

The Identity Reset – Why High-Functioning People Eventually Lose Themselves 06.02.26

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Nazoorah Nusrat is a holistic life coach, mind-body practitioner, and founder of Clarity Coaching Energy. Through NLP, somatic healing practices, and heart-led alchemy, she helps people reconnect to their souls, release limiting beliefs, and heal from burnout, trauma, and toxic relationships.



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High-functioning people rarely fall apart in obvious ways. Instead, they quietly lose connection to themselves while still appearing capable, composed, and in control. Drawing on trauma psychology, nervous system science, and holistic healing frameworks, this article explores how identity erosion often occurs within narcissistic dynamics, and how reconnection becomes possible.



There is a moment many high-functioning people reach that feels both subtle and deeply unsettling. Life has not collapsed. From the outside, things may even look stable, responsibilities are handled, roles are maintained, and others may still see you as strong, dependable, or resilient. Sound familiar? And yet, internally, something essential feels missing.

You may notice a growing detachment from who you thought you were. Decisions feel harder, motivation fades, your emotional responses feel muted or strangely delayed. You're not depressed in the clinical sense, but you're no longer connected to yourself in the way you once were. That feeling of joy seems distant.

This experience is often described as “losing yourself.” In reality, it's rarely random. It's especially common in people who have spent prolonged periods within narcissistic or emotionally imbalanced dynamics.

What you are experiencing is not a failure of character or resilience. It's an identity reset.

Identity erosion within narcissistic dynamics

Narcissistic dynamics do not always present as overt abuse. More often, they are subtle, relational, and cumulative. They reward emotional accommodation, hyper-responsibility, and self-suppression. Over time, the individual learns, consciously or unconsciously, that safety comes from being agreeable, capable, or emotionally contained.

Clinical trauma research, including the work of Judith Herman and Gabor Maté, shows that prolonged relational stress reshapes self-perception and emotional regulation. High-functioning individuals are particularly vulnerable because they adapt well. They remain outwardly stable while slowly disconnecting from their own internal cues.

What begins as coping gradually becomes identity. Intuition dulls, boundaries soften, emotional responses are delayed or overridden. The body remains tense while the mind rationalises the situation. This is not a weakness – it's an adaptation.

Eventually, however, the system reaches capacity.

The nervous system's role in losing and reclaiming you

I've spoken about Polyvagal theory, developed by Dr. Stephen Porges, in recent articles. If you haven't heard of it, go check it out. It helps explain why identity collapse often follows prolonged emotional vigilance. When the nervous system spends years oscillating between hyper-arousal and emotional shutdown, the self becomes organised around survival rather than authenticity.

This is the point at which many people feel lost.

The familiar internal structure dissolves before a new one has formed. Motivation drops and old goals feel hollow. There's grief for the person you were, alongside a quiet awareness that returning to that version of yourself is no longer possible.

This phase is deeply uncomfortable, but it is also biologically intelligent. The body is no longer willing to sustain an identity built on self-abandonment.

As Bessel van der Kolk's work demonstrates, trauma is not only remembered cognitively. It is stored somatically, which means identity repair must involve the body, not just insight.

Why holistic healing supports identity reorganisation

Identity does not live solely in the mind. It is encoded in posture, breath, muscle tension, emotional reflexes, and what biofield research refers to as the body's energetic coherence (NIH, HeartMath Institute).

This is why purely cognitive approaches often fall short when someone is rebuilding themselves after narcissistic or emotionally dysregulated environments. The groundwork doesn't settle, and the bricks come tumbling down again.

Holistic healing supports identity reset by restoring safety at the level where it was lost. Nervous system regulation, somatic awareness, reflexology, acupuncture, sound-based practices, and energy-informed approaches allow the body to release survival patterns without requiring repeated verbal processing.

As regulation increases, something subtle but profound happens. Internal signals return. Boundaries become instinctive rather than forced. Intuition sharpens, and the sense of self reorganises from the inside out. This is not self-improvement, this is self-reclamation.

From identity reset to purpose

For many people, the identity reset becomes a turning point. Not because it's dramatic, but because it strips away illusion. Values clarify, tolerance for misalignment diminishes, and energy redirects toward what is genuinely meaningful.

This is often the phase where people, including myself, feel drawn to help others. Not from a place of fixing, but from recognition. Once you understand how deeply identity can be shaped by relational dynamics and nervous system states, you begin to see the same patterns everywhere.

The most uncomfortable part of this experience may not come from the internal recalibration, but from how others now perceive you, or more accurately, how they cannot adjust to who you are becoming.

Why I do this work

My work is rooted in this understanding that many people seeking support are not stuck or lost. They are navigating an identity reset that they were never taught how to understand.

Through Clarity Coaching Energy, I work with individuals who have outgrown survival identities, narcissistic dynamics, and roles that required self-suppression. My approach integrates nervous system regulation, holistic coaching, somatic awareness, and energy-informed practices to support people in reclaiming their real identity, safely and sustainably.

This work is not about becoming someone else. It is about removing what was never truly you. You can learn more about my work [here](#). You can explore my writing and reflections [here](#).

Closing reflection

If you feel as though you've lost yourself, consider this possibility. You may not be disappearing. You may be reorganising. What feels like emptiness is often space. What feels like confusion is often the nervous system releasing an identity that no longer fits.

The identity reset is not the end of you. It is the beginning of living from alignment rather than survival. With the right support, it can become the most grounded and truthful chapter of your life.

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Read more from [Nazoorah Nusrat](#)

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Nazoorah Nusrat is the founder of Clarity Coaching Energy. With over 20 years of experience in health and wellness, she supports people moving through grief, burnout, or identity shifts to reclaim their clarity, confidence, and inner calm. As a reflexologist as well, Nazoorah blends science, spirituality, and soul to help her clients reconnect to their truth. Having moved through and healed from narcissistic relationships and dynamics, Nazoorah is passionate about emotional alchemy, sacred leadership, and creating spaces where people feel seen, heard, and empowered.

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