

# The Covert Passive Aggressive Narcissist

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**Dedication.** “To my Mom, who was the embodiment of unconditional, tender, authentic love. You gave me the greatest gift of all. Thank you.”

## Foreword

“3 years ago, my reality was imploding all around me like a scene from the movie *Inception*. Everything I had believed to be true was suddenly collapsing. I was forced to face the truth. Until that moment, I couldn’t quite put my finger on exactly what the problem was. I was mostly in denial about it, but I think I knew something was wrong for a while.

As 1 of my friends mentioned the word narcissist, she pointed out, “He’s like the ones from the past, he’s just the more sophisticated model.”

The heart-breaking dissolution of that relationship sent me on a journey to Peru where I met several more characters like him, mostly in my work life. A year later & totally devastated, I reluctantly went back to the original covert abuser in my life to get on my feet again.

Back where it all began, 1st the complex-PTSD breakdown happened & then I broke through. Observing my mother with new awareness, I was finally able to see where that pattern of relationships came from. In facing my wound & working on healing, I created a new sense of purpose & the work I do now to help people self-heal after narcissistic abuse.

Recently, when 1 of my clients told me she was writing a book on covert narcissists, I was so excited that I offered to write the foreword. I'm grateful that Debbie dedicated herself to write this book on such an important, nuanced topic within the genre of narcissistic abuse.

This book is meeting a great need because unfortunately there is not enough information available for people who have been through the more covert forms of abuse. It's incredibly sophisticated & stealth, so it's often missed by mental health professionals who were not trained to recognize it.

Debbie writes,

*"You think you're on the right track after discovering narcissistic personality disorder, but then you read things that are not completely what you experienced."*

*"Coverts do have a grandiose sense of self, are preoccupied with fantasies of power, require excessive admiration, but they hide all these attributes so people will like & trust them."*

She gets it. The author clearly knows this war from the front lines.

After years of talking with people in my personal & professional life about covert narcissists, I've come to believe that in order to really understand the nature of the covert narcissist, you have to have lived it. Whether it's a spouse, significant other, friendship, boss, co-worker, neighbor or family member, the patterns are nearly identical & only someone who has been inside that nightmare can really know what the experiences is like. Even then it's hard to describe.

I believe the covert types are by far the most dangerous because of their ability to fly stealth, undetected by normal radar. They leverage their intelligence through a meticulous choice of words & silence in order to manipulate others. The smarter the narcissist, the more dangerous because the cloak of invisibility is so high-tech.

The overt type of abuser is much more obvious because they lack the intelligence to manipulate that cleverly, so they resort to aggression & violence as their primary weapons.

Plausible deniability is the covert narcissist's greatest weapon in their arsenal of gaslighting tools.

With a covert narcissist everything on the surface looks normal & often lovely for months, years, even decades. They know how to say all the right things, exactly the things that you personally want to hear. They can mirror empathy, concern, & tears better than most Hollywood actors. However, underneath the surface the feeling is off. It's so subtle that you could easily miss it or dismiss it.

After a relationship with a covert narcissist, you feel like you can't trust your perception of reality because no one else can see what you see. Most people adore covert narcissists because of how very careful they are in choosing who they unmask around & how much effort they put into optics & public perception.

When you ask for advice from friends & even professionals, you might only hear people giving the benefit of the doubt to the covert narcissist or worse yet telling you that you're being paranoid, overreacting or some other way of blaming the victim. Unfortunately, asking advice from people who don't understand it can feel invalidating, lead you to more setbacks & possibly even encourage you to stay in a dangerous situation.

It's terrifying when every part of your intuition is telling you something is really wrong but the covert narcissist & everyone else are telling you that things are just fine, & implying that maybe you are the problem.

Survivors of covert narcissists need to know that they're not crazy. This is the primary concern I hear from clients who were with covert types of abusers. Reading this book will give you that validation.

The recovery of self-trust after abuse by a covert narcissist can take some time. Be patient with yourself in this process. You have been through a severe relational trauma & while you can't see your wounds, they are very real.

This book will help you to understand what happened in your relationship with a cover narcissist through an inventory of their typical characteristics & behaviors, in addition to survivors' stories of interactions with them. You'll likely have many aha moments when you connect the dots to similar experiences that happened to you.

I know this book is going to help a lot of people make sense of the insensible.

Big hug to you!

Meredith Miller, Coach & Author. Mexico City, Mexico" – Mirza, 2017, pp. 6–8

## Preface

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Mirza, Debbie (2017). *The Covert Passive Aggressive Narcissist: Recognizing the Traits & Finding Healing After Hidden Emotional & Psychological Abuse*. Debbie Mirza Coaching, p. 224.