

Synopsis

Narcissistic Personality Disorder, also known as megalomania according to Wikipedia, may present in any person at any stage of the lifespan, but usually occurs most often to a clinical degree in early adulthood and persists for a year or longer with specific and identifiable symptoms (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). It is expected that about 0%-6.2% of Earthlings will develop clinical Narcissism in their lifetime (American Psychiatric Association, 2013), with the primary indicated treatment being psychotherapy with a specialist in Personality Disorders (Mayo Clinic, 2021).

In order to diagnose Narcissistic Personality Disorder, the practitioner must rule out symptoms resulting from substance use disorder, bipolar disorder, and mania and hypomania, by interview or assessment. (American Psychiatric Association, 2013)

In Dr. Karyl McBride's book, "Will I Ever Be Good Enough?: Healing the Daughters of Narcissistic Mothers", McBride assesses varied and diverse presentations of Maternal Narcissism as it impacts children of Mothers she assigns this diagnosis to. She reports on their experience, and effects on adulthood with and without treatment.

The instant paper analyzes the criteria requisite for a diagnosis of Narcissistic Personality Disorder, and examines a case of narcissism known to the author, consistent with McBride's.

Narcissistic Personality Disorder (301.81)

"Narcissistic Personality Disorder (301.81) is a pattern of grandiosity, need for admiration, and lack of empathy" (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). The primary hallmark of Narcissistic Personality Disorder is Pervasive Grandiosity as a clinical personality trait. (American Psychiatric Association, 2013)

The Diagnostics and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders 5. Edition states, “

Narcissistic Personality Disorder is “a pervasive pattern of grandiosity (in fantasy or behavior), need for admiration, and lack of empathy, beginning by early adulthood and present in a variety of contexts, as indicated by five (or more) of the following:

1. Has a grandiose sense of self-importance (e.g., exaggerates achievements and talents, expects to be recognized as superior without commensurate achievements).
2. Is preoccupied with fantasies of unlimited success, power, brilliance, beauty, or ideal love.
3. Believes that he or she is “special” and unique and can only be understood by, or should associate with, other special or high-status people (or institutions).
4. Requires excessive admiration.
5. Has a sense of entitlement (i.e., unreasonable expectations of especially favorable treatment or automatic compliance with his or her expectations).
6. Is interpersonally exploitative (i.e., takes advantage of others to achieve his or her own ends).
7. Lacks empathy: is unwilling to recognize or identify with the feelings and needs of others.
8. Is often envious of others or believes that others are envious of him or her.
9. Shows arrogant, haughty behaviors or attitudes.”

According to the American Psychiatric Association, ‘narcissistic personality disorder presents in a variety of contexts’. “Those who related to individuals with narcissistic personality disorder typically find an emotional coldness and lack of reciprocal interest...and 50%-75% of those diagnosed with narcissistic personality disorder are male” (American Psychiatric Association, 2013)

Grandiosity may emerge as part of manic or hypomanic episodes [otherwise], but the association with mood change or functional impairments helps distinguish these episodes from narcissistic personality disorder.” “In Substance use disorders. Narcissistic personality disorder must also be distinguished from

symptoms that may develop in association with persistent substance use.

“[I]f an individual has personality features that meet criteria for one or more personality disorders in addition to narcissistic personality, all can be diagnosed.” (American Psychiatric Association, 2013)

A Case of Narcissism

Known to the instant author is a man named Peter, whose whole adult life was building to the moment he'd be a true clinical case of Narcissistic Personality Disorder. As a child, he was left alone most of the time by both his parents, who preferred their work, and in primary school he refused to do any academic work he wasn't immediately good at. His love of print and audiovisual media meant that by high school he was taking vocational technical classes in AudioVisual Media with intent to become a camera man. He refused to engage in any new learning, for fear of criticism, which he still reacts to with contempt and anger, even when he's proven wrong.

Upon graduating high school at 18, Peter went to work in a factory where he found a low paying job he was the best at, and self-excluded from bidding on new positions. Peter is overly social, and dominates conversation. Peter hijacks the discussion any time he can, except when deceiving new interlocutors into believing he's someone he's honestly not. Grandiosity typifies everything Peter does. He has to be the most knowledgeable, the best, the hardest working, the richest, the apex and extreme of anything he engages in or he simply doesn't do it. Peter seeks people of higher socio-economic status than himself, and is currently in the process of going bankrupt trying to keep up with the Jones' on substantially less net income. Peter envies those who earn more than him, while deriding most postsecondary education as “no good”. Peter made the bulk of his money through an inheritance and honest living, and esteems long hours in the factory for steady pay the only praiseworthy work. Peter has no idea what it's like to live on anything but an hourly wage, and anyone who doesn't earn an hourly

wage isn't "on his level", in Peter's own mind at least.

Peter has no real long term interest in anything anyone else does. It takes an Act of God to move him to maintain interest in something he doesn't independently initiate, like a maternal narcissist with no interest in either her child, her child's activities, emotional, mental, and physical needs, or all. Peter needs constant attention to validate his own thoughts, beliefs, and ideas are the most important of anyone he'll interact with. Disagreement with Peter is not only futile, but encourages maltreatment of who would dare disagree and his ongoing ire until one sees things Peter's way, unless he's provably wrong and can never be justified as right in any way over the long term. In maternal narcissism, these traits present as cold and uncaring towards the child, unless like with Peter the child is serving the mother's happiness or perceived needs (i.e. feeding the wants, needs, and desires of the person diagnosed with narcissistic personality disorder and constantly validating those as more important than one's own, or at least equal in priority together).

An example is the 2020 federal election in the United States. This author has been registered to vote and actually voted in every election he's known of since he's 18 years old, but Peter denied once years ago ever being registered or interested in politics, and upon registering in 2020 to Vote switched his story to a lie that he'd always been registered, but only voted federal.

Peter is a pure case of lifelong clinical narcissistic personality disorder which permeates all areas (every context) of his life. A maternal narcissist without treatment would never develop a meaningful adult relationship with her child, either, is my psychological opinion, whereas with Peter he has one with a long term intimate partner committed to making the relationship work from adulthood forward. It's presumed Peter would be a very poor parent if ever a Father with Narcissistic Personality Disorder.

Works Cited

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