

Defending Yourself


False Allegations

Narcissists make false allegations daily. The intent is to minimize and distract you from their behavior, put you on the defensive, and get you to react emotionally. They hope to send you into an emotional tailspin whereby they gain control as you frantically defend yourself against false allegations. If you've caused Narcissistic injury, the Narcissists will take their abuse and allegations up to the next level by threatening to report you to the authorities or a government agency. If that doesn't give them the control they are seeking the Narcissist is likely to follow through on the threats by making false allegations to the police, child or adult protective services, and/or filing a petition with the court. Whichever avenue they take, you are bound to be emotional, defensive, anxious, and in a flight or fight mode—*exactly where they want you to be*. You do not want to be opening the door to the police in that state, receiving a call from CPS, APS, or having to respond to a court summons. If you are in an emotional state when contacted by one of these institutions, the Narcissist's narrative of you being the unhinged one wins, and you lose. It's that simple.



*If you are reading this AFTER the Narcissist's threats have escalated, DO NOT PANIC. Continue to read through this document and just remember this:

A Narcissist is like a five-year-old who is blaming you for their action figure being flushed down the toilet. You need to be the adult, calmly stating: "Where is your evidence that I flushed it

down the toilet?” DO NOT BECOME ACCUSATORY. DO NOT GET INTO THE “HE SAID/SHE SAID”
BANTER. 

Narcissists study their victims. They know how to incite and encourage them to act irrationally. They badger until their victims cannot take the stress, pain, and constant abuse, forcing them to snap, preferably in a way for all to see. **You cannot allow them to do this.** You have to be prepared for the attack before it happens so you can strategically handle it calmly and coolly, thereby taking away the Narcissist’s ability to further abuse you.

There is one caveat in the case of a smear campaign that focuses on friends, family, neighbors, acquaintances, etc., in which defending yourself is usually unnecessary. The best defense is often no defense and to walk away. Contrary to this, when the Narcissist threatens legal action, in that case it is vital to defend yourself. You must start documenting everything now. Keep records, bank statements, invoices, photos, and videos. Create calendars and journals to remind yourself of what happened and when. Download your text messages and chat logs. Gather as much evidence as possible for yourself, the police, investigators, your lawyer, and the judge to show them what it's like being a victim of Narcissistic abuse. The Narcissist will try to present themselves as perfect, so it is up to you to dismantle their false image by combating their lies with the truth. Documentation is one of the most effective things you can do to protect yourself. In addition, documentation will uncover the Narcissist’s pattern, help you to anticipate future attacks and what form they will take, and give you clarity--the chaos, emotional and

psychological abuse the Narcissist has inflicted upon you will no longer have the same power as the collection of truths will strengthen and protect you.

If the Narcissist has become physically violent, document with photos, LEAVE, and file a police report. Listed at the end of this webpage are resources for domestic violence.

Why Document?

Through recounting incidents, your defense will be considered more credible when it is corroborated with notes rather than from memory, especially if they are handwritten. Do not use a Word document.

Every incident of Narcissistic behavior or abuse should be documented, as well as their maladaptive or bizarre behavior and incongruent actions. At this point, you might be hesitant to document all episodes as it can seem overwhelming and time-consuming, and noting minor and things that seem like unrelated events may seem irrelevant and petty. Still, often with a Narcissist, those seemingly "small" unrelated incidences are parts of a larger pattern of abuse. You might not recognize the pattern until you record the episodes, and the connections emerge. Similar to the childhood connect-a-dot drawings, the great thing about connecting the dots through documentation is once you see the concrete pattern, so does everyone else.

Here is an example of what may seem to the casual observer a stand-alone asshole event, but to the victim of Narcissistic Abuse, it is much more:

Shelia was in a car accident and needed to get x-rays. Her mother told the Golden Child (GC) sibling to drive Shelia to the Doctor's office. When the sibling arrived at Shelia's house to pick her up, they did not help Shelia to the car or open the door for her even though Shelia was in visible pain. Once the two were in the car and the GC sibling was driving, the sibling sped, tailgated, slammed on the brakes, and jerked the car as they shifted the gears. At the time, Shelia knew

nothing about Narcissistic Abuse or GCs; she only knew her sibling was angry and didn't understand why. When they arrived at the Doctor's office, Shelia was told there would be a thirty-minute wait as the x-ray technician had more patients than usual that day. Upon hearing the news, Shelia's sibling huffed and puffed, tossed magazines, and paced in the waiting room. Feeling uncomfortable as she witnessed her sibling becoming more irritated and angrier, Shelia told her sibling they could leave; she never got the x-rays and, as a result, never received the proper treatment.

Over time Shelia began to make a connection between her sibling using the car to threaten and abuse her. Her sibling "offers" to drive corresponded with the sibling needing something, usually something of material value. The GC sibling would rage if nothing was to be gotten or they were refused. She also realized her sibling had a pattern of making demands on family members when they were passengers in the sibling's car. Later, after learning about Narcissistic Personality Disorder, Shelia would understand why her sibling was so awful to her the day she needed to go to the Doctor's office. Quite simply, the sibling felt entitled and, as so, should not have to drive anyone to the Doctor's office unless there was something in it for them; they were jealous of the attention Shelia was getting, and they had no empathy. In hindsight, the GC sibling had characteristics of Narcissism. Their anger in that light made perfect sense. Through other events relating to the GC driving, Shelia was able to discern the pattern of abuse: The sibling would isolate their victims in a car using fear of their reckless driving either to get A) what the GC sibling wanted, B) punish the victim for not fulfilling the GC's demand, or C) to seek revenge on the victim for a perceived insult. Sheila and the other victims would be at the mercy of the GC's

reckless driving and rage. Once Shelia realized this was an abusive pattern, she no longer rode with her sibling, taking away one of the GC's "tools."

Say one time, against her better judgment, Shelia rode with the GC in the car again, and the GC asked for a 5000-dollar loan during that ride. Shelia said, "No," and the GC drove erratically, hitting a car in front of them. When talking with the other driver and when the police officer arrived, the GC charmingly said it was Shelia's fault because she grabbed the wheel. How would Shelia defend herself? A typical reaction would be an emotional reaction of outrage at the lie. In addition, it's more than likely the GC would bait her and gaslight her with a snarky *"Sis, you know it's true? You get so emotional sometimes."* If Shelia becomes emotionally reactive in front of witnesses, that's it--the case is closed, but if she stays calm, says "No, that did not happen." and could refer and cite the times the GC drove recklessly, the GC's claim of Sheila grabbing the steering wheel would be seen for precisely what it was: a lie. Of course, one would hope that having discovered the GC's abusive pattern, she would never have gotten in the car and given the GC a second chance.

Narcissistic Abuse is Not Well Understood

A word of warning even though I used the term Golden Child in the description about Sheila, **do not use the terms like it or scapegoat, flying monkey, or even Narcissist when documenting.**

Many of these terms are not clearly understood, so you'll either find yourself explaining them or, worse, your documentation will be discounted as squirrely. Most importantly, **don't diagnose the Narcissist.** While it is clear to you what they are, it may not be to others, such as the court. Diagnosing them can backfire on you by making you look slanderous and judgmental.

Also, be careful in asking for a psychological evaluation, as most psychologists won't diagnose NPD because it's considered a rare condition. It is estimated that 0.5% of the population meets the clinical criteria and the prevalence of NPD in the community is around 1%. In addition, if in a court battle the opposing counsel will usually only agree to an evaluation if you consent as well, and, if you do, you are giving the Narcissist even more information they can use to abuse you further.

Because there is not a correct or widespread societal understanding of Narcissistic Abuse until society catches up with the rest of us, it's best to address narcissism in terms of abuse and let others come to their own conclusions about the pathology behind the abuse with the help of your documentation. Don't lose faith because the Narcissist won't be able to stop themselves from giving you more evidence, and over time their mask will fall. One of the ways this happens is when the Narcissist is incongruent, or in other words, there is a **difference** between what they **say, do, and feel.** Here is an example:

Let's take the case of a custody battle in which the Narcissistic father only pretends to want a relationship with the child to exert control over and punish the mother for not acknowledging the Narcissist's "Greatness." For the court's consumption, the Narcissist masks himself as a caring, loving father, who, like most caring, loving fathers, prioritizes the health and welfare of his child and takes extraordinary measures to do so, but because in reality he has no interest in the child, many of the child's basic needs were not met. For example, the father never changed the baby's diaper during visitation. The baby always came home wet, with the same supply of diapers the mother sent with the father in the diaper bag (the father did not keep a supply of diapers.) Sounds small and petty, but nevertheless, the child's mother kept jotting on the calendar every time her child came home from a visit wet with "*diaper wet*" in blue ink. The next red flag occurred during the summer when the father refused to put sunscreen on the child when they were at the beach, so the mother jotted "*Beach-refused sunscreen*" in red ink on the calendar. The father also didn't attend her doctor appointments, so every time he declined, she wrote "*Declined Dr.*" Starting not to sound petty, but still . . . then one day, when he took the child back to her mother, the mother saw red welts on the baby's face which would have been impossible for her father to miss; when the mother looked closer, she saw they were all over her child's body. The mother took the baby to the emergency room, where the child was diagnosed with an allergic reaction. This is when all the documentation written before added coupled with the allergic reaction not only illustrated a pattern but pointed to an issue of neglect and gave credibility to the fact that the father was not caring for the baby's basic needs and was putting the child in jeopardy. The mother's documentation of mere questionable incidences gave her

initial feelings of concern credence. However, if she had called her attorney or asked for less visitation times after incidences of wet diapers, she would have looked petty, overly critical, and crazy, precisely what the Narcissist wanted. **Don't fall into the trap** and don't think for a second the wet diapers and refusal of sunscreen were not bait, however also don't voice your suspicions. You must be patient, shrewd, and quiet until the time is right.

***The mother would need to keep the emergency room visit documentation and take a picture of the rash.**

I chose these two examples because, on the surface, they seem nitpicky and are the exact things Narcissists do to make you look crazy. Make no mistake, the Narcissists will intentionally attempt to provoke you with things that are hard to prove, not quite **"bad enough,"** and their narratives have plausible explanations. These events are the hardest to explain to people who don't understand Narcissistic Abuse. They will not understand until you have a trail of evidence showing a pattern. That's why you must document, document, and document.

The Narcissist abuse method is "Death by a thousand cuts." It's also how they slowly trap their victims into the cycle of abuse and get away with their actions for extended periods. The unfortunate fact is the full extent of the abusive behavior may not be acknowledged or understood unless it is documented, as most people can't fathom how devious Narcissists are. Documentation of repeated incidences will lead to the logical and correct conclusion, even by the most skeptical observer, that abuse has occurred. Documentation exposes lies, keeps the truth from being distorted, and traps the Narcissist in the web of lies they continue to weave. Remember, Narcissists are pathological liars, and when threatened to be exposed for their

actions, will craft other lies to make them look good; if questioned or confronted with their narrative, they will heap further lies on top of the original lie. As each level of deception is added, their risk of exposure increases. So again, document, document, document.

I know all this seems overwhelming. I can hear you wearily say, "I'll be documenting all the time, and it's so easy to make a mistake." I understand, but with practice, you'll be fine, and in some cases, only one or two words jotted on a calendar will suffice.

I recommend working with an attorney if fictitious claims have been leveled against you, false reports have been submitted, or you receive a court summons. If the Narcissist has financially abused you and paying for an attorney is out of the question, some organizations offer free legal assistance. See my resource list and check with your state government's website in the self-help resources section or request services from a pro bono attorney. If you're looking for information before committing to an attorney, depending on the state you live in, you can find free legal advice on the American Bar Association (free legal answers web page). You'll find the link to the website in the resource list. The best attorney for your representation will be knowledgeable about cluster B personalities and a lawyer experienced in dealing with Narcissists as they will know how to expose them, but be careful; I've seen family law attorneys advertise that they are experienced with Narcissism when they are not. Always interview an attorney before hiring them.

How to Write Notes

Notes are the best way to create records that memorialize evidence and critical information that may be lost to memory. This is especially helpful as Narcissists contradict themselves and lie about events, but **how you write the notes** is also important. Old school using a pen (not pencil or erasable pen), paper, and a notebook is the best. This type of documentation aids your credibility because what is written with pen and paper cannot be easily edited like a Word document. Also, notes made in chronological order in a notebook and have visible mistakes within them are challenging to criticize for trustworthiness. I like using a composition notebook for this. Pages cannot be torn out without leaving a visible trace, and what you lose in space is made up for because it's easily transported in a purse, backpack, by hand, or stored in the glove compartment of your car, so it's readily available.

Rules for Writing

Write notes contemporaneously. Begin writing right after the incident or during the episode without the Narcissist's knowledge. Notes can be taken in any way readily available, even if you have to write them on a scratch piece of paper left in your car, a grocery receipt, or even a Kleenex box. Later you can copy and transfer the notes to your notebook but **keep the original note.**

If you make a mistake while writing:

- Draw a single line through the error. Initial the lined-out mistake, then make the correction.
- Do not scribble.
- Do not erase.
- Do not use correction fluid (White-Out).

- Do not rip out pages.

When writing, stick to "Just the facts."

DO NOT

- **Express an opinion.**
- Stay away from words like the following:

Awful/Wonderful
Beautiful/Ugly
Better/Best/Worst
Delicious/Disgusting
Definitely
Enjoyable/Horrible
Favorite
For/Against
Good/Bad
Inferior/Superior
Oppose/Support
Terrible
Unfair
Worthwhile

- **Judge or describe based on personal belief or feelings.**

These statements depend on your personal taste, which your reader might not find to be credible or understandable.

NOT CREDIBLE: Joey's has the best food in town. (Says who?)

- **Use "all or nothing" words**

Avoid using absolutes such as: always, never, everywhere, nowhere, everything, nothing, because they are usually untrue and lack credibility.

INCORRECT: My kids never eat.

CORRECT: My kids are picky eaters.

DO

- Use senses when describing events.

- Paint a picture with words.

Example:

What NOT to do:

She did it again. Acted like a total clown in the restaurant. She's crazy jealous. She always yells at me when I go to answer the phone. I should be able to answer my phone wherever I want if I think the phone call may be important. She's paranoid too. She grabbed my phone, scrolled through my messages then placed it face down on the table. Then she criticized my friend Brian who was the one who called; He was trying to coordinate a basketball game between all of our friends. She doesn't want me to have friends.

Versus

What TO do:

March 15, 2022

-met for dinner at Red Robin on Lake Union at 6pm

-phone kept ringing, I went to check it

was something serious happening? Emergency?

-She said loudly, "you're rude, you have no social skills, stupid, lazy, and pathetic" and it embarrassed me.

-Other patrons stared @ us while she went through my phone messages

-She said, "Your friend Brian is a child--blowing up your phone to schedule a basketball game. You need to get away from him. You're a grown man."

-We ordered and ate before going home.

Voice memos rather than writing

PROS:

Recording incidents is convenient because you can record "as it happens," The information is accurate. After all, it is recorded in real-time or immediately after the fact. Voice memos also tend to contain more information because speaking into a recorder is faster and easier than writing or typing.

CONS:

This type of documentation is labor intensive. After the recording, you will need to transcribe it, meaning the recording must be reviewed and proofread for accuracy, sometimes this means listening to your recording and going over your writing multiple times.

As you stick to "just the facts" add details as more details equal believability.

General statements such as *"He drinks too much"* or *"He drives with his mother in the car when drunk"* do not help. You should describe specific things and say when and where things happened.

Example:

On February 5, 2023, GioGio, while taking their mother to the doctor for a dementia evaluation, knocked over our mailbox while driving. I ran out to the street to see what had happened. He had exited the car to look at what he had hit. I smelled liquor. I suggested he come inside the house, and I take his mother to the doctor. He yelled at me to "mind my own business" and got back into the car, slamming its door. I watched him weave down the road.

Another advantage of keeping documentation is that clues can sometimes be uncovered. For example, the above writing documented that GioGio's mother was going to the doctor for a dementia evaluation. GioGio was not agreeable to letting the person who wrote the note take his mother instead. Why? Remember, if GioGio is a Narcissist a Narcissist is always motivated by their wants or needs. In this case, the answer to the question: What does GioGio have to gain by taking his mother for her dementia evaluation?, is a clue about GioGio's true motivation.

Here is an example by Francine that is rich in details:

I was making minimum wage, paying rent, buying food, and paying for all of his subscriptions on his phone. On December 21, 2019, in the car in the maple leaf neighborhood, when he was

driving, his music stopped playing because the auto-renewal failed. While in the car, I called my bank and found no money in my account. When I told him he started driving fast, the speed limit was 35 we were in a residential area. He was going 70 mph; then got on the freeway even though we didn't need to get on the freeway as we were only going to the neighborhood park. When we got on the road, he began cutting people off, yelling at me and out the window at others, and weaving in and out of traffic. When we got off the freeway and stopped at the stoplight, he took his hands off the steering wheel and began hitting his fist in his palm. I felt my heart race.

*Do not worry about grammar, run-on sentences, or misspelled words. Your goal is to memorialize, not pass high school English Grammar.

*Be sure to include the Negative impact/result of the Narcissist's action. The previous example is, "I felt my heart race" And before that was "I felt embarrassed".

Witnesses

Record statements any witness makes before, during, or after the incident. If they are willing, you can ask them to write a description of the event in their own words and sign it. It is essential that they also include their contact information in the statement. You will need their full name, address, relationship to you, event date, and what they saw and heard transpire. The less biased the witness appears, the more likely the court is to believe them. For example, the court will assume your parents, close family, and friends are biased heavily toward you. That means they're not as good supporting witnesses as people like your neighbors and acquaintances. The best-supporting witnesses are the other side's family members if they cooperate with you. You should not gather declarations from your minor children, especially if they are children you share with the opposing party.

Physical Evidence—What to Collect and How

- *ALWAYS document physical abuse such as cuts and bruises with photos.*
- During the same period of time or contemporaneously print out emails or call logs that contain evidence or information about incidents. Ensure the printout includes the sender, recipient, date, and time.
- Print out text messages or take pictures of a phone display containing the news, contact information, date, and time.
- Print screenshots of social media posts that contain evidence of abuse. This may appear in the form of admissions of abuse, threats of violence, or even photos you didn't consent to. Check your profile, and if you can (without putting yourself in danger), look at the Narcissist's social media for evidence.
- Save and document voicemails of abuse, including the time and date of the message.
- Take photos of unmarked medicine or vitamins the Narcissist wants to give you. **NEVER INGEST** drugs or vitamins a Narcissist gives you unless you are positive they are what is being presented.
- Take photos of overturned furniture, broken items, or thrown objects.
- Always keep track of your billing statements, as Narcissists are financially exploitive.
- Videotape if you can without putting yourself in danger.
- Invest in recording devices and cameras to put around your home again without putting yourself in danger. Even if you can only get a Ring doorbell without raising suspicion--do it.
- Collect statements from teachers, physicians, neighbors, or other relevant witnesses.

Protecting the Evidence

Forward the photos, texts, and voice mail messages as soon as possible to an email address the Narcissists does not have access to or someone you can trust and save to a google drive or the

cloud. Change your password often. The record of the date and time forwarded and saved will also lend to your credibility.

After writing your notes and collecting the evidence, you must ensure the documentation and evidence is not stolen, lost, damaged, or destroyed. You will need at least two hard copies of your documentation and evidence **stored in two separate safe places**, two electronic **copies**, all stored in two **separate** places. I cannot stress enough that you must keep your documentation and evidence safe from the Narcissist. I like using banker boxes to store all the hard evidence because they're easy to transport, but you may need to get more creative, especially if you live with Narcissists. For some ideas, see the resource list article, "Secret Hiding Places You've Never Thought Of."

Once you get into a routine of documenting and gathering evidence, you will feel your anxiety dissipating and being replaced by calm confidence. Still, at this point, you may become overconfident and make the mistake of taunting the Narcissists or, worse, threatening them. **DO NOT. IT WILL BACKFIRE.** Not only will you lose credibility, but it will also cause Narcissistic rage and put you in danger!

Eventually, you will bundle all the hard documentation in two binders. One will serve as your copy to make notes in and to refer to, the other binder you will keep on hand just in case someone like the police comes knocking at your door to question you. You can present them

with a binder full of evidence. The electronic copies will be available to send to attorneys or investigators via email.

*All these copies may seem overkill, **but evidence can be destroyed**. Trust me, you will sleep better at night knowing you have multiple copies. Also, it's okay if you miss some things. You will. The truth is it's not hard to establish credibility in your defense against a Narcissist once you've demonstrated patterns. If later you've missed something here or there and only have memory to serve, you will still be credible because the pattern of abuse will have been established. That, however, does not mean you ease up on documentation; it only means once you've established credibility, you can breathe a sigh of relief.

Putting It All Together

Narcissists are notorious for using government agencies and the court system to abuse you further. If you get a call from one of these agencies or a court summons, you will want to be prepared to tell your story in a cohesive and calm manner. Even if you have been diligent in taking notes, gathering evidence, and storing it, it is essential that you can communicate what has happened to you in a way that people who don't have knowledge of Narcissistic Abuse understand. The most effective way to communicate a complex topic like Narcissistic Abuse is to write it. That means you need to write your story.

A Narcissists number one trick is to keep you off balance to get an emotional reaction from you. Don't be surprised when they choose a time such as Christmas day, a birthday, an exam week, or the anniversary of a parent's death to have you served with court papers or make a fictitious report to a government institution like the police. This of course is done intentionally to inflict the most emotional harm, causing you to be off balance when you have to defend yourself against the false claims either verbally and/or in the form of writing a declaration. So you must prepare for this in advance. You don't want to write a response to false accusations in an emotional state of panic and fear because a deadline is looming. You also don't want to allow the Narcissist to further traumatize you. It will make your story harder to tell, write, and put together cohesively. Remember, the Narcissist has already started the smear campaign that you're mentally ill, an addict, etc., So, you must have a clear, concise document ready to read, send to your attorney, and make specific to whatever you are falsely accused of.

To accurately describe your experience and abuse, you need to:

1. State your position clearly
2. Support your argument with evidence, documentation, and examples
3. Anticipate and respond to the counterargument.

Again, to do this well, you will want to write about your experience BEFORE you need it, even though it is not inevitable that you will in fact need to defend yourself against formal false claims, it will still be beneficial to you. Having all your information documented in an easy-to-understand way will decrease your anxiety, help you identify patterns in the Narcissist's behavior ,and predict when they will occur again, you will gain a perspective free of emotion, while rumination and retraumatizing will stop, and the constant fight or flight mode will disappear because you will be prepared for whatever the Narcissist may throw at you. It will also help you to speak about the abuse in the past tense, which will help you detach from the abuse and abuser, thereby aiding your healing process. Another happy outcome is you will start to notice the Narcissists threats will begin to lose their power over you.

Introduction

You will want to begin your document by stating all your pertinent information: your name, address, children's names, and ages, who you live with, where you live, etc. Then you describe your relationship with the Narcissist: family, friend, business partner? This is where you would state things like date of marriage, separation, date a contract was signed, where and when you met, how long you have been in a relationship with the Narcissist, when you agreed upon responsibilities within the relationship (this is important because Narcissists do NOT LIKE to be

held accountable and will try to evade it). An example of what you might include would be a description of an agreement. Let's say the two of you decided that you would make the house payment out of your monthly salary, and your partner said they would save the same amount in a joint savings account, but when you went to check the balance on the joint savings account there was only 128.00 dollars, when according to your records; it should have been 23,000. Or if there are many incidents (which is the most likely scenario), you might write something more general like, "this case is about my physically abusive, emotionally abusive, financially abusive wife, husband, parent, sibling," fill in the blank. Or again, more specific but pointing both to fraud and parasitic manipulation, you might write, "This case is about my husband refusing to work and pretending to be disabled." You'll also want to state as a transition to the next paragraph on how things have gone since the most recent conflict, separation, or you implementing "no contact." This is the context from which you will present and summarize your story.

Body

The body of your document will be organized around your main topic and then divided into subtopics. Take a few moments to develop an outline. Start with something general, and you can add to it and edit it as you go; you'll find this a little tricky because Narcissists are likely to throw an assortment of false accusations, motives, and character flaws at you rather than a substantiated argument. Go back to your list of possible attacks, and for every attack, write a response based on your notes and evidence. If they have formally made a complaint(s) that is not listed in your possible attack work sheet add it/them and your response.

When you receive the complaint, it is essential to read the statement carefully, noting any mistakes in the information, and most importantly, address each claim, because statements made by the other side that are not denied are assumed to be true. Don't let this upset you. Narcissists will lie about materials that are not material to the case to anger their opponent.

The body of your document will contain compelling facts and events that will expose the Narcissist's false claims (this may constitute several paragraphs with different main headings & sub-headings). Eventually, you'll want to place the facts and events in an order where they will have the most impact, but for now, it's essential just to get them down on paper.

***Show Rather Than Tell**

Remember (as the same in writing the notes) you want to show rather than tell. This means writing objective facts rather than conclusions and subjective descriptions. For example, you wouldn't want to write, "my husband is a monster," which is your personal conclusion. Instead, provide the reader with enough objective detail to draw their own conclusion by describing the incidents showing he's a monster.

Writing an Outline

- *Take time to organize your ideas.*
- **Divide your main topics under headings and specific details/events under sub-headings.**
- Headings organize your story's main ideas and make it easy to find the subject.
- The Compelling Facts/Events from your notes will be placed under the appropriate headings and subheadings.

Outline Worksheet

I. Introduction

A. Pertinent information

B. Background Information re relationship

C. Statement of conflict/issue: Clearly state your stand on the issue and provide a brief outline of your main points.

II. Body—support for your stand on the issue backed up with dates, examples, and evidence.

A. First Heading: Introduce and explain.

a. Sub-heading—Specific details and events

B. Second Heading: Introduce and explain.

b. Sub-heading—Specific details and events

C. Third Heading: Introduce and explain.

c. Sub-heading—Specific details and events

D. Fourth Heading: Introduce and explain.

d. Sub-heading—Specific details and events

E. Fifth Heading: Introduce and explain your fifth main point.

e. Sub-heading—Specific details and events

III. Conclusion

A. Summary of Main Points: Summarize your main points to reinforce your argument.

IV. Exhibit Attachments

A. Include all supporting documents and evidence here. Having a cover sheet listing them in order is helpful, but not necessary.

After you complete your outline and as you write, check grammar, punctuation, and spelling. The Grammarly app is an excellent resource for this.

Attaching Exhibits

When writing a claim that is supported by evidence, you include the supporting evidence by writing ATTACHED EXHIBIT or EXHIBIT. You begin with ATTACHED EXHIBIT # 1 and then add whatever type of evidence it is: TEXT, PHOTO, PHYSICIAN STATEMENT, etc., also add any transcribed recordings here. However, in some states recordings are not admissible (acceptable) in a court of law. Your attorney will advise you. In addition, courts and states have different rules for how to cite evidence. This again will be something an attorney can help you with. Think of this document as a draft; a way to get your story and evidence together in a way that is logical, thorough, and easy for others to understand. If you eventually need it for court, you must take your bundle to an attorney before submitting it. The important thing is you will have the most emotionally difficult and time-consuming work—the foundation of your case—completed. You won't be running to an attorney or legal clinic disorganized, frazzled, and afraid.

It is beneficial to accompany a calendar with evidence as an attachment. Large print calendars with large boxes in neutral colors and without designs are best. They allow you to write about numerous incidents, which is essential when multiple events happen during a day. Color code the entries so that visual patterns emerge helping the reader understand how Narcissists abuse follows a pattern. Patterns of behavior suggest intentionality and a systematic pattern of abuse.

Here is an example of a possible accusation and the exhibits you would include:

The Narcissist accuses you of being a bad parent. In fact, you are a “terrible parent” not “concerned about your child, Johnny’s, future.” Johnny had always gotten A's in math, but now since he spends weekdays with you, Johnny has been making C's. It is because you are allowing him to “play video games instead of studying.” The Narcissistic parent claims you said you're OK with him playing video games because it “gives you a break.” When you were married, you called it "Mommy time," and that's when you drank wine.

You meet the accusation with dates hard evidence. The truth is your child is in an AP Algebra class and his progress report grade is a C it is not his final grade. It is the middle of the semester, and your child is only allowed game time for an hour after completing his homework.

ATTACHED EXHIBIT # 1 Progress Report

ATTACHED EXHIBIT # 2 Homework

ATTACHED EXHIBIT # 3 Chapter Tests

ATTACHED EXHIBIT # 4 Study Calendar

ATTACHED EXHIBIT # 5 Screen Shots of Computer Monitoring App

ATTACHED EXHIBIT # 6 Teacher Emails

ATTACHED EXHIBIT # 7 Parent Teacher Conference Notes

ATTACHED EXHIBIT # 9 could be a plan to help him with his studies written in conjunction with the school counselor, etc. Whatever evidence you have that your child’s C is not due to your

neglect is what you add as an exhibit. It is essential you don't let the Narcissists run with the narrative that you are neglecting your job of being a parent in favor of alcohol.

Formally Submitting

Before submitting, an attorney or legal aid can help you be concise by deleting irrelevant or weak facts and tightening your language, get your response down to a manageable page count, help format your document according to the agency's or court's rules and decide from your evidence which will be the best to use in substantiating your claim or defense, ensuring that it is relevant, factual, and supportive of your case. They will be able to identify details necessary to prove your case or disprove the claim brought against you, interview any potential witnesses who can support your claim or defense, and make sure you have established solid facts and organized them logically. When finished your document will be called a Declaration and you will be required to sign it. If this all sounds a little scary remember this is your chance to share your story in a way, it couldn't be communicated before.

Last Tips

Do not give the Narcissist ammunition. For instance, if you used to go out occasionally for a drink and they are an alcoholic, you can be sure they are going to accuse you of being an alcoholic, so do not post a picture of yourself out on the town drinking with friends.

If you are in litigation with them, assume they've hired detectives, your social media is being monitored, and those random run-ins and telephone calls you're getting from old friends may not be random at all.

Do not let them know you have documentation that will expose them. They are likely to become violent or aggressive. Instead, detach, make a safety plan, and cut ties as soon as possible. Taking an observer stance, instead of automatically accusing them, will give you more information in the long run.

If you anticipate that a Narcissist will retaliate, take as many precautions as possible. Alert law enforcement of any threats you've received, including the release of personal information or photos. This will ensure that there is documentation of any threats should there be a legal case moving forward.

If you anticipate that a Narcissist will smear you to your co-workers or bosses, let them know what the situation is ahead of time. Find ways to safely circumvent the potential consequences of retaliation.

Keep adding to your documentation every time there is an incident of Narcissistic Abuse, the Narcissist step over a boundary or violates an agreement.

DO NOT USE YOUR GATHERED EVIDENCE TO DEFEND YOURSELF IN A SMEAR CAMPAIGN. The flying monkeys are likely to share your information with the Narcissist, and frankly anyone who talks *about you* rather than *to you* is not worth your time. You're better off ignoring them.

You can help law enforcement and investigators read your story more quickly by highlighting the essential language with a light-colored marker.

When writing notes or your story

- Get to the point.
- Don't repeat the same material over and over again.
- Avoid rambling sentences and collateral issues that are not central to the arguments in the case.
- Be concise.
- Construct your story so that the essential facts immediately leap out.
- Make sure you describe, and document matters which are **your** direct personal knowledge or observation not someone else's. That which is not part of your direct personal knowledge is hearsay and as such cannot be substantiated.

Remember

Narcissists are not interested in resolving a conflict. They are willing to be dishonest and are morally corrupt. While you work to catch them in the truth, they try to get you in emotional turmoil.

Remain grounded, do not overly defend, and use your factual documentation to speak for you.

Yes, there will be moments when despite you doing all the things that I have written about, the Narcissist will seem to have the upper hand. I understand but it's an illusion based on their mask and lies. Remain unwavering; their games will not work forever, and the calmer and more strategic you are, the better.

Narcissists lie consistently and often do not remember the lie they used previously, so their story will change (it takes another lie to cover the first lie), and they will get caught.

DOCUMENT, DOCUMENT, DOCUMENT.