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Why Is It Always About You?: The Seven Deadly Sins Of Narcissism

Why is it
Always
About
YOU?

SAVING YOURSELF FROM
THE NARCISSISTS IN YOUR LIFE

Sandy Hotchkiss, LCSW

Foreword by James F. Masterson, author of *The Search for the Real Self*



Synopsis

In this groundbreaking book -- the first popular book on narcissism in more than a decade -- clinical social worker and psychotherapist Sandy Hotchkiss shows you how to cope with controlling, egotistical people who are incapable of the fundamental give-and-take that sustains healthy relationships. Exploring how individuals come to have this shortcoming, why you get drawn into their perilous orbit, and what you can do to break free, Hotchkiss describes the "Seven Deadly Sins of Narcissism" and their origins. You will learn to recognize these hallmarks of unhealthy narcissism -- Shamelessness, Magical Thinking, Arrogance, Envy, Entitlement, Exploitation, Bad Boundaries -- and to understand the roles that parenting and culture play in their creation. Whether the narcissist in question is a coworker, spouse, parent, or child, *Why Is It Always About You?* provides abundant practical advice for anyone struggling to break narcissism's insidious spread to the next generation, and for anyone who encounters narcissists in everyday life.

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Customer Reviews

Well-written; the best book I've read on the subject. The commentary on the social aspects of

narcissism makes this author's approach relevant to every reader. Practical, realistic coping strategies as well as models for good-enough parenting. Great book for parents and teenagers to read together!Synopsis: Narcissism is a healthy, necessary stage twice in a person's life, during the toddler and teen years, and gives an individual an inflated sense of confidence that enables him or her to leave the security of the parental bond to explore the world with newly acquired abilities. If children receive good-enough parenting when reality deflates this bubble of omnipotence, they reach the end of their narcissistic explorations with a newly integrated sense of self and awareness of the separateness of other people. If they are traumatized or are insecure in their attachment to primary caregivers at these crucial stages, they never "graduate" from the school of narcissism, and become "toxic people," viewing others merely as extensions of themselves and therefore without separate needs and feelings. You probably encounter narcissistic people every day without understanding why they are so rude, have an unfounded sense of entitlement, poor boundaries, or seem to be more "special" than other people. Many of us have been raised in families that pass down narcissitic vulnerabilities, leaving us prey to narcissists, who are always on the lookout for people who can be manipulated into supplying external validation of their "specialness," either by annexing you and your talents to serve them or by deflating you so as to inflate themselves.

Think you don't know a narcissist? Think again. Narcissists are everywhere particularly, in the public eye. Think about the Enron and Worldcom disasters. Do you think Skilling and Fastow or Ebbers and Sullivan aren't as narcissistic as they come? They fit the mold in spades. And how about our cultural obsession with these egotists? Aren't we somewhat awestruck by the "My ... doesn't stink" stars? From time-to-time, we're all a bit 'wowed.' I'm certainly guilty but perhaps now I'll have a better understanding of the circumstances surrounding the situations and 'icons' involved. WHY IS IT ALWAYS ABOUT YOU is an extremely insightful expose' on the egotists in your world, whether mildly or flagrantly narcissistic. And, this 'disease' doesn't just apply to our public figures; it can be as close as your immediate family or, heaven forbid, yourself!Narcissism derives its origin from a youth in classical Greek Mythology, Narcissus. The story goes that one day Narcissus saw his reflection in a pool of water and immediately fell in love with his image. From that very moment, he began to see everything as it related to his own image. The world was his looking glass and his insatiable appetite for himself took him all over the globe, and he was invariably pleased with what he saw. He left in his path a troubling wake which slipped like a fever through the people who saw him.Ms. Hotchkiss has nailed this subject when she posits "Their needs are more important than anyone else's, and they expect to be accommodated in all things. They can't comprehend why they

might not always come first." Narcissists are endearing, enticing creatures typically with extremely thick skins....but only to certain elements.

In classical mythology, Narcissus was a young man who fell in love with his own image reflected in a pool of water and wasted away from unsatisfied desire. In modern terms a narcissist is a vain, self-absorbed, arrogant individual with a grand sense of entitlement. Narcissistic tendencies include the need to be perfect or in control at all times. Narcissistic attitudes and behaviors are epidemic in our society. The American Psychiatric Association estimates that one out of every one hundred persons meets the criteria of severe narcissism. According to the author, "our culture is full of narcissistic influences that numb us to the reality of the problems we face." In fact, unreality is the hallmark of narcissism. Their distortions of reality can cause others to question themselves and doubt their own perceptions. Narcissists will go to great lengths to promote fantasies that sustain their grandiosity and omnipotence. Many prominent elected officials, sports idols, and entertainment figures are narcissists. They also head large corporations and lead flocks of the faithful. Many of us encounter unhealthy narcissism in some form every day. Narcissists see themselves as "special people." They know better than you do. They are also very shame-sensitive. They avoid shame at all costs. They are unlikely to self-correct their intrusive or inconsiderate behavior just because you call attention to it. When failures occur, they portray themselves as victims and blame others for their misfortune. Gossip, backbiting, and bootlicking are prevalent in work environments dominated by a narcissist. The narcissist sees power as his due. This is why many achieve management positions. In such positions they practice stretching employees until they break and then get rid of them.

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