

Are We Really Capable of Changing Who We Are? 02.04.26

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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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We often believe who we are is fixed, over the past decade and more neurosciences tells a different story. Through neuroplasticity, the brain is constantly rewiring in response to experience, meaning change is not only possible but inevitable. This article explores how trauma, particularly within narcissistic dynamics, shape's identity and how nervous system regulation, breathwork, and holistic healing can restore safety, self-connection, and a new way of being.



Can I actually change who I am?

This question sits quietly underneath so many people's thoughts, a belief that can sway every decision that shapes adulthood. Not surface-level change, but the deeper layers where emotional patterns linger and create daily reactions.

For a long time, the answer many people absorbed was no. Our personality becomes fixed, and our trauma defines us. We hold onto the identity born of “this is just who I am.”

But both science and lived experience say something quite different. We are not fixed beings, we are a series of patterns that are repeated, and those patterns can be rewired.

The brain is not static, it is adaptive

Neuroscience has shown that the brain is constantly changing through a process known as neuroplasticity. Neural pathways strengthen through repetition, which means the thoughts, behaviours, and emotional responses we practice become wired into our system.

This is why trauma leaves such a deep imprint. When someone experiences prolonged stress, particularly in relational environments such as narcissistic dynamics, the brain and nervous system adapt for survival. Hypervigilance becomes normal. Emotional suppression becomes necessary, and reactivity, anxiety, or shutdown are not personality traits, they are learned responses.

As Dr. Stephen Porges explains through polyvagal theory, the nervous system is always scanning for safety or threat. When safety is inconsistent, the body remains in survival states, shaping how we think, feel, and interact with the world. [In](#) other words, many of the ways we define ourselves are not who we are, they are how we adapted.

Why we believe we can't change

If change is biologically possible, why do so many people feel stuck? Part of it is conditioning. From a young age, we are told who we are. Labels are assigned, and those roles are reinforced. In dysfunctional or narcissistic environments, these identities often serve the system rather than the individual. The “responsible one,” the “calm one,” the “strong one,” the one who doesn't cause problems. Over time, these roles become internalized as truth.

There is also fear. Change disrupts familiarity, even when that familiarity is painful. The nervous system often prefers known discomfort over unknown possibility because it equates predictability with safety.

As Sadhguru often speaks to, identity is something we accumulate rather than something we inherently are. What we believe to be “self” is often a collection of memory, experience, and external influence. And if identity is constructed, it can also be deconstructed to serve our soul, not what others perceive.

From trauma to safety, rewiring the system

Healing is not about thinking differently first, but about teaching the body that it is safe enough to be different.

In my own journey, undoing the impact of narcissistic relationship dynamics meant recognizing that my body had been living in a constant state of stress. Even when situations changed, my system had not caught up. The reactions, tension, and internal pressure were still running, for decades.

This is where holistic approaches become powerful.

- Breathwork slows the nervous system and signals safety.
- EFT (Emotional Freedom Technique) helps release stored emotional charge.
- NLP (Neuro-Linguistic Programming) works with subconscious patterning.
- Sound healing uses vibration to bring the body back into coherence.

These are not trends; many practitioners now use them as tools that work directly with the systems that hold identity in place.

As Bessel van der Kolk highlights in trauma research, the body holds the imprint of experience, which means change must happen at the level where the imprint lives. Through repetition of safety, the nervous system begins to rewire. New responses become possible, and new space appears where reaction once lived.

What change actually looks like in practice?

In my work through Clarity Coaching Energy, I see this shift consistently. Clients who once feared their own emotional responses, particularly anger, begin to feel safe enough to experience and express it without shutting down or withdrawing from life. What once felt overwhelming becomes manageable, then integrated.

Others who have spent years as the “fixer” or the responsible one, often shaped by early environments where they had to hold everything together, begin to reconnect with their own needs. They move from survival-based responsibility into choice, from obligation into self-led living.

These changes are not forced or short lived, they emerge when the nervous system no longer needs to operate from fear. As Stephen Porges’s work shows, when safety is restored, social engagement, connection, and authentic expression naturally follow.

Change is already happening, whether we notice it or not

We often think change is something we have to create. In reality, we are changing constantly. Neural pathways are forming and reforming every day. Cells regenerate, and emotional responses shift. We adapt to environments, people, and experiences continuously. The question is not whether we can change.

The question is whether we are consciously participating in that change, or unconsciously repeating patterns that were formed in the past.

Are we really capable of changing who we are?

Yes. Not by force or willpower alone. We change by working with the body, the nervous system, and the subconscious patterns that shape identity in a holistic, wholesome way.

Change becomes sustainable when it is felt, not just understood. Once the body learns safety, the mind follows. The nervous system regulates, allowing fixed identity to expand, releasing old patterns to allow something more authentic to emerge.

Working with me

Through Clarity Coaching Energy, I support people in moving from survival-based identities into grounded, self-led ways of being. This work blends neuroscience, nervous system regulation, and holistic healing to create change that is not only possible, but lasting.

If you feel stuck in patterns that no longer reflect who you are, or are ready to explore what change could look like for you, you can learn more [here](#). [You](#) can also explore more insights on healing, identity, and self-connection [here](#).

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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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