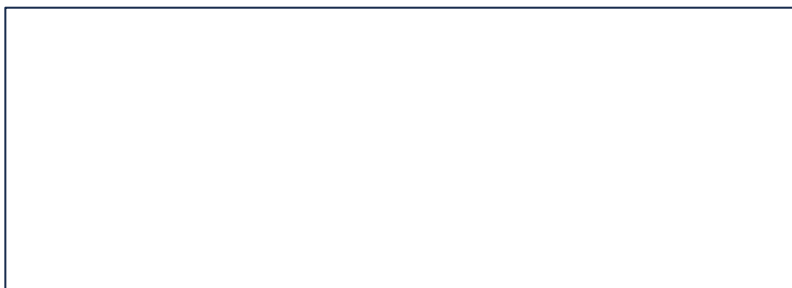
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## Narcissist Prep Work

“There’s a lot of value to be gained from understanding this very complicated personality,” says Wendy. “The more you know about the way they’re put together and why they do what they do, the more you become armed with ways of protecting yourself, of not blaming, doubting, or second-guessing yourself on everything. And as much as you might say in the middle of an angry moment of healthy self-righteousness, you want to be able to know it from your sturdy, best self. You want to make your decisions from your healthy, wisest self. Those decisions are greatly informed by your knowledge of what’s happening with this person that you’re up against. The more you understand this, you are not at risk for self-sacrificing.”

**The only way you can have that straight spine and that sturdy self and sense of being in your adult skin is by prepping. Get your vulnerable self and put it in an imaginary safe room. “I know it sounds hokey,” says Wendy, “But this is what therapists will do when they’re about to enter the treatment room. I put little Wendy in a safe place. Tuck her in somewhere. Imagine she’s out of earshot. It doesn’t mean I’m not going to feel any triggering effects, but I’m still in my adult skin, so I can speak on behalf of what I’m feeling.”**



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## The Setting Limits Script

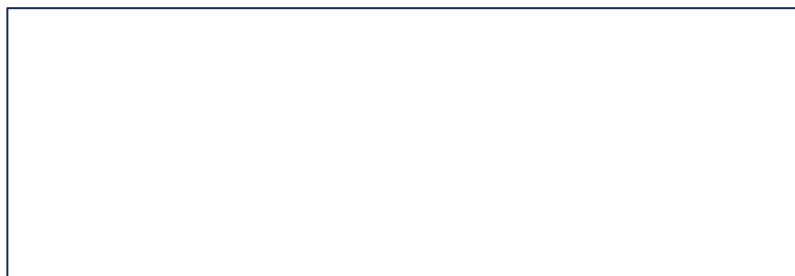
When setting limits with a narcissist in a healthy way, you want to be in your wisest adult position, standing in a solid place where you can look at the narcissist and follow Wendy's script:

**You:** "I know you're used to getting what you want when you want it. You worked really hard to have that privilege. Your parents always told you as long as you got straight As, you didn't have a curfew. You could do what you wanted. I know that's what you're used to, so it's not your fault. But it is your responsibility, because it's not working in this relationship. It's not working here for me. So this has got to stop. You can't talk to me like that."

**The Narcissist:** "Or what?"

**You:** "Well, I see an inevitable end for us at some point. I can't imagine how we can sustain a relationship like this, because I'm not happy."

**"They may not like it," says Wendy. "They may get angry or continue to roar. They may stomp off. But you have just planted an important seed by saying this. You just have to remain firm and keep planting these seeds."**



*Full show notes and resources for this episode [can be found here.](#)*

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