



**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.

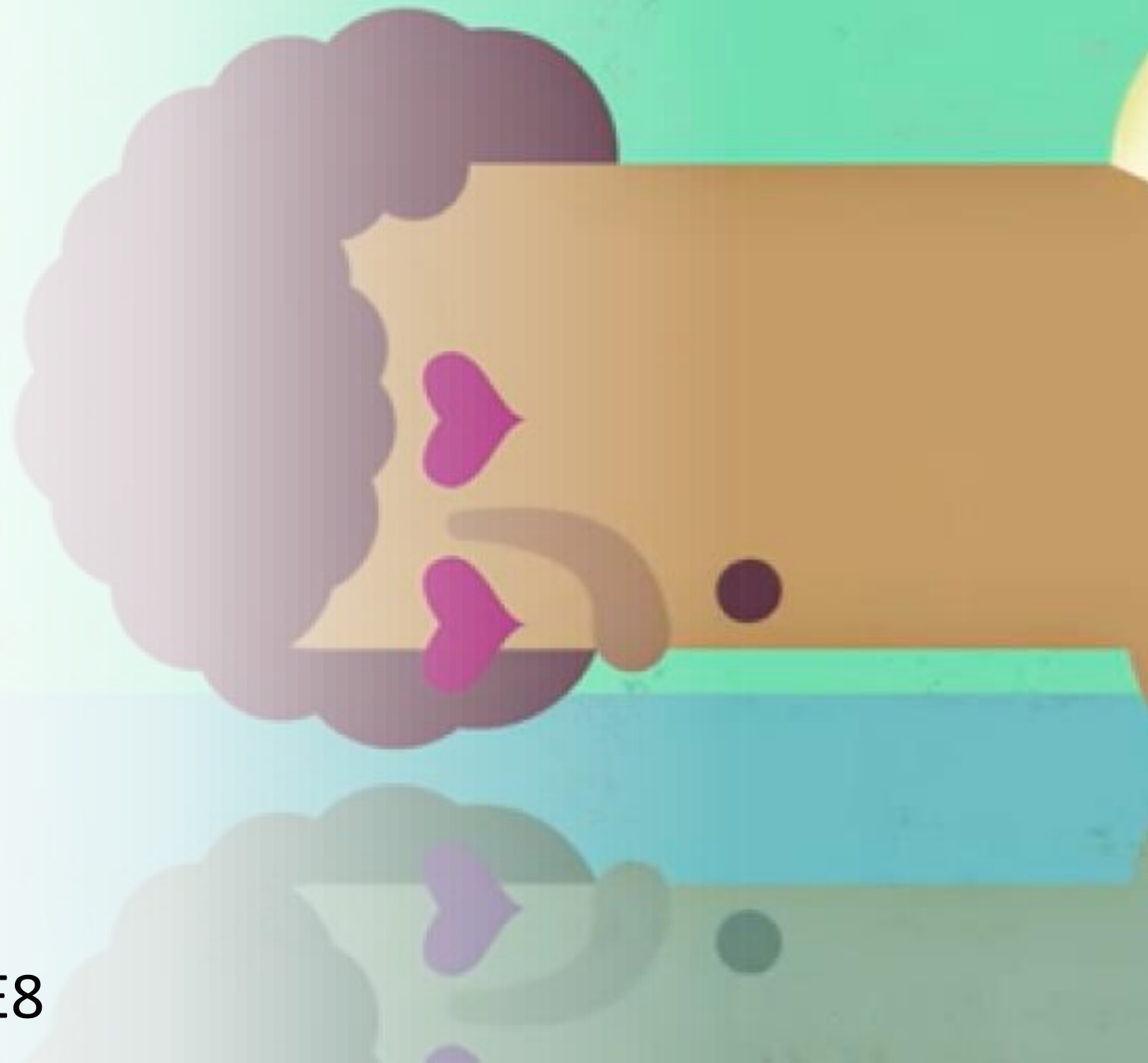
"Ugly Love", Laura Charanza





# The Story of Narcissus

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<https://youtu.be/arJLy3hX1E8>



# Contemporary Narcissism fed by Social Media

*“Likes, followers, and comments become metrics of self-worth, encouraging the pursuit of validation and admiration...*

*Reality TV shows, talent competitions, and online influencer culture place individuals in the spotlight, encouraging self-promotion and a desire for fame.*

*The "me-first" mentality, often reinforced by consumerism and media messages, fosters a sense of entitlement and self-centeredness...*



# Far-reaching Consequences of Growing Trends

- Communities more fragmented - social connections are increasingly digital
- Lack of authentic social interactions can lead to a reliance on shallow connections and superficial validation
- Self-centeredness and lack of empathy hinder genuine emotional connections and the development of genuine, deep relationships
- Valuing personal success over collaborative efforts can also undermine workplace dynamics
- Narcissism linked to higher levels of anxiety, depression, and overall dissatisfaction with life
- ***Might counsellors actually be adding to the problem??***



# Narcissism through a “Configurations of Self” Lens

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Good Boundaries

Able to Say No

Healthy Self-Respect

Openness to Correction

Sense of Humour



*Healthy  
Assertiveness*

Sense of Entitlement

Need for Admiration

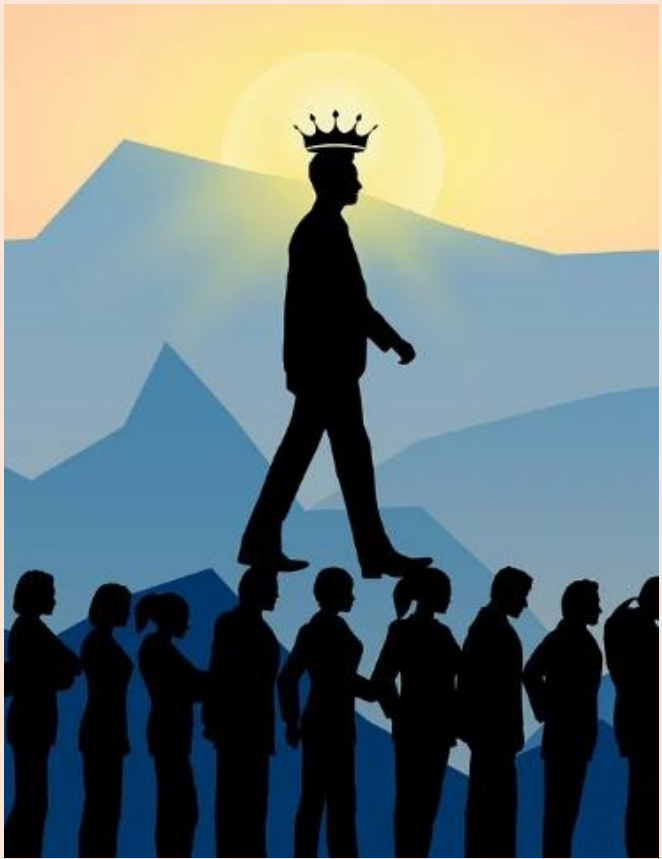
Lack of Empathy

Arrogance

Inability to Handle Criticism



*Narcissistic Personality Traits*



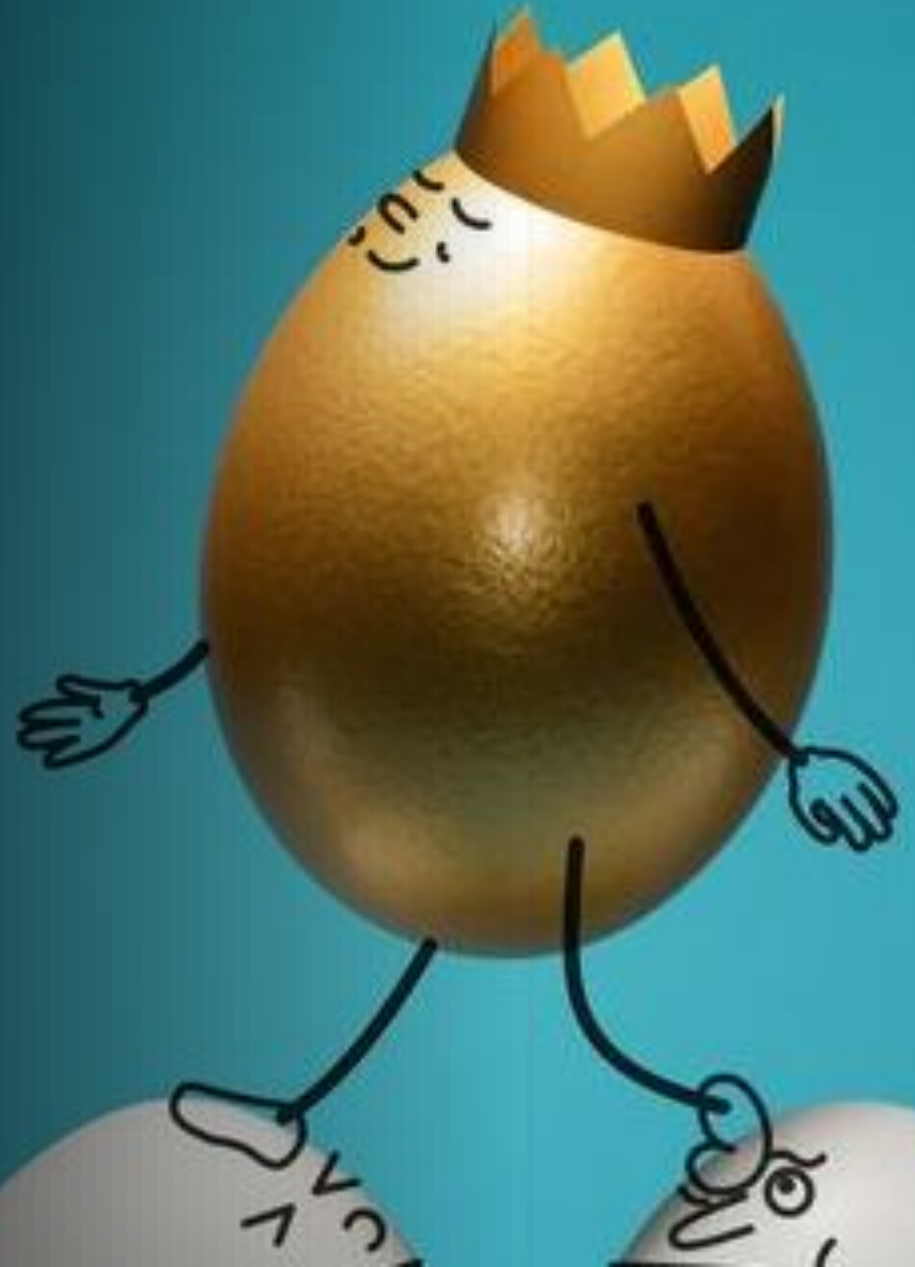
*Narcissistic  
Personality Disorder*

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# Narcissism Concepts

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# 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

<https://thoughtcatalog.com/shahida-arabi/2017/05/3-powerful-ways-to-heal-from-the-toxic-triangulation-of-narcissists/>



# 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?*

# ISOLATION



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

“Ugly Love”, Laura Charanza



# 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>

# 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!





# Buddy Group Discussion Ideas

- Share your personal experiences of living or working with a narcissist
- Have you ever felt you were counselling a narcissist?
- Do you recognise narcissistic traits in yourself?
- Comments & Questions to Katy Bodman, please

15 minutes





A top-down view of a desk with a light brown background. In the upper left is a white mug with a teal handle, filled with dark coffee. To its right are three round, golden-brown biscuits with a geometric pattern. In the upper right are four colored pencils (green, orange, blue, and pink). In the lower left are three yellow pencils and a black pencil sharpener. In the center is a white rectangular piece of paper with the text 'TAKE A BREAK!' written in large, bold, black, hand-drawn letters. Below this text, '5 minutes' is written in a smaller, orange, sans-serif font.

**TAKE A  
BREAK!**

**5 minutes**



**ANY  
QUESTIONS  
OR  
COMMENTS?**



# Angela's Story: Married to a Narcissist



## 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

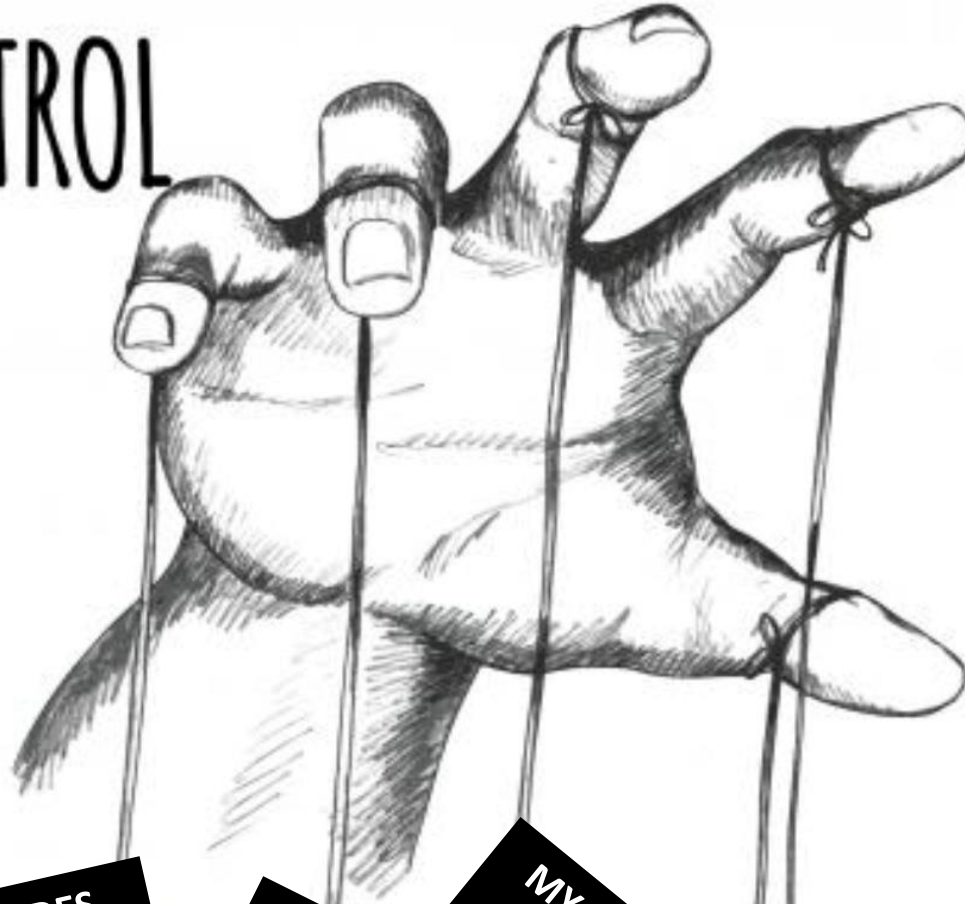




# COERCIVE CONTROL

## COERCIVE CONTROL IS A CRIME

(29<sup>TH</sup> 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 Covert Narcissist

*The Vulnerable Narcissist*

*The Needy Narcissist*

*The Stealth Narcissist*

*Passive Aggressive*





# THE VULNERABLE NARCISSIST



Grandiose narcissism is marked by:

- overt expressions of self-importance
- high confidence
- a desire for attention and admiration
- dominant social behaviours

Vulnerable narcissism is characterised by:

- internal feelings of insecurity and inadequacy
- hypersensitivity to criticism and perceived slights
- covert needs for validation often manifesting in
  - passive-aggressive behaviours
  - a sense of victimisation



creator.nightcafe.studio

# THE VULNERABLE NARCISSIST

- Grandiose, but ***appear*** very hard done by and fragile, insecure and anxious
- 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

*Which one is the narcissist?*



# GRUDGE-BEARING

*New research has found that people who score high on both grandiose and vulnerable narcissism tend to hold onto feelings of hurt longer.*

*If someone has a big ego but is also easily hurt, they are more likely to hold a grudge when they can't stop thinking about how they've been wronged.*



The research was published in *The Journal of Social Psychology*

[https://www.psypost.org/new-psychology-research-connects-narcissism-to-grudge-holding/#google\\_vignette](https://www.psypost.org/new-psychology-research-connects-narcissism-to-grudge-holding/#google_vignette)



# THE VULNERABLE NARCISSIST IN THE COUNSELLING ROOM

Help build  
his  
confidence?

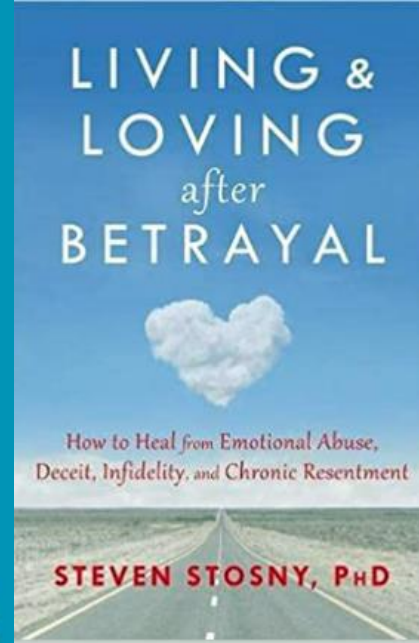
How do you  
work with a  
“victim”??

Covert  
Narcissist?

I’m just so anxious  
and depressed...

No one sees  
how great I  
am...

# FIXED MINDSET OR GROWTH MINDSET?



Victim



Learner

# 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!”*

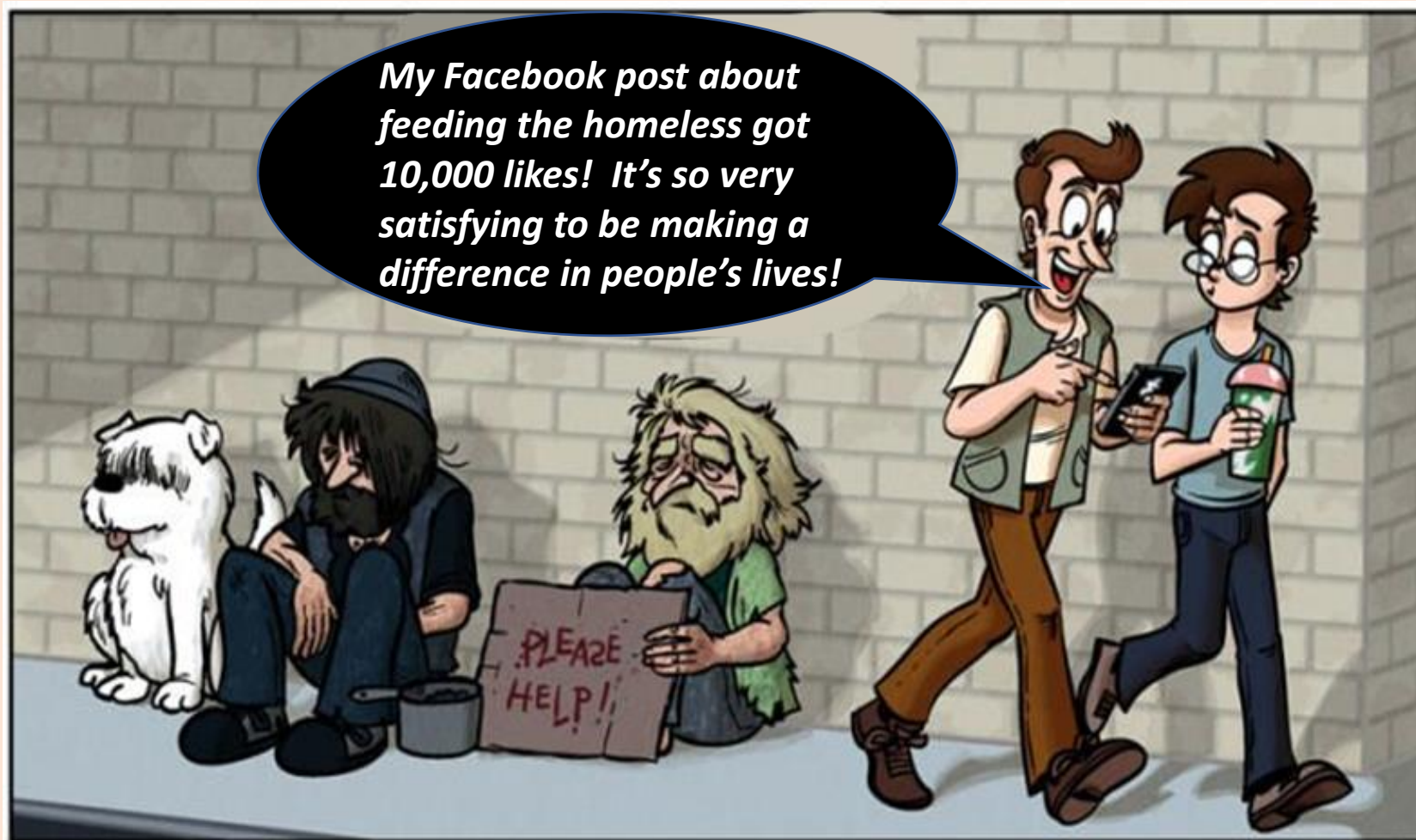




# VIRTUE SIGNALLING

*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



## THE SOMATIC NARCISSIST

**Derives their self-worth from their bodies, obsessing over their weight and physical appearance. They usually also criticise others who they perceive as less attractive than they are.**



## THE INTELLECTUAL /CEREBRAL NARCISSIST

**Usually regard themselves as more intelligent than everyone around them and go out of their way to make others feel unintelligent. You'll ultimately never win an argument with them, so best ignore them.**





# PAUSE FOR REFLECTION

Comments, Thoughts, Questions to Katy....

# Or....

- Overparenting and ‘helicopter parenting’, have been linked to a greater sense of entitlement and pathological narcissism in young people
- Overprotection may:
  - Limit the ability to learn from one’s own experience
  - Make people less autonomous – more reliant on others for feedback and guidance
  - Related to lower self-efficacy and coping skills, particularly in young people



**Narcissistic traits in young people: understanding the role of parenting and maltreatment**

<https://bpded.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s40479-020-00125-7>

Overprotective parenting may limit the learning experiences for children and young adults, which may **foster unrealistic self-views** and **entitlement...**, which in turn may make individuals more prone to develop elevated narcissistic traits.

The Dunning-Kruger effect occurs when a person's lack of knowledge and skill in a certain area causes them to overestimate their competence and underestimate their own abilities.





# Buddy Group Discussion Ideas

- Share your reactions to the different types of Narcissism
- What do you feel about the way young people tend to be raised today?
- Share any personal or professional experiences, as feels safe
- Comments & Questions to Katy Bodman, please

15 minutes





A top-down view of a desk with a light brown background. In the upper left is a white mug with a teal handle, filled with dark coffee. To its right are three round, golden-brown biscuits with a geometric pattern. In the upper right are four colored pencils (green, orange, blue, and pink). In the lower left are three yellow pencils and a black pencil sharpener. In the center is a white rectangular piece of paper with the text 'TAKE A BREAK!' written in large, bold, black, hand-drawn letters. Below this text, '5 minutes' is written in a smaller, orange, sans-serif font.

**TAKE A  
BREAK!**

**5 minutes**



Angie and  
Pauline :

The power of  
the Narcissist





# Understanding the Echoist





# Echoism through a “Configurations of Self” Lens

Self-Awareness

Empathy

Kindness

Willingness to Help

Mutuality



*Healthy  
Altruism*

People-Pleasing

Self-Blame

Lack of Self-Care

External Locus of Evaluation

Neglect of Own Needs



*Echoist Traits*



*Extreme Echoism*

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

# 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

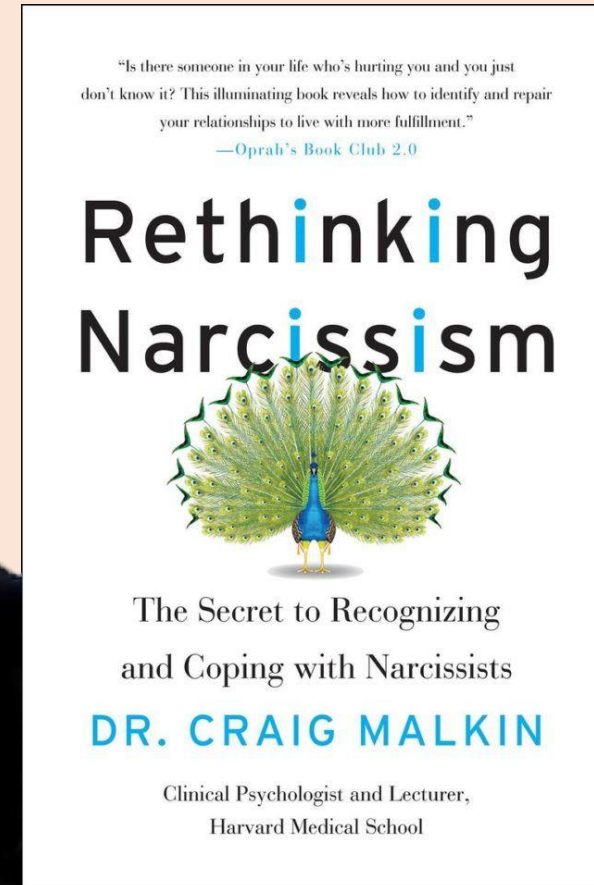


**BEWARE THE NARCISSIST –  
THEY WILL LOVE YOU!**

# BEING AN ECHOIST

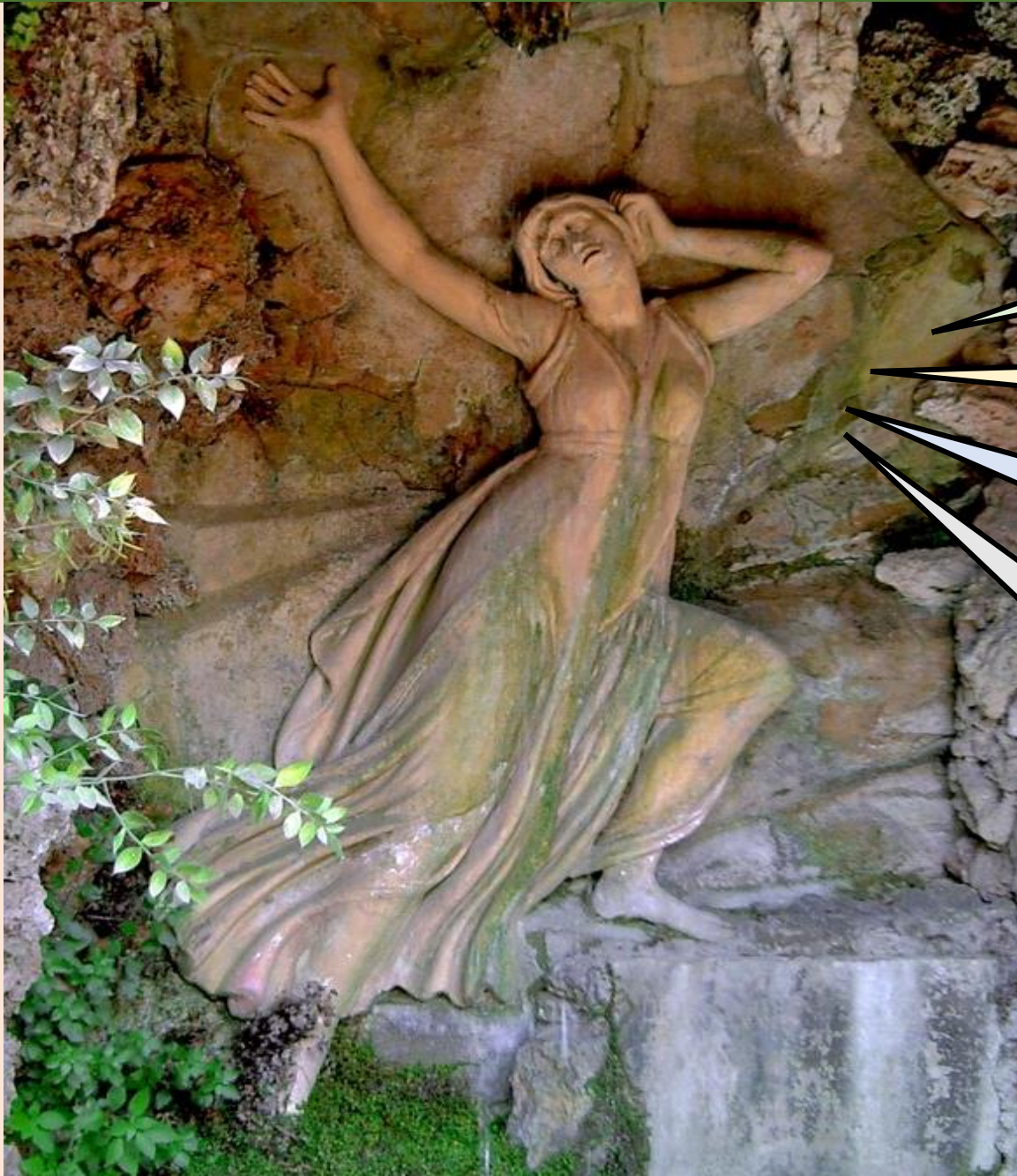
Unlike Narcissism, Echoism is not an officially recognised condition or disorder. It was popularised by Craig Malkin, a clinical psychologist and lecturer at Harvard Medical School, in his book, *“Rethinking Narcissism”* (2016)

***“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



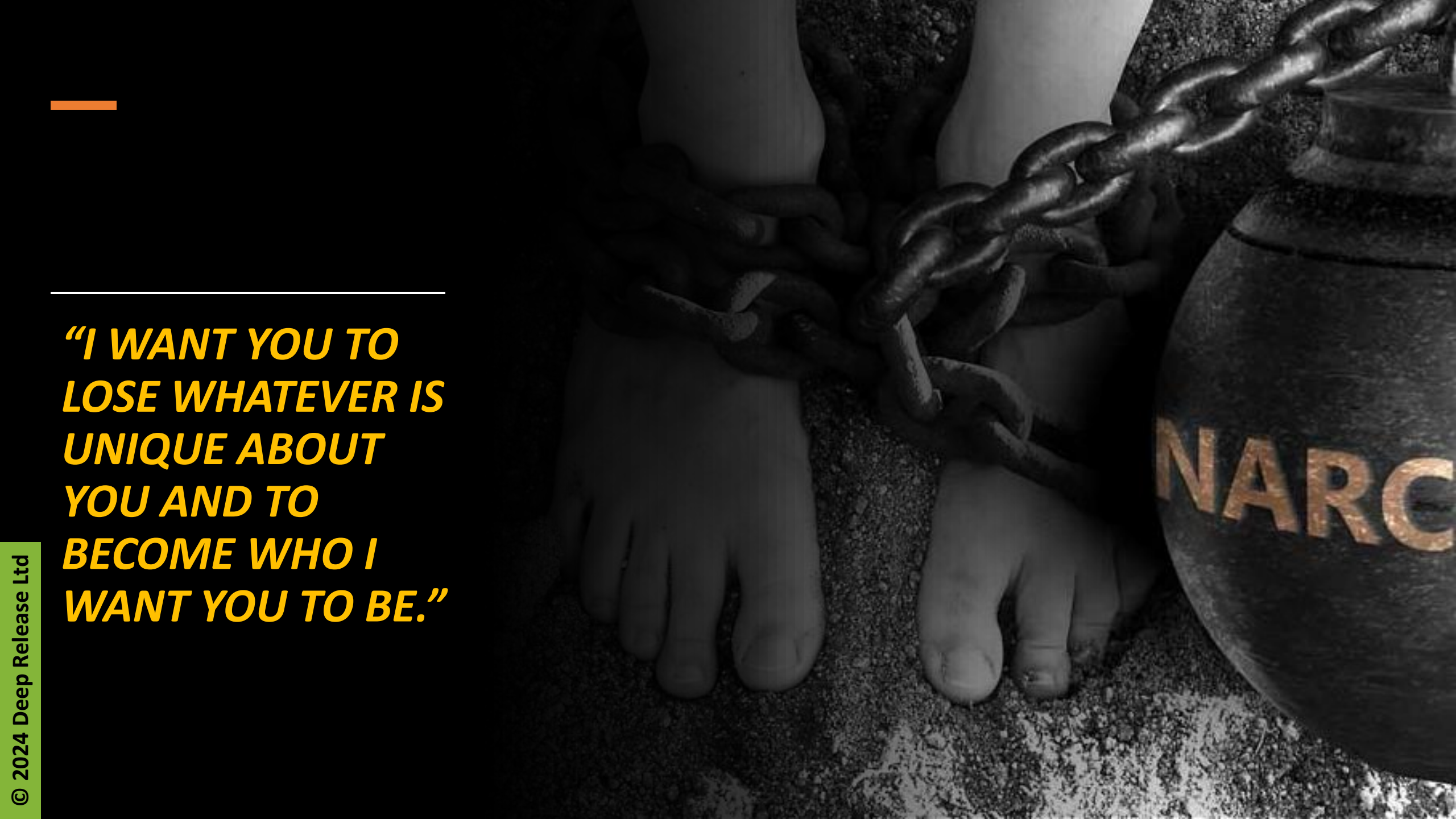
When things go  
wrong, I blame  
myself

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.”***



# 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





# 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



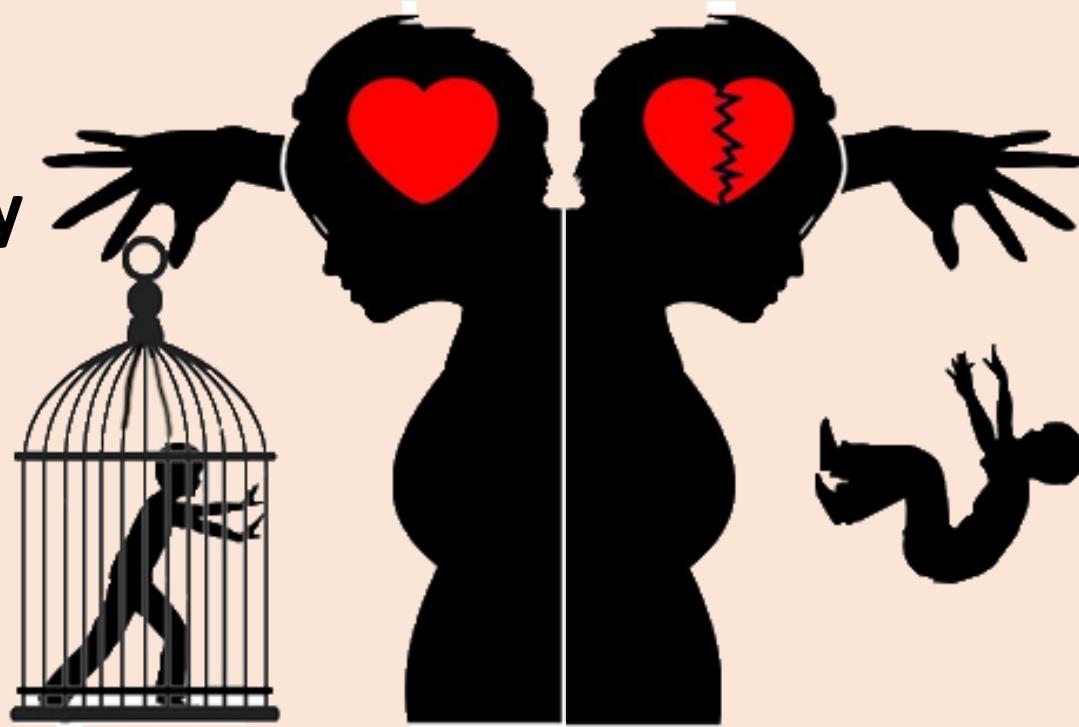
# THE NARCISSISTIC PARENT

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 must 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 must 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





*Take a Moment...*

*What would  
your Ideal Letter  
of Apology be?*

A top-down view of a desk with a light brown background. In the upper left is a white mug with a teal handle, filled with dark coffee. To its right are three round, golden-brown cookies with a geometric pattern. In the upper right are four colored pencils (green, orange, blue, and pink). In the lower left are three yellow pencils and a black pencil sharpener. In the center is a white rectangular piece of paper with the text 'TAKE A BREAK!' written in large, bold, black, hand-drawn letters. Below this text, '5 minutes' is written in a smaller, orange, sans-serif font.

**TAKE A  
BREAK!**

**5 minutes**



# 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

- The 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**

**ANY  
QUESTIONS  
OR  
COMMENTS?**





# Buddy Group Discussion Ideas

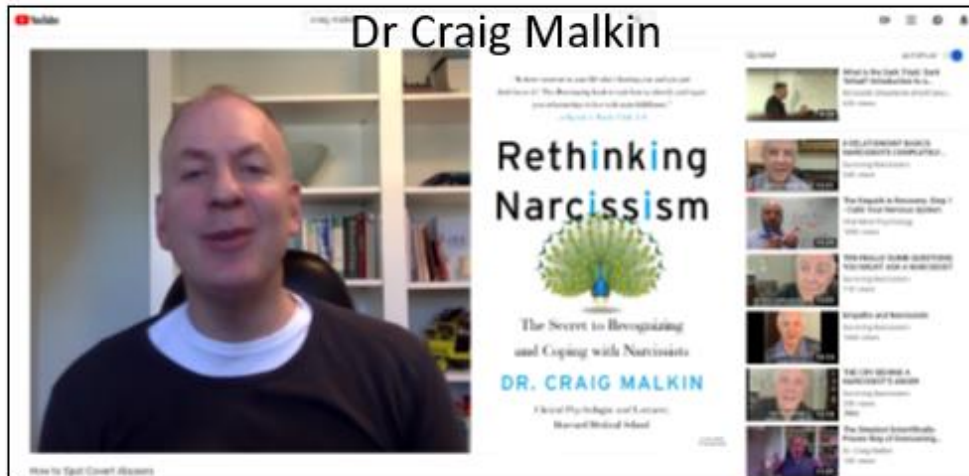
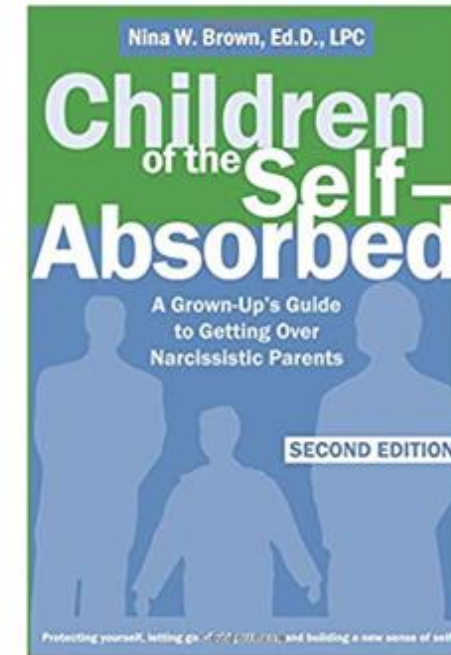
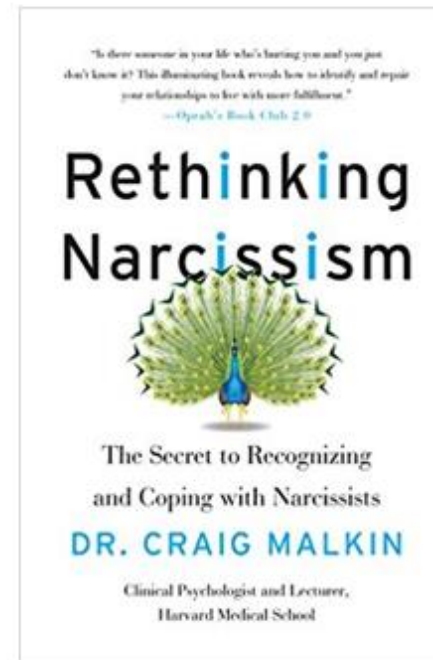
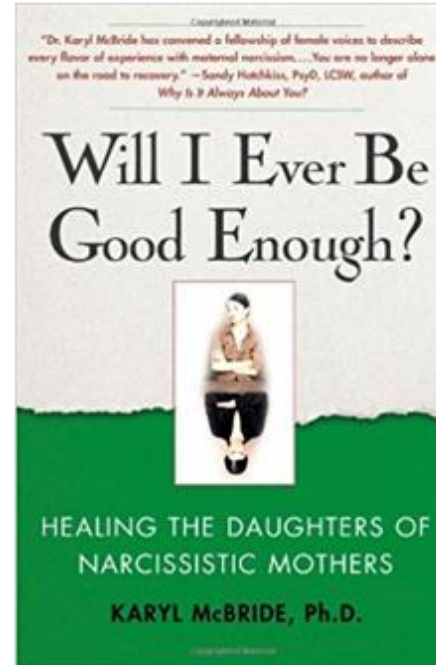
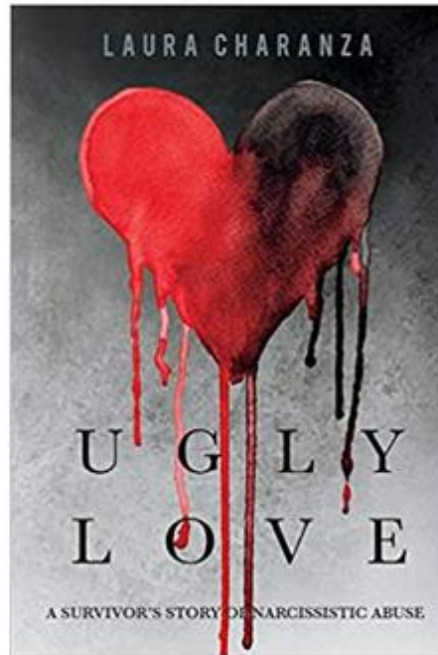
- Say goodbye to each other, exchange details if required.
- What will be your take-home message?

5 minutes





# RECOMMENDED READING





# Resources

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[PACT-RESOURCES.CO.UK](https://pact-resources.co.uk)

ORIGINAL & CREATIVE  
COUNSELLING RESOURCES



# Cards



Roles Played in Families  
Extra Set A

# Books



£11.50 each

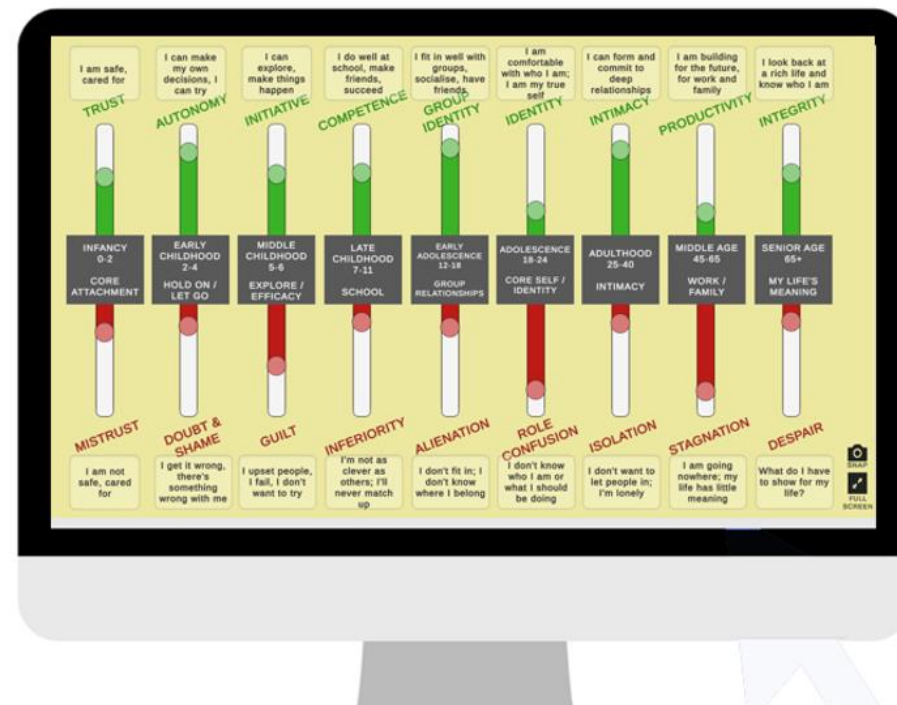
3 for £32 (save £2.50)

Also available on Kindle

pact-resources.co.uk

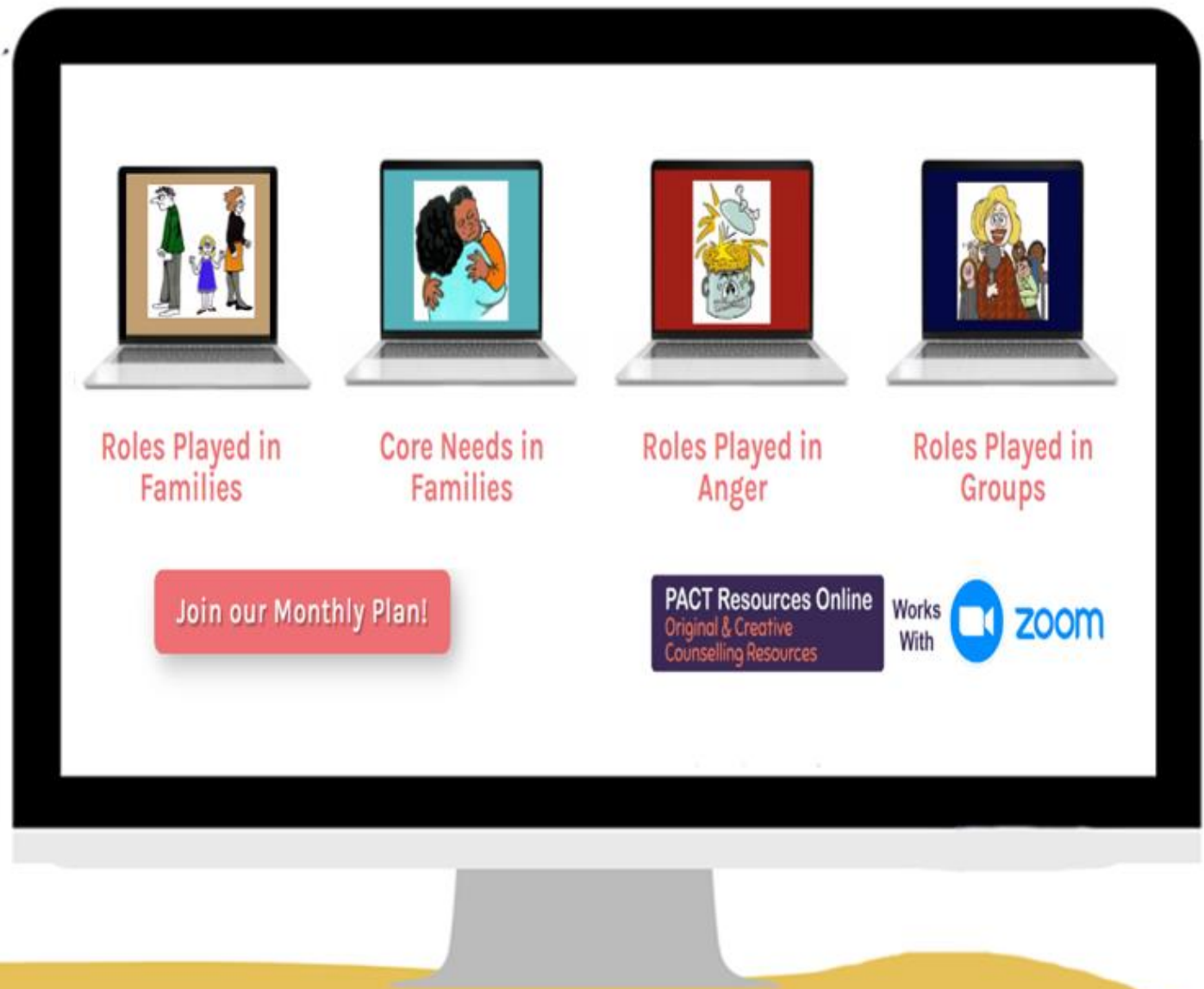
# The Wheel of Life and Erikson's Life Stages

## FREE Web Apps!





The 4 sets of cards  
are available as Web  
Apps by paid  
subscription.  
Other apps to  
follow!

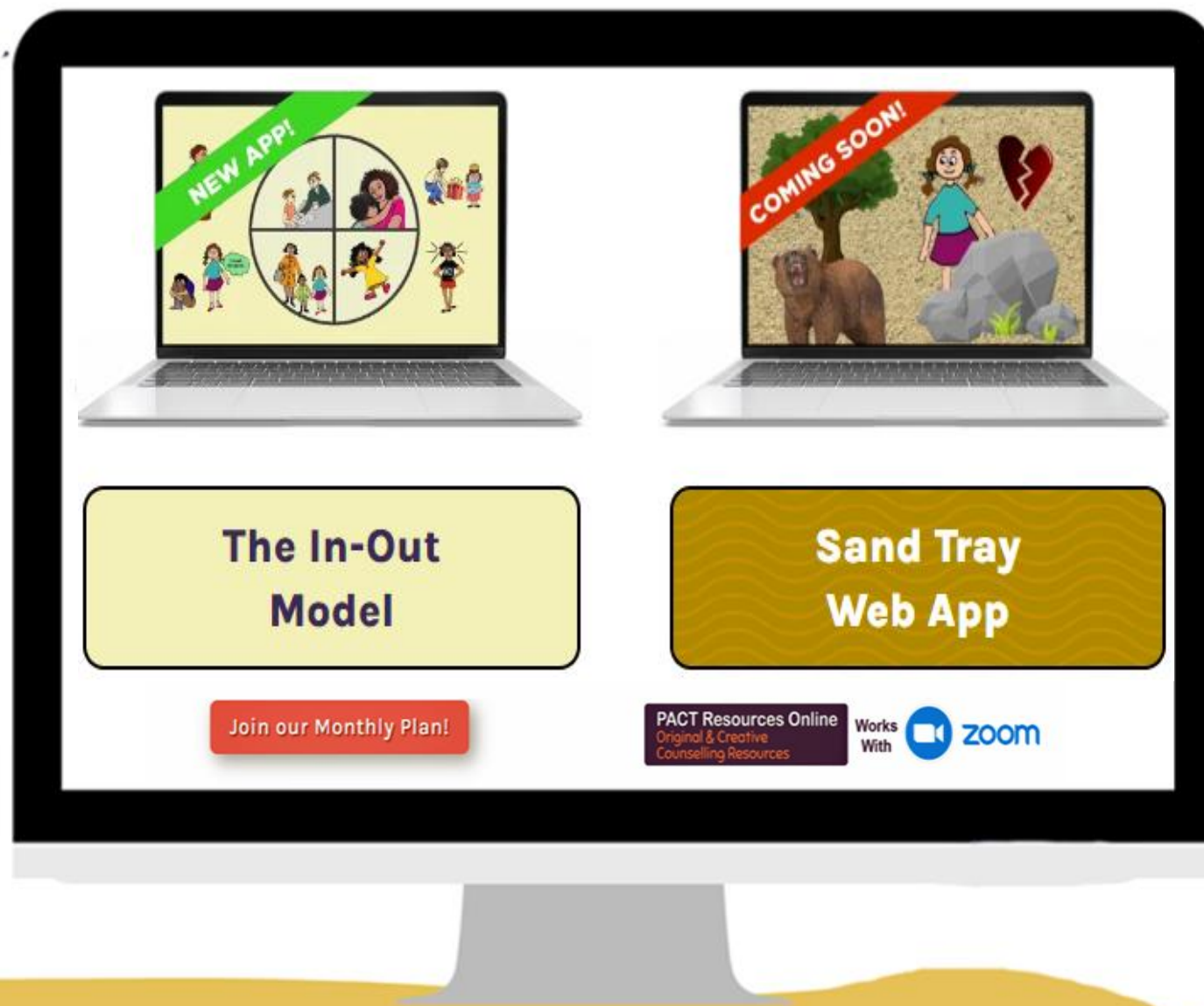


[pact-resources-online.co.uk](https://pact-resources-online.co.uk)



The 'In-Out' Model web app is now including in your paid subscription!

'Therapeutic Sandscapes' soon to follow!



[pact-resources-online.co.uk](https://pact-resources-online.co.uk)

# e-Resources



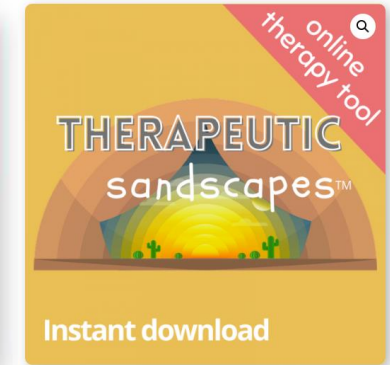
Erikson's Life Stages  
£3.50



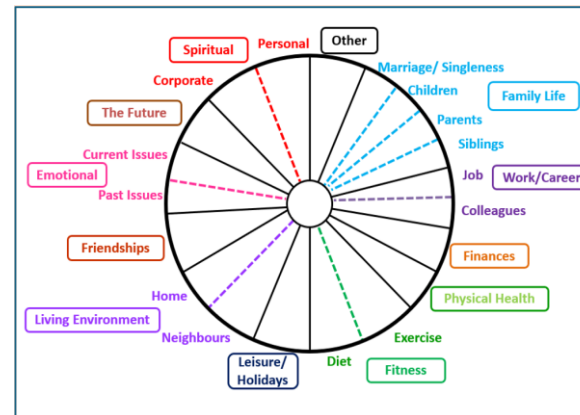
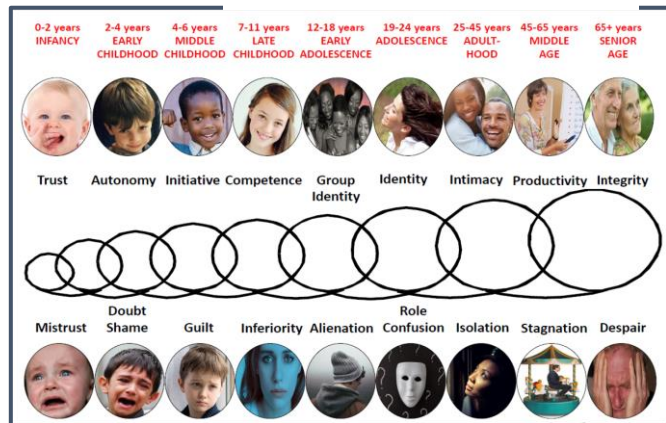
Wheel of Life  
£3.50 – £5.00



Working with Animal  
Figures Online Pack



Instant download



Use PowerPoint

Web Apps in progress!

pact-resources.co.uk

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Creative Supervision  
Mon 10<sup>th</sup> June



When Fathers Wound  
Sat 29<sup>th</sup> June



The In Womb Journey  
Fri 12<sup>th</sup> July



Working Creatively  
with Nesting Dolls  
Tues 16<sup>th</sup> July

9.30am – 1.00pm

Prices £10 (limited Bursary places), £20 or £30

Catch up video link with all bookings

£10 or £20: 7-day link

£30: lifetime link



Deep Release Online  
Professional Training for Counsellors

[deeprelease.org.uk](http://deeprelease.org.uk)

# 2024 Annual Counsellors Conference, Residential



Friday 27-Sunday 29 September 2024



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- A closed group for counsellors & trainee counsellors
- Please answer the joining questions!



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**deeprelease.org.uk**



# YouTube

## Search 'Pauline Andrew Creative Counselling'

- Lots of videos on working creatively
- Please subscribe!



## Search 'Brain, Body and Beyond'

- Videos on Life, the Brain and Relationships
- Please subscribe!



**Deep Release Online**  
*Professional Training for Counsellors*

[deeprelease.org.uk](http://deeprelease.org.uk)

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your feedback!



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*Thank you*

<https://www.info@deeprelease.org.uk>

<https://www.pact-resources.co.uk>