



The Narcissistic Family: Diagnosis and Treatment

By Stephanie Donaldson-Pressman, Robert M. Pressman

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In this compelling book, the authors present an innovative therapeutic model for understanding and treating adults from emotionally abusive or neglectful families? families the authors call narcissistic. Narcissistic families have a parental system that is, for whatever reason (job stress, alcoholism, drug abuse, mental illness, physical disability, lack of parenting skills, self-centered immaturity), primarily involved in getting its own needs met. The children in such narcissistic family systems try to earn love, attention and approval by satisfying their parents' needs, thus never developing the ability to recognize their own needs or create strategies for getting them met. By outlining the theoretical framework of their model and using dozens of illustrative clinical examples, the authors clearly illuminate specific practice guidelines for treating these individuals.

Stephanie Donaldson-Pressman is a therapist, consultant, and trainer. She is known for her work with dysfunctional families, particularly with survivors of incest. Robert M. Pressman is the editor-in-chief and president of the Joint Commission for the Development of the Treatment and Statistical Manual for Behavioral and Mental Disorders.

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Editorial Review

Review

"The authors have skilfully presented an often difficult topic in an easy-to-read work which will be of value to helpers at any stage of their professional development." (Anglican Theological Review)

"So readable and chock full of understandable case examples that it demands to be shared with patients. It focuses on the conduct of parents and their children trying to make sense out of their chaotic lifestyles in search of love, self-esteem, acceptance, and inner peace. Its valuable insights can be potent reinforcers of the therapeutic experience." (Jack G. Wiggins, Ph.D., past president, American Psychological Association)

"Such a find. The concept is an artful and practical synthesis that bears effective witness to the authors' depth of knowledge of contemporary psychotherapeutic literature." (Joseph R. McCool, Ph.D., past president, Academy of Family Psychology)

"I believe that this book should be required reading for every family physician. It is a real eye opener for those physicians who routinely prescribe psychotropic medications without psychiatric input and without insisting on the patient's participation in therapy." (Laurence Bouchard, D.O., past president, American Association of Doctors of Osteopathy)

From the Inside Flap

New Hope for Treating Adults Who Have Grown Up in Emotionally Abusive Families In this compelling book, the authors present an innovative therapeutic model for understanding and treating adults from emotionally abusive or neglectful families? families the authors call narcissistic. Narcissistic families have a parental system that is, for whatever reason (job stress, alcoholism, drug abuse, mental illness, physical disability, lack of parenting skills, self-centered immaturity), primarily involved in getting its own needs met. The children in such narcissistic family systems try to earn love, attention and approval by satisfying their parents' needs, thus never developing the ability to recognize their own needs or create strategies for getting them met. By outlining the theoretical framework of their model and using dozens of illustrative clinical examples, the authors clearly illuminate specific practice guidelines for treating these individuals.

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Ira Knudsen:

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