



**From Trauma to Triumph: Reclaiming Your Life After
Narcissistic Abuse**

About me

Hi, I'm Louella Garcia — a survivor, thriver, bodybuilder, and coach. I'm also someone who knows firsthand how hard it is to escape narcissistic abuse. I didn't just survive it — I rebuilt myself from the ground up.

I hold a double major Bachelor's degree in Social Work, with an emphasis in Marriage & Family and Criminal Justice. I retired from a career in government and have stepped fully into my purpose: helping other survivors reclaim their power and heal. I founded Thriving Beyond Abuse, LLC to create a safe space for women like me — women who have been silenced, manipulated, gaslit, and broken down, but who still have the fire in them to rise.

My coaching is rooted in experience, not just theory. I've lived it. I've walked through the darkness and found my way out. And now, I'm here to help you do the same. Whether it's through one-on-one coaching, content that speaks to your soul, or just being a voice that reminds you that you're not crazy — I'm with you.

You are not too damaged. You are not too far gone. You are not alone.

You were never meant to just survive.

You were born to thrive — and I'll be right here, walking that journey with you

Introduction: Why This Ebook Exists

If you're reading this, you've likely been through hell—and survived it. But surviving isn't the end of the story. This book is about becoming a THRIVER.

A Thriver is someone who doesn't just walk away from abuse—but rises from it. We don't just heal—we rebuild. We reclaim our voice. We ignite our power. We help others rise too.

My name is Louella, and I'm not only a narcissistic abuse coach—I'm a survivor and a Thriver. I've lived the cycle of love bombing, devaluation, discard, and hoovering. I've cried on floors I paid for, questioned my sanity, and stayed longer than I should have because I was trauma-bonded and afraid. But I got out—and I found fire in the ashes.

This ebook is not just information—it's transformation. It's part guide, part journal, part mirror, and part love letter to every woman who thought she wasn't enough.

By the end of this book, my goal is to help you:

- Understand what happened to you (it wasn't your fault)
- Break the trauma bond
- Reconnect with your worth and inner power
- Set boundaries without guilt
- Embrace your identity as a Thriver, not just a survivor

This is your sign. You don't have to wait for closure. You don't need their apology. You are not broken—you are awakening.

Let's begin....



Chapter 1: Understanding Narcissistic Abuse

“You can't heal from what you won't name.”

Narcissistic abuse is a slow erosion of your reality, safety, and sense of self. Survivors often say, “I didn’t even realize I was being abused until I left.” But you’re here now—and that means your Thriving chapter has already started.

Why is this form of abuse so confusing?

Because narcissistic abuse isn’t always obvious. It can be charming, subtle, and emotionally intoxicating. It builds slowly. It hooks you with what feels like love. But what it really does is chip away at your truth, your confidence, and your power.

Let me say this clearly:

You are not crazy. You were conditioned. You were gaslit. You were manipulated. And now, you are awakening.



What is a Narcissist?

Narcissistic Personality Disorder (NPD) is marked by:

- A grandiose sense of self-importance
- A deep need for admiration
- A lack of empathy
- Exploitative behavior in relationships

But many abusers may never be formally diagnosed. What matters more than the label is the pattern. If you constantly feel:

- Confused and off-balance
- Unheard or invisible
- Emotionally drained
- Like you’re “walking on eggshells”

You are not in a healthy relationship. That pattern is emotional abuse.



Common Tactics of Narcissistic Abuse

- Love Bombing: The whirlwind of affection, attention, and promises in the beginning.

- Gaslighting: Manipulating your reality with statements like “You’re too sensitive” or “That never happened.”
- Devaluation: Sudden withdrawal of affection, increased criticism, subtle cruelty.
- Discard: Abandoning or dehumanizing you—emotionally or physically.
- Hoovering: Trying to suck you back in with fake apologies, guilt, or charm.

This cycle creates a trauma bond—a biochemical addiction to the highs and lows of abuse. You’re not weak for struggling to leave. You’re human. And you’re healing.



Journal Prompts: Start writing about:

- When did I start to feel small or unsafe in the relationship?
- How was I love bombed—and how did it make me feel?
- What does it mean to me to move from survivor to Thriver?



Daily Affirmations: Say these 1 to 2x daily

- I am not crazy. I am recovering.
- I trust what I experienced.
- I am no longer surviving—I am Thriving.

YOU GOT THIS!

Chapter 2: The Cycle of Narcissistic Abuse

“It wasn’t love. It was a cycle designed to keep you hooked.”

Narcissistic abuse isn't chaotic by accident. It follows a specific cycle that is carefully repeated—until you break it.

Understanding this cycle helps you stop blaming yourself. You weren't “stupid.” You were stuck in a pattern engineered to keep you emotionally addicted.


These are the four main parts of a narcissistic abuse cycle:

1. Love Bombing (Idealization Phase)

This is when they sweep you off your feet. You're showered with:

- Constant compliments
- Fast “I love you's”
- Talk of a future together (marriage, kids, forever)
- Texts all day, every day
- Intense sexual and emotional connection

You feel high. Finally seen. Finally chosen. But what you're really experiencing is manufactured intimacy—not authentic love. They're hooking you emotionally, so you'll bond hard and fast.

 Red flag: Healthy love builds. Narcissistic love overwhelms.

2. Devaluation

The shift is subtle at first. Then it escalates. Suddenly, the person who once adored you:

- Criticizes your appearance, goals, or intelligence
- Pulls away emotionally
- Gives you silent treatment
- Starts fights and blames you
- Accuses you of being “too sensitive” or “dramatic”

You’re left chasing the version of them from the love bombing phase. You wonder, What did I do wrong?

This is the trap. They flip the switch so you try harder to win them back. You become more loyal, while they become more cruel.



3. Discard

Sometimes emotional, sometimes physical—but always brutal.

They may:

- Ghost you
- Cheat and blame you
- Break up in a cold, callous way
- Humiliate or smear you publicly
- Move on instantly to someone new (a.k.a. the new supply)

You feel discarded like trash. But this wasn’t about your worth—it was about control. And it’s often temporary.



4. Hoovering

Just when you start healing, they come back. They test the waters with:

- “I miss you”

- “No one gets me like you do”
- “Let’s be friends”
- Guilt-trips: “I’m broken without you”

This is called hoovering, named after the vacuum. They’re trying to suck you back in—not because they love you, but because you’ve moved on.



Breaking the Cycle

It doesn’t break on its own. You have to break it.

And that takes:

- Awareness
- Boundaries
- Emotional distance
- Coaching, therapy, and self-work
- Community with other survivors and Thrivers

This is where your healing begins. The moment you step out of the spin and say, “Not this time. I choose me.”

Chapter 3: The Hidden Damage

“Just because they didn’t hit you, doesn’t mean it didn’t hurt.”

One of the hardest parts about narcissistic abuse is that you often can't explain what's wrong—even to yourself.

You weren't thrown down the stairs. You weren't locked in a room. But you were silenced, minimized, gaslit, discarded, and dehumanized.

And that kind of harm?

It sticks to your soul.

It reprograms your nervous system.

It changes how you see yourself—and the world.

This is the hidden damage.



Complex Trauma (C-PTSD)

Many survivors of narcissistic abuse develop symptoms of complex post-traumatic stress disorder (C-PTSD)—a type of trauma that results from prolonged emotional abuse, neglect, or betrayal.

Signs of C-PTSD can include:

- Hypervigilance (constantly on edge)
- Intrusive thoughts or flashbacks
- Emotional numbness
- Difficulty trusting others
- People-pleasing and perfectionism
- Deep shame and self-blame

You didn't "just have a bad relationship."

You were psychologically injured.



What Happens to the Brain and Body?

Your nervous system was trained to survive chaos. It learned to:

- Read moods before words were spoken
- Tolerate mistreatment just to feel closeness
- Shut down or overreact under stress

This is called fawning—a trauma response where you people-please to avoid conflict or punishment. And in toxic relationships, it becomes survival.

But here's what no one tells you:

You can rewire your nervous system. You can feel safe again. You can feel like you again.

Healing your body is just as important as healing your mind.

Self-Esteem and Identity Loss

One of the most painful forms of damage is the erosion of your identity.

You may have:

- Forgotten your own dreams
- Changed your voice or opinions to avoid conflict
- Lost confidence in your appearance, voice, or worth
- Forgotten what brings you joy

That's not because you're weak.

It's because you were systematically broken down so you'd be easier to control.

But guess what? You can rise again—and stronger.

Thrivers Tools

These tools help rebuild what narcissistic abuse tried to destroy:

1. Somatic Check-In:
Place your hand over your heart.
Breathe.
Ask, What does my body feel right now?
You're learning to feel safe in yourself again.
2. Mirror Work:
Look in the mirror and say:
"I see you. I love you. I will protect you."
Daily Joy Ritual:
Every day, do one small thing that brings you joy for no reason.
A dance in the kitchen
 - a. Painting your nails
 - b. Sipping tea with your favorite playlist

Joy is your resistance. Joy is your medicine.



Journal Prompts:

- In what ways did I lose myself in the relationship?
- How is my body still holding the trauma today?
- What would it mean to feel safe inside my own life?



Daily Affirmations:

- I am not broken. I am healing.
- I deserve safety, peace, and joy.
- I am not just surviving—I am Thriving.

Personal Reflection in Chapter 3

Personal Note from your coach, Louella:

I didn't just "get out" of my relationship—I escaped it. There were days I didn't know if I'd survive. I was so trauma bonded that even when I knew it was abuse, I still felt like I couldn't leave. The cycle kept pulling me back in.

But here's what I learned:

Getting out isn't the end—healing is.

And healing doesn't mean being perfect. It means learning to trust yourself again, step by step.

I am living proof that you can go from barely surviving to fully Thriving.

Chapter 4: Breaking the Trauma Bond

"You're not addicted to them. You're addicted to the version of you who once felt loved."

Trauma bonds are powerful. They're not just emotional ties—they are chemical chains created in your nervous system.

This is why leaving a narcissist can feel harder than leaving a drug.

A trauma bond forms when abuse is paired with intermittent reinforcement:

You're hurt → then comforted.

You're abandoned → then love bombed again.

You're devalued → then reminded of "how good it used to be."

Your brain begins to crave the highs to escape the lows.

But what you're really craving... is relief.



The Chemistry of Bonding

When a narcissist cycles between cruelty and affection, your brain releases:

- Dopamine (pleasure, reward)
- Oxytocin (connection, bonding)
- Cortisol (stress hormone)

Over time, these chemicals make the relationship feel like a survival need—even when it's destroying you.

That's not love.

That's trauma bonding.



"But I still love them..."

That's the addiction talking.

You don't love them—you love the version of yourself who once felt safe, seen, or chosen.

Why It's So Hard to Leave

Most people outside of the abuse don't understand why you stayed. But survivors know:

- You were conditioned to believe it was love
- You were gaslit into doubting your instincts
- You were isolated from your support systems
- You clung to hope that the “good version” would come back

Leaving is not one decision—it's a hundred small ones. And every time you choose you, the bond gets weaker.

How to Break the Trauma Bond

1. Go No Contact (or Minimal Contact if co-parenting)
Block. Delete. Remove all reminders.
You cannot heal in the same environment that broke you.
2. Feel the Withdrawal
You will grieve. You'll crave them. You may even feel crazy.
That's not weakness—it's detox. Let yourself feel it.
3. Name the Truth
Write down what they actually did to you. Reread it when the “good memories” try to trick you.
4. Reclaim Routine
Structure creates safety. Your nervous system needs rhythm and grounding.

Thrivers Tools

- No Contact Script:
“I am choosing myself now. Contact is a door I am closing for good.”
(Write it. Speak it. Repeat it.)

- Craving Interrupter:
When you miss them, do this instead:
Go for a walk
- Listen to empowering audio
- Text a trusted friend
Replace the craving with care.
- Reparenting Practice:
Close your eyes.
Visualize the version of you that was trapped in that relationship.
Now tell her:
“You’re safe now. I will never abandon you again.”



Journal Prompts:

- What was I hoping to feel each time I went back?
- What is the truth I know now that I couldn’t see then?
- What would it look like to be loyal to myself first?



Daily Affirmations:

- I do not need closure to heal.
- I break cycles, not myself.
- I am loyal to me now. I am a Thriver.

Chapter 5: Rebuilding Self-Trust and Identity

When the gaslighting ends, the rebuilding begins.”

One of the most painful parts of narcissistic abuse isn’t losing them—it’s losing yourself.

You may find yourself asking:

- Who am I now?
- What do I even like anymore?
- Why don't I trust myself?

This is the aftermath of being repeatedly told your feelings were wrong, your memories were false, or your instincts were crazy.

That wasn't you being "too sensitive."

That was manipulation.

Now that you've broken free from the cycle, it's time to rebuild the most important relationship of your life—the one with yourself.

Why Self-Trust Was Destroyed

Narcissistic abuse systematically erodes your ability to trust:

- Your emotions
- Your decisions
- Your perceptions
- Your boundaries

This is by design. If you question yourself, you'll rely on them. That dependence is how they controlled you.

But you can reverse it.

Every time you honor your needs, speak your truth, or walk away from red flags—you're rebuilding the trust you once lost.



You don't need anyone's permission to come home to yourself.



Reclaiming Identity After Abuse

Here's the truth: You don't have to become who you were before the abuse. That version of you was still open, still trusting, still unguarded.

Now, you're wiser. More grounded. Fierce.

You're not going backward—you're evolving.

Ask yourself:

- What values matter to me now?
- What does safety feel like in relationships?
- What kind of woman do I want to be?

You get to redefine your identity—not through their lens, but your own.

Chapter 6: Empowerment Tools and Boundaries

“Boundaries aren’t mean—they’re medicine.”

One of the clearest signs that you’ve entered your Thriver era is when you stop tolerating what you used to explain away.

Boundaries are the bridge between who you were and who you are becoming.

They aren't walls to keep everyone out.

They're doors that let only the right ones in.



Why Boundaries Feel So Hard

If you were taught that love means:

- Self-sacrifice
- Being the bigger person
- Tolerating disrespect to “keep the peace”

...then setting boundaries can feel wrong. But that's not love—that's programming.

Boundaries feel hard when:

- You're scared they'll leave
- You were punished for having needs
- You're still unlearning guilt

But here's the truth:

Healthy people respect boundaries. Narcissists punish you for them.

If someone gets angry that you're protecting your peace, they were benefiting from your lack of it.



Empowerment Tools That Change the Game

You don't need to be aggressive—you just need to be anchored. These tools will help you stay in your power when old patterns try to pull you back in:



Thrivers Tools

1. The Empowered “No”
Practice saying:
2. “That doesn't work for me.”
 - a. “I'm not available for that.”
 - b. “No is a full sentence.”

3. Body-Based Boundaries

Tune into your body. If your chest tightens, your stomach flips, or your voice shakes—it's a sign. Your body knows when something is off.

a. Trigger Journal

Every time you feel disrespected or anxious in a conversation, write down:

What was said

b. How it made you feel

c. How you wish you had responded

4. Then rewrite it in your Thriver voice.

Thriver Anchor Phrase

Choose one phrase to come back to when you're tempted to shrink:

"I am not who they broke—I am who I became."



Journal Prompts:

- Where do I still feel afraid to say no?
- What boundary have I been afraid to set?
- What version of me needs protection the most right now?



Daily Affirmations:

- My peace is not up for negotiation.
- I no longer abandon myself to be accepted.
- My boundaries are sacred. I am a Thriver.



Thriver Morning Ritual

Start each day anchored in your power and peace.

This ritual takes just 5–10 minutes but can shift your entire mindset and nervous system into healing and thriving mode.

Step 1:

Center Your Breath

(2 minutes)

Sit comfortably. Close your eyes.

Take 5 deep breaths:

- Inhale slowly through your nose (count 4)
- Hold for 2 seconds
- Exhale through your mouth (count 6)

Focus only on your breath. Let go of any tension.

Step 2:

Set Your Intention

(2 minutes)

Ask yourself:

- What kind of Thriver do I want to be today?
- What will I choose to focus on?

Write your intention here:

—“Today, I choose to _____.”

Step 3:

Affirm Your Truth (2 Minutes)

Say aloud or write these affirmations (or your own):

- I am safe.
- I am worthy of love and respect.
- I trust my instincts and honor my boundaries.
- I am not a victim—I am a Thriver.

Step 4:

Body Check-In & Movement (2–4 minutes)

Place a hand on your heart or belly. Ask:

- How is my body feeling right now?

Stretch, sway, or gently move in a way that feels good.

Invite energy and vitality into your day.

Bonus: Gratitude List (Optional)

Write 3 things you're grateful for this morning.

They can be as simple as:

- The sun shining
- A warm cup of coffee
- Your breath

Today, I choose to:

Affirmation(s):

Body feeling /
movement notes:

Gratitude:

Printable Journal Space:

