

N.Y.B.L. Podcast Ep 243 (You Are Not CRAZY, You're Just Dealing With a Narcissist)

[00:00:00] **Rebecca Zung:** You know, those of you who have watched my videos know that I've talked ad nauseum and read my books. It's all about the different types of narcissism and how they manifest. It does seem like there's going to be some similarities and differences on the basis of the type of narcissist we're dealing with.

[00:00:14] Something I've always wanted to bring home to everyone is the type of narcissist someone is often has a lot to do with the kind of day they're having. And by that, I mean, Any narcissist who's having a good run of it, they're making a lot of money, they got the stuff they want, they're getting the people they want, they're more, most importantly, they're getting the validation and the supply they want, more often than not are going to present as grandiose narcissists.

[00:00:38] Life's going their way, and so, but some people just tend to be more of the grandiose narcissistic type, and that's their baseline, okay? in general, people who are narcissistic have empathy deficits, so deeply entitled. The grandiose narcissists are obviously quite grandiose. They're arrogant. They have a propensity for rage.

[00:00:58] They do not regulate [00:01:00] disappointment well. They're chronically seeking admiration. They're seeking validation. They are superficial and they are, um, and they are, um, they, they have not only difficulty regulating their emotions, but they're also incredibly Sensitive in the face of criticism. They can dish it out, but they can't take it.

[00:01:20] The presentation of the grandiose narcissist then becomes someone who really is sort of like that person, that kind of, it can feel sleazy salesman like it can be like, I am the king of the world. Like it can be, I've got all the answers. It can be annoying guy on the bar stool, or annoying gal on the bar stool.

[00:01:35] All of that's. What are the leading tips you have with, especially in a divorce setting, of how to negotiate with a grandiose narcissist? Well, so the grandiose narcissist is going to do everything they can to keep control of the

situation. So the first thing they're going to try to do is try to get rid of your lawyer in some way.

[00:01:57] Because your lawyer is the person who is [00:02:00] now between the narcissist And the person who they want to control. Mm-Hmm. . Mm-Hmm. . And, and the lawyer now becomes the enemy. Mm-Hmm. . Because that's the person who's going to actually maybe expose the narcissist. Mm-Hmm. for whatever. Who? Mm-Hmm. who, who or what they are.

[00:02:18] Or maybe, um. Uh, Bee between them and them getting the deal that they want or they think that they should have. And so, they're going to try to get the person to meet at Starbucks. Let's just meet at Starbucks, you know, we don't need lawyers. Um, you know, so that's the, the thing that they're going to do.

[00:02:34] Okay, Interesting. And they're going to say your lawyer um is, is just after the money um, I've heard. that, you know, he or she, whatever it is, that they can possibly dream up and say that's what they're going to say because they want you to get rid of the lawyer. So this is what I tell people all the time is, um, you have three choices.

[00:02:55] You can stay with this person. and stay married to them, which I [00:03:00] don't recommend. But I've got, you know me, y'all can read my book and I got a whole bunch of videos telling you how to stay if you need to stay because some people have to stay. Well, I don't recommend in the long run. I mean, if you have to stay for kids or, or you have reasons or whatever, but in the long run, you probably want to work this person out of your life.

[00:03:16] Number two is. It's to take exactly what they want you to take with your pat on the head and walk away. But we already talked about that. Even if you choose door number two, it's going to be a shifting thing. It's never going to be exactly because if they think that you're just taking what they're offering then they're like, well, maybe I should offer less or whatever because they just want to mess around with you.

[00:03:39] And then. door number three is, you know, you're going to have to fight up against this person. So, you know, don't, don't have those meetings alone. Cause you know, that this person manipulates you, you know, the person's a liar, you know, that this person is going to say and do whatever they can to get what they want or to manipulate you.

[00:03:58] So. don't do [00:04:00] it. Don't have those conversations. And what I recommend for people to do in those situations is just say, I don't know. I'm just talking to my lawyer. Blame it all on your lawyer. Let your lawyer be the fall person. You know, I don't know. I just want what's fair. I just want, you know, what. What my rights are, and I'm going to let the lawyer sort it out.

[00:04:20] That's what I suggest that people do. So it seems, I mean, in all of my work, working with individuals who are experiencing narcissistic abuse, or in narcissistic relationships, my consistent, you know, Don't move away from a position as realistic expectations and radical acceptance. This person, to the point you're now getting a divorce, things have gotten so toxic and I have to say in narcissistic relationships, people let things get a lot more toxic than they would in another relationship where they simply grown apart from someone because you've, you've become so mentally confused.

[00:04:55] And with a grandiose narcissist, you're so used to being lorded over, you're So [00:05:00] confused by the gaslighting. You know, people are re and grandiose narcissist plays that game really, really well, and you're burned out. So that idea of a Starbucks meeting is like, okay, okay, fine. You're so exhausted. Mm-Hmm,

[00:05:12] But then I say realistic expectations, radical acceptance. This is a person who manipulates. It's who they are, it's what they do. Just like a scorpion. narcissist manipulates and to have realistic expectations that all of a sudden now that you filed for divorce now they're gonna become an angel. It's not how it's gonna go down.

[00:05:29] Oh! In fact, it's the opposite because you no longer have value to that narcissist in fact you're a liability because as long as you are still in that narcissists world and they thought that maybe you were for them in some way or you have some value to them then, then they're sort of measured a little bit more.

[00:05:46] Yeah, yeah. But once you no longer have value, you are now the enemy. And so it is on. And, you know, I think in a subsequent video, we're going to talk more about all the different kinds of things that they do in a divorce setting, but, um, you know, [00:06:00] it's you, once you no longer have value to a narcissist, you are the enemy.

[00:06:04] And I also have to say too, though, with a, with a grandiose narcissist, what people do need to be prepared for psychologically is it's not over, like, they're not just going to start a fight, they're actually going to try love

bomb sequence two, love bomb sequence three, because in some ways, it's not that they want you back.

[00:06:20] They may, a lot of times, grandiose narcissists care deeply about what they look like to the world. They want to look like the Christmas card. They want to be the happy family. They have a whole narrative around. I just want to be the happy family. This matters to me. And you know, it's, it's, it's a whole shtick that they're selling to the world.

[00:06:37] So they want to keep that back, but it's also a game. It's, can I lure the rat out of its hole? Can I bring this person back out? It's what it was from the jump. That's what love bombing is. Get them to sign a post nup right now. Okay, you want me back? I'll come back. Mm hmm sign a post nuptial agreement. Mm hmm That's great.

[00:06:57] Perfect. Now, we know how they're typically gonna react. Of course, they're [00:07:00] not gonna say yes. No, they're not gonna say. Now you, now you've called their bluff. That's right. And they play on that vulnerability and they say really a post nup. So this really was just about money and that's when the other person the non narcissistic person who's already been So beaten down by this, who's already vulnerable to this, who already has issues around self doubt, confusion, all the things that happen in narcissistic abuse, says no, this wasn't about money, and they find themselves getting into the thickets, and can often get pulled in, they want to seem noble, no, this was never about money, this was about you treating me with respect, And Ben, I've seen many people at that point get sucked right back in with the grandiose narcissist.

[00:07:38] Do you what I say to that Narciss? What's wrong with it being about money? If you're entitled to it? Right. And there's the difference between the nar, that lawyer and the psychologist, if you're entitled to it, if the law provides that you're entitled to it, then That's right. Don't. Be embarrassed about asking for what the law is providing for you, but here I will.

[00:07:57] This is where I would take a slightly different stance as a psychologist. I [00:08:00] think what a lot of people say is that yes, it's about money. This is a marriage. Marriage is really a contract. Marriage really is a contract. Stop romanticizing it. It's a contract, but marriage is a contract that, um, that they are entitled to it.

[00:08:14] But I do think that people who have been in long term relationships with grandiose narcissists, it is really about, can you please reflect on what you just did to me for the last 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30 years? You know what? They'd

say, I'd walk away from 10 million dollars. I have the best story for you with that.

[00:08:36] I, the best Um, so I was representing a guy who was number two in the largest development company in Florida. Um, and you know, he was one of these narcissistic personality types who came in and, you know, any room in your retainer and whatever, and I was like, no, but you know, if you want to go on down the road, fine.

[00:08:55] But he, so I didn't, but he was trying to get me to reduce my retainer. [00:09:00] So we get to, um, mediation and it's like nine o'clock at night and we're all settled on everything and and he's agreed to pay her around 250, 000 a year in alimony For that and he was like 55 years old. So just for easy math, you know, it's at least for the next 10 years because when you retire it's 65.

[00:09:22] You could potentially ask for a modification, but so we're talking about two and a half million dollars. Okay. Um, we're getting ready to sign. Mediator comes into my office and says, or to the conference room where I was with my client and says, I need to talk to you. I have a very unusual request, but I want to run it past you before I run it past your client.

[00:09:42] So she pulled, he pulls me aside and says, The wife says that she will waive alimony, waive two and a half million dollars, if he apologizes to her for how he treated her during the marriage. [00:10:00] And guess what? He didn't want to do it! And there it is. See? See what I'm telling all of you? There it is, you know?

[00:10:08] So I made him! Yeah. I'm like, yes, you will get over there. And so he went over there and apologized and she waved alimony and that was that. But it was, that was worth more to her. Right. And she knew also that he wouldn't want to do it. Right, and so here's where it's... as I'm going to put the psychologist hat on here, which is there is something unsatisfying about that.

[00:10:35] He didn't want to apologize. It wasn't a real apology. The one thing we do know in the world of narcissism is a narcissist's apology is, it's worthless. It's less than worthless. It's the gum on your shoe. Because it's manufactured... It's somebody saying, just for two and a half million bucks, say sorry.

[00:10:49] That's not an apology. That's a... you know... From my perspective as his attorney, I'm like... Right. All day long. Exactly, exactly. As her attorney, I'd have been like, you're not asking for that. No [00:11:00] way. Right. And as her

psychologist, I say you just bust yourself another 10 years of healing because you, that wasn't an apology.

[00:11:08] I think that the struggle becomes, you know, and again, this is where it's interesting to have the lawyer talk to psychologists, is that when the apology feels not authentic, The person says, you know, what was that? I'll say it was nothing. It was, you know, it was window dressing. It's very difficult for a narcissistic individual to apologize.

[00:11:28] Because of the shame factor, because of the insecurity factor, because of the lack of capacity for them to exercise empathy, right? What he does not... Okay. that client of yours, he doesn't believe he caused her pain. Right. He doesn't. He just wanted his money. Okay. She was in pain and the other person didn't acknowledge it.

[00:11:46] It's looking into the mirror that doesn't look back. And that's, that's there to wit is the conundrum where I might say, okay, if you, you know, I, I would tell somebody get the money at least you can get the therapy [00:12:00] because, you know, that's, yeah. As his lawyer, my job was to advocate for him. Right. Him. Right.

[00:12:07] So it wasn't my job to say no to that. Right. It was my job to say, get your butt in there and apologize. Right, right. Yes. I mean, you know, because that's the kind of thing that he would've come back to me on later and said, why didn't you make me? That's right. And my, and exactly. And blame you. But my and my job is to tell that woman, you didn't get a real apology.

[00:12:26] What can we learn from this relationship? I'm sure she probably regretted it. Maybe, who knows what her financial situation was, you know, maybe who knows what her, I don't know her mindset is, but at the end of the day, I would have said, you know, how do we help you learn from this so you never pick someone like this again?

[00:12:42] You know, that's really what it is. How do we learn from this? They do, people do pick. So, you know, just as a twist here, because we do talk about, while the grandiose narcissist is the most common, the one we see the most, There are these other subtypes, what we often call the covert or vulnerable narcissist.

[00:12:56] This is what I often view as the more victimized narcissist. When you meet [00:13:00] them, they're often a little bit more sad, they're softer, they're not as in your face. In fact, a lot of people want to rescue covert

narcissists. They're like, oh, if this person just got a break, they'd be fine. What they don't realize is right under the surface is this tremendous contempt that life didn't go on jealousy and envy, and all these kinds of emotions and the insecurity, in the covert slash vulnerable narcissists is much greater.

[00:13:29] Would you say that, are there any other unique elements of negotiation that come up with covert narcissists? Well, so they're not going to be as in your face and is not going to be as obvious to a divorced husband. Lawyers or to the judge. Mm-Hmm. . So the judge might say, oh, this poor person. Mm-Hmm. . And, and full everybody.

[00:13:48] Mm-Hmm. . And especially because narciss, uh, the, the covert narcissist tends to be more passive aggressive. Mm-Hmm. . And so it's easier to explain a way that things that they will do. Mm-Hmm. , you know, so they, they [00:14:00] might, you know, inadvertently. Send an email to somebody. Oh, oops! It was an accident. And you know that it wasn't an accident because you've been living with this person for years.

[00:14:11] So they're much more, um, adept at hiding the kinds of things that they're doing. So in my opinion, they're actually more toxic in a lot of ways. Yeah, absolutely. Um, because it's, it's going to be harder to get the. And the people in the system to understand the personality type that you're dealing with. Um, it is, you know, if you're having a, uh, parental evaluation or custody evaluation done, you know, they may fool that psychologist because they're going to say, Oh, I'm such a victim.

[00:14:45] And, you know, this other person was so horrible to me and I can never catch a break. And, you know, I want to work, but I'm so sick. Sick all the time. Mm-Hmm. And I always feel terrible. Mm-Hmm. . And, you know, and so they're, they're actually much more difficult [00:15:00] in the divorce setting and they'll still do the same kinds of things.

[00:15:02] Mm-Hmm. this triangulation is a biggie with, with covert narcissists. Let's get the whole world on my side. Mm-Hmm. Let's get everybody Absolutely. To see how absolutely much of a victim I am and how horrible this other person is. And they're actually very good at getting the person. Yes, they are. Um, get, getting people to believe them.

[00:15:21] And leaving the person who has been victimized by them looking like a bad guy. Right. You know, this person actually has been enduring so much when you've been in a relationship with a covert narcissist. And everyone's like,

why are you being so hard on him or her? Are we gonna, what? Well, come on. Like, cut.

[00:15:35] And there's a lot of gaslighting by other people that happens in these relationships where, especially when it's careening towards a divorce. So it's, yeah, it's definitely a, a, a, a very, very toxic dynamic. Right. When. When a person is in a divorce or in any form of negotiation with a covert narcissist, then what?

[00:15:53] Well, it's the same kind of thing that you're going to have the same sort of thing. I mean, they're going to probably obstruct you. They're, [00:16:00] you know, they're not going to give over information. Um, you know, they're going to put up roadblocks at every chance that they can, they're going to manipulate everything that you say, but they're just going to do it in a way that's more, um, That's more under the radar and harder for you to bring to people's attention because when you bring What they're doing to people's attention It's the kind of thing where people go.

[00:16:24] Well, that's not that bad or that was probably just a mistake Yes, exactly. Gaslighting. Yes, exactly. You know, whereas an overt narcissist or the grandiose narcissist, it's much more manipulative. You can actually see it right in the email chain. It's easier to follow the email chain and go, well. Okay, here you go.

[00:16:46] Would you argue maybe it's a different form of manipulation? Because I think passive aggressiveness is at its core a manipulation, right? A hundred percent. It's the attempt of, maybe it's not even an active attempt, but it is the induction of negative emotion in another person, typically [00:17:00] guilt, to mobilize action on their part.

[00:17:02] Not because the other person wants to do something, but they're doing it to stave off this sense of guilt. And it's absolutely just as traumatic for the victim. Yeah, manipulation's manipulation. I mean, I don't care if it's in your face. I don't care. It's through a passive aggressive backdoor. It definitely leaves people sort of reeling.

[00:17:20] So this takes us then to one last form of narcissism I want to get to because I think it's worth mentioning because it's more dangerous, which is malignant narcissism. There are research out, researchers out there that view malignant narcissism as sort of like that, that space in the middle where, where No, more of a grandiose narcissistic style meets like a low grade psychopathy meets this sort of really Machiavellian Manipulative political like, you know,

very skilled working other people's style Malignant narcissists are where we're gonna see your CEO types.

[00:17:51] We're gonna see your world leader types We're gonna see people at the top who are able to charm you then go chew someone else out, [00:18:00] then go destroy someone else's life, and then go charm someone else. Like, their, their, their ability to just sort of do that leaves everyone confused, and they've usually charmed the right people, including people like judges.

[00:18:11] They're that good. Whereas a covert narcissist ain't charming anyone. You know, even the grandiose narcissist gets a little bit nervous during a divorce. A malignant narcissist is very cool under stress. Yeah, it's harder to get them unglued. Yes, it is. It is. And they can be dangerous. I mean, we've been talking about, you know, negotiating a divorce thus far from a perspective of, you know, not from a violence perspective.

[00:18:34] Now remember, abuse in a relationship can take many forms. The majority of clients I work with are dealing with severe psychological abuse, which to me is every bit, perhaps even more traumatic than physical abuse. And it also includes things like stalking, coercive control, financial abuse. Yes, so those all the things, the financial, the control, all of it.

[00:18:56] It is, it is like a, it's a disease that overtakes the [00:19:00] person, and they realize they're literally living in a prison when they're in a relationship with a malignant narcissist. It can escalate to, to danger, and in the cases I've consulted on where a person's divorcing a malignant narcissist, We have to come up with a safety plan, and that's where I've worked with people of expertise in domestic violence, on having a go bag, and how do you set that up, and how do you, I mean, we're teaching people to clear out the search histories on computers and stuff, I mean, in the electronic age, in some ways, it's hard, yeah, save what you need to save, clear out what you don't want to do, go to libraries, use other computers, change your passwords, right.

[00:19:33] I mean, this is, this is a different territory. Is there any other thoughts when you're negotiating with someone who, if not full on dangerous, like going to really do physical harm to you, it's always menacing. They send that, that menacing email. There's something almost stocky about them. Doesn't Mm-Hmm.

[00:19:49] Emails at three in the morning. I mean, these are the clients I work with who are the most wrecked. I mean, it's, it is, they, they are in a post-traumatic stress state almost all of the time. [00:20:00] Yeah. Yeah. I, and

they have no boundaries. So, I mean, they'll just show up at your house. Mm-Hmm. they'll, they'll do, do whatever they need to do.

[00:20:08] Mm-Hmm. , whatever they, they want to do. So, first of all, let me just. Day, and I tell my clients this all the time, if you feel that you are in danger mm-Hmm, , please call the police. You know, don't call your lawyer. Mm-Hmm. Your lawyer can't do anything right away. Mm-Hmm. . So, you know, a lot of times I hear people saying, how is he or she getting away with this?

[00:20:24] Mm-Hmm. , I hear it all the time. It's a very common thing. And so let me just inject reality into. statement really briefly. And that is that there are no divorce fairies that linger around people's houses and come jumping out of the wall when somebody misbehaves. So how are they getting away with this?

[00:20:45] Remember, the only person that has any power over anyone else in our society is the judge. That is it. There is law enforcement. If you break the law, if you are, if you do something criminal, you can call the police. [00:21:00] Other than that, it's The judge. Those are the only Mm-Hmm. avenues. Mm-Hmm. of getting someone to behave.

[00:21:05] Mm-Hmm. . That's it. So when you're dealing with somebody who is menacing and maybe unsafe or stalking, then you have to call the police because most. in order to get any kind of an injunction. So if you want to get some kind of injunction against the person, or I guess, you know, in regular word terms, it's a restraining order or something like that.

[00:21:31] You have to be able to show that you're in danger. You have to be able to show, you can't just say, I'm scared of this person because this person has civil rights. They have constitutional rights that you have. They have to have notice and opportunity to be heard and all of that sort of thing. And so Call the police if you think that you're in danger.

[00:21:52] It will only help you get that restraining order down the road if you decide that that's what you want. The worst possible thing [00:22:00] that you can do is go try to get a restraining order and then it doesn't stick because now the person feels empowered. So you have to be really, really careful about making sure that if you're going to go that route that it's going to stick and you're going to get it.

[00:22:16] But also let's warn people that once you get a restraining order, the likelihood of violence skyrockets. Well, because they're now, they're, you know, yes, but that's the reality check. I don't want people to think restraining orders

are an answer. I think they're a. Step, but there're a step that put people in danger.

[00:22:29] And that's the nature of how our, our, our system works. So we, I mean, I don't, I think to, to say that, that, I mean, the number of people I lived down, I have a lot of people ask about that. So the only other path is some kind of a civil order. Mm-Hmm. . Um, which would be, you know, ex. You exclusive occupancy of your house or something like that.

[00:22:48] Um, and, you know, those things you can get, but they take time. Yes, they do. So you have to, you know, what the lawyer's power is, is to file a motion, set the [00:23:00] motion for hearing in front of the judge. Then you know, and the, all the judges are very backed up. The judicial system is extremely backlogged. And so it takes.

[00:23:09] It takes a while to get a hearing, um, and then once you get that hearing, newsflash, the judges don't always rule right away, which is really frustrating too. And so sometimes you're waiting weeks, months. I've even waited months for an order from that judge. So how is he or she getting away with this? Well, the only way you can rein in the behavior is by creating enough leverage in order to get that person to come to a table and potentially have a resolution with you or get enough leverage that you can get convinced the judge to order things.

[00:23:49] To go your way. Right. Which is hard. And again, in the populations I deal with, I, I deal with the people who are, things didn't go their way. And too many women who are beaten up or [00:24:00] killed because the restraining order came that inflamed, the violence can't. I mean, you know, it's, it's a nice idea and law enforcement has more leverage.

[00:24:08] It really opens. This whole issue of, these are complicated issues. And you know, in the bottom line, and I think one of the most painful things I've heard is The number of clients who have worked with me, who've said This person is a bad person, they should not be raising these kids like You know, and again, it's usually not even in the money piece, like the and they'll still be upset, like, I don't know how you expect me to do all this with this little bit of money, but I, I How can you let this person, half the time, raise children, and I'm telling you as somebody who's worked with these families, I have seen the majority of narcissists I've worked with got 50 percent custody.

[00:24:47] Yeah. 50 percent custody. Yeah. And let me tell you this. There's no happy ending to this. Children are destroyed. Well, here's what happens a lot of

times in the negotiation for that, and especially [00:25:00] in states where child support is tied to timesharing. Yes. Which a lot of states it is. Some states it's not, but Most states, it is.

[00:25:08] And so what they do, especially if they're the moneyed spouse, is they go for timesharing because then they pay less in child support. That's right. And a lot of times they end up not taking it, which means that the non moneyed spouse isn't getting the full amount of support. Still with the kids and they have the kids all the time.

[00:25:23] Right. Which, again, I understand what you're saying, that this is a right of the child, but I always advise clients. I say anytime they try to blow you off and blow off the kids, like they got the kids 50% of the time, so they didn't have to give you the money. That's why they fought for, they didn't want the kids.

[00:25:38] They wanted the money. Okay. No, but it's also though the, the facade of, I got my kids 50% of the time ish because they don't, they don't want to tell the world that they didn't want their kids. Right. They don't wanna tell the world, but they don't want their kids. No, no, no. But they, but they want the show that they got 50% Right.

[00:25:55] So after the show is proven and they can walk around saying they want 50%, they're always trying to. [00:26:00] Voice the kids on. Mm-Hmm. the other partner, a hundred percent. To which I tell the other partner who's usually the one I'm working with, take 'em. They're like, but this is unjust. I'm like, this whole thing is unjust.

[00:26:10] Didn't you say you wanna be with your kids a hundred percent of the time. Anytime they give 'em, take 'em. Because the less time those kids are spending with the narcissistic parent, probably the healthier for your kids. Now what does end up happening is that they're not often getting the requisite additional money that that more time would take.

[00:26:26] They figure it out, but I'd say if you can get the time with your kids, get the time with your kids. Okay, so a little strategy here as far as, um, during a divorce. If the divorce is taking a several months, which a lot of them do. Yeah. Then give the narcissist 50 percent of the time during the temporary period.

[00:26:45] Because you will give them rope to hang themselves that way. Because then by the time you get to that final hearing or you get to to the mediation. You've now kept a log, which I tell everybody. Yes. Oh, so do I.

Yeah. So you've now kept a log that shows that [00:27:00] this person showed up late, didn't take them, asked you to take them, blah, blah, blah, because they can't help being themselves.

[00:27:07] Um, they're not going to take the kids. Fifty percent of the time, even during that nine month or one year period, you will have lots and lots of times that they asked to change the. They showed up late, blah, blah, blah. And so now you have that leverage. Now you have the information that you need in order to push for the custody arrangement that you want.

[00:27:29] Okay. That's a great point. I mean, can we probably talk for. 17 hours on this because we've seen it from both sides of it. And it is interesting. Like, you know, to watch that, that I say exactly that is you have to keep the most detailed log. I said, it's almost like you're keeping records and charts the way a physician would like, you know, days, hours, you name it, you know, yes, I'm sure that's good.

[00:27:49] And I hope you heard that. She's won entire cases on those. You can't do this after the fact. You have to do this in real time. You're not going to be able to even construct it a week later. In real time, it has to [00:28:00] become a daily practice that you're logging this stuff. It's difficult, it's painful, it's uncomfortable.

[00:28:04] You must do it. It's part of your healing, but it's also part of your strategy. Just open a notes thing in your calendar or your phone. Or use an app. There are apps just for taking notes for that. I mean, so, just get into the habit of logging it real time. So you think you're free from that narcissist, but guess what?

[00:28:25] There are some things that you need to know once you've escaped. And let me tell you, this is the one thing that I say to people all the time. You don't actually just leave a relationship with a narcissist. Nobody just nicely walks away and says, Hey guys, you know, this has been a nice, you know, let's stay friends.

[00:28:46] I thought. That I could do that. I was in a business relationship with a narcissist and boy was I dead wrong. I have a whole video on that by the way. It's actually called I was dead [00:29:00] wrong. There's so many things that I was dead wrong about when it comes to that. You have to escape. People like run from relationships with narcissists.

[00:29:11] You end up like escaping with your hair on fire. It's like you're running from a burning building. So once you're out and you think you're out, what do you need to know? Well, number one, I'm going to give you five. So you're going to want to stay and watch all the way till the end. This is really, really important.

[00:29:29] Number one is that it's not over. As long as they think that there's some kind of supply to be had from you, they will never let you go. And so if you think that you're just going to give them what they want and you'll be able to leave, they You are dead wrong. So don't think, well, they'll see how nice I am.

[00:29:50] They'll see that I'm being reasonable. I'll give them something. Right from the beginning, and you know, they say they want to settle nicely too, and you're [00:30:00] just going to be dead wrong, you're going to end up being taken advantage of, and you're going to be halfway down the road, and you're going to be really, really upset that you gave in all of these things, and now you're way in the hole with attorney's fees, and they're going to hold you to whatever you said you were going to give, and yet they won't want to do.

[00:30:21] Sigh. give you anything and they're going to constantly be moving the goalposts when it comes to trying to make settlements and things. And by the way, I have a whole video on why narcissists move goalposts. You can definitely check that out, but you know, they're going to be keeping tabs on you as long as they think that they can get supply from you.

[00:30:39] They're going to continue to do that. It's not over as long as they think that they can. It's almost like there's peanut butter at the bottom of that jar. As long as they think that there's some kind of supply that they can get from you, it will not be over. So that's number one. Number two is that they're going to try to line up those flying [00:31:00] monkeys and they're going to try to line up your friends and they're going to try to line up their friends against you.

[00:31:04] And they're going to go to, you know, these people and try to divide and conquer and try to get them against you and try to make you feel isolated. And trying to make you feel alone. Even if they say, let's be friends and we're gonna make this amicable, and all of those things, regardless, you know, they're gonna go to, if you have a business relationship, they're gonna go to the employees.

[00:31:27] They're gonna do it behind your back. They're gonna go to the clients, they're gonna, if you have children, they're gonna go to the children and

they're gonna try to get the children on their side against you. I mean, that's what they do because they're super insecure and it's just. You know, they're going to try to make you look like the bad person.

[00:31:44] So that's number two. The number three is they may try to come back and say, you know, let's get back together or even after they've attacked. to you and been heinous and horrible to [00:32:00] you. It'll be like, well, I will drop all of this if we can still be business partners or if we can still be married or whatever.

[00:32:09] I mean, that happened to me actually in my business partnership that, you know, after this person was absolutely awful. Well, one of the offers was we remain in some sort of a business relationship. And I thought. What? Are you crazy? I mean, but that's, you know, what they do. So don't fall for that. Do not pass go.

[00:32:31] Do not collect 200. The answer is no. I do have a video on five signs of narcissistic hoovering. You do not do that. No. The answer is no. Let me think about it. No. All right. So that's, that's number three. Number four. is they will move on and find a new supply source because once they realize that your supply source is dwindling, you know, they see that there's not much peanut [00:33:00] butter left at the bottom of the jar.

[00:33:01] We got to go get a new jar. Okay. So they will find a new supply source. Don't be surprised. Don't be hurt. Don't take it personally. That is their food. That is their lifeblood. That is their oxygen. They literally are leeches or, you know, vampires. I mean, they cannot survive on their own. So you will be dropped like a hot potato very quickly.

[00:33:28] I mean, as much as they say they couldn't live without you and they would be like a puddle on the floor or whatever, all those things that they said. And you're going to be like, Oh my God, what? They moved on like so fast. And don't be surprised if it's somebody like in your circle, like your best friend, or, you know, they've got to be business partners with one of your employees or somebody you knew, cause they want to hurt you.

[00:33:53] They want to get back at you. So there's that too. So that's number four.[00:34:00]

[00:34:07] All right, that's number four. And number five, the number five thing you should know that you need to remember after escaping a narcissist is what I've been talking about all the way here. is that you become public enemy

number one. You become public enemy number one. They only see things in black and white.

[00:34:32] They cannot see gray. You know, you're either for them or against them. You're either with them or you're not. And if you're against them, then you are public enemy number one. You want to know the real reason why they just won't leave you alone. It's so crazy because people don't just, like, leave narcissistic relationships.

[00:34:50] You know, whether it's a business relationship or personal relationship, you don't just casually go, Hey, you know what? This isn't working out anymore. Let me just [00:35:00] catch on the flip side. We'll just stay friends and we'll just be cordial to each other. I tried that. I was in a business relationship with a narcissist and I thought, Oh, I'll just figure out a way that we can stay friends.

[00:35:15] and it did not work out that way for me. I tried, I tried everything that I could to try to keep it nice. It wasn't going to work that way for me. I really, really wanted to. It's like you're running out of a burning building. Like you're just with your hair is on fire and you're trying to get out and you hope to hell you get out of there with the clothes on your back.

[00:35:40] That's. The analogy that I have when you're like trying to get the hell out of these relationships and then they just will not leave you alone, and you think, why? Why would I want to be in this relationship with you? You are horrible. And yet they don't see it that way. You [00:36:00] know, a lot of times they see it as Well, you were horrible too.

[00:36:05] You were just as bad. I was only responding to you. They see you as the enemy. A lot of time. I mean, they're just so warped in their brain, but why did they not leave you alone? It's like they have this whole love hate relationship with you. And I have a whole video on why narcissists love you and also hate you.

[00:36:27] And you can definitely check that out if you would like, but why they don't leave you alone is because, well, it all comes down to, you guessed it, that narcissistic supply, that is their lifeblood, that is their food, that is their oxygen. And of course, when it comes down to negotiating with them, you are still a source of supply for them.

[00:36:54] And so they are going to want to continue to keep you as a source of [00:37:00] supply. And even though they'll sit there and they'll say, I want to

settle this. I want to get this done. How come you're not settling this? And yet you're sitting there going. Well, you didn't provide what you were supposed to provide.

[00:37:16] You didn't provide the document. You're the one that filed 50, 000 motions and they're going to go, but you aren't the, aren't the one settling. Gaslighting you once again, they act like you're the one that has the problem yet you know darn well. that they're the ones that are continuing the problem. And I know as a lawyer who has represented tons of these people, they'll sit there and they'll say, I'd rather pay you than her.

[00:37:46] They'll say that straight up to the lawyer. They know because they don't see you as a person. They see you as an opportunity. It's like a game. They're like sitting there playing a video game. It's like they get a dopamine [00:38:00] hit from the pawns. You know, moving these pieces around on a board or whatever, like they, they enjoy, you know, manipulating people.

[00:38:10] It's fun for them. They enjoy it. And so that's why they do it to them. You're still a way to get that dopamine hit. And they, they enjoy. messing with you. As long as you are a way to get supply for them, they're not going to leave you alone. And so you are either going to be a source of adulation for them or a source of prestige or a source of, you know, all of that is like that grade a diamond level supply.

[00:38:44] The grade a diamond level supply is it feeds their ego. Like how, how do they How do they look to the world? They look to the world like they're, they're great. They look wonderful to the world. So they can show the [00:39:00] world how amazing they are, whether it's that prestigious job, the prestigious house, car.

[00:39:07] bank account, you know, all of those things, right? Or it can be people telling them how great they are, how smart they are, you know, because they want to believe that they're smarter than everybody else and all that good stuff too, right? So now all of that is the grade a diamond level supply. And then there's that what I call the dark underbelly that supply that they also get from making people feel small, jerking them around.

[00:39:35] It's almost like the kid with the earthworm when they put like the pins in it and they enjoy seeing how the earthworm just sort of like moves around, you know, and, and move like on the ground, that's kind of what they're doing when they. they're seeing you sort of being manipulated like that. And that's why they don't leave you alone.

[00:39:54] That's why they come back. That's why they, you get the little ping Hoover in your [00:40:00] inbox six months later, a year later. And you think, Oh God, I've been finally free of this person. And Oh my God, here they are back again.

[00:40:21] And you know, they're, they're actually very codependent. They don't like being alone. They don't want to be abandoned. They might act like they don't. I don't want you around or whatever, but the bottom line is, if there's nobody else around, you know, they're going to look for, hey, who can, you know, who can I hit up right now?

[00:40:40] Right? They might look to see who's around right at that moment, right? And if there's somebody that they can, you know. Find to go hang out with, then they'll, they'll do that. Or if there's somebody who's going to take care of them, they'll go find that person or somebody who can give them money or financial [00:41:00] support or whatever it is.

[00:41:01] They'll go find that person too. They don't, they don't want to have to be loan and, and especially, you know, if you've rejected them or something like that, they, they really can't handle that. So that's why they don't leave you alone. And it's. Especially the more supply you've given them, if you try to rip it away, they're going to come back to try to get it back.

[00:41:21] So let's talk about when a narcissist will actually leave you. I know you're like over here hoping, right? But or maybe you're like worried, I don't know, but when will they actually leave you? So well, let's talk about why they're actually in relationship with you in the first place, because that's the whole point of it.

[00:41:41] They attach themselves. To you, not because you have so little value, even though they're devaluing you the whole entire time, they really attach themselves to you because you have so much value. They want to suck as much value out of you as they possibly can. They're almost [00:42:00] like leeches or you know, vampires.

[00:42:03] sucking that out of you. They want that narcissistic supply. And if you want to know more about narcissistic supply, you can check out my video on that. You know, they have this endless need to feed this thing inside of them, this beast inside of them. They have this emptiness inside of them that will never be fed.

[00:42:26] It's like a black hole, but there's bottomless, you know, and they want you to feed it. You probably, when you first got into a relationship with them, wanted to feed it to, you didn't realize that it was a bottomless pit, you know, that can never be fed. It's a one way directional spigot. It will never be two ways.

[00:42:48] And they somehow always figure out a way to get that spigot going this direction and never the other direction, you know, once you're low, no longer fueling that. And they [00:43:00] realize that you're shutting off that spigot or that. you know, that source, then they won't want you anymore. If you're no longer a good source of supply, then they won't want to be in relationship with you anymore.

[00:43:15] So if you start to stand up for yourself more, whatever, whatever that was that they were receiving. you if that supply source is starting to shut down, then they're no longer going to want to be in relationship with you. So if you start to set boundaries or you start to shut off that money source, or you start to shut off whatever that's.

[00:43:37] source of supply was that they're getting from you, then they're going to want to shut off relationship with you. And let me tell you, your value to them is in direct relationship with like the ratio is indirect. It's directly related to how much value they're [00:44:00] getting from you. I mean, it's, it's a very.

[00:44:03] sort of transactional relationship, but it's almost like, I don't know, mathematically, you know, like they get like a thousand out of you, you know, you're going to get like a little teeny, teeny little thing, you know, in other words, as long as they're getting supply, there's as long as they're getting something, then they'll come back.

[00:44:22] But if they're not getting anything, then they will not be in relationship with you. And once that supply source, if they don't feel like they're getting What they want, then they're gone and they're gone with nothing. No feeling whatsoever. I mean, and whatever it was that you gave them, there'll be no sense whatsoever of thanking, acknowledgement, feeling of gratitude, nothing.

[00:44:53] There will be no remorse. no apology, [00:45:00] no sense of empathy for whatever it was that you gave them. It will be discard, gone, whatever. You know, I just want to go through some of the signs that you might start to see that they may be starting to be done so that you can start to see some of that. But, you know, they might start to feel distant from you.

[00:45:21] You might start to see some sense that they're just. Always in a bad mood with you. You know, with the, with the narcissist, you do start to see that a lot anyway during the devalue phase, but during the devalue phase, they usually are hot and cold, hot and cold, hot and cold. When they're starting to go into the discard phase, it's just always cold, always cold, always cold.

[00:45:44] They're just always distant, always distant. You know, you start to see that they're just They never care what you think they're just always gone. They're just always taking advantage, always using, you know, they're not in any sort [00:46:00] of, you know, caring at all or worried, you know, usually if you start to pull back from them at all, like, you know, where they start to feel like maybe you're going to maybe.

[00:46:13] step back, then they start to pull in again and love bomb you and future fake you and do what they need to do to pull you rein you back in. You don't see that anymore. You know, they, they don't really care or they might start accusing you of doing the things that they're doing. You know, if they're cheating on you or they're doing things, they might start to accuse you of that so that they're sort of preempting those things so that they're sort When the time comes that they are, you know, getting out of the relationship, they want to be ahead of that.

[00:46:51] You know, well, you were cheating first or something like that, you know, to make sure that it's sort of tit for tat, that sort of [00:47:00] thing. And let me tell you, it'll be the best thing that ever happens. So, you know, should you be worried? If this person is about to discard you, it's probably going to be the best thing that ever happened.

[00:47:10] But you do want to prepare yourself, you know, so if you think that this is coming, you do want to prepare yourself. You do want to make sure that you have your documentation in check. You do want to make sure you have everything that you need. Lined up financially. You do wanna make sure that you have a stash of cash.

[00:47:33] You do wanna make sure that you have a place to go, a place to live. If you know if this is a divorce situation, if it's a business situation, a business partnership, make sure that you have a succession plan in place. You know, you do. Stay two steps ahead of them if you see that this is coming and get a plan in place, okay?

[00:47:54] You know, if you do think that it's a divorce situation, make sure you watch [00:48:00] my video before you divorce a narcissist. Watch this. If you

are dealing with this and you're managing this, I have a whole video series on self care to deal with narcissists. Definitely check that out. And, you know, the best thing you can do for yourself is just move on.

[00:48:18] Just move on because that is the best thing that you can definitely do for yourself.[00:49:00]

[00:49:59] Why doesn't the [00:50:00] narcissist believe that you will ever leave? Well, because they started conditioning you right from the beginning. When they started love bombing you and love bombed you they came on super strong they were very charming and charismatic and personable and They swept you off your feet.

[00:50:26] I'm talking about whether it was a business relationship or a personal relationship. I actually found myself in a business relationship with a narcissist, a covert, passive aggressive narcissist who love bombed me into being in a business partnership. And this was after I had become a very successful attorney and everything else and I ended up into this relationship with this person.

[00:50:57] So, you know, you end [00:51:00] up in these relationships and you think, how? in the hell did I get here? And you end up thinking, Oh my gosh, you know, am I going crazy? And you feel paranoid and powerless. And they still in their delusional mind, even though they're horrible and heinous to you and they act aggressive or passive aggressive and they treat you awful for whatever reason, they don't think you'll leave.

[00:51:31] And I'm going to tell you why. Because you don't for a long time, many times they see that they've gotten away with things. That's how they see that you are a good source of supply from the beginning. Once you're locked in because You know, they get you to that point of locking you in very quickly, and that's what happens with narcissists most of the time, you know, whether it's a [00:52:00] business relationship or a personal relationship, they want to get to that next level as quickly as possible, move in together, sign contracts, you know, be in partnership, get married, you know, whatever it is, let's, let's get to that next step as quickly as possible to lock you in and then you're locked in.

[00:52:20] And then once they do lock you in, then they start getting cold, you know, it's hot and cold, hot and cold. And they start to ghost you or they start to not do things that they're supposed to do. You start to see those red flags and you start to question things. And now all of a sudden it's your fault. You are the problem.

[00:52:44] We talked about that and you agreed. What? We never talked about that. And now you start to see that they're maybe doing things behind your back and things aren't adding up and you're starting to question things and you ask them about [00:53:00] things and now they're projecting, they're deflecting, you're catching them in lies.

[00:53:05] And all of these things start to happen, yet you stay in the relationship, even though you're seeing these things happen. They know that you've continued to stay, even though these things are happening. And even though you maybe threatened to leave, you know, sometimes maybe even you do leave or whatever, but you come back.

[00:53:31] And then they future fake you. Oh, things are going to be so much better. You'll see. And, and you go, okay. And you listen to it, or they might apologize and you say, okay. And by the way, I have a whole video on, you know, what is a narcissist. mean when they apologize, but you should definitely check that out.

[00:53:56] You know, it's like they're, they're faux apologies. And then [00:54:00] you listen to these apologies and you say, okay, and you stay through that, you know, so then they. Assume after a while that they have you, that you're going to listen to it, that they have this control over you, almost like a Bengali or something, that you will continue to listen to them, to be controlled by them, that at some point.

[00:54:32] Even though you'll get mad, that you'll be unhappy, that they can yo yo their way back into their web, back into their lair, getting you to believe them again, or that they can guilt you there, or harass you there, or scare you there, or control you there, Or whatever it is that they [00:55:00] need to do to scoop you back in to their web of control because they've been able to do it before.

[00:55:10] So they just assume that they're going to be able to do it again. And that's why they don't believe. that you'll ever leave because they've been able to keep you into that web of control thus far. I'm

[00:55:34] strong because you are strong. And I've said this many, many times before. I'm going to, it's definitely worth repeating. The narcissist is definitely way more afraid of you than you are of them. You are the stronger one. They did not attach themselves to you because you had so little value. They attach themselves to you because you have so much.

[00:55:55] That's why they need you. They need you way more than you need them. They've. [00:56:00] made you believe that otherwise that's the big trick, that's the big paradox. That's the funny thing about it. That's the irony about it. They don't want you to ever figure that out, but that's the truth of it. Okay. They think if they're, if they have a big enough tantrum, they, you know, you're, you're gonna give it, but, you know, at some point.

[00:56:28] You can look at them having that tantrum and say, you know what? I'm not moved by your tantrum anymore. And I want my life back. So no thanks. And you can't. Use my emotions to control me anymore and I'm done with this. I'm done. And that's what ended up happening with me in my business relationship. And that's what ends up happening with everybody in these relationships.

[00:56:58] And that's what's going to end up happening [00:57:00] with you too. And it's time for you to take your life back and be done with this web of toxicity. Let's talk about narcissists. So let me just start by saying this. I am a lawyer. I spent a lot of time litigating very high conflict, high net worth divorces in my previous life where I practiced all the time.

[00:57:25] And I really had to grow into that role because it wasn't in my nature. I was raised by a Chinese doctor. I was raised to always do the right thing, be a good girl, follow, toe the line, do the right thing, you know, do the everything I'm supposed to. So it really didn't come naturally to me to stand up to people and be in their face and be part of, you know, that whole world of [00:58:00] conflict.

[00:58:00] A lot of people don't like conflict. I'm definitely one of those too. So for me, it's always kind of takes me aback when people are immediately able to get right into conflict and narcissists thrive on conflict that gives them narcissistic supply. They love to get people going and they love to goad people.

[00:58:25] They let rile people up. I've never been that type of a person. In fact, I'm always shocked when people do that to me, you know, where they immediately just want to cut me off or they immediately just want to say things that are fighting words or whatever, because that does not come naturally to me. That is not something that I would have normally ever done.

[00:58:48] I've always been a peacemaker. I've always been wanted to keep the peace. I've always been, you know, even in my own family. I. Try to be the [00:59:00] peacemaker. I, I joke that I'm a Libra, so you know, I like things

balanced. I like things to be everybody, to be happy. So when I realized I was dealing with two different narcissists in my life, one.

[00:59:13] in my business life and one in my family, I had to really figure out this personality type. And it was really, really hard. The hardest part for me is what I'm going to tell you, what the one thing was that I was dead wrong about. That is that I thought that I would be able to somehow keep the peace, keep good terms.

[00:59:44] And even in the business relationship that I had, I still thought, okay, even if we're part in company, we'll still be able to be on good terms. We'll always be able to at least be cordial to each other. [01:00:00] Every time I've had to deal with a narcissist, I've tried this, and I actually just had to deal with this with somebody who was in my work organization this week, you know, a narcissistic personality, and I tried very hard to say, you know, let's not make each other wrong.

[01:00:18] Let's. Let's wish each other well. Let's continue to support each other and continue to lift each other up. And here's the thing that I was dead wrong about. You're not going to get that with a narcissist. You're not going to be able to wish each other well and go off in the sunset in your different directions and run into each other.

[01:00:42] still before each other and, and, and have it all be good. It, it, there's no peaceful resolution when it comes to narcissists. There's no handshake and potentially continuing to have a friendship or something down the [01:01:00] road and some relationship. There's no closure. You don't get that closure where you each say to each other, geez, you know, I'm sorry it didn't go better.

[01:01:11] I could have done this better. I'm sure, you know, I forgive this from you. You know, I shouldn't have done this. You're not going to get that closure. You're just not. I, and it's so unsatisfying sometimes. Like you just wanna say like, why do you have to make it like this? Why do you have to make it so difficult?

[01:01:31] Why, why do you have to scorch the earth on the way out? But that's what they need to do. They, they have to turn it into this. thing because with a narcissist, you're either for them or against them. And if you're against them, then you are public enemy. Number one, they have to feel like they can, they're taking you down and they need to get that supply from you one way or another.

[01:01:56] And there's no supply to be had in [01:02:00] wishing each other well and just moving on with your lives. There's not. And so here's what I want to say to you. Stop trying. It's not going to work. It just gives them supply when you try to do that. And you don't want to give them an opportunity to jerk you around. So you're not going to get that closure.

[01:02:22] You're not going to get them to see you, see your value, see your side, see what you contributed, see how good you were to them. They don't care. All they see is they're not getting supply anymore. They have to make you wrong. And

[01:02:46] I know you guys have been dealing with this too. And I'm sure you have seen this. I do want to also mention that I have a whole video on my own story with narcissists. And so if you're interested in that, you can definitely go check that out. That [01:03:00] is, it's called, I don't normally share this. So you can check that out if you want to, but they want to make you public enemy number one.

[01:03:07] So they want to take you down first. They want to make sure that you look bad before anybody else makes, makes them look bad. They want to continue to get some kind of supply out of you. So do yourself a favor, let go, stop trying. They will suck your soul. That's what they have to do. are bloodsuckers.

[01:03:29] They're energy vampires. They have to, you know, troll on down the road to find the next source of supply. And they're not going to give you the satisfaction that you want. Unfortunately, wishing them well doesn't give them anything. So let go of that idea. Let go of closure. Let go of thinking that you're going to be able to say goodbye on good terms.

[01:03:56] Unfortunately, it just doesn't happen with narcissists. [01:04:00] And I really, really tried. Well, I'm gonna actually say, I think there's actually a very fine line. between being a doormat and trying to keep the peace. And that's, that's another big lesson that I've learned in this whole thing. I thought that if I could just be kind enough, good enough, caring enough, that that would be enough.

[01:04:25] And that even if there was an end to the relationship that That part of what I had done would be seen, but what I found was that a lot of times if you don't call them out on their behavior, you don't allow them to, or you continue to allow them to treat you in a certain way. see that as you being a great source of supply because you're not saying anything.

[01:04:51] You're allowing them to get away with their behavior and you're continuing to give them attention, money, adulation, respect, [01:05:00] whatever it is that you're giving them. And they just resent the fact that you're not continuing to give that to them anymore. They don't appreciate what you've already given them.

[01:05:09] So it's not going to happen. So stop trying. Just let go. Put your attentions toward people who actually deserve it. Wish them well and forgive them from afar. Just not for them, but for you so that you don't carry around all that anger and resentment because that's not going to serve you. You know, the old saying, like, you know, caring resentment is.

[01:05:33] like drinking poison and expecting the other person to feel the effects. So, wish them well from afar, and wipe them from the CPU of your life, and move on. Could the gaslighting also be not just a way of controlling you or the other person, but also just a way of getting what they want? of justifying what they want.

[01:05:59] [01:06:00] And, um, you know, I want to be able to do what I want to do. And so I'm going to tell you that we already had this conversation, that you, you, you agreed that I could do what, whatever it is that I want to do. You don't remember having that conversation? Oh, well, I guess you're crazy. Um, you know, I, I, I, I think it's some of that, too.

[01:06:23] Oh, I think it's definitely a lot of that. Yeah. So, and, and do you think that, um, You know, Brene Brown talks in her book, Daring Greatly, about narcissists and how they're the most wounded of all. They're the most, they carry the most shame. And so they have the most to cover up for. Um, do you see that too in your experience?

[01:06:49] You know, it's, it's really hard for anyone to diagnose a person with narcissistic personality disorder, and so, um, I tend to, um, lump [01:07:00] people in, I don't care what the name is called, if the behaviors are these, then it's not a healthy relationship. Right. Um, and. on the note of them being wounded, um, the, the, the theories are that narcissists are sort of born out of their own trauma.

[01:07:20] And if they were raised in an abusive household, then you have a choice of either becoming a, um, narcissist to protect yourself. You're not going to let anyone in. You're going to, you're going to stop everyone from getting close and. This is following the pattern of how they were abused. Um, the other option when someone has an abusive parent in their life is, is that they become a

codependent, a people pleaser, someone that wants to help everybody and not make any waves.

[01:07:52] So you've got this, this push me, pull you, um, kind of a thing. their takers and we're givers. [01:08:00] And so, um, you know, together we make a perfect match and, and that's just the human magnet syndrome as in Ross Rosenberg's book is that we are attracted to the drama because we're used to it. Um, and, and as far as them, um, being able to heal, I don't think that they will ever be able to heal because it is inbred in them.

[01:08:25] Again, it's a protective mechanism to their own trauma. Yeah, yeah. So how would somebody who wants to divorce a narcissist go about that? What, what kinds of advice would you give them about, you know, statistics, stories, ways to get out of it? Well, the first thing is to get support because you are not about to have a normal divorce.

[01:08:49] And again, most of the people that come into my groups, um, don't even know they were with a narcissist, don't even know that they've been abused. So when you start [01:09:00] a divorce, you're almost innocent at that point. You still have feelings of love and they have none. And then it's so clear in this horrific discard that most of them get to before divorce that, that the other person had no feelings.

[01:09:16] They might've been married for 40 years, but they were just being used. And so when you get into a situation where you're going into a divorce to prepare yourself by knowing, um, that every trick in the book is going to be used against you, um, lies are going to be told and. I think an important thing when you're hearing these in the courtroom and Susan, you could probably attest to this as well.

[01:09:43] Um, it's to not react in the judge's eyes when you're blindsided by lies and accusations in the courtroom. Um, it's to take them. Offline take them and understand them and don't take them as a personal attack because it's [01:10:00] just a ploy. It's a tactic. And, um, while we're sitting there going, how could you not love your Children anymore?

[01:10:07] Um, it's it's much bigger than that. It's it's something that without proper preparation for a divorce, um, you're going to lose in a very big way because they go for the jugular. There's no question about it. If they punch, um, you know, they're going to punch harder and if you're not prepared for that and you're in this innocent, it was a wonderful marriage.

[01:10:34] I want to keep it together. They're going to walk all over the victims, you know, Tracy, um, that just rings a lot of bells with some of the things that Rebecca and I have. Spoken about because, you know, as I think Rebecca mentioned just before we started this podcast, um, you know, we not too many narcissists end up in long term marriages, you know, these are, these are not marriages that are successful.

[01:10:58] So we have certainly [01:11:00] seen our share of divorces and for relationships that have broken down because of this narcissist. cycle, narcissistic cycle. Um, they go from bad to ugly pretty fast, uh, in the courtroom. And I was just thinking you might, can you share some stories of things that you've heard, um, that narcissists have subjected their, I'll call them victims to in the courtroom setting or in the divorce setting, you know, that might, uh, spark some, um, understanding for our listeners.

[01:11:31] Well, a narcissist will actually attack your best qualities. That's just a fact. So, if you were a wonderful mother. There's nothing better or that's going to hurt you more than to be accused of being a terrible mother. And so they're going to attack the things that you most value. And so in that, um, I was attacked, um, in, in my divorce.

[01:11:57] with very false [01:12:00] accusations, false accusations that I had stolen money and false accusations that I had forged paperwork. None of this was real, and yet they were the ones actually forging paperwork and, you know. projecting what they were doing. And yet I had to defend myself. I had to protect myself. And, um, so many people will experience the, you're a terrible parent and they'll have, um, child protective services called on them when they are the most loving, caring parents.

[01:12:33] But if you, if you see these things coming in, they are there to distract the judge. They're there to distract and. Draw out this, um, divorce to be as long as possible. They're doing it for lots of different reasons. One of them is generally financial that, um, perhaps they have more money, um, and they can, they can rake you over the coals.

[01:12:58] And a lot [01:13:00] of people end up going bankrupt from a 100,000 divorce. So, um, it's making you suffer as part of the, that's the whole thing. Yeah. And that's what messes with people's heads the most is that these false accusations, no matter what it is, um, it hurts. You get sucked into the trying to defend yourself or trying to rationalize their crazy behavior.

[01:13:27] And there's no, there's no rationalizing crazy. No. Well, and you never get to deal with the actual facts of what's best for the Children in reality because you're dealing with the accusations that you're a bad parent or something like that. So that you stole money or whatever it is. So you're so busy dealing with all of that craziness.

[01:13:47] Right. You never move forward with the actual divorce. No, it's, it's such a common thing to project out that, um, someone is something that they're not to accuse them [01:14:00] so that they have to defend themselves. And, and that's, that's the hardest part in going through a divorce with a narcissist. Um, They are the high conflict divorces.

[01:14:10] They are the ones that don't end. I had seven trials. I felt like Casey Anthony. I'm like, did I kill my daughter or something? I don't understand why we're fighting over this much. Why? But, you know, as and I admire you for continuing the fight though, because, you know, even though it's hell to get out of it.

[01:14:33] And we talked about, you know, the name of our episode today is escaping hell. Um, but I, you always used to tell my clients and, and a lot of times it was the women who were more of the victim, but there's definitely men victims as well. Um, but I would. to them. Your choices are three choices here. It's which as soon as I would say no, no.

[01:14:59] [01:15:00] Okay. So door your pat on the head and they want you to take in the parenting plan is, wh is, whatever the um, the the property division that Uh, you know, fair to, to, to them, which is, you know, basically nothing for you and all for them. Um, or, or door number three is to, to fight for what's fair. I mean, those are really the options.

[01:15:29] And so, um, you know, I like what you said about, you know, making sure you have the right support and, uh, because it's gonna take. every ounce of strength you've got. Yeah. And unfortunately it can cost that 100, 000 that you talked about as well, Tracy. Those are, you know, that fight, even if it's the good fight or the fight based on facts costs a lot of money.

[01:15:53] in a courtroom. Yeah. And, and it's, it's just that sort of mad, rabid dog that just [01:16:00] keeps coming back. You know, you, you just think, why can't this just end? Like I'm not fighting you. Why does it have to keep, why is something coming out every single time we go to court? And, um, it confuses the victim. It really confuses them because they truly believe that there was a real marriage and that.

[01:16:20] This shouldn't be happening. So when these things happen, um, it really messes with their head, right? Because the goal is not to just pragmatically, you know, settle the divorce. The goal is to make you suffer and they'll fight for things that they don't even want. Um, like kids, this is all the time. huge thing.

[01:16:41] They don't even want them, but they don't want you to get them and they're willing to fight again without any reason or any real interest in, but it's just the battle. It's the battle to watch you squirm in court and, and that's their goal. If they can [01:17:00] fulfill that, they feel like they've gotten away with something.

[01:17:03] And when they tip you in court and they tip you, um, in the, the parental, um, Parenting plan and and they get too upset. Be really aware that they could be recording you and then using that against you. There's so often where their manipulation of baiting someone is to push you to that point. So that you do look crazy.

[01:17:26] So now they can go around to their next victim and the next victim and tell everyone how crazy you were. So really common. So then let's talk about some of the other ways that narcissists will abuse you financially. Um, you know, cutting off credit cards, moving assets, you know, preventing career advancement.

[01:17:47] Let's talk about some of those other things that they'll do. So certainly, um, cutting off credit cards is one vehicle, right? To keep somebody essentially under your thumb, right? All of a sudden you don't [01:18:00] have the credit cards that will help you pay for the most basic necessities in your life, food, clothing, um, childcare, all of those kinds of things, right?

[01:18:09] And your credit limit used to be limitless. Um, when the narcissist was feeling magnanimous, and now you have essentially the narcissist has decided that, you know, you're not on the narcissist's side anymore. And so the credit cards get cut, your limits go low, if any. Um, and all, you know, you're standing at the grocery and you can't pay for the groceries, or you have now found yourself so isolated.

[01:18:35] Um, and you don't have those passwords to even understand what the finances are because the passwords have all been changed. Um, the mail is no longer coming to your home. It may be going to the narcissist's office instead, or, you know, obviously with online now you don't have any of that

access. And so it is, it is really a strategy to keep you under that [01:19:00] person's thumb and to keep you dependent on that person.

[01:19:04] Yeah. Moving assets is another one. Moving assets is a very, it is, is very, um, difficult because once the assets start to move, it makes it much more difficult to trace the assets. Um, and so maybe things were in joint names and all of a sudden there's no more money in that bank account. Or maybe you had a brokerage account and the brokerage account has now been moved or the, the assets have now moved into a different brokerage account.

[01:19:32] Maybe it was in joint names and now it's only in his or her name alone. And so you no longer have access to the funds and the security that you had access to before, which makes you even more dependent. And look, I think at that point, it's time to kind of, it's a wake up call. I think maybe the wake up call could have happened earlier, but certainly that is the wake up call when assets start moving.

[01:19:57] When someone is even moving [01:20:00] assets to other family members or to friends, and you don't have control of that, perhaps things are being moved into trust. And all of a sudden, you know, the, the, somebody is saying to you, just sign here. It's okay. You know, we're taking you to an attorney of their choice to just sign here.

[01:20:17] Those are warning calls that you need to be aware of. Yeah. And then they play games. Like they'll start paying the bills from, you know, your account first, right? So deplete that account first. Yes. That, that is, um, another strategy is again, taking away your control, right? Your safety line. So if they're paying all of the bills from your account, your account eventually is going to be depleted while their accounts are building.

[01:20:49] Right. And all of a sudden you don't have enough money to actually go to the attorney. You don't have enough money to go to your therapist to have that conversation about what is happening in your life. You [01:21:00] don't have the money to, to do, to move around in the world. I think what people really need to understand and, and money sometimes is a dirty word.

[01:21:08] People don't like to talk about finance finances, but. to work in the world to move around in this world, you need money. That's just a fact. And if someone is taking your control of your, your finances away from you, that is a wake up call that you need to do something. Yeah. And then they'll, they'll start to play games during the case, right?

[01:21:30] So what they'll do is they will. Uh, play games with the discovery. So you want to talk about that a little bit? Sure. So, um, so let's talk about what discovery is, first of all, because I think that a lot of our clients, I know when we start, um, actually dealing with discovery, they want to know what it is.

[01:21:51] So what we do usually at the very beginning of a case is we serve, meaning send, discovery notices. to your spouse's [01:22:00] attorney, and those have a list of documents that we're going to be looking at. Usually it goes five years back. Sometimes it could go longer, but we're looking at credit card statements to see how the spending actually has occurred.

[01:22:12] Is there spending on other people who maybe are outside the marriage, for example, paramours of some sort? Is there gambling that we need to be aware of? Are there transfers of monies to other accounts? There's lots of ways to look at these documents, but essentially credit card statements, bank statements, brokerage statements, statements regarding restricted stock units.

[01:22:35] um, bonus and award statements. We want to see it all so that we understand what are the assets, what are the liabilities, and what's the income. And then, of course, what is the lifestyle? Because the lifestyle analysis is going to tell us how much spousal support, um, there will be or how much spousal support will be paid, right?

[01:22:54] So we're looking for all of that. So we serve these notices and then the other side doesn't comply, which is [01:23:00] what you're talking about, Rebecca. So maybe they give us a whole pile of documents, but they're not really relevant. And then they tell us, we we've given you 5, 000 documents. We've given you 50, 000 documents.

[01:23:10] Okay. But it's the quality, not the quantity of the documents, right? That we're looking at. And of course, then there's the person who doesn't give you any documents. And now you are left with lots of discovery notices out there. And. perhaps letters to counsel, et cetera, and your bills are escalating. At some point, your attorney should be subpoenaing everything that they can subpoena directly from the institutions, right?

[01:23:36] So we serve the discovery notice. If we don't get the, the discovery, we start subpoenaing. We have to be careful about subpoenaing employers because sometimes that can actually backfire. So we are careful about that. But sometimes we're left with no choice. We have to get the information. Um, so we will subpoena the institutions.

[01:23:56] One good place to start is the tax returns because there's usually a [01:24:00] schedule in the tax returns that will set forth the dividends and the interest from interest or dividend bearing accounts. And those are great places to start to subpoena. Yes. Yeah. Yeah. So she just said so much gold right there. I just want to like, make sure that we don't, um, gloss over what she just said, because there was so much gold in what she just said that, uh, and I just want to make sure that you guys just heard everything that she just said.

[01:24:33] Um, because as lawyers, I, I, I know. Everything that she just said, but I want to make sure that you guys got to hear everything that she just said. Um, so. As so in a case, there are five major areas. I always say five major areas. Some people say four, but I'm going to say five. So there's, um, property [01:25:00] division and then there's spousal support and then there's.

[01:25:03] Um, uh, custody, child support and fees. So those are like the five major umbrellas. And when you are looking at the five major umbrellas, and every single case has those five potential areas, and then there's tangential areas like domestic violence and things like that. But the, the five major areas are those.

[01:25:22] And in every single case you have those potential. And if you don't have kids, obviously custody and child support aren't going to be there, but. You have those five major areas. So when you have some major, uh, potential issues, such as waste or, um, you know, business valuations or, um, something like that.

[01:25:47] Then you might have to hire a forensic accountant and that forensic accountant might need to look at a lifestyle analysis, you know, in order to say, how are we going [01:26:00] to come up with what the true income is or what, what we need to look at as far as how to come up with, you know, an alimony award or a spousal support award.

[01:26:11] And so you hire this forensic to help you do that. And what they have to do is they have to actually go back and track every single dollar that was ever spent or ever looked at. And what they do is look at the last five years and it's, it's kind of painful, actually, I mean, for them, you know, they literally go.

[01:26:39] How much did you spend on this, you know, shoe purchase or this grocery store purchase or this literally every single dollar and they put it together into what we call a lifestyle analysis. So that's what she's talking about with that [01:27:00] and, um, and tracking every single dollar and, um. And so that's what a lifestyle analysis is.

[01:27:08] How much did you spend on your pets? How much did you spend on your nails? How much did you spend on it? Literally, that's what a lifestyle analysis is. And it's kind of painful, but that's what it is. Um, it, it kind of feels like a rectal exam. I think, um, honestly, but, um, because you never think that that's what's gonna end up happening when, when you're actually doing it until you go through a divorce.

[01:27:34] And then that's what it ends up being. Um, but, um, but you need to know what somebody's true income is. in order to come up with, you know, because it's important for alimony, it's important for child support, it's important for a fees claim. So, you know, a true income is really, really important for all three of those.

[01:27:57] So, That's [01:28:00] what she's talking about for that. Now, when, when you're talking about subpoenas, so when you actually are trying to get documents from somebody, they can either hand them over voluntarily, but when you're talking about a narcissist, they usually don't. They usually don't. And so what happens is you say, hand over 12 months of bank statements or whatever it is, or five years of bank statements, but what happens is they'll hand over everything but December or something like that.

[01:28:37] And then you're over there going, where the hell is December? Or they'll hand over everything except for... Page five or something like that. And you know, where's page five and you know, and it's just, it's so annoying as hell. And, and it, every, all of that costs money because you're paralegals like looking through it and they go everything but page five is in here.[01:29:00]

[01:29:00] And so you have to go, here's a motion to compel. I need page five and it gets extremely expensive and time consuming because you're not allowed to just. Filed a motion to compel. You have to prove that you tried to do it, you know, uh, you know, uh, yourselves first, well, at least most jurisdictions you do.

[01:29:20] Right. And so good faith. Sure. Right, right. Good faith. Try to do it yourself, and then that costs money first. And then you have to, you know. Then you can file your motion to compel. So all that costs money. So what she's saying is, instead of doing that, just go straight to, you know, Bank of America and file the subpoena because at least then, you know, the Bank of America isn't gonna piss around.

[01:29:46] They'll just give you the whole entire statement. That's what she's saying. So, um, it's, it's a little bit more money because Bank of America is

going to charge you for the [01:30:00] copies, but at least, you know, you're going to get the entire statement. So that's what she's saying. That's 100 percent correct.

[01:30:08] Exactly correct. And look, I think that the point of sending the subpoenas in my mind is that sometimes, and I've watched this, right? Lawyer is, is sending the letter and another letter and another letter. And I'm thinking to myself, Why would we be begging for these statements? They're going to come in this beautiful package from Bank of America, for example.

[01:30:29] They're going to be certified. They can go straight into evidence. They're true and accurate copies. They're business records. And I don't have to now spend all this time begging for my discovery. Right. And as long as you can get them, I mean, sometimes it's harder because it's an out of state subpoena or something like that.

[01:30:48] It depends on. where they're from, right? So sometimes you can't now and what she's saying as far as going to the employer, it can be difficult because [01:31:00] if they're self employed or if it, if the, if the employer is, you know, the, the, their friend or something, because it's, it's a small company, well then he ain't going to bother because.

[01:31:15] You know, it's not going to be, um, probably accurate anyway, you know, but if it's a public company or a big company or something like that, maybe it's worth it to subpoena the records from, from the employer, you know, so you have to weigh that out. Yeah, I think that the biggest issue about subpoenaing the records, and you're correct, obviously, if it's a friend, it makes it much more difficult.

[01:31:39] And I have seen more and more that people can often defer their income, particularly when the business is small. They have, you know, all these different deals going as they're going through the divorce because their buddy went through the divorce too, right? Okay. And so now they're deferring their income and.

[01:31:56] You're really not getting a true picture of the income, but [01:32:00] even when, and you have to be careful about this and particularly in some counties in New York, they are very strict about it. There are employers who are going to get upset about being subpoenaed. And so you really need to have a very good reason.

[01:32:15] The person has not complied. I usually like to get court permission to do it. because then it actually informs the court as to what's going on. Somebody has another opportunity to produce the documentation, but at some point you need the documentation and most employers will understand most large corporations and institutions are going to understand because a lot of people go through a divorce and so they're used to getting these subpoenas.

[01:32:43] Yes. But, um, Absolutely. Uh, but with out of state, you have to go to the court out of state and you have to, you know, it, there's a little bit more of a, um, some steps that you have to go through Yes. To, um, [01:33:00] to get that. So it's just a little bit more expensive. It's a little bit more time consuming. Um, sometimes you have to hire a lawyer outta state in order to help you.

[01:33:09] process server out of state. It's just a little bit more difficult to do that. Sometimes it's worth it though. I mean, but you know, you, you just always have to know and, and, and, um, weigh the return on your investment. Don't, don't, you know, throw good money after bad, right? That's exactly right, Rebecca. 100%.

[01:33:29] So, um, so let's talk about. You know, um, other things that people should be doing in order to protect themselves. Um, you know, what other kinds of documentation that they should be looking at? Um, emails, texts, you know, that sort of thing. What else, what else can they do? So, look, first and foremost, I think that people need to make sure when they're signing those tax returns that they actually know [01:34:00] what they're signing.

[01:34:01] Because, you know, we, we touched, or you did, you touched on this idea of business valuations, for example, and I think that it's very important that people understand that they actually need to make sure that their tax returns are accurate before they sign them, or before they actually allow the accountant to be filing them, and then they should be keeping copies of them, and they need to also remember that the accountant works them.

[01:34:24] If you're filing joint tax returns for both of you, so the accountant should be providing a copy. The accountant should be answering your questions and you should not be, you know, being put in a situation where you're told sign here. Okay. And you're not able to review it or sign here and you were given one minute to get them to the post office or to get, tell the accountant to e file them.

[01:34:46] So it's, it's very important that you review those tax returns because they are an admission essentially of what the income is. And if you're being

misleading, maybe it's not you who's being misleading, but when you [01:35:00] file those joint tax returns with your spouse, you are agreeing to the government that this is your income.

[01:35:07] And so it's very important that I think first and foremost, that you, you deal with that particular issue. The other issue is making sure that you keep records, keep records of bank statements, keep records of the credit card statements, you know, start to gather essentially your file so that your attorney is not having to hunt down every single thing that that is going on.

[01:35:29] Those bits and pieces that that woman gave me, they made her case. They really did. They, they were millions of dollars and they came sometimes a little tiny pieces of paper like this big. Okay. But, you know, shredded. Okay. But 5 million later. Okay. She had found that money essentially. I mean, look, we did subpoena it.

[01:35:51] We did find it. But essentially she gave us the breadcrumbs to be able to do that. So start gathering your statements, start gathering the, the credit [01:36:00] card statements, keep your eyes open. I think that these are all important things to be doing. Yes, your attorney is not a mind reader and you're, there's not some, you know, a thing out in the sky where your attorney can go to and, you know, find all the information, you know, you have to provide it to your attorney.

[01:36:22] So, you know, the more information that you can bring to your attorney, the better it's going to be. I'm going to add something, Rebecca, because it comes up a lot. Believe it or not. So very often people decide that they're going to fill out these applications for mortgages or for loans, and they're going to have to state what their income is or whether they've been given gifts or whether they've been given loans, and they mistake that information, right?

[01:36:48] And that often comes back to bite them, right? So, for example, a parent, um, may give, you know, the couple or a party a loan. And now they've stated that [01:37:00] they have no loans on their application for their mortgage. They, they, it was a loan, but they decided to make it into something other than a loan. because they want you to look more favorable to the mortgage company.

[01:37:14] And so it's very important that you remember that your words and the things that you sign, the documents that you sign, the documents that you're swearing to, the documents that you're submitting to banks, particularly federally, um, toward banks, that those are your words and they are your

admissions. And so you need to accurately report things because I will tell you during a divorce, it will all come back to bite you.

[01:37:37] One other thing that I think is so important is that people, if they're getting an inheritance, or if they actually are getting a gift from a parent or other family member, that they make sure that that is well documented and that they keep those money separate and apart. So, A lot of people come to us and they have lost what we call separate property in New York.

[01:37:59] They [01:38:00] would have had, for example, they came into the marriage and they had no prenup perhaps, and they have not actually kept their premarital property separate, or they have not kept their inheritance. And all of a sudden they have co mingled all of these funds. Perhaps they've spent down their inheritance.

[01:38:17] Perhaps they've spent down their premarital property while they've been saving marital property. All things that you shouldn't necessarily be doing. If you actually save and keep that separate property separate, you will get a credit at the end if you can trace it. In New York, it is the person who is, um, has the separate property claim.

[01:38:38] It's their burden to trace that separate property in order to get credit for it. But many times people come to us and they have millions of dollars of separate property that they cannot trace. And so it may just be gone. Really important. Very good advice. Yes, very good advice. And gather those important documents and put them in a [01:39:00] safe place.

[01:39:01] You know, make copies of them and put them in a safe place. Yes. Yes. Keep them. You know, I think one of my first cases ever was a matrimonial case where the woman had a fabulous prenup. But when she actually, she was hospitalized and when she came back from the hospital, prenup was completely gone. She never saw the prenup again.

[01:39:22] And the prenup would have been very favorable to her. The attorney was long gone who had drafted the prenup and nobody was going to be talking about that prenup except for her at that point and it was gone. So you need to make sure that you keep your documents. Safe. Make sure that a family member has a copy.

[01:39:40] Make sure that they are in a place that is not going to just be in your email and your emails become, you know, are erased or somebody's got into your emails and deleted them. Make sure to keep your password safe. All of

those kinds of things you really need to pay attention to. Yes. Very, very good advice.