

# THE AUTHENTIC EDGE

Helping you to become who you are meant to be -- in your **personal life, relationships** and **career**.

June 17, 2025



## Narcissistic or Codependent

In our cultural conversation about toxic relationships, narcissists are usually cast as villains, while codependents are seen as their innocent victims. The narcissist is labeled manipulative, selfish, and emotionally stunted. The codependent is portrayed as selfless, giving, and long-suffering. One is bad. One is good. But this binary view keeps us locked in the same unhealthy dynamics we're trying to heal.

The truth is far more complex, and far more human.

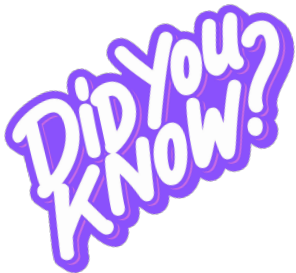
Narcissists and codependents are not opposites. They are two sides of the same developmental coin. Both are adaptations to emotional injury. Both are rooted in survival strategies that emerge when authentic attachment needs go unmet in early life. And both play roles in keeping the dysfunctional dynamic alive.

If we want to shift from survival-based relationships to healthy, authentic ones, we must move beyond blame. That means no longer glorifying one pattern while vilifying the other—and instead, understanding the interplay between them.

Let's explore how to move from questioning yourself to trusting yourself.

Warm regards,

Anne Dranitsaris



**Narcissists are among the least likely individuals to seek therapy voluntarily**, and when they do, treatment is often ineffective unless there is a profound shift in self-awareness. Research shows people with narcissistic traits rarely view

themselves as the problem, which makes them less likely to pursue help. A study published in the *Journal of Clinical Psychology* found that narcissistic individuals had the lowest rates of treatment-seeking behavior among all personality disorders—**less than 5% seek therapy on their own**.

## In This Week's Newsletter

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**Feature Article: Narcissists aren't Monsters; Codependents aren't Innocent**

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**Brain-Based Tips for Detaching from Narcissists**

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**Did You Know? Narcissists Don't Seek Therapy**

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**Excerpt: Chapter 9: How We Sabotage Relationships**

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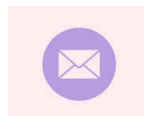
**Authentic Reflections: I Didn't Realize I was Disappearing**

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**Upcoming Events: Summer & Fall 2025**

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## Narcissists aren't Monsters. Codependents aren't Innocent. They're Both Stuck

In our cultural conversation about toxic relationships, we've fallen into a trap: we cast narcissists as villains and codependents as their unfortunate victims. One is selfish and manipulative. The other is giving and long-suffering. One is "bad." The other is "good."

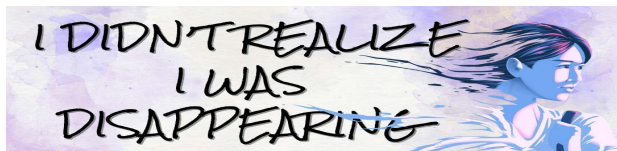
But this good-versus-evil narrative does more harm than good. It keeps us from seeing what's really going on.

The truth is neither narcissists nor codependents are living from their Authentic Self.

Both are stuck in survival patterns.

Both are using personas they developed in childhood to cope with emotional environments that didn't support their development.

[Read the Full Article](#)



When we think of toxic relationships, we often focus on the narcissist—their manipulation, their cruelty, their inability to take responsibility. But what about the person on the other side? The one who stays, over-functions, explains, apologizes, and quietly disappears in the name of love?

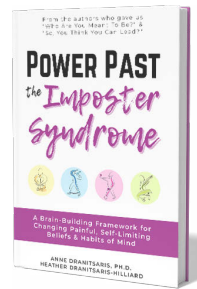
This is the story of Lena—a smart, capable woman who lost herself in the fog of codependency and found her way back with the right support. It's not just her story—it's one many of us know all too well.

Lena was the kind of woman many people admire—high-achieving, empathetic, thoughtful. But she'd been in a relationship for five years with a man who slowly chipped away at every part of her. It hadn't started that way, of course. In the beginning, he was everything she thought she wanted: charismatic, driven, intense. He pursued her with confidence and told her she was unlike anyone he'd ever met. For the first time in years, she felt chosen.

[Read the Full Article](#)

Even when narcissists do enter therapy, dropout rates are high. One meta-analysis found that narcissistic traits were associated with lower therapeutic alliance and reduced treatment success, as many narcissists engage defensively, manipulate the therapist, or use therapy to reinforce their grandiosity. Without a strong internal motivation for change, therapy often becomes a stage—not a space for transformation. Narcissists may intellectualize their problems, blame others, or use therapeutic language to justify their behaviors rather than reflect on them. Because their self-worth is externally constructed and fragile, the vulnerability required for meaningful therapeutic work is experienced as threatening. Instead of confronting their developmental wounds, they often attempt to control the therapeutic process or seek admiration from the therapist, reinforcing their false self.

## Excerpt: Chapter 9 How We Sabotage Relationships



The Saboteur Imposter Syndrome Persona is one of the four core personas that emerge when we live from fear rather than authenticity. Rooted in early childhood experiences, the Saboteur forms as a protective strategy to help us feel safe and in control. It convinces us that stepping outside our comfort zone—no matter how much we long to—is dangerous. Instead of supporting growth, it undermines it, leading us to abandon goals, sabotage relationships, and shrink away from opportunities that would move us forward.

Self-doubt is one of the Saboteur's most effective tools. When we consider doing something new or daring, it whispers: "What if you fail?" "What if they find out you're not good enough?" It makes us overthink, hesitate, or procrastinate until the opportunity passes by. Often, we mistake this inner dialogue for logic or humility, when in fact it's the Saboteur working to prevent change. Even when we want success, love, or creative fulfillment, the Saboteur casts just enough doubt to keep us from acting.

In this chapter excerpt, you'll meet the Saboteur in its many forms and learn how to identify when it's hijacking your goals, your confidence, and your relationships—so you can stop undermining yourself and start living from your true potential.

[Read the full chapter...](#)

## Brain Tip for Detaching from Narcissists



**Activate your prefrontal cortex**—the part of your brain responsible for rational thinking and self-regulation—by naming the pattern instead of reacting emotionally.

When you feel triggered by the narcissist's manipulation, gaslighting, or emotional withdrawal, pause and say (silently or aloud), "This is a survival pattern, not love."

This simple act of labeling the behavior engages your executive function, calming the limbic system (your emotional brain) and helping you break the automatic loop of reactivity, guilt, or self-blame. Repetition rewires your brain: the more you name it, the less power it has over you. Detachment begins not with distance, but with clarity.

**Remember : RESPOND don't REACT to the narcissist's behavior**



# Become Who You Are Meant to Be: Upcoming Events for Women on the Path to Authentic Living

## Summer / Fall 2025

### An Invitation from Me to You

I'm offering these groups for women who are ready to go deeper—who feel, as I do, that there's always more to discover on the path to our authentic selves. No matter your age or life stage, breaking free from the grip of imposter syndrome, untangling from the patterns of codependency, or challenging long-held self-limiting beliefs is hard, but it's also where the real transformation begins.

I've created these groups for women who feel a quiet, persistent call—who know in their bones that there's more for them. More meaning. More truth. More aliveness in their relationships, careers, or in life as a whole.

The women who join these groups have something in common: they are seekers, truth-tellers, and courageous souls. They're not interested in surface-level change. They're ready to do the deep, inner work it takes to live a meaningful life—one that feels aligned with their Authentic Self.

If you're feeling that same pull, I invite you to join us. This is your space to be witnessed, supported, and empowered on your journey back to who you truly are meant to be.

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## Summer & ~ Fall Offerings

These workshops and groups are designed to support breaking free from the limitations of roles, beliefs and fears to get on YOUR path to individuating and achieving your authentic potential.

### - 60+ Women's Group: Continuing the Journey

A soulful, supportive space for women 60 and older who are committed to deepening their journey of individuation. Share wisdom, reflect on purpose, and embrace the next chapter with intention.

### - Imposter Syndrome Workshop: Reclaim Your Inner Authority

Quiet the inner critic and step fully into your worth. This experiential workshop unpacks the root causes of imposter syndrome and provides brain-based strategies to rewrite your internal narrative.

### - Breaking the Chains of Attachment: A Codependency Workshop

Learn to identify unhealthy attachment patterns, understand emotional entanglements, and create boundaries that support freedom and authentic connection.

More information about the sessions is coming soon. If any of the groups or workshops sound interesting to you, contact me at [anned@annedranitsaris.com](mailto:anned@annedranitsaris.com). **Summer Sessions:** July **Fall Sessions:** October Limited group size – secure your place early - These intimate, guided experiences are designed to support lasting change.



### Anne Dranitsaris, PhD

For over 40 years, I've been helping individuals, couples, leaders, and entrepreneurs break free from limiting beliefs, codependence, Imposter Syndrome, and other patterns that hold them back from living as their Authentic Selves. Through my work as a psychotherapist, leadership coach, and behavioral change expert, I've had the privilege of guiding countless people on their journeys to discover their true potential and lead lives aligned with who they're meant to be.

For me, the journey to connect with our Authentic Self is a lifelong quest—one that requires courage, introspection, and an openness to transformation. My work is deeply personal, shaped by my own experiences with family dynamics, emotional growth, and the path to authenticity. My passion is empowering others to thrive, and I feel privileged to share this work with everyone I encounter. If you'd like to learn more about how I can help you on your own transformative journey, contact me at [anned@annedranitsaris.com](mailto:anned@annedranitsaris.com).

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