

Narcissistic Abuse Recovery

Examples of Lies to Track

Gaslighting & Denials

Common Lies:

- I never said that.
- You're imagining things.
- That never happened.
- You're too sensitive.
- Well, when you... (deflecting blame to avoid accountability)
- You manipulated me into doing that.

Underlying message:

- I'm the victim here — you are the aggressor.
- Your memory, perception, and feelings can't be trusted.

Tactics often used:

- Denial of facts or words previously spoken.
- Rewriting history ('that never happened').
- Pretending to forget ('toxic amnesia').
- DARVO (Deny, Attack, Reverse Victim, and Offender).
- Deflection: focusing on the survivor's behavior instead.

Impact:

- Creates chronic self-doubt and confusion.
- Makes the survivor feel 'crazy' or unreliable.
- Erodes confidence in memory and judgment.
- Silences the survivor from confronting lies again.

About Ex-Partners

Common Lies:

- My ex was crazy.
- My ex was abusive — emotionally, physically, financially, sexually.
- They ruined my life.
- I was the perfect partner; they betrayed me.
- My ex manipulated me, and I didn't realize it until later.

Underlying message:

- All of my past partners victimized me — I've never been the problem.

Tactics often used:

- Smear campaigns against exes to elicit sympathy.
- Exaggerating or fabricating abuse.
- Contradictory stories depending on the audience.
- Lying to their own therapist, doctors, or other professionals about how badly they were "mistreated."

Impact:

- Makes new partners, friends, and associates feel like rescuers.
- Builds credibility with professionals while discrediting the survivor.
- Isolates the survivor from truth and outside support.

About Work & Achievements

Common Lies:

- I had an amazing career doing X...
- I was the best at my job.
- Everyone at work respected me.
- My ex/business partner ripped me off.
- My ex-employers always... (treated me badly, were jealous, didn't recognize my value, etc.)
- My bosses manipulated me into leaving / into failing.
- I was fired because... (jealousy, politics, discrimination — never their own behavior).
- My employers never recognized my true value. They didn't pay me what I was worth or respect my contributions, so taking extra resources, money, or time wasn't wrong. It was my way of balancing the scales, of getting what I deserved.

Underlying message:

- I'm too talented, honest, misunderstood, innocent, or uneducated for people to handle—they victimized me out of envy or corruption.
- If I bent the rules, it was only because I was already being mistreated.

Tactics often used:

- Inflating resumes and accomplishments.
- Rewriting failures as persecution.
- Claiming sabotage or unfair dismissal.
- Framing theft or misuse of resources as compensation.
- Presenting themselves as 'too good' for corrupt systems.
- Extorting money while blaming others' greed.

Impact:

- Gains admiration or sympathy without merit.
- Hides instability or irresponsibility.
- Normalizes exploitation of employers, business partners, or clients.
- Provides excuses for financial exploitation.
- Creates guilt in survivors, making them feel they must 'make it up' to the narcissist.
- Traps survivors into 'helping' fix their career or finances.

About Honesty & Loyalty

Common Lies:

- I've always been honest with you.
- I would never lie to you.
- I would never cheat on you.
- I was manipulated into lying / cheating — it wasn't really me.
- I've always been a good person.

Underlying message:

- If I was dishonest, it's only because someone else pressured me. I am the one who was tricked or victimized — not the one who betrayed you. Deep down, I'm still the "good person" here.

Tactics often used:

- Denying infidelity or wrongdoing outright.
- Minimizing lies as 'small' or 'white lies.'
- Shifting blame onto others.
- Claiming noble motives ('I lied to protect you').
- Reinforcing a global identity of 'goodness' to make dishonesty harder to confront.
- Presenting themselves publicly as altruistic, kind, loving, caring, and selfless humans who have only ever been wronged — especially by ex-partners.

Impact:

- Undermines trust in the relationship.
- Keeps the survivor off balance and questioning their own instincts.
- Excuses betrayal and shifts guilt to the victim.
- Creates cycles of doubt and justification.
- Makes the survivor feel cruel or unreasonable for questioning someone who claims to be 'so good' and 'so loving.'
- Confuses outsiders who see only the narcissist's polished, caring image, leaving the survivor doubly isolated.

Financial Lies

Common Lies:

- I'll pay you back.
- I don't have any debt.
- People have manipulated me financially, that's why I'm broke.
- I'm a free spirit — I don't follow society's rules or The Man's rules.

Underlying message:

- My financial instability isn't my fault. I'm different, above rules and systems, and therefore not responsible for the mess I create.

Tactics often used:

- Hiding debt or shifting it to others.
- Exaggerating wealth or assets.
- Framing irresponsibility as 'nonconformity' or 'freedom.'
- Giving small gifts or gestures to manipulate people into giving larger sums or ongoing financial support.
- Guilt-tripping for loans or gifts.
- Fabricating emergencies to get money.
- Flipping blame for financial losses.

Impact:

- Drains the survivor's resources.
- Creates dependency and financial entrapment.
- Normalizes recklessness as 'authenticity' or 'freedom.'
- Tricks others into feeling responsible for the narcissist's well-being.
- Causes guilt and confusion around money.
- Keeps survivor tied through financial obligations.

Community & Reputation

Common Lies:

- Everyone thinks you're the problem.
- People say I'm such a good person.
- Nobody believes you.

Underlying message:

- I am the misunderstood victim. You have treated me unfairly, and I will make sure everyone hears and believes my version of the story.

Tactics often used:

- Gossip, half-truths, and twisting events.
- Selective disclosure to outsiders.
- Crying victim in public.
- Recruiting 'flying monkeys' to repeat their narrative.

Impact:

- Isolates the survivor socially.
- Damages credibility and reputation.
- Builds a false image of the narcissist as virtuous.
- Makes escape harder by surrounding survivor with doubt.

Excuses for Abuse

Common Lies:

- I only lied to protect you.
- I was just joking.
- You made me do it.
- If you loved me, you wouldn't question me.
- I was manipulated by others into reacting this way.
- I was under so much stress — anyone would have snapped.
- That wasn't abuse, you're exaggerating.
- I only did it because I love you so much.

Underlying message:

- My harmful behavior is not my responsibility. I was provoked, misunderstood, or overwhelmed. You are to blame, or it wasn't really abuse at all.

Tactics often used:

- Minimizing ('it wasn't that bad').
- Humor as cover ('it was just a joke').
- Shifting blame onto the survivor.
- Emotional blackmail ('if you loved me, you wouldn't...').
- Justifying with stress, alcohol, or outside influence.
- DARVO: Deny, Attack, Reverse Victim and Offender.
- Reframing control as passion ('I only act this way because I care so much').

Impact:

- Creates confusion about what abuse really is.
- Induces guilt and self-blame.
- Normalizes cycles of harm.
- Silences survivors from speaking up.
- Erases survivor's pain while reinforcing abuser's victim identity.
- Erodes self-esteem and reality-testing.

Personal History

Common Lies:

- My family treated me terribly. (later contradicted with opposite accounts)
- I had a perfect childhood. (later contradicts with abuse stories)
- I was horribly abused. (then contradicts with happy childhood stories)
- I've never done drugs / I've never cheated / I've never hurt anyone.
- I was manipulated by my family / teachers / friends all my life.

Underlying message:

- My past proves I was always the victim — therefore, I can't be the abuser now.

Tactics often used:

- Contradictory life stories.
- Fabricated hardships.
- Rewriting personal history to fit the moment.

Impact:

- Generates sympathy.
- Excuses bad behavior.
- Creates confusion about what's real.
- Prevents accountability.

In Relationships

Common Lies:

- You're the only one I've ever loved like this.
- I'll change.
- It won't happen again.
- You're overreacting.
- You manipulated me into acting this way.

Underlying message:

- Even in this relationship, I'm the one being mistreated — not you.

Tactics often used:

- Love-bombing and idealization.
- Future-faking ('we'll get married,' 'things will be different').
- Minimizing harm ('you're overreacting').
- Reframing control as passion.

Impact:

- Creates cycles of hope and disappointment.
- Fosters dependency on promises of change.
- Traps survivor in repeated betrayals.
- Deepens emotional confusion and attachment.