



Reclaim

YOUR AUTHENTIC SELF

HEALING AND RECOVERY FOR DAUGHTERS OF
NARCISSISTIC MOTHERS

AMANDA ROBINS PSYCHOTHERAPY

You & Your Mother

RELATIONSHIP SELF-REFLECTION



Relationship Self-Reflection

Introduction

For those of us who have been raised by narcissists, life and relationships can be challenging.

This self-reflective exercise is designed to help you consider your relationship with your mother, both as a child and now as an adult.

As you work through it consider the impact that your mother has had on you and how she is still influencing your approach to relationships, including, most importantly, your relationship with yourself.



Questions

ABOUT YOUR RELATIONSHIP

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Can you be yourself with your mother?

Does your mother accept you and support your goals, your purpose, your ideas and aspirations?

Does she tolerate my difference from her and your autonomy?

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Is it is easy to disagree with your mother? Does she understand and empathise with your point of view, even if it differs from hers?

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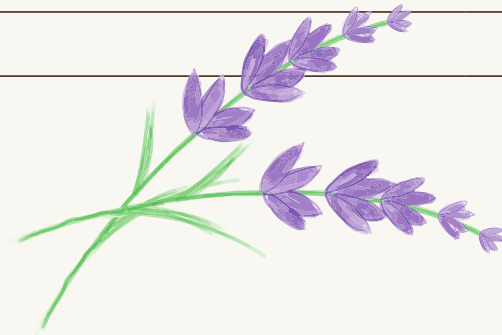




- How important is it for you to have your own space? What needs and boundaries do you have when it comes to your own space?
 - Boundaries are not only vital in the relationship we have with ourselves but with others too. In any partnership, we need to nurture and sustain our individuality. We can love someone, but with boundaries. As human beings, it is normal to have some space.

Does/has your mother respected your boundaries? Does she/did she allow you privacy? For example, did she read your diary or ask intrusive questions when you were an adolescent? Did she often come into your room without knocking?

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Does your mother support your feelings? Is she/has she been able to tolerate your distress and help you understand your feelings? Can you be angry with her/complain or disagree without her "getting you back", arguing, becoming defensive or telling you you are wrong?

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- Does your mother understand that you have demands on your time? We cannot reciprocate love for others without prioritizing our needs, wants, and boundaries. We have priorities such as family, friends, work, self-care, etc.

- Does/has your mother respected your priorities and empowered you to focus on yourself first? Does she make demands on you and sulk or become angry when you are unable to meet her needs? Is she emotionally manipulative?

How does your mother communicate? What was communication like in

- your family when you were growing up?

Were you encouraged to explain your needs and ask for what you want or was this discouraged? How were emotions communicated in your family? Did members verbalise or "behave" the emotion? Were you expected to "read your mother's mind"? Did she give you or other family members "the silent treatment"?





- Shame is an important experience in narcissistic families. Often adults who have grown up in narcissistic families will have chronic shame. Did/does your mother shame you or use shame as a tool to get you to do what she wants? Is she "shame averse"? Does she often blame or shame you if you disagree or try to assert yourself?

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Is your mother often angry? Is anger her main or most characteristic emotion? Is she sometimes scary? Does her anger ever escalate to rage?

• Is your mother "cold"? How often in your family did you and other members verbalize your feelings, express affection, hug and affectionately touch? Has your mother ever done this? Has/does your mother offered you affection, acknowledgement, encouragement? Do you ever feel she uplifts and empowers you? Does your mother or anyone else in your family put you down, belittle you or sarcastically undermine you, laughing it off as a "joke" or telling you you are too sensitive?



Is your mother constantly judging and criticising you? Does she pressure you to be perfect and to be what she expects you to be?



Closing



These questions aim to guide you to reflect on your relationship with your mother. Loving yourself is the key to moving on. Everyone is deserving of wholesome and healthy relationships, but for children of narcissists the key is self-discovery and self-love. Despite the cliché, narcissism is not about real self-love, it is a sign of emptiness inside.



Narcissists often attempt to control others and coerce or manipulate them into giving up their identity and self-will. A narcissistic mother can have a huge impact on our ability to individuate and become autonomous. That is why developing agency, self compassion and self-love is a big part of our journey.

Don't forget that this is all a process. The journey to recovery won't be linear, and it will take heartwork.. Narcissists are fundamentally incapable of real love. They may need others, desire them and even shower them with affection, but this is not the same as love.

Overall, this is a worksheet guiding you to ponder on the relationship you have (or had), with your mother, whether it is healthy and how it might have affected you as an adult. Your journey to freedom and self-compassion is only just beginning. The journey can take a lifetime, but it is the only one worth taking.



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