

Narcissistic Mothers

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- *I do not love; I do not love anybody except myself. That is a rather shocking thing to admit. I have none of the selfless love of my mother. I have none of the plodding, practical love. . . . I am, to be blunt and concise, in love only with myself, my puny being with its small inadequate breasts and meager, thin talents. I am capable of affection for those who reflect my own world. – Sylvia Plath*

There is a special place in hell for narcissistic mothers. Ms. Plath herself indulged in the ultimate narcissistic act when she committed suicide by sticking her head in the oven while her two young children were asleep in the same apartment. How thoughtful of her to have sealed off their rooms with towels so that the fumes wouldn't consume them too. She needed someone to live on to remember her and care that she was gone.

Narcissistic mothers do not have children for the same reasons the rest of us do. They do not look forward to the birth of their child because they can't wait to see what they look like or what type of personality they will have or who they will become. No, they have children for one reason only:

More mirrors. They have children so that the children will love them unconditionally, not the other way around. They have children to do things for them. They have children to reflect their false images. They have children to use, abuse and control them.

They don't see their role as a mother as life's biggest gift. It's a burden they didn't expect. They thought they were creating little "mini-me's." They didn't take into account the fact that somewhere around age 2, these spiteful, ungrateful (in their minds) little creatures start to develop their own individual personalities and wills of their own. For the rest of us, that's the best part of being a mom — watching our children grow into increasingly independent, confident, free-thinking individuals. For the narcissistic mother, each step away from her is an absolute act of betrayal.

Children have emotions that they express quite freely. This annoying practice is squashed as early as possible since narcissists cannot handle emotions. "What is wrong with you?" and "You're so oversensitive" and "You're overreacting" are common phrases uttered to children of narcissists.

These mothers end up resenting all the work that goes into raising a child, having no use for them unless they are achieving, doing something or otherwise reflecting their false image onto them. Children are a nuisance to them, taking precious time away from their own agendas. They don't like to have to shop for clothes for their children, prepare meals for them, do their laundry, pay for daycare, enroll them in activities, drive them to friends' houses, throw birthday parties, pay for their college educations or protect them from abuse.

They will smother and overprotect their children under the guise that they are taking care of them. They will fail to provide age-appropriate information on such things as menstruation, personal grooming (make-up, hairstyles, shaving, etc.), budgeting money and dating. This all serves to keep her children under her control as long as possible. If they are ill-informed and overprotected, they will not feel confident to grow or move further away from her.

They will use their children as slaves. They will delegate all household chores to the children as early as possible. They will insist that they pay for their own personal items and clothing as early as possible. Older children will become responsible for younger children. No matter how many of her responsibilities her children take on, it will never be enough or be done well enough. They expect perfection and constantly remind their children that they fail to meet this expectation. Of course, they train their children to believe that they are the ideal mother. Any evidence to the contrary is to be kept secret at all costs. They will behave much differently toward their children in

public than they do at home. They will vehemently deny any wrongdoing on their part and most likely blame their children, completely rewriting history.

Narcissistic mothers don't stop being narcissists when their children become adults. They will play siblings against each other. They will compare siblings. They will talk to siblings about each other. When they have a problem with one, they will talk to another about it.

They are jealous of their children's successes, even though they brag to others about them ('see how great MY kids turned out'). They will make snide comments if they think one of their adult children has a better marriage, house, job, etc. than they do. They are thrilled when they perceive that one of their adult children has failed in some way (although they never tell others about these "failures"; it reflects poorly on them). They are more than happy to assist when necessary because that makes them look good, plus, there is an added bonus of having favors to collect on. Asking a narcissistic mother for a favor feels like selling your soul to the devil. It's emotional extortion.

These mothers steal their kids' childhoods, identities and future healthy relationships. They will keep on taking and sucking the life out of their children for as long as they live, if their children allow it. It is incredibly difficult and painful to acknowledge that your mother never loved you without blaming yourself — she raised you to blame yourself for everything. But it is necessary to put the blame where it rightfully belongs in order to insure that this insidious disorder isn't perpetuated generation after generation.