



Deep Release Online
Professional Training for Counsellors

NARCISSISM & ECHOISM

Narcissistic abuse is different from physical abuse.

The wounds are deeper, yet invisible. There are no bruises, broken bones or black eyes.

With physical abuse the victim can point at the perpetrator and say YOU HURT ME.

The emotional and verbal abuse inflicted by a narcissist happens slowly, usually over a long period of time...

“Ugly Love”, Laura Charanza



It's an insidious, progressive breakdown of self-worth and identity...

Victims are left with the belief that something is inherently wrong with them and that they are the sole problem... they are not enough... they are not worthy of love or respect.

Many men and women are victims of narcissistic abuse for over a decade before they realise what's happening.

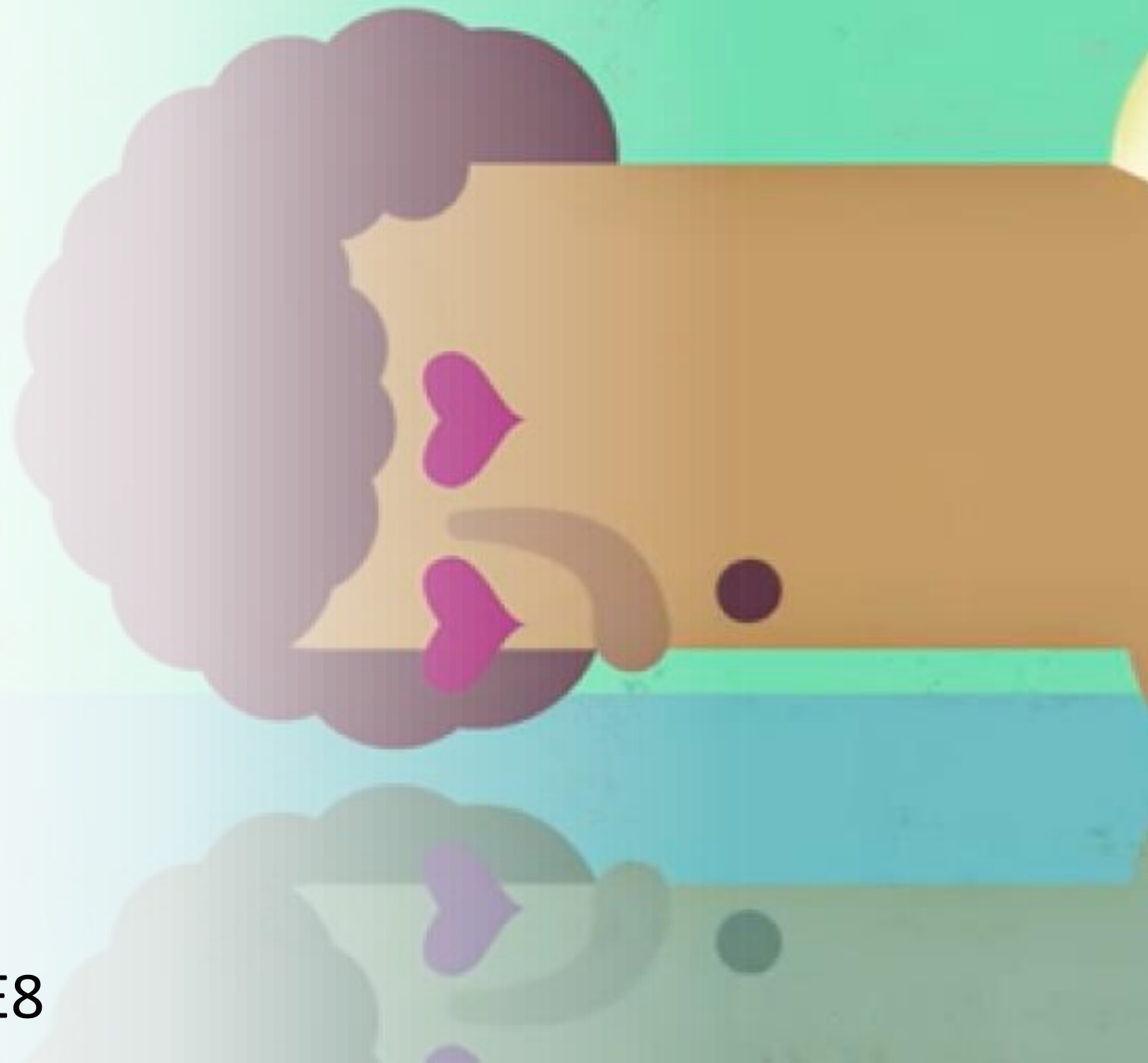
By then, a victim is a shell of what he or she used to be.

“Ugly Love”, Laura Charanza





The Story of Narcissus



<https://youtu.be/arJLy3hX1E8>

NARCISSISM & ECHOISM



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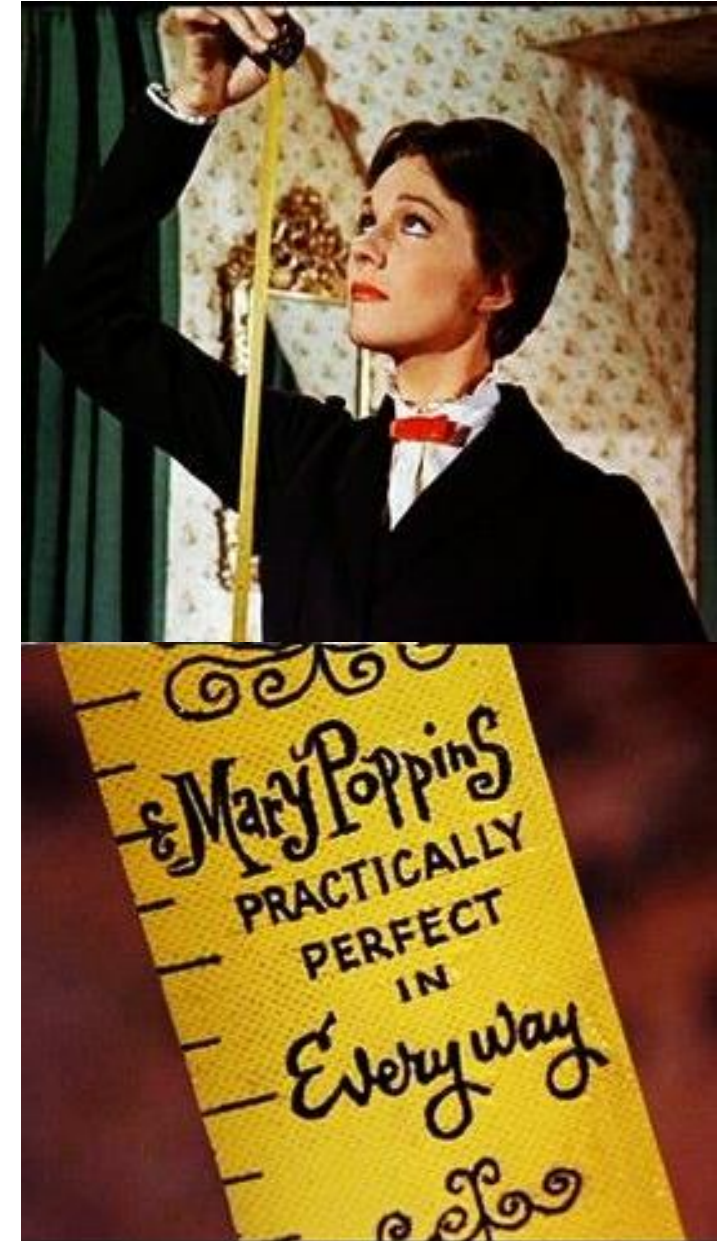
NARCISSISTIC DISNEY CHARACTERS!



**Mother Gothel
with Rapunzel
(Tangled)**



**Queen Grimhilde
(Snow White)**



THE GRANDIOSE NARCISSIST



“It’s like a disease where the sufferer feels pretty good, but the people around them suffer...”

GRANDIOSE NARCISSISM



<https://youtu.be/XUyzeykVwgY>

Narcissism Concepts



NARCISSISTIC SUPPLY

A concept coined by Otto Fenichel in 1938, to describe a type of admiration, support and sustenance which is essential to their self-esteem.



LOVE BOMBING

Love bombing uses tactics such as charm, lies, gifts, mirroring and pretend affection. You're targeted in this way to bring you quickly into relationship.

It determines how many boundaries you willingly allow them to violate, and how deeply they can hook you into a relationship.



So when the abuse starts you will stay.

The better at love bombing the narcissist is, the harder it will be for you to escape.

NARCISSISTIC TRIANGULATION

Some ways narcissists triangulate:

- flirting with others in front of their partners
- emotional and physical infidelity
- comparing their partners to others as a way to manufacture insecurities in them, eg “*my ex never had this problem with me...*”
- reporting back falsehoods about what one person is saying about another, in order to pit their victims against each other



GASLIGHTING

To manipulate (someone) by psychological means
into doubting their own sanity.

You're crazy—that never happened.

You're so sensitive.

You're overreacting.

You must be confused again.

THAT'S NOT RIGHT;
YOU'RE REMEMBERING
THINGS WRONG.

Just calm down.

I NEVER SAID THAT.

What are you talking about?

COERCIVE CONTROL

COERCIVE CONTROL IS A CRIME

(29TH December 2015)



MY PARTNER HIDES
MY BELONGINGS

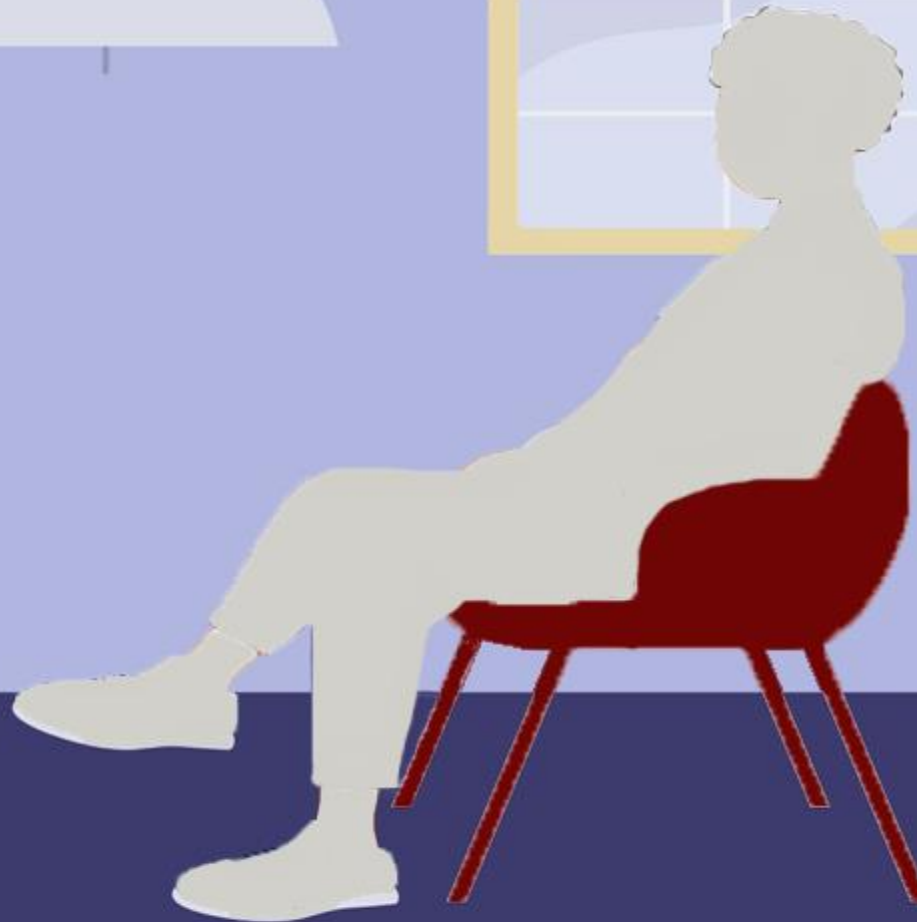
MY PARTNER TELLS ME
MY FRIENDS DON'T
WANT TO SEE ME

MY PARTNER WON'T
LET ME SLEEP

MY PARTNER WON'T
LET ME WORK

MY PARTNER
PROMISES I WON'T
GET HURT IF I DO
WHAT THEY SAY

THE GRANDIOSE NARCISSIST IN THE COUNSELLING ROOM



THE GRANDIOSE NARCISSIST IN THE COUNSELLING ROOM

- Establishes dominance
- One-up position
- *Boost my ego...*
(Narcissistic supply)
- *Don't challenge me*



Let me tell you all
about myself!



Angela's Story: Married to a Narcissist



The Covert Narcissist

The Vulnerable Narcissist

The Needy Narcissist

The Stealth Narcissist

Passive Aggressive

Dr Ramani Durvasula

[https://www.couplestherapyinc.com/
the-signs-of-a-covert-narcissist-husband/](https://www.couplestherapyinc.com/the-signs-of-a-covert-narcissist-husband/)



THE COVERT NARCISSIST

- Grandiose, but appear very hard done by and fragile
 - Hypersensitive to criticism
 - Can be resentful or aggressive if challenged
-
- Portray themselves as special, misunderstood
 - Can give an early impression of modesty/ humility... BUT – they don't feel inferior!
 - Strong sense of entitlement
 - Self-centred - withdraw from relationships which don't provide narcissistic supply



THE COVERT NARCISSIST IN THE COUNSELLING ROOM

Help build
his
confidence?

How do you
work with a
“victim”??

Covert
Narcissist?

I’m just so anxious
and depressed...

No one sees
how great I
am...

THE COMMUNAL NARCISSIST

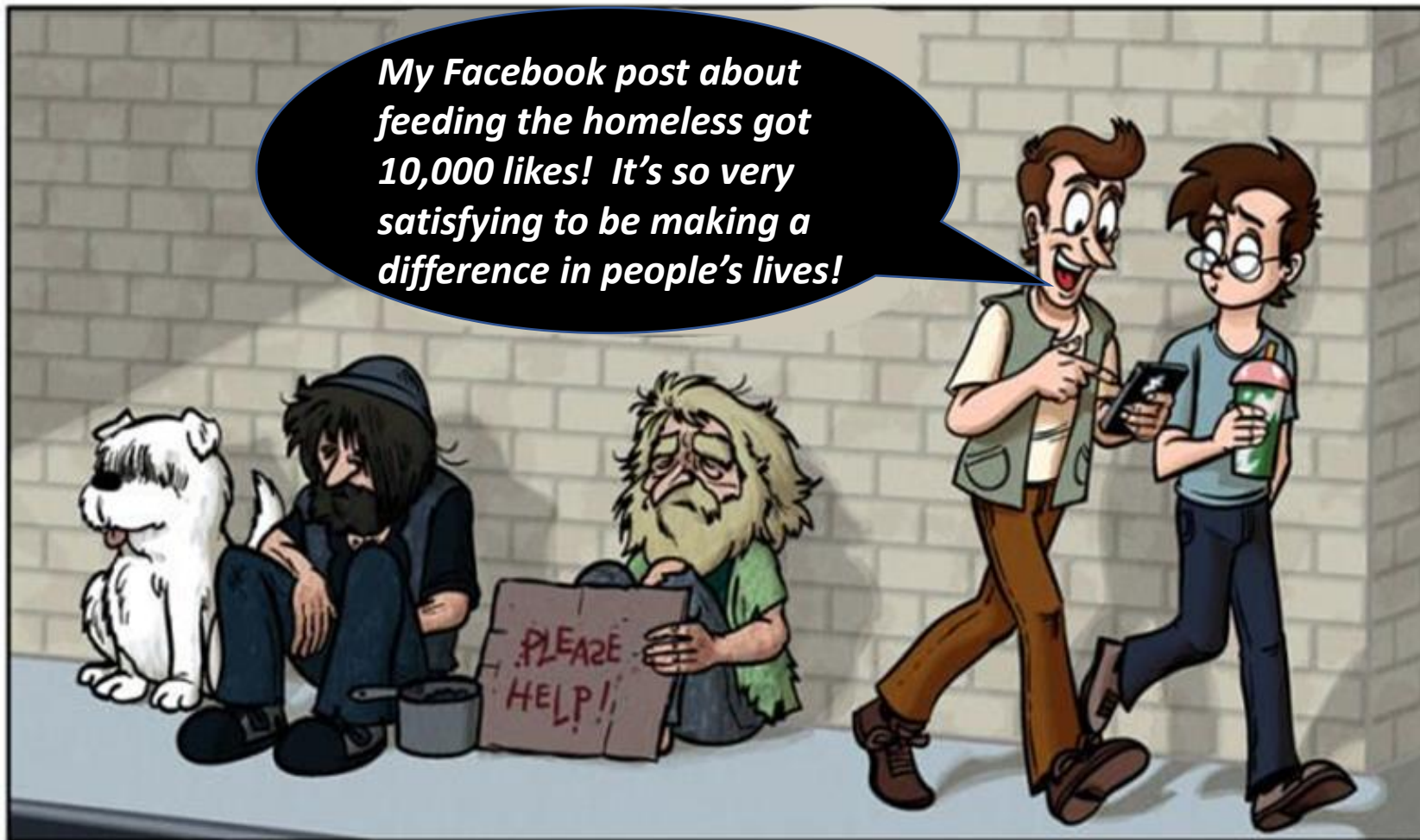
- Always trying to save the world, but need a lot of recognition
- See themselves as especially nurturing, understanding and empathetic
- Will let you know, with pride, how much they give to charity or how little they spend on themselves
- Social media is made for the Communal Narcissist!
- Will always look amazing!
- They believe they are better than others
- *"I am the most helpful person I know!"*
- *"Look at all the good deeds I've done!"*



VIRTUE SIGNALLING

An attempt to show other people that you are a good person, for example by expressing opinions that will be acceptable to them, especially on social media.

Cambridge Dictionary



LACK OF EMPATHY

- The sole function of others is to meet the narcissist's need for special treatment and admiration – narcissistic supply
- People seen as objects, not human beings with feelings
- In order to recruit supply, narcissists are highly skilled at manipulating people's perceptions of them
 - They act out of a “false self”
 - the glittering high achiever
 - the pitiable victim
 - the indefatigable do-gooder



Understanding the Echoist



ECHO AND NARCISSUS

- Echo was a nymph who was cursed by Hera, the Queen of the Olympian gods, married to Zeus.
 - The curse meant that Echo was robbed of her own voice.
 - She could only feed back the last few words she heard.
 - Echo fell in love with Narcissus.
- Narcissus fell in love with his own reflection.



John William Waterhouse, 1903

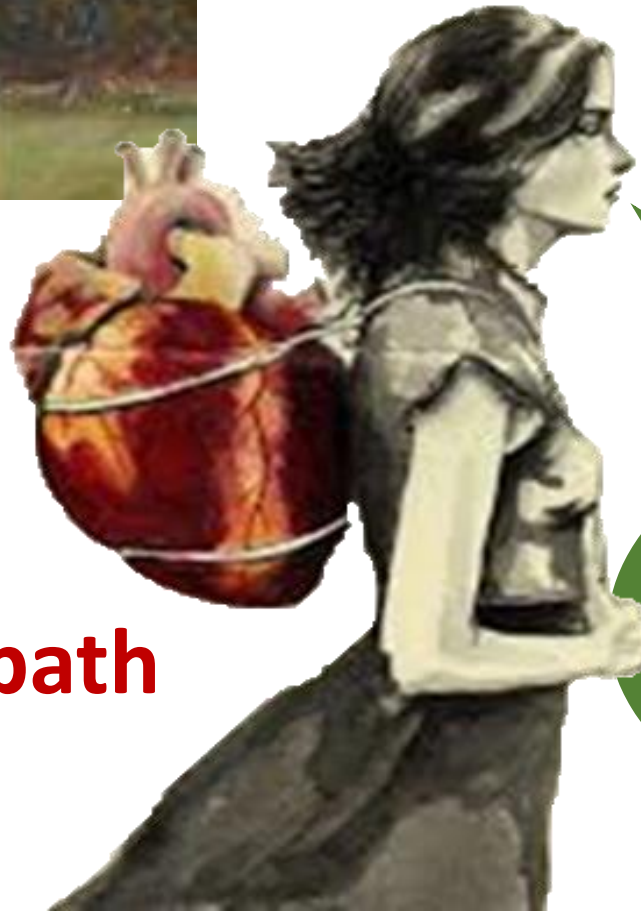
THE OPPOSITE END OF THE SPECTRUM: EMPATHS AND ECHOISTS

The Echoist



I echo your
needs and
feelings to keep
a connection to
you

The Empath



I am highly
sensitive to your
needs and feelings
and empathise
deeply

HIGHLY SENSITIVE PEOPLE (EMPATHS)

- Intuitively pick up the feelings of others and read others' moods
- Tend to be very sensitive - feel emotions powerfully
- Get their sense of meaning from a passion to help others
- Tend to be very available to anyone struggling

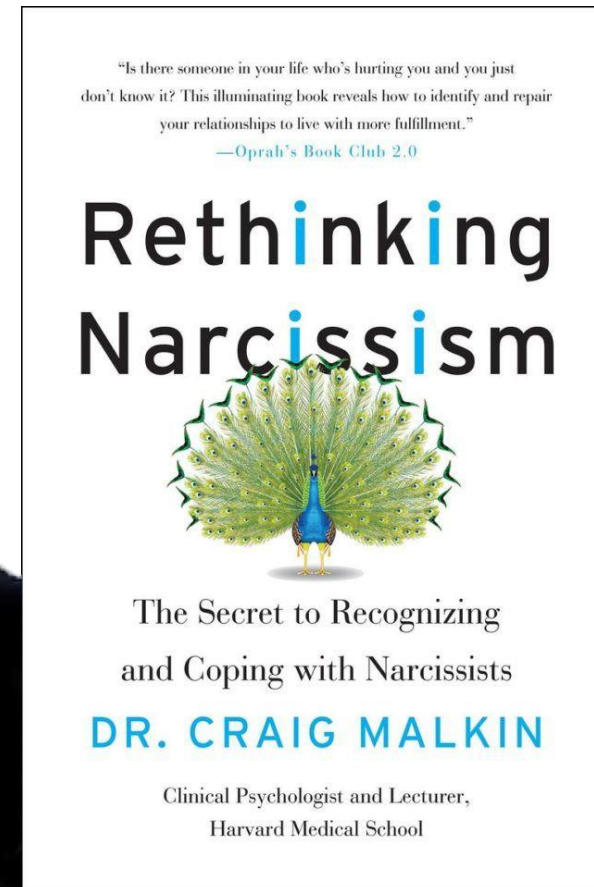


**BEWARE THE NARCISSIST –
THEY WILL LOVE YOU!**

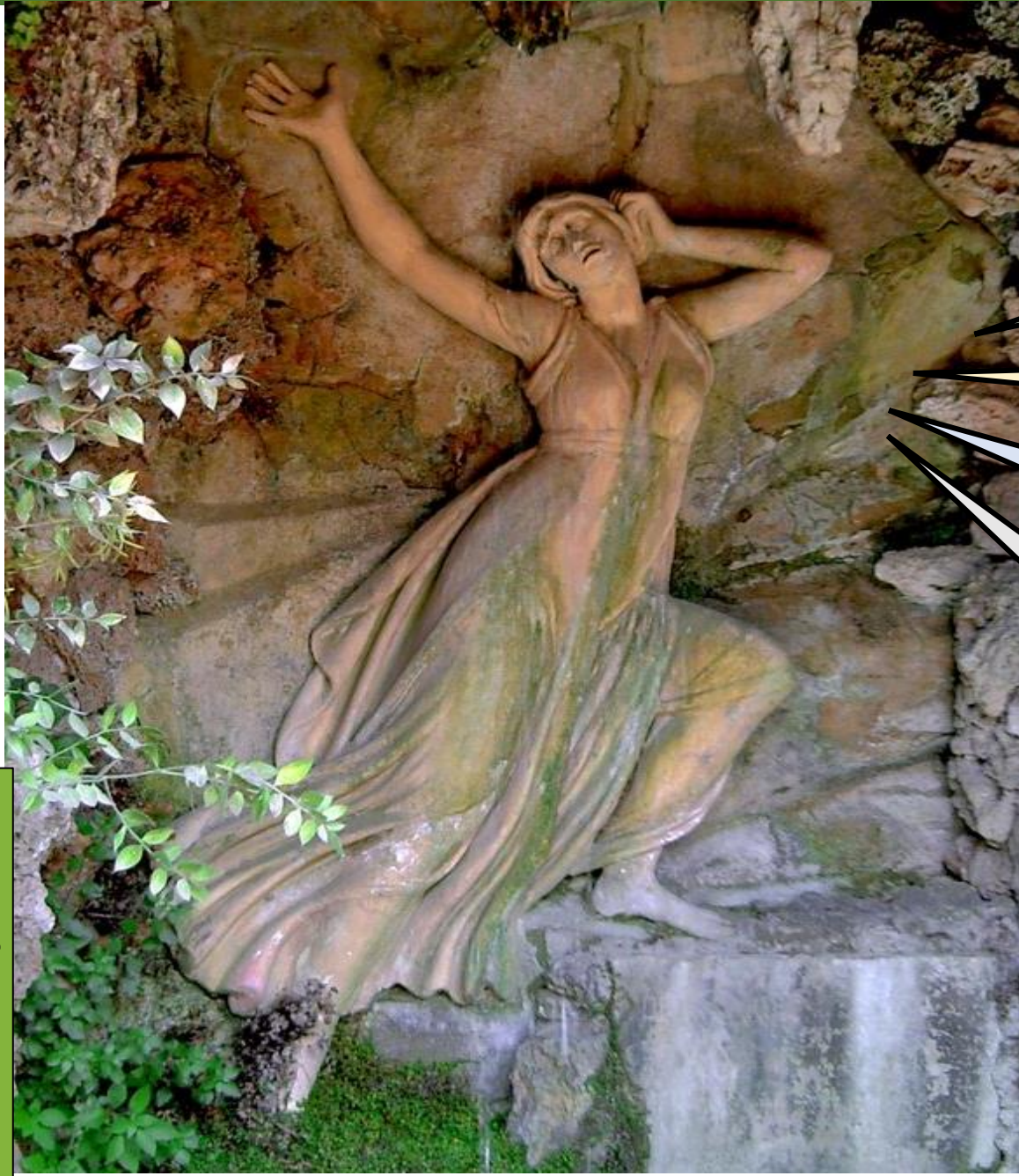
BEING AN ECHOIST

Unlike Narcissism, Echoism is not an officially recognised condition or disorder. It was popularised by Craig Malkin, a clinical psychologist and lecturer at Harvard Medical School, in his book, *“Rethinking Narcissism”* (2016)

“Echoism is a fear of feeling special or standing out in any way, even positively. It’s a fear of seeming narcissistic in any way.”



ECHOISM



When things go
wrong I blame myself

When people ask me
what I like to do I'm at
a loss how to reply

I bury my own needs,
feelings and desires and
echo the Narcissist's

The less room I
take up the
better

laberint d'horta park barcelona

***“I WANT YOU TO
LOSE WHATEVER IS
UNIQUE ABOUT
YOU AND TO
BECOME WHO I
WANT YOU TO BE.”***



Angie and
Pauline :

The power of
the Narcissist



• Angie and Pauline debrief...



*If I were meant
to be controlled,*



*I would have
come with a remote.*

**What makes a
person a
Narcissist?**



WHAT MAKES A NARCISSIST?

- Primary Narcissism is normal
- NPD is “an inheritable psychological condition”
- The child is excessively praised for specific attributes which provide the parent with self-esteem
- The child is an extension of the parent – *make me look good!*
- **BUT....** The parts of the child that aren’t so great are dealt with harshly, humiliated or ignored



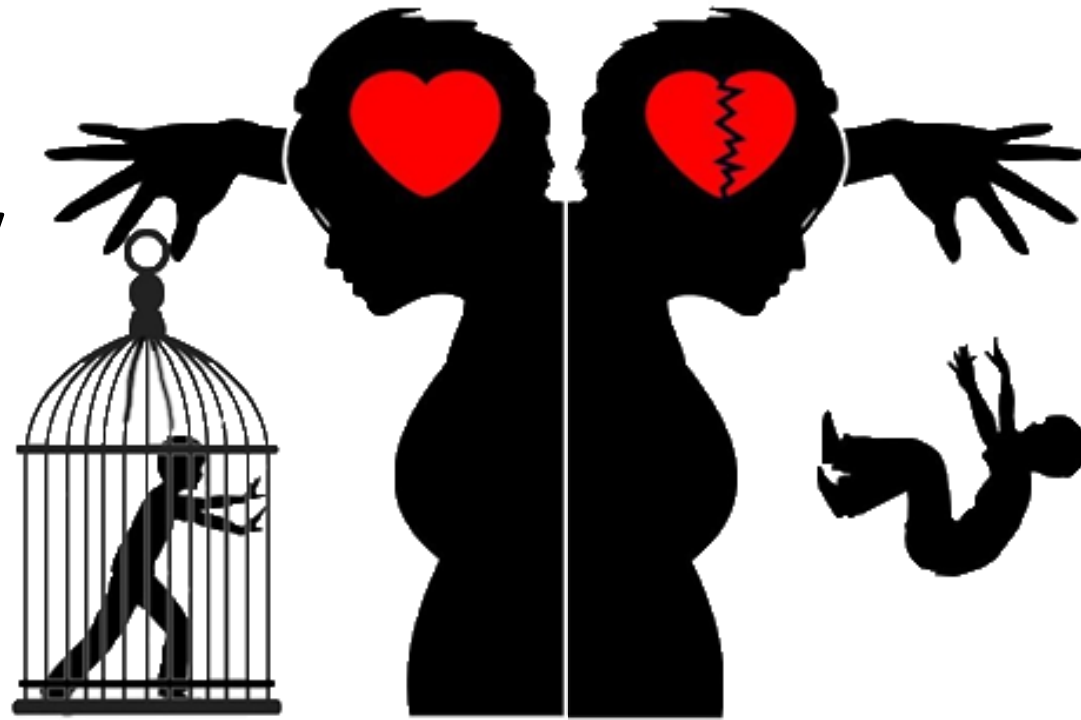
THE NARCISSISTIC PARENT

The child learns that, to get the parent's love and attention, they need to develop the **false self** and be who the parent needs them to be.

"I have to make my parent look good so I must get rid of the bits of me that are weak and which cause my parents problems."

The child becomes highly attuned to the parent's mood and to the false self.

The parts that are
praised produce a
sense of grandiosity
in the child



The parts that were
rejected create
a sense of
worthlessness

THE NARCISSISTIC PARENT

Becoming a proxy for a narcissistic mother's self-aggrandisement is a difficult double act.

**You have to shine,
but you cannot outshine her.**

**You have to take centre stage,
but you cannot upstage her.**



Terri Apter: Difficult Mothers

THE IDEAL LETTER OF APOLOGY : FACING THE FACTS

I am truly sorry...

It wasn't fair...

I hurt you...

It wasn't your fault...

I was wrong...

Angela's Ideal Letter of Apology



THE IDEAL LETTER OF APOLOGY : FACING THE FACTS

Take a Moment...

*What would
your Ideal Letter
of Apology be?*

TURNING POINT : SLIDING DOORS



CINDERELLA



Cinderella is subject to coercive control and abuse. Her needs are not considered by her narcissistic stepmother and sisters, who behave in grandiose and cruel ways.



She is rescued by reclaiming her true self, believing in herself, and finding someone who loved her enough to rescue her and show her love.



HANSEL & GRETEL



Hansel and Gretel are drawn to the witch's house which is made of gingerbread and covered in frosting and sweets candy.

But it is a deception to lure them into her power. She wants to devour and destroy them.



Gretel finds the strength to rescue Hansel and fights back.

The witch dies in the oven she had prepared for them.

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

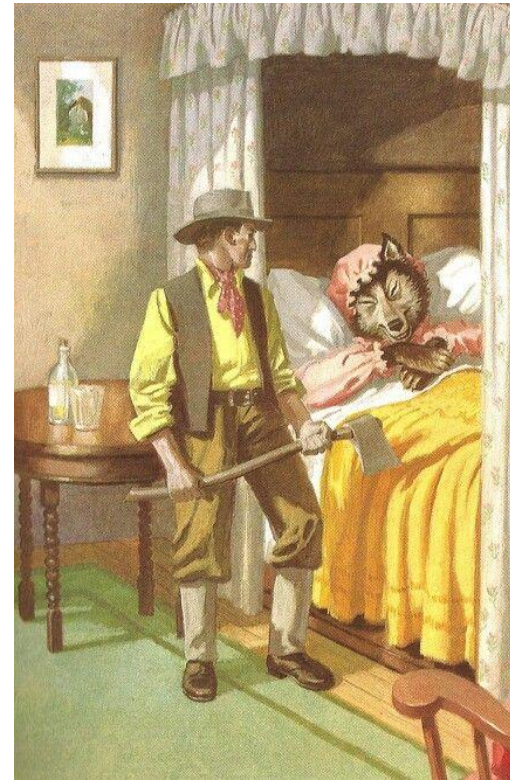
Little Red Riding Hood is a picture of trusting innocence, believing that she is safe and loved.



She gradually becomes aware of the deceit of the wolf and challenges him.



She still needs the help of the woodcutter to escape from the wolf



She learns to recognise truth from lies and deceit from authenticity





Angie and Pauline : Turning Points

TAKE A MOMENT

Take a Moment...

*What have the Turning
Points been in your life?*

Did you take them?

HOW THE NARCISSIST ENTRAPS AN ECHOIST

“Narcissists are skilled at alienating you from the people who keep you grounded and help you live your truth.”

“Ugly Love”, Laura Charanza



HOW THE NARCISSIST ENTRAPS AN ECHOIST

“I love the power I have to get you back when you threaten to leave, by throwing a few crumbs your way, and watching how quickly I can talk you into trusting me when I turn on the charm, deceiving you into thinking this time I’ll change.”

“I love you from the Perspective of a Narcissist”
Leif Beck, Soulspot.com



RECOVERY

“All too often women believe it is a sign of commitment, an expression of love, to endure unkindness or cruelty, to forgive and forget. In actuality, when we love rightly we know that the healthy, loving response to cruelty and abuse is putting ourselves out of harm’s way.”

“All About Love”, Bell Hooks



STEPS TO RECOVERY : PHYSICAL VS EMOTIONAL DISTANCE

- Trust your instinct: “Something isn’t right...”
- The Narcissist knows how to push your buttons and trigger reactions from you
- They watch, study and mirror your behaviour
- The Grey Rock technique is to show no emotions, give minimal answers – cut off their source of Narcissistic Supply
- If you can physically get away, that is generally perceived as a good idea.
- Cut off all contact, especially social media.



BECOMING STRONGER

- My turning point came because I really was ready (although I didn't feel I was!). Through years of counselling and the support of friends I had grown to the point where something in me knew I could cope with making a different, bolder decision. I can forgive myself for the times down the years I could have taken more decisive action, because in reality I didn't have what I needed then to cope with the fallout.

- My need to belong is bigger than I realised and the disapproval and rejection from my family felt agonising. I now feel more detached from them, but perhaps freer in myself.



TAKING A STAND

- My level of guilt and self-blame for being a 'horrible person' has been high at points, but I have come to recognise this is the gaslighting I have internalised since childhood, where my feelings have always been undermined so the narcissist can be absolved. I can still doubt myself - perhaps I always will - but I also believe myself as well, so it is not so all consuming.
- I have become a firm believer in what I call the wounded animal principle: My dad had an awful childhood and is wounded – but he is also a serial wounder in his relationships. Both things are true at the same time. I have compassion for his suffering, but I also know he is not safe and can strike out. Perhaps for the first time in my life I am learning to live with the reality of both truths.



TAKING A STAND

- I spent a lot of time reading about narcissism online and usually the advice was to sever contact. I don't disagree with that, but it's not always that easy. My children (who love their grandparents and have not been subjected to the same treatment as me) were devastated and felt anxious when there was a rift. I have reluctantly allowed reconciliation, but my wariness is high.
- My boundaries feel stronger, while my bond to his toxic behaviour feels weaker. It's not perfect but then it feels like there is no ideal solution, because ultimately I don't think he'll change.



STEPS TO RECOVERY : ACCEPT THE TRUTH

Whether a parent, partner or other significant relationship, we need to accept the truth that this person was highly toxic and consciously hurt you. Your best traits were used against you: empathy, the desire to explore, openness, kindness, positive sociability....

It was not your fault – forgive yourself



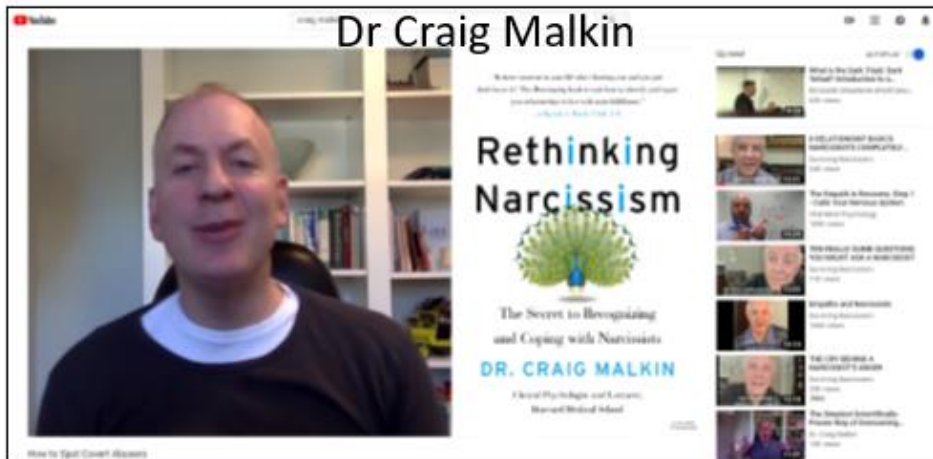
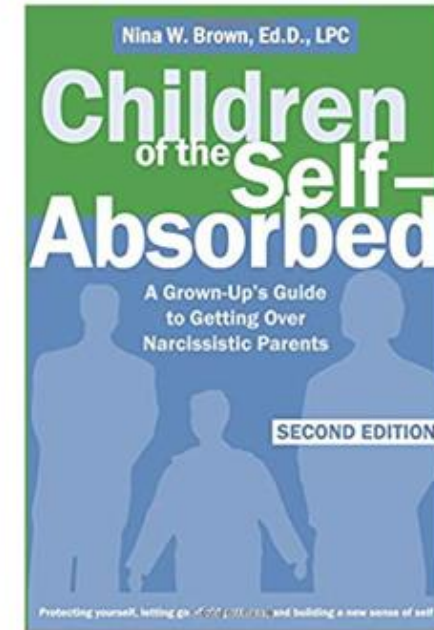
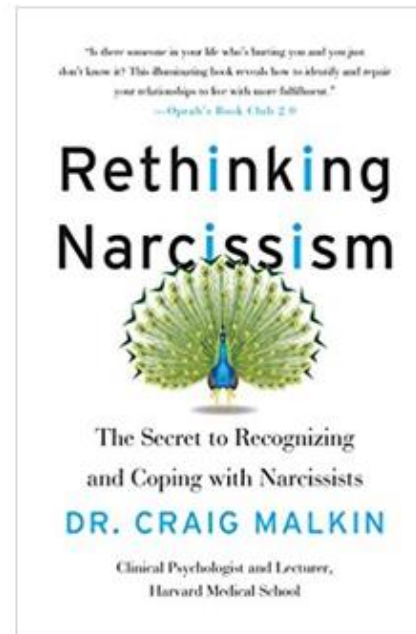
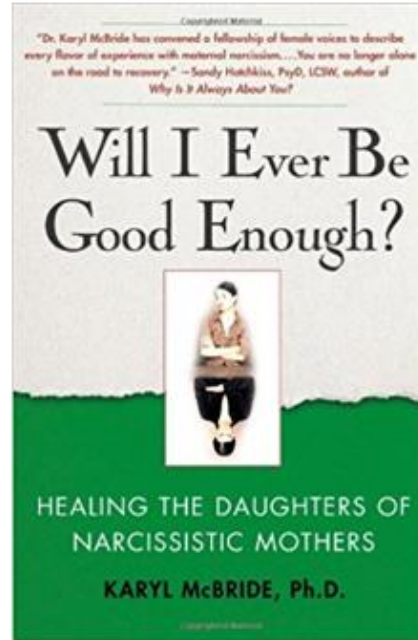
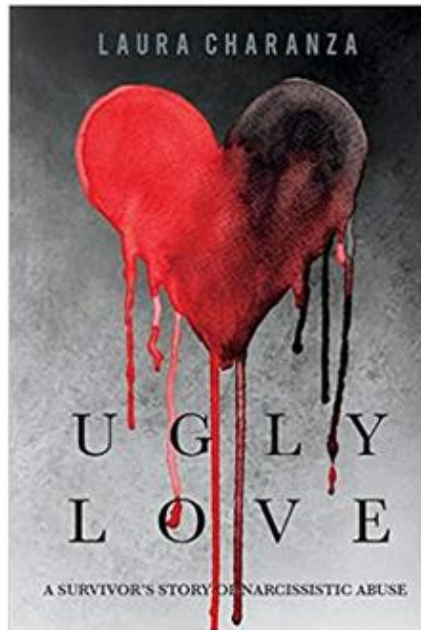
STEPS TO RECOVERY : DETOX YOUR SYSTEM

The more time you have spent with a narcissist, trying to please and appease them, the more you have been exposed to a toxic mental health disorder. Trying to understand them and be empathic has been very costly for you.



- **Therapy**
- **Journalling**
- **Trusted Friend**
- **Support Group**
- **Body work**

RECOMMENDED READING





Resources

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Working with Gestalt in the Counselling Room – Training Video

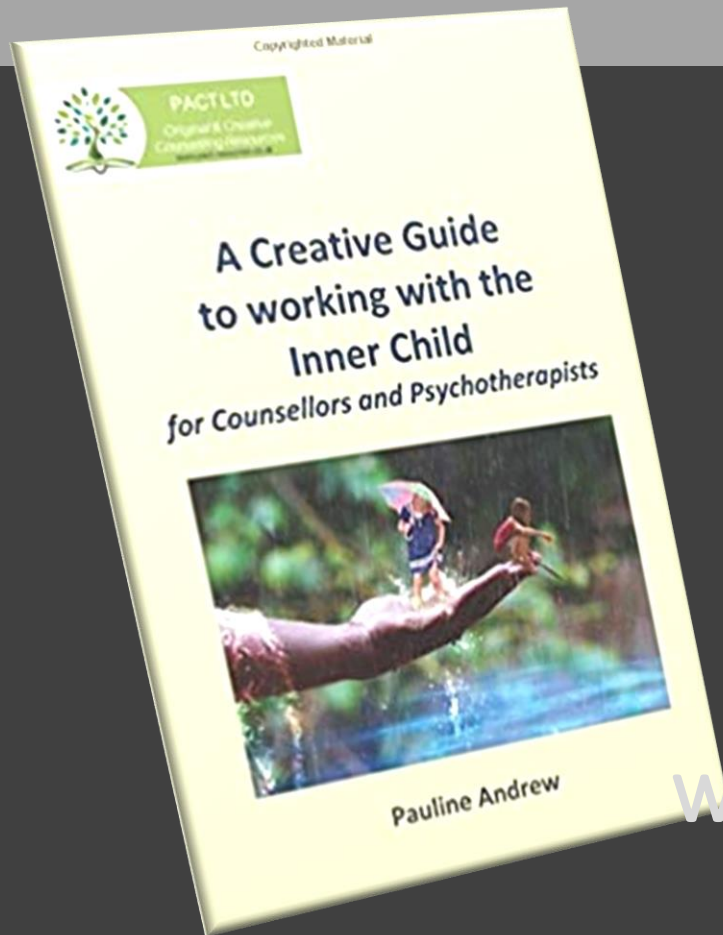
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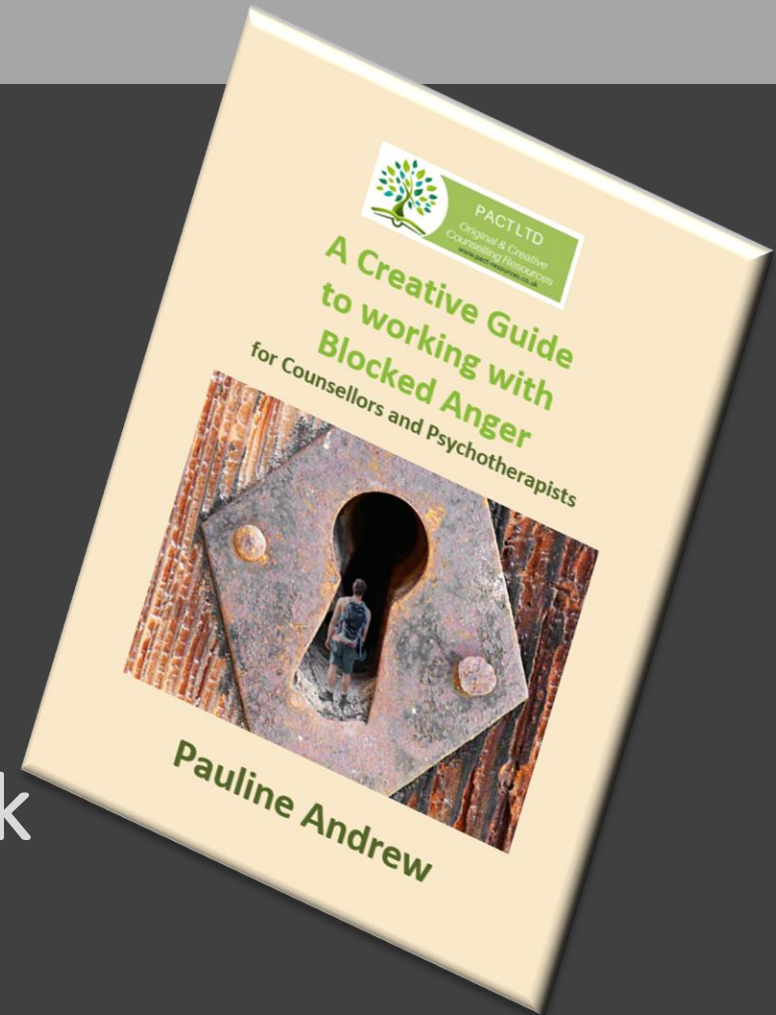
Attachment Behaviour in the Counselling Room – Training Video

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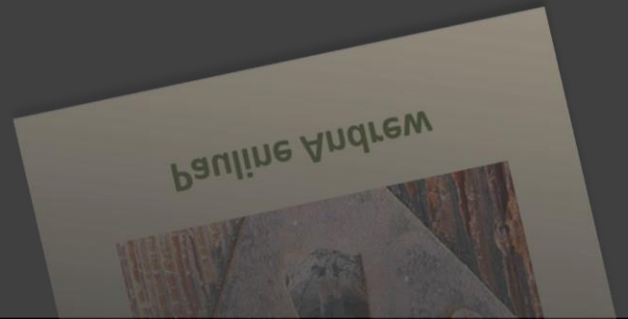
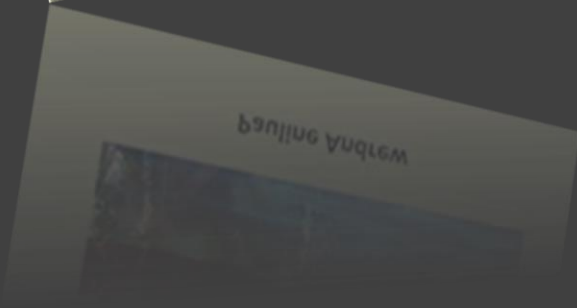




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Professional Training for Counsellors

Coming up...

Working with Sand Trays in Person and Online (half day)

Thurs Mar 10 or Sat Mar 12
9.30am – 1pm



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your feedback!



Thank you

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