

N.Y.B.L. Podcast Ep 204(Dealing With Covert Narcissists at Work. Here's How To Find Out!)

[00:00:00] **Rebecca Zung:** You think that you're dealing with maybe a covert narcissist in your business? I have been there, the worst. So in this video, I am going to be going through the seven ways that you can spot a covert narcissist in your business at work or wherever it is that you're dealing with one during the day. You definitely definitely don't want to miss this.

[00:00:30] All right. So, so nice. So kind. So wonderful. Everybody thinks that they are wonderful. They come, they friend you, they are your best friend. Everybody thinks that they are wonderful. They ingratiate themselves within everyone, but you know, they're kind of like in everyone's business. They sort of find themselves.

[00:00:54] everywhere they need to be. That's sort of how they are. They just sort of really in [00:01:00] touch with everything that's going on, especially if it's a company, they see where the best synergies are, they see where they can collapse and, and they, are really, really great for that idealization phase. You know, they want, they look for those opportunities to attach themselves to the right people.

[00:01:24] They're excellent opportunists and they're, they're kind of like meerkats, you know, they're always looking around for that best opportunity and where they can attach themselves. to that best person to make themselves look the best. You know, where can they look the most significant and be seen and, and, and be valued the most, right?

[00:01:52] And they want to be in that, that spot, that spotlight. If they [00:02:00] attach themselves to you, Are that person at that moment, you know, so whether it's a business partnership, or if you're at work or whatever it is, it's because they have decided that you're the one that should be attached to in that moment.

[00:02:21] And so, if that's the case. then you know you're going to be a good one for them. But if all of that aligns and that's fantastic at the beginning, once they attach themselves to you, so that's number one, then you start to find, well, number two, they end up not following through. on the things that they're

supposed to be doing, say that they're going to do things, they end up not doing them.

[00:02:52] So number two is that they're very, very passive aggressive, assign themselves or you assign them certain things to do. [00:03:00] Where is it? You are kind of confused by it because they seem like they're going to be an amazing partner or somebody to be working with and it's not happening and they always have some sort of excuse for it or or they just don't respond to you at all, but, you know, they've always got some sort of family issues, some sort of family emergency, you Some sort of something going on and you start to feel during this time that underlying sort of competition coming on.

[00:03:36] Now, you're starting to feel that and you're starting to feel that they're sort of triangulating. Right? So number 3. is that's when you're starting to feel that sort of competition going on. That's where you're starting to feel where there's they treat you a little bit like they [00:04:00] are superior to you and you are inferior.

[00:04:04] Little digs, little subtle digs, little subtle devaluing. Where, you know, they kind of forget things about you on purpose, things that you know that they knew about you, they kind of put themselves in superior positions. If. There is an opportunity all of a sudden they left you off of it. Oh, inadvertently.

[00:04:30] They might have inadvertently left you off of emails for meetings or information about clients. You know, all of a sudden things are starting to happen. And when you question them about it, they are what, what are you talking about? You know, they don't own up to it because, you know, everybody still thinks that they're so wonderful, so nice, and they even say things to you, like how much they [00:05:00] think of you.

[00:05:01] It's confusing because the way they're acting is different than the way they conduct themselves. And so you're starting to feel confused about this underlying thing that's happening. You know, the passive aggressive behavior, this underlying competition, things that they're forgetting and the way they, they still seem like they're your friend, or they still seem like they're supposed to be sort of on your side.

[00:05:30] Then the next thing is they start setting themselves up as sort of the, they're friends with all sorts of other people. and that they have stronger sort of relationships with other people. They still, they start setting themselves up as they are the go to person. They are the go to person within the relationship with you so that you are [00:06:00] kind of the secondary person in the relationship.

[00:06:05] and because they want people to sort of see that you are now kind of wronging them in some way that you are now sort of the the bad person they want to sort of set themselves up as kind of the victim of you if anything ever happens they want to make sure that They've kind of got these third parties align, aligned with them and they want to make sure that you know that these third parties are aligned, you know, so they'll kind of drop it in that close they are to this person or that person, especially if this person or that person is superior to you.

[00:06:53] somebody that you look up to, somebody that is perceived to be higher up on the food chain in some way, [00:07:00] more famous, more influence, whatever it is. It doesn't have to be even within the same company, but they want to make sure that whoever this person is, it's whether it's the illusion of influence or, or whatever it is.

[00:07:15] That you know that they know or whatever it is that there's this perceived feeling that if there was ever a fracture between you and them that they're going to be absorbed into the higher level of society as they see it. you're going to be left out in the cold. That's what they kind of want to make sure that you feel.

[00:07:43] Um, that's the next one. The next one is you start to see some maybe even potential situations where they start treating you almost as a subordinate. Now they're starting [00:08:00] to give you tasks. to do where you are kind of becoming where you're doing things for them. They might even say things to you in public or in front of others that make people think that you're their subordinate in some way.

[00:08:18] They might put something on out on social media. Or something that kind of makes people believe this, even if it's not true, or they treat you like this in some way,

[00:08:47] because I know for me, it was very similar to this, and I know for me, I even started to see some unethical behavior at this point, I was taken aback, and [00:09:00] if you actually say something to them at this point about behavior, That is, you know, potentially unethical or not above board, or you try to call them out on whatever it is that they're doing, they are really, they turn it around.

[00:09:19] Like, it is such a huge. Oh, my gosh. I can't believe you would. question me, then they become the victim. They reverse it so that they become the victim and you are now comforting them. The next thing is that they will

pretend Like you didn't know they didn't know that you were trying to either take time off or that you were trying to not be scheduled on a certain day or do something like that, you know, they'll start to try to, uh, sabotage you.

[00:09:59] So they might even, [00:10:00] like, tell clients or people like that, that. Oh, they don't know where you are. You know, make it seem like you just didn't show up or make you come in on those days, make you work on those days, that sort of thing. The next thing is that if something good happens with you, and this is the last one, number seven, is that they will absolutely not be happy for you whatsoever.

[00:10:27] I mean, they'll be like, Oh, great for you. Thank you. Well, congratulations. I mean, they'll try to muster it, you know, if they're trying to still hide it, but, you know, you can, you'll be able to start to tell that they're not actually happy. And by the way, you know, this is still, you know, all, if they're still with you, so working with you, but I just want to add sort of like a PS to this.

[00:10:53] If you decide that you're no longer for them and now you're against them, or now you're actually [00:11:00] pulling away and they know it, this is when. Gloves off, mask off when it comes to a covert narcissist, this is when they just absolutely go insane, you know, removing your access, doing things. This is when you start to see a side of them where you think, Oh, what happened to the nice one?

[00:11:21] Wow, they'll start sending you really nasty emails being just absolutely horrible and you think, wow, I didn't even know you had it in you to be like this. And all you're trying to do is actually maybe try to have a cordial and you try to extend an olive branch. You're trying to be nice, trying to wrap things up.

[00:11:44] in a good way. They will not be able to do that. I'll tell you that right now. And by this time, you will have had all the energy sucked out of you. You will be a shell of yourself having dealt with them and you'll just be, I gotta get out of this thing. [00:12:00] So believe me, I know I've been there. I've been exactly where you are.

[00:12:06] And I can just tell you that the best thing for you is going to be putting those boundaries in place and not talking to anybody, not talking to any of their flying monkeys either. I mean, because they try to, you know, put themselves in this place of a puppet master or whatever. And I can tell you that the other people around them don't see what's going on.

[00:12:29] And it's just not going to be helpful for you to try to remain in contact with them or the other people in their world. It's better for you to try to cut ties with as many people that are close to that narcissist as possible to for your own sake, your own sanity, your own soul. Believe me, but then there's something that happened.

[00:12:49] I want to get to the narcissist in your life. The sneaky narcissist. Yeah. As I kept getting promoted and the CEO I worked for was a [00:13:00] male, the president of the company was a male. However, the only other peer, um, from the executive level that was a female was our CFO. And along the way, the higher I would rise, the less and less she would like me right at first.

[00:13:13] It was, Oh, great. Happy to have you here. As you know, I entered into the executive team. But then I got promoted to executive vice president. Then I got promoted to chief revenue officer. And she and I were at the exact same level. And during that time, I thought to myself, I'm making her a little uncomfortable.

[00:13:30] I could sense that there was something that she liked less and less about me. And so I started somewhat turning a blind eye to her bad behavior, passive aggressive, not responding to emails, not including me in meetings I should be included in. And instead of me owning my voice and, Oh, and by the way, that is so, that is.

[00:13:48] So covert narcissist behavior, passive aggressiveness is total covert narcissist behavior. And then when you call them out on, you know, not including [00:14:00] you on meetings, it's like, Oh, I thought that I had included you, you know, and it's like that plausible deniability. Oh, I didn't include you on that. Oh, I thought I did.

[00:14:10] You know, that sort of thing, um, you know, where, where, you know, oh, and, and everybody else thinks that they're super nice. So you, you know, that they, at least the ones that I had dealt with. Oh yeah, because this person definitely treated me differently than she treated other people. I mean, she would enter into a meeting and almost hug people and welcome them.

[00:14:34] And when I would walk in. She wouldn't even say hello or acknowledge my presence and you know, over time I started noticing it was chipping away at my confidence. I was becoming more of a B rate version of myself because I felt so uncomfortable entering into these situations, even just a basic meeting.

[00:14:52] I always felt, you know, as the odd man out. However, I had really allowed that to happen by turning a blind eye to her [00:15:00] behavior, not acknowledging it. E E And finally one day I woke up and I just said, I've had enough of this, you know, in my own mind, I want to just, I want to stop, I want to stop you there because that is so, so important.

[00:15:10] You're like, you're, you're saying stuff that's so, so important that I want to like mention because they condition you. And, and what you're saying is something that I want to make sure that I highlight for people that they understand. It's that conditioning because when you're a person who is an empathic person, a good person, a nice person, a normal person, a normal person, it's like, you're not sure if you should say something.

[00:15:35] You're not sure if you should bring it up and it's It's like, is it, is it something that you should like call out, you know, is it something big enough that you should sit, you know, you don't want to make waves so you don't end up, you know, calling it out. And then you end up kind of almost being conditioned and, um, that person, Oh, look, I got away with it.

[00:15:58] I got away with this. I got away with [00:16:00] that. And then it happens again and again, like over time and you end up. Sort of being conditioned. Um, you know, I, I, I got away with not, um, inviting her to this meeting. I got away with, um, not including her on that email. I got away with this. And then, you know, over time it was several things that happened, but you were conditioned over time and that's what they end up doing is this conditioning, um, where.

[00:16:30] You were, um, allowing this to happen, but not like intentionally allowing it to happen. I mean, and that's what I want people to understand. It's like, you know, people feel bad about themselves or they feel like, you know, oh, how did I let this happen? How did it happen? You know, but it's like, because it's like these little things, it's like death by a thousand cuts.

[00:16:56] You know it, it's like, do I, do I say something about that [00:17:00] little thing? Oh, I wasn't included on this email. That seems so stupid. Like to bring that up, you know? It's like, but then it's these little things over time. And so I just wanna make sure that I highlight this because this is so typical, especially of a covert narcissist.

[00:17:15] And you know what's interesting to that point, and thank you for highlighting that, is that. I would also reach out to people around her to say, am I crazy? I would go to her brother, who I had a better relationship with, and say,

am I crazy? I feel like she just keeps cutting me out. What's going on? Because I was looking for some validation or clarity.

[00:17:34] I truly felt so confused. I didn't want to think the worst, especially earlier on, the longer it went on, the more clear it became to me. But I would go to her brother and he would say, Oh, you know her. She's, she's, she's being annoying. Charlie jealous. Don't worry. You know, women, he would say that to, you know, women can't put two women together.

[00:17:51] And that's what they do. And they just sort of poo poo it. And, and, and you think you're going crazy. And by the way, they end up, they're like watching you. [00:18:00] They're just observing you all the time. They're watching you, watching you, watching you. And you, they almost like want to become you. They almost like want to, like, they have this like fixation and this obsession.

[00:18:12] session over you because they're so like, um, in, in some ways there's an admiration of you at the same time as at the same time that they're super jealous of you. That's the, you know, was my experience of it as well. Oh, it's so true. You know, it's funny. I look back earlier in my career when I first came to the company, this woman was such an introvert, the typical CFO you would think of, you know, literally with a calculator running around, not speaking to anyone.

[00:18:40] I'm very much an extrovert leading a sales organization, so I'm forward facing my job is to communicate and and make people feel comfortable and create relationships. So we were complete opposites. However, during my tenure and as I would advance, I start noticing, wow, she's starting to give speeches at meetings.

[00:18:57] That's weird. She's dressing [00:19:00] differently. That's weird. I didn't notice it until one day. I will never forget. She was winning some award. I was at the event. And I thought to myself, wow, I'm in awe of this woman. She is nothing. She doesn't look like, act like, speak like, dress like the person I met here 10 years ago.

[00:19:15] So I went up to her to ask. I said, listen, I've got to ask you a question. You've literally, like a flower, I've seen you when you were closed when I got here. Open up and bloom before my very eyes as another woman in business. And I was a little bit younger than her. I said, could you give me some advice?

[00:19:31] How can I follow along your path and try to learn in my way, how I could, you know, expand myself. And she looked at me and said, I have no idea what you're talking about. And I remember that cocktail party. And then she said, but if I come up with any idea that something hits me, I'll let you know in the future.

[00:19:50] And I said, okay. And I remember leaving, feeling bad about myself that evening and thinking, Heather, here you are thinking she did some special thing. She was just [00:20:00] being herself, which left me feeling like I'm, I don't have that within me. However, fast forward a couple of years. I was a lot smarter. I was more exposed to the world and I had friends who were running at a much higher level and they started telling me, I hired a publicist, Heather.

[00:20:14] I heard hired a personal shopper. I hired a stylist. I hired a speaking coach. I hired an executive coach. My friends started telling me everything that this woman had been doing right before me, but she, instead of like my friends telling me they're doing it. She was trying to keep it a secret and make me think that I'm crazy.

[00:20:33] Yeah, so she didn't want you to have the secret to us, of course, right? Yeah, she's not going to tell you because she doesn't want you to be better. But then what is so obvious now? Yeah, but then what did she end up doing? Well, I ended up, um, in, you know, she was my peer. So there really wasn't anything she could do to me for a long time.

[00:20:56] Her father became ill. And she became [00:21:00] interim CEO, which means you're somewhat have the title, but you don't have all the power. She would still have to defer to the ultimate CEO chairman for approval on certain things. So she made my life a living hell. Basically, in the next year, I launched a personal brand, um, forward facing, you know, I, I made all my profiles public.

[00:21:19] In an effort to try to attract talent to the company, I was always trying to recruit new and better people that made my life easier. And so this was a strategy implemented, which was brilliant at the time. You know, no one was doing it in my industry. I was attracting so much talent to the company, but at the same time I was turning my light up, right?

[00:21:38] I was getting noticed. I started winning more awards. I started getting asked to speak on bigger stages, and she hated that. And so she had the GC contact me, threatening me that you can't have a personal brand. It's a

conflict of interest. Read your contract. And I had already done my due diligence. I'd hired an attorney.

[00:21:56] I knew that I had every right to do this and I would put whatever [00:22:00] verbiage they wanted on, you know, I would address. It was just so ridiculous that I was every day, you know, being basically attacked for doing nothing wrong. So in the end, she ended up getting the ultimate title CEO when her father became ill enough.

[00:22:14] And when that happened, she fired me immediately. Fired you like boom like that. You had made so much money for the company and did all this stuff And yeah, just fired you and then yeah She said there was no need for my position any longer. So the company no longer needed me. Yeah And then so how did you feel like tell us about that you went home and what?

[00:22:40] It was a horrible situation, but I was so sick of being bullied by this woman that on our last meeting where she actually did terminate me, I pulled the rug out from underneath her. I was so sick of being bullied in her really passive aggressive way that she tried to pressure me in the meeting to sign a non disparaging agreement to protect herself and [00:23:00] protect me.

[00:23:00] her company to ensure I never shared any of the things that I share now publicly. And I refused it. I said, I said, I'm not interested. And, and, you know, you standing there trying to hold a paycheck over me doesn't work anymore. And to see her face change physically, the color, the complete dynamic in the room was changed instantaneously when I declined her offer and stood up with a lot of class and walked out without getting angry, without getting mad.

[00:23:27] Of course, I got to my car and I was bawling my eyes out because I didn't know how I was going to pay my bills. But in that moment, I took back all the confidence that I had lost over those years. And I felt so proud of myself. Yeah. And I want to point out to everybody, you just like sucked her leverage away.

[00:23:44] Like, cause she wanted that, like, she wanted to see you squirm. She wanted to. see, you know, that to hold that, uh, power over you and you just suck that away from her. And I love the fact that you didn't [00:24:00] show that like emotion in front of her, which is something that I tell people all the time, like, you know, get to your car, scream, cry, whatever in your pillow at home and your shower, whatever.

[00:24:12] But in that moment, You know, you were like, don't give them that power in that moment, right? So you get home and I, I, you know, I heard you say like, you were like under a weighted blanket for like whatever, you know, like you felt like the world had come to an end, but it turned out to be the best thing that ever happened to you.

[00:24:35] So talk about that. It did. The first thing, once I came to and came out from the weighted blanket and crying was. I decided no one knows I'm fired. She was keeping it a secret, right? And so I thought, you know what, I'm going to go promote that I've been fired, which a lot of people thought was crazy, told me not to do it.

[00:24:54] I checked in with the one voice that counts your own. And to me, I said, for me, this is the right thing. I'm going to reframe getting [00:25:00] fired. And I googled who is successful that's been fired. Turns out J. K. Rowling, Oprah, Mark Cuban, Steve Jobs, the list goes on and on. I decided to see it as in good company, right?

[00:25:12] This is the level you want to roll at. You need to get fired. So I posted, I've just been fired. It's a really challenging situation. If I've ever helped you, I need to hear from you now. And I asked for help. That post went viral, landed me on the Elvis Duran show, and halfway through that interview, he said to me, Obviously, you're writing a book, Heather.

[00:25:33] But I wasn't. You know, I hadn't thought anything out yet. And so, him believing in me and transferring that confidence in me led me to Google, how do you write a book? And all I have to do is sit down and write and I knew I could do that. So, uh, five months later I launched confidence creator, which one it went number one on the Amazon business biography list.

[00:25:52] And at the time Donald Trump was president and it moved his book to number two. Um, so I trumped Trump for number one in the business biography list. [00:26:00] The first week my book came out. So awesome. Now. What is the fallout when you're dealing with a narcissist in the workplace? The collateral damage is huge.

[00:26:13] Narcissistic behavior on the job is not just economic. It's not just emotional. Just one narcissist. can be that proverbial one apple that can make all of them rotten. Seriously, I have seen it happen. I've seen it happen as an employer. Frankly, you have that one bad apple in there, that one person who's pitting everybody against everybody.

[00:26:45] who's bringing the morale down. And then what happens is that it causes less productiveness within everybody. It's, it's causing now, if you have to get rid of that person, [00:27:00] how much does it cost you to have to replace that person? And over time, teams don't want to work with each other, having to deal with the short term.

[00:27:12] The long term fallout as a manager, as a team member, organizational fallout, the impact can be quite huge. Now, what is it you're looking for? What are the red flags? What kinds of things should you be seeing or should you be looking for? You know, as an employer, red flags, narcissists have a grandiose sense of self.

[00:27:41] So they want all of the attention to be on themselves at all times. They end up taking credit for other people's work. They are unwilling to work in teams. Oftentimes they require an excessive level of praise. I remember one [00:28:00] time when I was interviewing somebody for a job and that person right in the interview process said to me, I hate way to work with.

[00:28:13] I love helping people. I love, you know, saying all the right things, but then she said, only thing I require is I need a lot of praise. I require lots and lots and lots of praise and adoration. I thought, this is not the person for this organization. I mean, if they tell you that right up front, heed the signs, heed the warning signs.

[00:28:38] Remember when people tell you who they are, believe them the first time, right? If they won't take feedback, if they're extremely defensive, It's always somebody else's fault. It's always a problem if they're unwilling to take responsibility for their actions, for their screw ups, for their problems. You know, [00:29:00] they didn't do something on time.

[00:29:02] They didn't deliver when they were supposed to. They didn't follow through when they were supposed to. Those sorts of things. And it's always somebody else's fault. They had a family funeral. They had something. Someone else didn't get them the things on time. It was always something. You start to see people hitting people against each other.

[00:29:24] You see problems everywhere this particular person goes. That's where a problem is. You've heard that this person said something bad about this person, or this person is not a team player back to kindergarten, does not work well with others, doesn't play well in the sandbox, that's a red flag as well, doesn't have empathy for others, you know, doesn't seem to care about others at all.

[00:29:54] other people in the organization. You know, literally doesn't, you [00:30:00] know, seem to worry about what's happening with other people in the organization. Or if you're talking about a boss, does the boss seem to care? I mean, I remember there was a boss that I worked for one time. Wasn't me that had the situation, but somebody else that I worked for was a single parent.

[00:30:23] And this particular boss didn't care about what was going on and even told that single parent to get a cab for her children to take them to the doctor one time because she didn't want that single parent to be away from the office. When her Children were sick, that is a sign of a person who may not have empathy, who may not care about the employees exhibiting signs of those sorts of narcissistic behavior.

[00:30:55] can be a problem. These are the kinds of things that ultimately down the [00:31:00] road are going to bring down the morale and that are going to cause almost like a cancer within the whole organization.

[00:31:15] And I'd like, I'd love to know what other kinds of problems you've seen. It can be super pervasive. within all sorts of organizations. Very, very, very toxic. And so you've got to go in, you've got to root out that problem and you've got to do it as soon as you see it. And then you've also got to train other people in your organization to be able to see what's going on so that you can help arm them.

[00:31:44] with the right solutions and with the right skills to be able to handle this, to be able to deal with this so that they can gain some clarity on this, so that they can learn how [00:32:00] to speak, so that they can be given the phrases, so that they can know how to establish strong, healthy boundaries. You know what I say?

[00:32:09] Step one, don't run. Step two, make a U turn. Step three, break free. And you know, one of the other things I so often say is, you know what's negotiable? Contracts. Issues. Terms, you know, it's not negotiable ever is your self worth, your self esteem, who you are. Narcissists are so much more afraid of you than you are of them.

[00:32:37] So if you stand in your power, if you stand up to them, if you know who you are, if you know who, how to be. strong and, and in your healthiness whole and complete, they will shrink. They will respect you. That's like a kryptonite to a narcissist, but you've got to know how [00:33:00] to do that. And you've got to be able to know how to keep that going in your organization, or it's going to cost the organization so much money learning how to keep that

difficult employee in check and keeping your organization free from that person.

[00:33:19] so that you can keep the organization overall healthy and strong will in the end be such a lifesaver for all involved. And by the way, save yourself so much time and so much headache and so much money.[00:34:00] [00:35:00]

[00:35:14] Okay, so things have turned red hot. You are under massive attack. They're triggering you because that's what they want to do. They want to make sure that you're triggered. They want to destabilize you. They want you to feel paralyzed. They want you to feel powerless. That's their goal. It's not just, by the way, it's not just because they want to win.

[00:35:42] Yes, they want to win, but there's kind of like this other piece of it because if they win, then it's over and they don't necessarily want it to be over because then the fun is over for them because part of the fun is the [00:36:00] intimidation factor. Part of the fun is watching you squirm. Part of the fun is like, it's kind of like that nasty kid who just like takes the earthworm and like wants to pick at it and watch it kind of squirm, put pins in it and watch, see what happens to it.

[00:36:19] Like that, that's kind of the fun of it for them. It's, it's, it's almost like an experience. experiment. They enjoy it. So how do you look fearless when they're like enjoying that? So I've come up with this acronym, it's called cool words, and it's to help you remember what to do. When they are trying to stick it to you, because a lot of times, by the way, they know you, especially if it's in a divorce situation or a business partner dissolution or something, where they've really gotten to know you well over the course of many years.

[00:36:56] They know what your Achilles heels are. They know how to [00:37:00] get to you. They know exactly what is going to needle you. So, cool words. C. C stands for chill out, take a break. First thing you can do is just walk away. Say, I need a moment. I need to walk outside. I need to take a breath. Go throw some cold water on your face.

[00:37:23] Go to the restroom. Take some fresh air in. Uh, just get away from the intensity of the room. Just, just doing that for a few minutes will, will make a huge difference. You have the right to just walk away for a second. Ch change it up a, a, a little bit, especially if there's a mediator. If you happen to be in a mediation setting, maybe even say, you know, I, I wanna talk to just the mediator for a second.

[00:37:52] Or maybe have just the lawyers talk or maybe ask. to have a different dynamic as far [00:38:00] as who's talking to whom. Even just that can kind of cool the temperatures down in the room for a second. Okay, so that's C, that's the first C. The next letter is O for cool words, right? So O, O stands for observe their behavior.

[00:38:17] You're just observing their behavior. verbally to them without emotion and without judgment. So you say to them something like this, I can see that you're upset. I can see that you're angry. You might even ask them, what's making you angry right now, get them to verbalize it. So you're just observing, you're observing their behavior to them.

[00:38:45] You're just. kind of taking yourself out of it by doing that. And you're asking them to explain their behavior to you without emotion, without defensiveness, without [00:39:00] judgment. You're not getting down into it with them by doing that. So that's the first O. The second O, we're working through the word cool here.

[00:39:10] The second O is observing the situation. as if you're a bystander. So the first O is you're observing their behavior to them. The second O is you're observing the situation as if you're a bystander. So this is where you're actually taking yourself out of the entire situation as if you're not even part of it.

[00:39:33] It's almost like watching a two year old having a tantrum on the floor. They're screaming, they're yelling. You don't feel like you need to get down on the floor and scream and yell, right? Usually just. Watch them. This is almost helpful like as if you're like you're watching a football game or you're watching a wrestling match or you're a hockey game and you're seeing like those guys like they start fighting, right?

[00:39:58] Because it helps you to [00:40:00] start to not take things as personally because remember the way people treat other people is always a direct reflection of the way they feel about themselves. I highly recommend the book, The Four Agreements. One of the four agreements that you make with yourself is you never take anything personally because the way people treat other people is always how a reflection of the way they feel about themselves.

[00:40:23] Observing the situation as if you're a bystander is something actually that Judge Lynn Toler also recommended when I interviewed her. And you can definitely check out my interview with her on this channel as Well, and we'll make sure we have a link to that here as well. So definitely check that out.

[00:40:45] The next letter is L. We're working through the word cool. So we've done C O O. Now we're doing L. L is let it go by you. You just literally watching the words that they fling toward you. Just go by you. [00:41:00] I just think of it as like when I was a kid and like I used to play dodge ball, like they would make us not, not willingly by the way, hated that game, but When we would, they would make us play that game in P.

[00:41:15] E., they called it P. E., and they forced us to line up against the wall. Do they still make kids play that game? Horrible game. They force you to line up against the wall and the boys would fling the ball at you as hard as possible and you would like try to dodge the ball. Anyway, so you just kind of like watch the words go by you.

[00:41:40] like that. Like you just go past them. The words go by you and there go, there they go. And you're just observing them go by you and they don't touch you. And that's what you're going to have them do. You're just letting them go by you. That's L. All right. And then words. This is my [00:42:00] favorite part of this.

[00:42:01] You use mantras, words, power words to keep you grounded. And so what you do is you actually have power words in front of you. So they could be words like power, strength, leverage. Resilience, confidence, or control, whatever it is. And you just have one or two of them right in front of you just to remind you of who you are, what you're doing there.

[00:42:30] And you don't even have to have the whole word written out. You can just write P for power. Something that's going to keep you grounded, keep you feeling strong. It could be just a symbol. Something that when you look at it. It's going to remind you of that word. In the book, Think and Grow Rich, which I also recommend, Napoleon Hill talks about that power of auto suggestion, which is a way for you to reprogram your brain and your neuronal [00:43:00] patterns.

[00:43:00] And so by having these words, there's something that is in the room with you when you're in that situation, that high emotion, that tense and intensive situation. It's a way for you to remind yourself who you are, and you're going to be less likely to be triggered that way. It's, it's reminding you that you're badass.

[00:43:27] You're a badass. And that badass self of yours is going to stay in that room. It ain't going to go anywhere when you're under attack so that you can remain looking fearless. And now we're going to talk about the do's and don'ts.

Uh, one of the things that I say that people should definitely do is document, document, document.

[00:43:51] Yes, yes, yes. And I know you tell your, your... Clients that too. Same thing. You know, it's, it's, it's, it's a good place to start because I think it is, if it's the only do you [00:44:00] do, you're in good, in good shape. And I don't u just use this document recommendation just in, um, marriages and, and close relationships and divorces.

[00:44:08] I make it a strong suggestion in. Place issues in, you know, other kinds of disputes you may be having, sometimes even in family issues. And it's interesting, my motivation for documentation, as you can imagine, it's to, to substantiate a legal argument. Yes. But it's also to help with your sanity. Mm-hmm.

[00:44:26] because sometimes people are like, no, no, maybe that didn't happen. I'm like, no, sweetie. In your journal on January 5th, it happened, you wrote it down like, oh yeah. So, you know, the narcissistic relationships are ab. Absolutely impacted by euphoric recall. People strangely are able to remember the good stuff about these really bad relationships.

[00:44:46] The documentation sometimes becomes a place where you can say, yeah, no, this isn't healthy. Well, it's, it's that, and I would add to that, that the reason. Another really good reason to document is that narcissists are [00:45:00] pathological liars. So you will catch them in lies if you document and I've won entire cases on people's notes.

[00:45:08] So, you know, and there's really no limit to how detailed you can be. It's really kind of just how, how meticulous you want to be, um, because. You know, if they're late for picking up the kids, if they're late for, um, uh, payment on something, if they made a snide remark, if they wrote an email that was, um, not reflective of a conversation and they tried to pawn it off as a conversation that you had, something like that, um, you know, just any little Yeah.

[00:45:42] Yeah. Yeah. Thing that just seems off to you, just take note of it. Mm-hmm. . Mm-hmm. . Because you know, when, when you ask the question, how is he or she getting away with this, which you're gonna ask that, and I always say all the time, every day, there's no like divorce fairies that come out and mm-hmm. and, and stop people from doing things.

[00:45:58] So, you [00:46:00] know, they won't get away with it. If you end up in front of the judge and you have the proper documentation. Yeah. Yes. It, it, it,

it is a, you know, I always say to people, you know, wanna know how you know you're being gaslighted or in a relationship with a narcissist. I'll tell you, you in arguments, you put text messages in front of them.

[00:46:19] You feel compelled to record conversations and you feel the need to write long novels of emails to them to explain your feelings. You're doing that because you're not being heard and because. You are being gaslighted so much that you have to show them this proof. This is taking this to another, to another level and for a different reason.

[00:46:37] Again, it's to provide that substantiation and it's not just about writing things down. It's about saving everything. You must save every text message. You must. You must save every voicemail, you must save every email, nothing can go, you're gonna start to feel like a hoarder before this is done, but you're gonna have to do it, because sometimes it's just that one message, and one thing I do also strongly encourage people to do, print it all out, and [00:47:00] there's actually apps out there that allow you to download all your text messages and print them all out Create a printout because in case something blows up with your phone or your email server or something then at least you have the hard evidence.

[00:47:12] It's got to have dates, times, all of that. Print it all out. You might even want to get into like a once a month cycle where you print everything out and put it someplace safe. Yeah, a couple of things I want to just make a comment on what you just said. Number one is for your own safety. Sake to remember that every text and every email and every writing is a potential trial exhibit.

[00:47:33] So if you don't wanna see it again, thank you. Thank you. Do not write it. Yep. I love that. Yeah. Yes, I mean, it will, if you don't wanna see it again at a very inopportune time, meaning like in front of the judge, you know, where you're now having to explain and defend yourself. Don't write it. Don't send it.

[00:47:50] But this becomes a great point of leverage, because I'll tell you, nothing incenses a narcissist more than when you're not giving them equally long, bizarre text, like those [00:48:00] long, long text messages that require you to click again to see the whole thing. Right. So what happens is, if you give brief responses like, Okay, let's talk later.

[00:48:08] They're going to just give you verbal diarrhea, which is great. So you get two for the price of one. You don't engage and put your stuff down where

you don't want it to be, and you get them. Just sort of putting it all out there, which you now have for later. Yes. That's good. And um, the other point I wanted to make about what you said was, you know, you feel this need to show them and defend it, you know, prove to them that what they said was wrong, whatever.

[00:48:31] Don't do that. No, I agree. Don't do that. That's your leverage. Don't resist the urge to want to do that in the moment and prove to them. So listen, people, you're dealing with narcissists. Narcissists are not going to accept constructive feedback and make changes to their behavior based on their, on your feedback and, and, and reflect on it and all of that stuff.

[00:48:55] It's not happening. So you can show them a text message that [00:49:00] directly counteracts exactly what they just said proves that they're lying. And. Somehow they will manipulate. Mm-hmm. Manipulate that away, that it's not a lie. Mm-hmm. . So, and, and even if it makes no sense whatsoever, I mean, sometimes they say things that make no sense whatsoever.

[00:49:17] Mm-hmm. . Mm-hmm. . Um, but just resist. That urge to want to show them the leverage, that would be a don't. Mm-hmm. , yes. You know, create your leverage. Do do that. But don't give it away too early. Right. And it did. That's a, it's a classic. It's a poker. It's a poker game. You would not ever sit in a casino and say, or card game and say, look at my cards, everyone.

[00:49:36] Yeah. Take a look. And now let's bet. So it's the same thing, it's just playing poker. What are some of the other big doss? So I would say, um, that you want to involve, people that are going to be able to support you for sure. Um, so you want to have a definite support system, but not people that are going to, um, fan the flames and, and, and, and that sort of thing.

[00:49:59] So, you [00:50:00] know, have a support team around you, get a really good lawyer who understands narcissism. We talked about that in the last video too. So if you haven't watched that video, you should go check it out, get a really good psychologist or therapist who understands narcissism as well. Like I cannot, that means I don't want to be stressed this warm enough is not because I'm trying to create business for my field.

[00:50:19] But this idea of a support system, a lot of the people around you cannot have this conversation if they've never experienced it. I'm amazed at how many people, my friends even, read my books and like, this seems really interesting, but I don't get it. Now, you can, it doesn't bother me, because it's

like, okay, I get that you don't get it, but if I was going through a narcissistic relationship, I would feel very gaslighted and lost.

[00:50:43] So the beauty of therapy with a therapist who understands narcissism is they get it and the kinds of support and feedback you'll get with that from them will not limit, will not leave you feeling that you're, you've lost your mind, but rather that you feel understood and supported. So I do think you need to [00:51:00] choose those and you have to choose where you have the conversations.

[00:51:02] Not everyone in your network can hear the conversation. Yeah, that's definitely true. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Anything else you'd say about that? So I would, the other thing is, um, to use video for depositions. Um, you know, a lot of people say, well, that's more expensive. Now we have to pay for a videographer. Well, okay, I'm going to tell you, you're already paying a court reporter.

[00:51:22] You're already paying your lawyer. You're going through this expense. You know, don't cheap out videographer because, um, What happens with the, um, depositions is the core reporter can only take down, you know, what is your name? My name is, uh, you know, John Adams or whatever and then it just so when you see it on the page, it just looks like type.

[00:51:45] I agree. But what, um, narcissists will do is they're going to try to They're going to rile you up. They're going to try to unnerve you. So they're going to make faces. They're going to make little, little things under their breath. They're going [00:52:00] to try to do things that upset you. Um, things that they know are upsetting you.

[00:52:06] They're going to pass notes to their lawyer so that it makes it look like they're saying something about you and you're wondering what's going on with that. And so, you know, uh, my normal listeners will know, like, I just say, like, they're just less likely to act like a complete jackass if you have, um, because, you know, that's how they can act, especially the grandiose ones and the malignant ones.

[00:52:30] Right? So. Using video for, for deposition can definitely help to rein in their behavior. Any other do's? Um, I, let me see, I have, um, gather as much supporting documentation on everything as possible so you're going to want to, you know, do your research, do, do your research for your site. So one of the things that I say all the time is When you're dealing with a narcissist, people

tend to be so focused on defending against what [00:53:00] that narcissist is doing that they forget to prepare their own case.

[00:53:05] That's interesting. Um, and, and, you know, it's just like in football, if all you have is a great defense and you have no offense, then you don't, you have no case. Right. And, and if your only case is just tearing down the other person.

[00:53:23] People who have been in narcissistic relationships, who may not have already done the reading and gotten the education, they do what anyone would do if they feel they're being attacked or their reality is being doubted, they defend themselves. So after the life history of this relationship, where all they do is defend themselves, it can be often very difficult to turn that switch off.

[00:53:42] And even in the work I do in In working with survivors of narcissistic abuse, it's that don't defend your self part. You, you have to have nerves of steel when someone is hurling all these bizarre, unfounded accusations at you to nod at them and say, okay, and then [00:54:00] walk away. Yeah. And not engage it. You really, I mean, and to me, I tell people like, you know what, forget all this meditation breathing.

[00:54:06] Like this is your meditation, like toughening up and saying, I'm not going to respond to this. It takes more mindfulness. I mean, you could probably bend a spoon with the amount of mindfulness it takes to not Defend to someone, right? Who is going after you. But you know now, after 10, 15, 20, 25 years of defending yourself against this person, it gets you nowhere, gets you nowhere.

[00:54:28] And, and it's time to stop and, and how you will feel better. And I actually asked somebody that I worked with and my work on coaching them through, um, dealing with litigation with a narcissist. I said, how did you feel before I started working with you? And this happened to be a guy who was dealing with a narcissist, ex wife, and he said, helpless and abused.

[00:54:48] And, you know, but what we did was we turned it around by creating a plan, a game plan, a framework where he was actually going on the offensive. That's great. And that's. [00:55:00] And that's something that's almost foreign sometimes to people when they're just so used to defending, defending, defending that they can actually turn around and take the controls and actually have the narcissist begging them to resolve the case.

[00:55:16] It can happen. Any other thoughts on do's before we turn to the don'ts? I think that's basically what you, because we, we covered having a strong lawyer, which is really important. We covered being prepared. Um, you know, the only other thing I really want to say about being prepared is don't make the mistake of going into a mediation or a, a, a, a settlement discussion, just thinking you're just going to have a conversation.

[00:55:42] Make sure you have your leverage ready to go. Make sure you are ready to go as if you're going to court. If you want to incentivize that person to settle and save thousands and thousands of dollars on going to court, you go to court, you're basically throwing, you know, your destiny, your, your, your, your, your, your future destiny to the judge and the judge might have a bad day.

[00:56:04] The judge might see things differently than you do. Judges make mistakes all the time. It's going to cost you thousands and thousands of dollars to go. It's better if you can settle in mediation or or in a settlement discussion if you can't right, right, right, right. They're not going to unless you've given them the incentive to do that.

[00:56:24] And I'm going to land it on one last do, which is, and maybe it's my head as a psychologist, and I've said this. My, the people on my YouTube friends, I know you're going to say, again, lady, you're going to say this. Realistic expectations, radical acceptance. And the reason I say this is a do is that You almost have to get up with an intention like, okay, I got to keep it real.

[00:56:43] I know what's coming my way. Because when you do that, and again, the clients I do get to work with, you know, directly in my office, what we, what we find is that we use our therapeutic sessions as a calibration. They're like, yeah, like, I feel like I'm slipping. And I'm like, what did you think was going to [00:57:00] happen?

[00:57:00] And they're like, Oh, yeah. So it is. It's so easy to want to put expectations about human behavior on this narcissistic person that are realistic, like a normal person would do this. That's not what you're dealing with. Your expectations have to be skewed to what it is you're dealing with. Like I said, that's what I do with clients.

[00:57:20] That's, you know, therapists, coaches. I just basically you drift back to like, but a normal person, I'm like, but that's not what we're dealing with, darling. Let's get you right back here. So expect that they will do all of these things that we're talking to yourself, even when some of these emails come back.

[00:57:37] And sometimes I do have the clients send me the email and say, you're not going to, and I'd actually start laughing. I'm like, here we go. And it's like clockwork. I mean, it's literally like clockwork. So that clockwork can be sort of settling to us. There are a few things that you can do. The first thing that you can do is understand what narcissism is.

[00:57:56] Understand that you're dealing with a personality [00:58:00] disorder. Yes, it is a spectrum. Yes, you know, everybody has narcissistic traits. Everybody has. some tendencies, but we're talking about all the way to the end of the spectrum here. We're talking about a person who has, you know, all of the traits that are listed in the DSM 5, you know, or at least five of the nine or whatever, you know, this is a person who is Now, you know, all they can see is themselves.

[00:58:34] They, they feel entitled. They, they have grandiose tendencies. They lack empathy, and they just cannot see you. They're in survival mode all the time. They, they literally have a black hole inside of them. It can never be filled. It's not something that can be easily corrected. It's, it's, pretty much, you know, not something that's ever [00:59:00] going to be rehabilitated.

[00:59:02] And so it has nothing to do with you. And even though they make it all about you and say that you're the one, you're the problem, you're the source of all of their issues, it has nothing to do with you. Remember the way people treat other people is a direct reflection of the way they feel about themselves.

[00:59:21] People who feel good about themselves treat other people well. People who don't, don't. Right? It has nothing to do with you. The other thing you need to remember is that they did not attach themselves to you because you had so little value. They attached themselves to you because you had so much value.

[00:59:41] They wouldn't be devaluing something that had little value. Think about that. All right? So don't take their behavior personally. That's the next thing that you need to remember. All right. The next thing you need to remember is. You need to set boundaries. [01:00:00] You know, you are changing the course of what's going on here.

[01:00:06] You're having to turn things around 180 degrees. You've basically been conditioned from the beginning. You know, they selected you, they started conditioning you, and so you have to start conditioning them the other direction. You know, so it's not gonna feel right for a while. You're gonna feel like you're wearing somebody else's clothes.

[01:00:33] You almost kind of have to look at it as you're taking a big massive ship and 180 degrees. So I say, step one, don't run. Step two, make a U turn. Step three, break free. Step one, don't run. Step two, make a U turn. Step three, break free. The thing you're going to have to know is, and you're going to slay, you're going to use my slay methodology, [01:01:00] strategy, leverage, anticipate, and focus on you, is that they really do.

[01:01:06] Respect somebody who stands up to them. They respect somebody who has confidence a lot more than somebody who doesn't. Don't argue with them directly. If you argue with them directly, if you push on them directly, if you push back directly, you're just going to get hurt. pushing back directly at them too.

[01:01:30] That doesn't work. That's just going to get fighting. And if you directly attack them, they're just going to defend themselves. And if you try to defend yourself, that's not going to help either. You know, when they send you those long text messages, that doesn't help. Okay. So. I say, you know, the first thing that you can do is use tactical responses.

[01:01:59] [01:02:00] Okay. So never explain, justify or over share short one liners, short one line responses. And what I mean by that is a narcissist will send you long things, long emails, long letters. long motions. They file long things to try to get long responses out of you, to try to get you to defend yourself, to try to elicit emotional responses out of you.

[01:02:33] And so what you want to do is send back very short things in response because That will be a way to particularly argue with them strategically argue with them rather than fight with them. Okay. So the way you do that, you've got to pick through and find the 1 thing that you absolutely need to [01:03:00] respond to.

[01:03:01] So something like. I deny everything in this letter. I will meet you on Wednesday at three o'clock. You know, something like that. You don't need to explain, justify, overshare. You don't need to go into all of the specifics. You know, I receive your letter. I deny it. You know, there's one thing in here that I need to respond.

[01:03:28] And I'm going to respond to that. And that's it. You don't need to go into every single thing. The next thing that you can do is have an agenda. I call it making a plan, Stan. So you can have an, uh, a plan or an agenda when you go to talk with them. And that way you are taking control. So, you know, step one, was don't run.

[01:03:58] You know, that was you [01:04:00] saying, I'm not going to run anymore. You're going to put boundaries in place. Step two is I'm going to have a plan. I'm going to have an agenda. I'm going to tell you, I'll meet you here, but these are the topics. That's it. We're not going to have 50 million topics. We're going to have one topic or two topics.

[01:04:23] And if it goes beyond the scope of those topics, I'm going to bring you back. And that's it. We're not going to go into every single topic. And By the way, we're also going to have a time limit. And if it goes beyond the time limit, then you can just say, I have to go. I have something else I have to do. I have an appointment.

[01:04:46] You can even say, Oh, but I very much look forward to our next meeting. And you can smile and say it calm. Say it collectively, because the one thing that you want to make sure you always do is [01:05:00] stay calm. All right, so that's your next point. Stay calm, stay cool, stay collected, because the minute you lose composure, You, the minute you lose your ability to be emotionally regulated, then they have you, because that is the one thing they will always try to do is bait you.

[01:05:26] They will try to bait you. They will try to get you. to get a response. Why do they do that? Number one, narcissistic supply. Number two, they're going to try to use your emotional response against you. The minute they can get you to do something, then they will. Use that emotional response against you. And then they sit there and look like the calm, cool, collected one, right?

[01:05:53] They look calm. They look cool. They look collected. And then everybody else [01:06:00] thinks that you are the crazy one. And then you go, well, that's not fair. But what happened is that they baited you into this. So, you know, stay calm, stay cool, stay collected. And then the next thing is be prepared to walk away. Be prepared to walk away.

[01:06:20] Be prepared. And, you know, on that sheet, remember, go to disarmthenarc.com. You'll see that there are some phrases where I say on there. I am going to ask you to be respectful. If you can't be respectful, then we can resume this conversation at a time that you can, you know, so be prepared to just say, we can have this conversation where we can discuss issues.

[01:06:46] You know, there's certain things that are negotiable, you know, what's negotiable issues, contracts, things like that. You know, what's not negotiable, your self esteem, your self respect. Those are not negotiable.

[01:07:00] So when you're starting to be attacked personally, when they start to

say things about you personally, when they start to call you names or raise your voice, things like that, then that then that's not helpful.

[01:07:15] It's not productive. And it's not okay. And at that point, that's when you can just say, um, this conversation is not going to continue right now. Thank you. And get professional help if you need it. Get professional help for having the conversations if you need it. You know, mediator, arbitrator. Dispute resolution experts and get your own professional help if you need it.

[01:07:44] If you need therapists, if you need coaches, if you need help, get it. Don't try to do this on your own because it's too hard. It's definitely too hard. You're dealing with somebody who's a master manipulator and you might
[01:08:00] need to get the help that you and support that you need.