

Understanding Narcissistic Abuse and Altruistic Narcissism: A Video Resource Pack

Video resource pack

Christiane Sanderson

Video Course

CPD / CE credits: 9



Online video access remains available for 1 year from the date you receive the video course.

This video resource pack includes:

- *Narcissistic Abuse and the Shame Based Self: Working with Survivors of Narcissistic Abuse (Christiane Sanderson)*
- *The Selfless/Benevolent Mask of Altruistic Narcissists (Christiane Sanderson)*

Dive into an unparalleled learning experience with our exclusive video resource: *Understanding Narcissistic Abuse and Altruistic Narcissism*. This meticulously crafted combo pack brings together two in-depth workshops by Christiane Sanderson: *Narcissistic Abuse and the Shame Based Self: Working with Survivors of Narcissistic Abuse* and *The Selfless/Benevolent Mask of Altruistic Narcissists*.

In these insightful and intellectually stimulating sessions, you will explore the multifaceted nature of narcissistic abuse, from the grandiose, vulnerable, and malignant narcissists to the lesser-known altruistic narcissists. Gain a profound understanding of the **dynamics and impact of narcissistic abuse, identifying emotional manipulation tactics such as love bombing, gaslighting, and stonewalling**, and learn how these contribute to a cycle of idealization, devaluation, repetition, discarding, and hoovering.

The workshops delve into the traumatic underpinnings of narcissistic behaviours, shedding light on **how narcissists use abuse to aggrandize themselves while minimizing others**. These will provide a comprehensive examination of the psychological toll on survivors, including self-doubt, loss of self-worth, and the emergence of complex mental health issues such as PTSD.

Moreover, you'll **uncover the intriguing paradox of altruistic narcissism, where seemingly selfless acts mask deep-seated needs for validation and control**. Learn to identify the hero, martyr, and giver archetypes in various relational contexts, from workplaces to intimate relationships. Special focus is given to therapeutic dynamics, exploring how therapists can inadvertently perpetuate narcissistic wounds and how to navigate these challenges with empathy and strategic intervention.



Equip yourself with the knowledge to support survivors effectively, break the cycle of abuse, and promote genuine healing and recovery. This video resource is essential for professionals seeking to deepen their expertise and for anyone dedicated to understanding the complexities of narcissistic relationships and fostering resilience and empowerment in survivors.

This video resource pack contains two complete workshops (CPD/CE credits: 9) that cover:

Part 1:

Like love, abuse comes in a variety of shapes and forms and can originate from various interpersonal relationships – it can be a partner, a work colleague, even a parent or someone influential in the larger religious or cultural community. Narcissistic Abuse is correlated with people who have a diagnosis of Narcissistic Personality Disorder (NPD) or who display narcissistic traits. As not all interpersonal abuse is predicated on narcissism or narcissistic traits, it is crucial to understand:

- the nature and dynamics of narcissistic abuse and
- how it links to domestic abuse and other forms of interpersonal abuse

While narcissism is an umbrella term, it is in fact a multi-headed hydra, which plays out in its various manifestations. The factors that underpin narcissistic abuse such as the **traits of the grandiose narcissist, the vulnerable narcissist and the malignant narcissist and how these are enacted in interpersonal relationships** to cover up shame will be explored, at this therapeutically oriented webinar. We will also probe and assess how this can lead to the need to minimise others in order to aggrandise the self, to attack others so as to protect the shamed self. Focus will also be placed on how the fear of closeness, fear of intimacy, abandonment and exposure of vulnerability can lead to attacking behaviour. In addition, consideration will be given to **the traumatised narcissist whose self-protective behaviours such their need for control, especially when they are overwhelmed by unrelenting trauma reminders or reaction**, and their emotional dysregulation can lead to impulsive and explosive mood swings in which they can be abusive, and unable to empathise or take responsibility for their behaviour.

People who have suffered Narcissistic abuse will have, for the most part, endured it as a violent emotional roller coaster although physical violence can also be a part of it in extreme cases. This training aims to identify the spectrum of narcissistic abuse and we will discuss:

- **Identifying types of Emotional abuse** which can swing from love bombing to gaslighting to distorting the sense of reality in romantic relationships. It can also include devaluation of the person, accusations, criticism, or threats in familial or work relationships. In such scenarios, **strategies such as manipulation, stonewalling, sabotage, exploitation, character assassination or social isolation** also form a part of a well-stocked narcissistic abuser's arsenal. Meanwhile, in close relationships where narcissists are the more dominant party, withholding money, silent treatments, isolation, and lying about their victims to others are pivotal narcissistic manipulative techniques. *Ignoring the feelings of their partners/victims and taking no responsibility of their actions are key markers of narcissistic abuse.*
- **Examining the patterns and cycle of narcissistic abuse** including the four **key stages of Idealisation, Devaluation, Repetition & Discarding and Hoovering.**
- **Highlighting the range of narcissistic abuse** which includes the whole spectrum of mental, physical, financial, spiritual, sexual, or verbal abuse; usually as a combination of one or more of these.
- More importantly, **the impact of narcissistic abuse** on survivors will be examined in detail: in particular self-doubt, the erosion of sense of self, the loss of relational worth, trust issues, compromised integrity, self-destructive habits and a range of mental health problems such as anxiety, depression, PTSD and Complex-PTSD and physical symptoms such as insomnia and nightmares.



By having a deeper understanding of the nature and impact of narcissistic abuse, practitioners will be more equipped to work with survivors and restore their reality. Emphasis will be placed on helping clients to break free from the narcissistic abuse cycle and to recover and heal from their abuse. We will also examine **how to support clients who are in narcissistic abuse relationships** to manage the impact, enable them to be safe and/or extricate themselves from such relationships and learn how to strengthen and protect self, to rebuild self-esteem, self-worth, confidence, set boundaries and build a support system, to enable them to move towards recovery and health from narcissistic abuse.

Learning Objectives:

- Identify the nature and dynamics of Narcissistic Abuse and how this links to domestic abuse, trauma, mental health and personality disorders such as Narcissistic Personality Disorder, Antisocial Personality Disorder and Borderline Personality Disorder
- Explain the spectrum and range of narcissistic abuse and identify the cycle of narcissistic abuse – idealisation, devaluation, repetition, discarding, and *hoovering*
- Discuss the **signs and impact of narcissistic abuse** such as erosion of a sense of self, loss of self-worth, and mental health ranging from anxiety, depression to PTSD as well as physical health
- Identify the different types of narcissists such as the grandiose narcissist, the malignant narcissist and the traumatised narcissist
- Discuss **factors that underpin the survivors' behavioural responses such as shame, self-protective strategies, impaired attachment, fear of intimacy, fear of abandonment and vulnerability** - which can lead to recurring attacking behaviour by the perpetrator
- Identify how to help clients break free from the narcissistic abuse cycle -enabling the restoration of self-worth, building of support networks, reclamation of reality and eventual healing from narcissistic abuse

Part 2:

Narcissism, as a personality disorder, is mostly understood in its grandiose form characterised by an inflated sense of self-importance, need for admiration, and lack of empathy for others. However, think of narcissism as a spectrum, with the altruistic narcissism at the very far end. At first glance, an altruistic narcissist seems the very opposite of a narcissist, with none of the associated manifestations. These are people who always put others first, are always ready to help, volunteer their time, guide and nurture as mentors. However, in the case of altruistic narcissists, this **need to help others is a means to fulfil unmet childhood needs, striving for validation, love, and approval, all the while pursuing self-affirmation through servitude**. Altruistic narcissists portray a selfless facade, appearing caring and compassionate, yet covertly satisfying their narcissistic cravings for uniqueness and control. Their actions are aimed at gaining a sense of self-righteousness and entitlement while fulfilling needs for adulation, excessive gratitude and deserving of special treatment.

As all narcissism is predicated on narcissistic injuries to the developing self in childhood, many traumatised narcissists feel compelled to seek resolution by redirecting attention towards aiding others. This intellectually stimulating webinar encourages us to **extend the discourse on narcissism beyond its grandiose representations. We will explore the impact of traumatic narcissism and its link to narcissistic traits associated with altruistic narcissists**. Using case vignettes and examples, the webinar will examine how altruistic narcissism manifests in a range of care giving or helping environments and identify the main types of altruistic narcissists – **the hero or rescuer, the martyr, and the giver**. We will look at narcissistic vulnerabilities, specifically the three narcissistic snares identified by Maltzberger and Buie (1974). We will also explore in detail how some therapists themselves can manifest these characteristics in the therapeutic dynamic with their clients.

The manifestations of altruistic narcissism can be seen in multiple situations:



- **Employer-Employee Dynamics:** An employer who portrays a facade of extreme generosity and care for employees, yet subtly demands unwavering loyalty and excessive gratitude, showcasing entitlement
- **Parental Roles:** A parent who appears excessively nurturing and self-sacrificing while expecting constant validation and admiration from their children, often imposing their desires and aspirations onto them
- **Couples in a relationship:** One partner might adopt a seemingly altruistic persona, consistently offering support and care to the other, but it's motivated by a need for validation and control within the relationship
- **Therapist-Client Dynamics:** A client may present as excessively appreciative of the therapist's efforts, portraying an idealized view of the therapist while expecting special treatment or unwavering support, thereby exhibiting entitlement. Similarly, the therapist may have a heightened sense of being benevolent, compassionate and virtuous – which can fuel a grandiose sense of self.
- **Support Groups or Communities:** Individuals engaging in support groups might showcase altruistic behaviours while subtly seeking validation or control within the group dynamics, showcasing a need for recognition or admiration
- **Community Leaders:** Figures in leadership roles within communities or social organizations might exhibit altruistic behaviour while subtly leveraging this facade to maintain power or control over their followers

We will especially consider the specific case of psychotherapists as altruistic narcissists – who might be shoe-horning clients into a preferred therapeutic modality and blaming clients for rupture, impasse, failure, or taking all the credit for healing the client.

Specifically, we will explore the range of relational narcissistic injuries sustained in childhood that are often re-enacted in the therapeutic relationship and how these become entwined with the client's need for healing. Consideration will be given to **how best to work with the interplay of both client's and therapist's narcissistic wounds and how to manage narcissistic threats in a therapeutic way without activating shaming or retaliatory defences**. We will learn about how we can facilitate essential behavioural changes in our clients and ourselves if required - that minimise the risk of becoming a traumatising narcissist. These include openness, promoting choices, humility, self-agency and empowerment through a collaborative, non-hierarchical approach, thus reducing power imbalances to facilitate healthy narcissism rather than replicating the dynamics seen in traumatic narcissism.

The workshop will focus on:

- Understanding the impact of traumatic narcissism and its link to narcissistic traits
- Identifying the main types of altruistic narcissists – the hero or rescuer, the martyr, the giver
- Understanding the main characteristics of altruistic narcissists such as their need for validation, need to be seen as worthy, caring, generous, kind, trustworthy, benevolent, compassionate, virtuous by being of service to others the community or society and how this is a façade to fuel and to maintain a grandiose sense of self
- Exploring how altruistic narcissism manifests in a range of care giving or helping environment – parents, teachers, social workers, charity workers, health professionals, spiritual leaders, as well as health professionals and therapists
- **Identifying the three narcissistic snares: 'to know all, to heal all and to love all' and how these can impact on our clients' relationships**
- Investigating how altruistic narcissists can become traumatising narcissists and the risk of replicating the core elements of traumatic narcissism
- **Examining the therapist defences against threats to narcissistic equilibrium in the therapeutic relationship**
- Discussing how to work with narcissistic threats and avoid shaming clients and remain compassionate



Learning Objectives:

- Identify the main types of altruistic narcissists – the hero or rescuer, the martyr, the giver
- Identify the three narcissistic snares: *'to know all, to heal all and to love all'* and how these can impact on our clients' relationships
- Examine the therapist defences against threats to narcissistic equilibrium in the therapeutic relationship

About the speaker

Christiane Sanderson BSc, MSc. is an Honorary Senior Lecturer in Psychology at the University of Roehampton, of London with 35 years of experience working with survivors of childhood sexual abuse and sexual violence. She has delivered consultancy, continuous professional development and professional training for parents, teachers, social workers, nurses, therapists, counsellors, solicitors, the NSPCC, the Catholic Safeguarding Advisory Committee, the Methodist Church, the Metropolitan Police Service, SOLACE, the Refugee Council, Birmingham City Council Youth Offending Team, and HMP Bronzefield.

She is the author of *Counselling Skills for Working with Shame*, *Counselling Skills for Working with Trauma: Healing from Child Sexual Abuse, Sexual Violence and Domestic Abuse*, *Counselling Adult Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse*, 3rd edition, *Counselling Survivors of Domestic Abuse*, *The Seduction of Children: Empowering Parents and Teachers to Protect Children from Child Sexual Abuse*, and *Introduction to Counselling Survivors of Interpersonal Trauma*, all published by Jessica Kingsley Publishers. She has also written *The Warrior Within: A One in Four Handbook to Aid Recovery from Sexual Violence*; *The Spirit Within: A One in Four Handbook to Aid Recovery from Religious Sexual Abuse Across All Faiths* and *Responding to Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse: A pocket guide for professionals, partners, families and friends* for the charity *One in Four* for whom she is a trustee.

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