

Union of Saints, Diagnosing/Defining Others As Problematic

Why Diagnosing or Defining Others Is Problematic

- **We lack the full picture.** Only trained professionals, with context, assessment tools, and consent, can make accurate diagnoses. When we casually label others, we risk being wrong.
 - **It strips people of dignity.** Pathologizing others reduces them to a disorder or flaw, rather than respecting them as complex human beings.
 - **It shifts the focus away from ourselves.** When we focus on “what’s wrong with them,” we avoid looking at our own needs, boundaries, and choices.
 - **It can cause harm.** Being mislabeled can leave people feeling judged, alienated, or silenced.
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The Healthy Alternative: Boundaries Without Diagnosis

Instead of saying: *“They’re a narcissist, so I can’t talk to them.”*

We can say: *“I feel disrespected when they dismiss my feelings. I’m going to limit contact for my wellbeing.”*

Boundaries don’t require pathologizing; they only require clarity about what we will and won’t tolerate.

Emotionally Mature Behavior Looks Like

- Taking responsibility for our own feelings and actions.
- Speaking from *I* statements rather than “you always/you never” judgments.
- Recognizing that people can be difficult, unkind, or unsafe **without needing to diagnose them.**
- Allowing others to be who they are while making choices about what is healthy for us.
- Valuing respect, empathy, and accountability over control or blame.