

# THE AUTHENTIC EDGE

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

July 1, 2025



## In the Shadow of the Narcissist

You know that pit in your stomach—the one that shows up after a conversation where someone smiled at you, but somehow you walked away feeling small? Like maybe you misunderstood, maybe you overreacted, maybe they're right about you. That's not your truth talking. That's narcissistic gaslighting doing its job.

It doesn't always come as a shout. Sometimes it comes as a whisper: "You're too sensitive." "I'm just being honest." "Why are you making such a big deal?" And if you're someone who feels deeply, who tries to be kind and do the right thing, it's easy to internalize these messages and turn the blame inward. You start asking, "What's wrong with me?" instead of, "Why are they treating me this way?"

This week's newsletter cuts through that confusion. Because here's the truth: believing the narcissistic voice isn't a flaw in you, it's a survival pattern. One rooted in early experiences where adapting, performing, and self-correcting were how you stayed connected and safe. But you're not that powerless person anymore. You can spot the pattern. You can interrupt it. And you can reclaim your voice and your reality.

You don't have to keep living in the shadow of the narcissist to survive. You don't have to keep questioning your worth. You just have to start seeing the manipulation for what it is—and stop calling it your fault. This issue gives you the tools to do just that.

Warm regards,

*Anne Dranitsaris*

**Did You Know?**

Did you know that 82% of high-achieving women admit they've downplayed their own needs just to avoid conflict in personal relationships? And that 65% of emotionally intelligent women report feeling more responsible for maintaining peace than expressing their true feelings? These insights, drawn from internal data in a 2024 coaching practice, highlight a powerful yet often invisible dynamic: the tendency of emotionally aware women to prioritize harmony over authenticity—even at the cost of their own well-being.

## In This Week's Newsletter

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**Feature Article: How Narcissists Make You Doubt Yourself**

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**Brain-Based Tip for Dealing with Gaslighting**

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**Did You Know? High Achieving Women Downplay Their Success**

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**Why Some People Keep Being Victims Instead of Getting Help**

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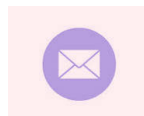
**Authentic Reflections: Maybe They're Right? A Client Struggle with Gaslighting**

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**Upcoming Events: Fall 2025**

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You know that feeling in the pit of your stomach—the one that shows up after a conversation where you stood up for yourself, asked a valid question, or expressed a need. It happens because you know what's coming.

... Suddenly you're the problem! You're too sensitive, or it's your fault because you should have known better.

That's not a communication breakdown. That's gaslighting.

Gaslighting is when someone intentionally distorts your perception of reality to gain control.

It's not a tone issue. It's not a poor choice of words. It's a strategic attempt to make you question your experience, your emotions, and even your sanity.

Gaslighting is used to gain power, deflect accountability, and keep you doubting yourself. It keeps you dependent. And it often shows up in relationships where one person needs to maintain dominance, whether emotionally, psychologically, or socially.

Read the Full Article



### Why Do We Believe People Who Make Us Feel Small?

- It's not because we're weak.
- It's not because we're naive.
- And it's definitely not because we're unlovable.

We believe them—these partners, husbands, parents, and bosses—because they wrap their control in concern. They distort the truth with just enough charm to keep us questioning ourselves. And when you've been taught that love is something you have to earn, that your feelings are too much, or that your role is to accommodate others, it's easy to confuse manipulation for care.

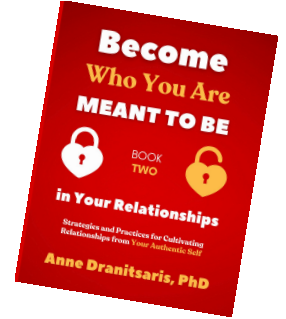
One woman I worked with came to me saying she wanted help for her codependency. She was growing increasingly depressed to the point she considered suicide and had decided to seek therapy as a last-ditch effort to find out why she wasn't happy despite having a "perfect life."

Read the Full Article

Nearly 90% of women worldwide report being penalized or undermined for their success, leading many to associate sharing their achievements with being boastful or selfish. Studies show women consistently underrate their performance, promote themselves less than men, and often attribute success to others—even when they've earned it. This fear of backlash or being labeled arrogant causes many to stay silent about their accomplishments, reinforcing invisibility and limiting professional growth. Self-promotion isn't selfish—it's survival in systems that don't automatically recognize female success.

Want help stepping out of the shadows, finding your voice and sharing your story? Let's connect—I support career-minded professionals who want to speak up without apology.

## Why Some People Keep Being Victims Instead of Getting Help



Despite rising awareness of trauma and mental health, most people who identify as victims of abuse, narcissistic relationships, or dysfunctional upbringings never seek real therapeutic support.

In fact, according to the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, only about 43% of adults with mental illness receive any treatment and among those who identify as trauma survivors, the percentage who receive therapy is even lower.

Meanwhile, online spaces are flooded with stories of suffering, but few include actual recovery. Many people build entire identities around being victims—sharing their pain, labeling their experiences, and surrounding themselves with others who do the same—without ever moving toward developing their full potential.

Despite knowing they want to change, they stay stuck. They don't get therapy. They don't learn new tools. They keep getting hurt, and they keep telling the story of how hurt they are, expecting others to accommodate and empathize.

Because when the wound becomes the identity, healing starts to feel like a threat.

### IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE THIS WAY.

If you're done repeating the same codependent pattern and are ready to build a life beyond your past, I can help.

Visit [annedranitsaris.com](http://annedranitsaris.com) or DM me to get on the path to your potential today.

## Brain Tip for Dealing with Gaslighting



### Gaslighting Hijacks Your Prefrontal Cortex—Not Just Your Confidence

When someone denies your reality, your brain doesn't just get confused—it activates a full-blown threat response. Cortisol spikes. Your prefrontal cortex—the part of your brain that handles logic, language, and perspective—goes offline.

That's why you freeze, feel foggy, or replay the moment obsessively afterward. Your body registers danger long before your conscious mind can make sense of it.

### Tip for Dealing with Gaslighting

Retrain your brain to choose truth over survival:

# Workshops for Women on the Path to Authentic Living

Fall 2025

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). **Fall Sessions:** October. Limited group size – secure your place early

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## Just a Reminder (Asking Is Hard—but I'm Doing It Anyway)

I've poured everything into my next book, *Rethinking Codependency for the Emotionally Intelligent*. It's the book I needed years ago—before burnout, before endless self-fixing, before I realized how codependency can disguise itself as perfectionism, helping, and always being “the strong one.”

But here's the truth: when I approached publishers, I was told bluntly,

“Come back when you have 10,000+ followers.”

**I kid you not.**

The work is ready. The message is needed. But to get it into the world, I need your help.

If my words have ever resonated with you—or helped you feel seen—will you support this next step by following, sharing, or subscribing?

It's not just about numbers. It's about reaching the people who are still stuck, still silent, still thinking they're alone.

Follow on **Facebook**

Connect on **Instagram:** @annedranitsaris

Follow and Connect on **LinkedIn**

▶ Subscribe on **YouTube**

Explore my **website:** [www.annedranitsaris.com](http://www.annedranitsaris.com)

And stay tuned: **TikTok** is coming soon. Quick hits. No fluff. Just truth.

Thanks for being here. **And thank you—for helping me take this next step.**

—Anne



### 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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