

Why don't psychopaths let go of their victims?



[\(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com/2011/08/17/why-dont-psychopaths-let-go-of-their-victims/prison-of-love-2/\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com/2011/08/17/why-dont-psychopaths-let-go-of-their-victims/prison-of-love-2/)

Several readers have indicated in your comments that the psychopaths you broke up with (or who broke up with you) don't let you go. They can't accept that the relationship is over. They still try to contact you even though you told them in no uncertain terms you wish to break all contact with them. Despite this finality, they still harass you with unwelcome emails or phone calls. Sometimes they use your child or children as intermediaries, making the situation even more painful and complicated. So the question arises: **Why can't psychopaths take no for an answer and let former relationships go?**

I've offered one answer to this question in the post **Relationship Boomerang**. Psychopaths juggle many relationships at once. Some are in the idealization/luring phase; others are in the devalue phase; yet others are in the discard phase and finally many are in the discarded phase, to which the psychopaths return when they get bored with all of the above.

Since, fundamentally, psychopaths engage with other human beings only because they need idolaters and subjects to use and dominate, **an insatiable and obstinate need for control is the main and most fundamental reason why psychopaths can't let go of their victims**. Letting go would mean that they

lose ownership over former targets. They no longer can get them to do their bidding. They can no longer lie to and manipulate them. They can no longer use them for supply, be it an ego boost, sex, money, or power. Those targets are out of their reach, out of their hands.

This also means that those former targets can move on and have the opportunity to lead much healthier and better lives without the psychopaths. This is the one thing that a psychopath can't tolerate: **the idea that you are far better off without him.** The idea that you can find love again, or regain control of the finances he decimated, or find a better career that he destroyed.

To move on, you need to sever all contact with the psychopath. **The psychopath may not release you, but you can free yourself.** If he emails you, keep all the emails and once you establish a pattern of cyberstalking turn them in to the authorities. Even rerouted IP can be identified by the police. If he calls, don't answer. If he leaves messages on the phone, let the answering machine record them and keep them as evidence to show the police. **A restraining order may not offer much protection, but proving a pattern of stalking could land the psychopath in jail.** Keep all the evidence against him but never engage directly with him (or her) in any way.

For a **fictionalized representation of psychopathic seduction**, check out my new novel, *The Seducer*, previewed on the links below:

Claudia Moscovici, psychopathyawareness

<http://www.amazon.com/Dangerous-Liasons-Recognize-Psychopathic-Seduction/dp/>

http://www.amazon.com/Seducer-Novel-Claudia-Moscovici/dp/0761858075/ref=sr_



August 17, 2011

Categories: [addiction](#), [bad men](#), [charismatic psychopaths](#), [charming predators](#), [cheating](#), [Claudia Moscovici](#), [confusing relationships](#), [cyberpath](#), [cyberstalking](#), [Dangerous Liaisons](#), [dangerous men](#), [dangerous women](#), [deception](#), [denial](#), [devalue and discard](#), [domestic abuse](#), [domestic violence](#), [emotional abuse](#), [emotional predators](#), [emotional vampires](#), [evil men](#), [how sociopaths think](#), [infidelity](#), [insincerity](#), [leaving the psychopath](#), [life after the psychopath](#), [love](#), [love addiction](#), [manipulative men](#), [manipulative personalities](#), [no contact](#), [psychology](#), [psychopath](#), [psychopathic lovers](#), [psychopathic seducer](#), [The Mask of Sanity](#), [the psychopath's relationship cycle](#), [toxic relationships](#), [trauma bonding](#), [trauma bonds](#), [Without conscience](#) . Tags: [Claudia Moscovici](#), [cyberstalking](#), [Dangerous Liaisons](#), [dangerous men](#), [dangerous relationships](#), [dating bad men](#), [dating dangerous men](#), [domestic violence](#), [emotional abuse](#), [Hervey Cleckley](#), [personality disorders](#), [psychology](#), [psychopathic seduction](#), [psychopathy awareness](#), [psychopathyawareness](#), [Robert Hare](#),

[social predators](#), [sociopath](#), [stalkers](#), [stalking](#), [The Mask of Sanity](#), [The Seducer](#), [The Seducer: A Novel](#), [The Seducer: A Novel about Psychopathic Seduction](#), [toxic relationships](#), [Why don't psychopaths let go of their victims?](#), [Without conscience](#) . Author: [psychopathyawareness](#)

291 Comments

Comment by rocketgirl on August 17, 2011 [8:15 am](#)

I think they do stop contacting you when they replace you, and you've made it clear you want no contact with them by calling them out on their smear campaign in you by publishing the truth about them on a web site with a photo, publishing anonymously and talking about things you know they've done that they keep secret, things they've done to other women. They will blame you, but they know they've hurt multiple women, and want to continue to be able to target victims. They'll wonder which target posted, they'll contact you asking to take it off the web, you let them figure out how to do that and then they will leave you alone. So far its been over a year, no contact after I did that. I can't assume he's not a psychopath just because he's stopped contacting me.

Comment by ibelcuthbert@rocketmail.com on August 17, 2011 [10:09 am](#)

Hi Claudia

Another great article!

My ex only contacted me when I did not contact him. And that was only whilst I was still in his "use category" – he still wanted something out of me. However, when I listed all the girls he was lying to, sleeping with, when I found out he was still sleeping with his ex gf from years ago, then his final words to me were "goodbye Lesley, you are not my problem anymore, have some respect for my life"... i have never heard from him again and nor will I. I do think there are many out there that come back, or constantly stay in touch and that must be quite harrowing as they do just exhaust you and make you feel drained of emotion. But in my case, because I realised what he was, and was too much "trouble" for him then i will never be contacted again. Do I feel sad about that? If i'm honest yes, but not for the reasons I thought I would – I'm sad about it as in some way I'd want him to contact me so I could have the pleasure of totally ignoring him and not being wound up and upset by his lies and deceit and vicious temper any more. But that has taken time, finding this site and the help and support it gives.

Love Lesley

Comment by LINDA on August 17, 2011 [10:15 am](#)

Claudia: Its interesting to see as I read this over and over from your articles that the entire relationship was nothing but one huge CYCLE, or different stages. As he was idolizing me he was discarding another, and when he was bored with me he was being amused by someone else, someone different, new, fresh; someone that was believing every single lie. I wonder what we call what cycle their wives or GF are in after years of being with them? The Main dupe stage or maybe they were discarded years ago but just didnt know it? I doubt very much just because you are living with them you are idolized and if you are its nothing but an act so they stick around. Furthermore, can you imagine living with someone who has all these different cycles of his

women he juggles? Its no wonder I hear how they ignore their partners so much and why the main partner always feels like she is not important to him, why most often their sex life is on and off and they are moody, distant and not even really there, because they are so damn busy with other relationships and it must be a full time job trying to keep power and control over others.
Linda

Comment by ibelcuthbert@rocketmail.com on August 17, 2011 [12:05 pm](#)

They do go through a pattern Linda, my ex used to have a blow out with me every 2/3 weeks which lasted a few days. My friend who also dated a path, he had the same cycle. That is how you know (i think) that they have a personality disorder, as they all are in patterns of abuse. I dont know why this is, why they have these cycles, maybe it is all linked to their other activities?
lesleyxx

Comment by LINDA on August 17, 2011 [12:23 pm](#)

Lesley: I have heard some say this also, picking a fight or provoking friction so it gives them an excuse to get mad and leave the house, then they run off so they can be with others. Tricky, clever sick bastards arent they to cause a fight with another person for absolutely no reason at all, geez they even fake getting mad – I think much of it is linked to their other activities, if they get so damn bored of one person then why dont they remain single and just jump from target to target and bed to bed? Linda

Comment by ibelcuthbert@rocketmail.com on August 17, 2011 [12:45 pm](#)

Linda , i think that Claudia said on one of her posts that they don't get as good a kick out just doing that, sleeping around. They have to have people that love them and are more of a constant in their life as they hurt them even more and enjoy it. Also sleeping around only gives them a quick high then its the come down, so they need someone there to get them through that, ie the woman/man at home. My ex used to make out he needed a relationship as he would get "lonely" and that he always wanted a "life partner" but its a load of shit. No one was ever good enough for him and he never got lonely, he just got bored if didn't have anyone to play games with and destroy.

He also took it one step further with his ex gf and ended up taking girls home and having sex with them in another room then taking them through to his gf for a threesome. Yes they are sick sick bastards and they make out its you that is the mad one every time. Very clever, very manipulative and very dangerous.

lesleyxxxx

Comment by ibelcuthbert@rocketmail.com on August 17, 2011 [1:57 pm](#)

Claudia can i ask you something? You say that paths can't tolerate you doing better without them and moving on. – Mine was not like that at all. He actually even said to me that he wanted me to meet someone else and be happy and well again – did he just say this as he knew it would hurt me as at the time he said it I wanted us to try again? Knowing what liars they are I think he probably did. However, he has left me alone, not that I'm complaining. I look a thousand times

better now he has!! I mean it still hurts and I've said before I have good days and bad days, but I don't feel strained or anxious any more.

lesleyxxx

Comment by whatwuzthat on August 17, 2011 2:17 pm

Linda, I recognize the cycle you refer to. My ex broke up with me, then went back to hang around is old intimate partner or his best friend as he calls her. Recently he has started yet another relationship yet he told me he didn't want to be in a relationship "right now".

I continued talking to him not knowing he was running back and forth between his old live in girlfriend and the latest conquest from the office. When I finally asked very bluntly what he was really doing the truth came out. I asked him if he had told the other women how he broke up with me..his 180 degree turn after one more sexual encounter. His response was he had told the other woman that he was still talking to me because I was having trouble getting past the relationship and that I believe he is a narcissistic abuser. I really doubt he has told his new sex partner that he has been accused of being a narc, and that he emotionally assaulted me by having one last sexual encounter for the road. He walked out of life with no hint of his plan 12 hrs after we had sex. I can't imagine he has the balls to tell anyone that story and certainly not to this new person, it would ruin the perfect dupe.

I think he enjoys the drama of having three woman to sob to and all of the self importance that this triangle generates for him. He said of our breakup that I was responding to it "out of character" I then asked him to tell his new sex partner the details of what he did to me and get her opinion on what the protocol should be to respond to such cruelty from a sexual partner of two years.

After this confrontation he has avoided me. He is still hanging out around the other two and in fact he has introduced the two of them. I can't imagine taking someone I am dating to my ex husbands house for coffee. It seems like a normal person would cut that kind of socializing off once a relationship ends, yet he continues to cling to his first relationship. He never brought me around his old flame, but is doing this now with the new woman.

If I send him a txt he will answer but he no longer reaches out to me. I am not missing him anymore, I am mostly horrified to finally understand what kind of man he really is and that I got scammed by him. My contacting him has been out of a deep seeded anger towards him. I want him to know how cruel and ridiculous he really is. I need to work on stopping direct venting towards him. While I do believe I've made him squirm some by telling him I was going to call the other women and give them the details of his behavior, in the long run I know this is not going to help me forget what he did nor will it protect anyone one else he digs his claws into.

Joanne

Comment by Laney on August 17, 2011 2:38 pm

The narcissism deceived here is mind-boggling. Even knowing what they have perpetrated on the victim—and they alone know all the ways the victim has been deceived—they still believe that the victim is better off with them than without.

My ex path talks about his ex wife in such terms. “She would try to come back if she thought she could; I’m the only way back to the perfect life she had. But she cheated and the best punishment is that she gave it all up for nothing.”

Now that I can start to understand who he really is, it is shocking to me that he thinks she screwed herself over by getting away from him. No telling how many ways he hurt her, isolated her, lied to her, dominated her.

He told me once that when he met her, she looked like a doll, and that is pretty much his MO when it comes to women. He collects them, entertains himself with them, abuses them, and/or neglects them at will.

Men he largely ignores, unless he wants their money.

Comment by Laney on August 17, 2011 [2:40 pm](#)

Sorry in my first sentence I meant described, not deceived. Must have been an auto-correct thing.

Comment by LINDA on August 17, 2011 [3:00 pm](#)

Joanne: They never have just ONE GF, even if they are living with them or even married to their partners its all a front, roost and illusion Some like the security of always having someone at home for them – and some dont care I guess either way they always are involved in lots of other relationships and someone is always cheated on and betrayed. THis is their life and how they live. The targets that are in their life for years they DONT forget, they discard them maybe even for years but eventually they try to recycle them. Mine no longer reaches out to me either because he knows his gig is up with me and I have been indifferent to him for the past year, I no longer say why didnt you call, or where have you been, etccc.. because quite frankly as I told him I could care less what he does and who he screws and who he is living with, no longer concerns me because he has NOTHING to offer me that I want or ever will. Once I started showing my indifferent behavior he no longer got the thrill from trying to hurt and destroy me because I simply didnt CARE anymore. He loved it when I was jealous of his GF and when I missed him and he LOVED to evoke hurt and jealousy in me when he constantly begged me to have group encounters with him, he was a sick sadistic wacko that enjoyed fooling me and playing me. Now I really hold very little respect for a person that is so disturbed he is rather pathetic to me now, he is a selfish sick pig. They are LIARS, CON MEN and TAKERS, they take from humanity and give nothing back all they care about is what THEY can get. When we give up the illusion how can anyone really truly say they loved such a person, he is as evil as Charles Manson. x0x0 linda

Comment by LINDA on August 17, 2011 [3:10 pm](#)

Lesley: I am always in shock of their sexual behavior but they are all the same, the bottom line here Lesley is they can do this because they have no conscience, they don't bond with anyone they could line up 20 women (or men) in a room while their wife or GF is at home – screw every person lined up and think NOTHING of it then go home to their partner well spent!!!! When you have no conscience you have no morals, standards or ethics you just do what you want to do and whatever pleases you. lack of conscience=danger They are KILLERS, they have just mastered the technique of not spilling any blood. Trust me I died a hundred times with this man Linda

Comment by rocketgirl on August 17, 2011 [3:48 pm](#)

It kind of amazes me that comments to this article have gone off track and are venting about what your ex did, I can see many of you are stuck in anger and cognitive dissonance...that is oar for the course.

I think the bottom line take away here is that the pricks don't care about you, never did, they are sick and twisted and to keep in contact either directly or by keeping track of their next victim, means that you are at square one. You aren't healing, you're simply ruminating over and over with intrusive thoughts.

If this is the case, your healing will go much faster if you can find a therapist versed in healing the aftermath of being a victim of a path.

Take a step back, realize you didn't choose this, you don't love him anymore either and walk away from it all. You can't effect change in him period. Change your phone numbers, change your email, get off Facebook, cut ties with his supporters, change what ever you can to stop contact. If you have kids with him, arrange a third party drop off, mediators when ever you can. Stop contact, stop focusing on him. Learn, grow, find peace, forgive for yourself and wipe your hands clean. Life is short.

Comment by ibelcuthbert@rocketmail.com on August 17, 2011 [4:12 pm](#)

Hi rocketgirl

I think all of us on this site are well aware that our exes don't care about anything but themselves. I for one find talking about what my ex path did and how he treated me helps me and the support I gain from this site whenever I read posts or put one on makes me stronger. I find that I actually think of him less since i went on this blog, however without other people's descriptions of their situations then that would not have happened. I think its a fine line between describing your experiences and sounding as though you are "stuck in anger and cognitive dissonance" but one that everyone on this site recognises. Having said that some people are angry and are still at that stage and they come on this site for help and support too. People deal with things differently. I for one am not angry, and i doubt I ever will be. But I don't blame anyone on this site that is that is for sure.

If we were all capable of doing what you say at your end of your comment, and immediately moving on and dealing with the many facets of our individual situations without help, support, getting things out that we cannot talk about to others, then no one would be posting on this site

and Claudia would probably never have started her articles. We all, I think, realise what we need to do to get over it and find peace. Its the getting there that people need help with.
lesley

Comment by LINDA on August 17, 2011 [4:44 pm](#)

Lesley: I support you 100% for your statements!!! If we feel the need to vent or "get off track" I dont think there is a law on this forum that will prohibit us from sharing the struggles we are going thru at a particular moment or given day. I dont think what I write is reviewed by an English professor telling me I have gotten off the subject. Is it REALLY hurting anyone that we vent and share our experiences under the wrong article? With that said you will have to excuse me as I spend my day ruminating over and over with intrusive thoughts. I apologize for taking such offense to this but nobody but a professional is in any position to chart my progress. It was good Leslie to share some of our experiences today – Linda

Comment by rocketgirl on August 17, 2011 [4:47 pm](#)

Lesley, did I not say people on this site deserve support, especially therapy?

I understand your defensiveness and your direction of blame towards me for pointing out that venting is not the same as describing an experience in terms of understanding that others can grow from. A lot if this is not really supportive when you just dump here and ask the questions that you aren't accepting the truth.

Claudia's articles are very good, very educational, but she isn't a therapist, nor is this a replacement for therapy. I don't think this is a forum where you can get support. What you're doing is supporting staying stuck.

With all due respect, the non pathologicals can get stuck in trying to "understand" the pathological if what you learned is used to only assign blame. If it doesn't shift your focus back to you, and how you can take this knowledge to learn to recognize a path in the future so you don't fall victim to it again, then you aren't taking steps to support yourself. Support does not mean staying stuck in guilt, shame, anger and analysis paralysis.

I also think some of us here have been largely responsible for our plight by pursuing and fighting it out with an emotionally rejecting individual. At some point we have to value ourselves more than the pursuit of that never coming validation we want back from our oath. Whether you are consciously aware of it or not, that is what is keeping you stuck. That validation is never coming. Try to move on.

Comment by rocketgirl on August 17, 2011 [4:51 pm](#)

I am a professional dear

Comment by ibelcuthbert@rocketmail.com on August 17, 2011 [4:51 pm](#)

haha thanks Linda haha your comment about spending all day ruminating and having intrusive thoughts did make me laugh...but that is how things are some days, or for some on here its every day. its just a long process to get through and I dont think any of us will be the same people when we come out the other side. I dont think you ever forget it, but you surely come out a stronger person. And I for one want to do that by talking about stuff and not bottling it up. Because that just comes back and bites you in the arse one day. hahaha...sad but true.

lesleyxxx

Comment by rocketgirl on August 17, 2011 [4:58 pm](#)

Maybe it's time to grow up instead of acting flippant when someone has news you don't want to take on board. Real supportive, ha ha, made me laugh...losers stay down in the dirt.

Comment by ibelcuthbert@rocketmail.com on August 17, 2011 [5:07 pm](#)

Yeah you are a charmer! hahaha. As you are so incredibly learned about such matters I shall let you carry on this thread with Claudia. i for one actually did not see my comments as dumping or stuck in a situation..especially my remark that he'd left me alone and I wasnt complaining as I look so much better, I think also I am quite within my rights to ask Claudia a question, as this is her site? However, I shall allow you to discuss such lofty topics and keep my remarks for the ones that should be pitied and that clearly do not have as much intelligence as you.

lesley

Comment by LINDA on August 17, 2011 [5:08 pm](#)

But you are NOT MY personal professional dear. My professional never told me losers stay down in the dirt that is why I pay him and NOT YOU.

Comment by rocketgirl on August 17, 2011 [5:19 pm](#)

You're right, I'm not your therapist, I just saved you a couple hundred bucks by not cuddling you. You two are filled with rage or you'd recognize help when you hear it. At best some women are pathological and have BPD and are beyond change, themselves, sometimes women with pathological men are pathological, too, so be careful of getting "support" from women commenting on such sites. Yeah I already know your comeback line, I've got your number.

Comment by LINDA on August 17, 2011 [5:25 pm](#)

Here is my comeback:: " NO CONTACT"

Comment by [kelli \(http://.gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://.gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 17, 2011 [9:50 pm](#)

Rocket,

What an interesting statement and good point you made about pathological women on sites, are you one of them? One of the BEST indicators that a "troll" or Pathological is in the midst, is with the way you are coming at people that are "ruminating and obsessing" and attempting to trigger them. THAT IS PATHOLOGICAL. You were doing fine until you started to undermine the process of others here and thus labeling them as "losers". I think we know who the real loser here

is, don't" we? It is my hope that Claudia will view your posts and remove them and you from this site. Please move onto another where you can stir up more controversy elsewhere. Thank you.
Kelli

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 17, 2011 [9:53 pm](#)

To the rest of you here, please IGNORE the poster stirring up the hornets nest. You have a right to your process and to do so in a way that is right for you. Please do not allow one person's attempt to derail this blog, upset you to the point where you stop reading and posting. Give Claudia the chance to take care of it. I know she is very, very busy these days! CHINS UP! 😊 Kelli

Comment by [whatwuzthat](#) on August 17, 2011 [10:09 pm](#)

Cuddling? Wow rocket girl, Im so glad your aren't my therapist.

Yes I do believe it was me who coined the term venting.

I don't feel any of the comments are off track. People seem to be sharing their experiences with their Ps and relating them back to the article. Yes there is some venting, but sometimes to set yourself free you have to get pissed off first. We are among friends here and it is a place where others do actually understand what we've been through.

If you don't personally care for it why don't you skip the comments you don't like. I must admit I can't relate to all of the posts either but I respect other people enough to resist the urge to diagnose what they should be or shouldn't be doing. Hey, I'm a computer "professional", let me tell you what's wrong with your system without knowing anything about it. Sounds like what you are doing doesn't it.

I particularly appreciate hearing Linda and Lesley's experience because I can directly correlate it to my own and don't feel like my situation was that unique.

My ex still hangs out with a woman he ceased relations with 12 years ago. I don't think he is quite letting her go, gosh I think that has something to do with this post, don't you?

He came back and forth to me at least 5 times the first year and I found myself believing his actions were due to severe career loss, chronic unemployment, and many many other issues. He was excellent at withholding information so it was easy to be subjected to the abuse behind his smoke screen. I knew him for 15 years as a co worker so he is not someone I just met so YES my guard was down. I guess in your opinion I am responsible for associating with a rejecting individual so my plight is my fault.

I do not feel stuck by a any means. Not anymore. I am thrilled to have the knowledge of "what truck just ran over me" so I can avoid it in the future. The stories I've read sure have opened my eyes to the fraud I was exposed to and I see similar fraud has been inflicted on the others.

It's all pretty awesome to me ladies, all part of healing.

Best Regards,

Joanne

Comment by LINDA on August 17, 2011 [11:00 pm](#)

Thanks Kelli I will take your comment under consideration. I will let Claudia address this; but I have to wonder if this person is SO OVER IT, and if "life is too short" , why she herself frequents sites on psychopathy? $2+2=4$ but THIS does not add up. Thanks again Kelli

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 17, 2011 [11:35 pm](#)

Linda,

Glad to hear you'll consider! I appreciate your posts and they have helped me much, as well as the other posters too. In answer to your question, there are those that troll psychopath sites to do precisely what you experienced by this person. Known as "trolls" they enjoy stirring up the already wounded. It's hard because it can be very triggering, I understand, but ignoring them and letting Claudia handle it, rather than reacting is best, if you can. Remember, nuttin better for a troll than someone who reacts and gives them attention! So we just don't give them any 😊 Kelli

Comment by LINDA on August 17, 2011 [11:47 pm](#)

Kelli: That is exactly why I told her NO CONTACT because that is what you do with pathological individuals !!!!

Comment by rocketgirl on August 18, 2011 [12:23 am](#)

I am an educator in psychopathy, not a troll. You have no idea who you are speaking to, nor do you understand it is not my intention to stir the pot. I am telling you from my professional experience what I see here, how you are not all helping each other because you yourselves are too wounded to do so. Find a good therapist, get one on one professional help. You all are very closed off to your own contribution to your misery. Here's to opening up your ears, but as I said, there is at least one of you that is most likely bpd, all the signs are there. This is not my first experience with attack forums, I wasn't expecting your negative reactions, but it is pretty typical of women who have become brainwashed in their world view and aren't better yet and in borderline females. Take care, I won't be writing in here again to help such vitriolic women. Seriously, help yourselves by not helping others who are in need of help by someone who is not a wounded healer.

Comment by Donna on August 18, 2011 [1:46 am](#)

OK, this thread for the last few days of reading has totally gotten on a wrong track in my opinion. I am not sure why. I came here for support and encouragement. Emotions are emotions. I understand that NC is the best policy.

Well, it happened. I missed him coming and going from my weeked annual picnic, and I was comfortable about it. But didn't he contact me to see if I was OK. He was pleasant and then the mask started slipping again. Talking about people and their many issues, like he has none. His

last "perfect" OW had to many issues.

I think he is feeling a little desperate because he is dropping his son off at college this weekend and will be home alone with no one to control, manipulate or be dependent on him. My best friend also a life long friend of his told me he is recruiting a young woman from Ghana to bring to the states to be his nurse and maybe father a child with him. He's 61.

He even showed up outside the front of me home calling me to answer and talk to him. Thank God I was asleep and didn't hear him. No I am not a perfect person but I do care about people and my self and don't go out of my way to use or injure others. I believe most relationships that are healthy have a balance of give and take. I do care and feel sorry for the man and the woman he He's getting ready to use for his benefit. (She might dupe him First) smiles..

"Rocket" wounded healers are still healing and will be healed...

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 18, 2011 [2:35 am](#)

Linda, psychopaths have a priority list, which changes depending on their whims, whom they desire at any given moment, and what they want. When you're high on their priority list they lie to you, hide your intentions, flatter you, etc. When you're low they break up, ignore you, devalue you, etc. People's place in their priority list shifts; however, as I argued earlier, you never go back to the top of the list once the idealization phase is over because the novelty and conquest are also over. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 18, 2011 [2:36 am](#)

Lesley, it's typical that your psychopathic ex contacted you when you did not contact him, to keep you on the hook as a back up. They don't want to expend much effort for preserving any relationship after the conquest and idealization phase are over; however, they will expend some minimal effort to keep as many targets as possible on the hook as back ups. Psychopaths rarely let go completely of any dominance bond. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 18, 2011 [2:55 am](#)

Lesley, I'm not so sure that when your psychopathic ex wished you well he meant it. They often tell lies, to appear chivalrous and hide their underlying malice and contempt. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 18, 2011 [2:56 am](#)

Linda, yes, each psychopath has an unending series of relationship cycles at different stages with countless partners, to entertain themselves and establish dominance bonds. They would die of boredom without them, since they are empty inside. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August

18, 2011 [2:57 am](#)

Joanne, I hope you consider yourself very fortunate that your disordered ex doesn't reach out to you anymore. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 18, 2011 [2:59 am](#)

Laney, yes, that is what psychopaths are. Collectors of partners. They can't love people, they can only possess them when they want them and dispose of them or put them on a shelf as backups when they don't want them anymore. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 18, 2011 [3:02 am](#)

Rocketgirl, you are right that, ultimately, victims of psychopaths and narcissists need to step back and realize that these disordered individuals who lack a heart and a conscience are trivial (precisely because they lack the main qualities that make us human). However, because the bonds were so one-sided and intense and the trauma so severe, it's difficult to absorb such a realization on an emotional level immediately. It takes time, information, a lot of support, as you well know. It's not an easy process, but it's doable. We're all here to help each other through this. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 18, 2011 [3:05 am](#)

Rocketgirl, you're so fortunate that after going no contact your psychopathic ex has not attempted to contact you again. Some do, however, even years after you go no contact with them. It all depends on how they handle rejection or the end of a dominance bond. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 18, 2011 [3:10 am](#)

Lesley, if I may intervene here in the debate with rocketgirl: I think that the ultimate goal for each victim, and what in fact each of us desires, is to put these sordid relationships with disordered individuals behind us. Rocketgirl is right to say they don't deserve our suffering and attention. And you're so right to point out that it's not a voluntary suffering or self-indulgence on the part of victims. Rather, the betrayal and trauma of the psychopathic bond is so severe that many victims take a lot of time, and experience a lot of pain, in absorbing the truth: that these individuals they thought loved them are total frauds who never loved them, but, on the contrary, wanted to use and hurt them. We each heal at different speeds and in different ways, but information about personality disorders and mutual support are very important to putting these disastrous relationships behind us. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 18, 2011 [3:11 am](#)

Linda, definitely, as I've said before, we all wish to heal and get over the psychopathic bond, but the healing takes time and it's not without rumination, sense of betrayal, ambivalence and suffering. After all, we're not healing from normal relationships that go wrong, but from

fraudulent relationships that were never right. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 18, 2011 [3:21 am](#)

Rocketgirl, I think that forums such as psychopathyawareness, lovefraud, and other quality informational websites are mainly informational websites and secondarily support forums for victims to exchange information and offer mutual support to one another. Even forums that feature some of the top experts on personality disorders, such as lovefraud.com, can't be a substitute for individual therapy, where a victim meets with a professional face to face, or at the very least by phone. Of course, I'd encourage victims who feel they need therapy to find a therapist who is trained in personality disorders who understands their plight and can help them heal. However, I think that quality informational websites on personality disorders are excellent supplements to that personal therapy as well as a kind of gateway to realizing you've been involved with a personality disordered individuals. Without the excellent articles on lovefraud, by therapists and victims alike, I'd have never realized that I was involved with a psychopath and woken up from the psychopathic bond. Moreover, a lot of therapists aren't specifically trained in personality disorders and may offer advice that is more appropriate for more or less normal relationships, not the psychopathic bond. When readers access websites like lovefraud.com and psychopathyawareness, they learn about personality disorders, see if this information applies to their relationships, and are able to share all this with their therapist, which can only enhance the personal therapy process. Finally, I think that victims supporting other victims is a very important part of healing. Support groups, be they online or in person, let victims know they are not alone. This is all the more important because the psychopathic bond is so traumatizing to victims that most normal people can't relate to what victims have gone through. Other victims can relate to this experience and offer encouragement during moments of weakness or ambivalence to other victims. I know that the lovefraud support group, not just the informational articles, have helped me. I started psychopathyawareness mainly as an informational website about psychopathy, to do my share to inform others and help them escape from the psychopathic bond the way lovefraud has helped me. This website has gradually evolved into a support group during the last few months, and I'm glad to see victims exchanging information and trying to help and support each other. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 18, 2011 [3:24 am](#)

Lesley and Linda, it's normal to ruminate and feel pain about such an abnormal experience as the psychopathic bond. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 18, 2011 [3:31 am](#)

Rocketgirl, Linda, Lesley and everyone else: I am not being diplomatic when I honestly say that everyone has made valid points: You say that it's best to see these psychopaths for the trivial human beings that they are and put them behind us. That's the goal, we all agree. But, as Lesley and Linda have pointed out, the road is hard, and harder for some than for others, if they were

very emotionally invested in the psychopath and the illusion of love he or she offered. Also, some victims were devastated not just emotionally, but also financially. For some, their families or marriages were destroyed as well. It takes so much information, support and strength to recover from this. I think we also agree that no support group or informational website, no matter how good it is, is a substitute for individual therapy with a specialist trained in personality disorders. I have stated earlier that such websites are both an introduction to this subject (since that's how many victims realize they are or were involved with personality disordered individuals) and a supplement to real-life therapy, plus a support forum which can be helpful. Of course, any support group will have some tension or disagreements some of the time. The stronger support groups, such as lovefraud and hopefully this one (as it continues to grow), will resolve them well. Which doesn't mean that everyone has to agree or even like each other. Just that everyone has to be honest and at the same time respectful to the other members, so that debates or disagreements don't devolve into mutual insults. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 18, 2011 [3:33 am](#)

Kelli, thanks for your comment. Yes, I do my best to respond to comments as promptly as possible and I addressed this debate as soon as I read it. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 18, 2011 [3:35 am](#)

Joanne, thanks for sharing your experiences. Your comments have helped several bloggers. Absolutely, sharing our experiences, learning about personality disorders, encouraging each other when we're depressed or feel any temptation to communicate with psychopathic ex's, are all an important part of this and any functioning support group. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 18, 2011 [3:44 am](#)

Linda and Kelli, I have noticed that lovefraud has a very useful technique called "potted plant" which is a way the contributors deal with trolls or psychopaths posing as victims. This tends to work very well from what I've observed. I try my best to keep the spam or very offensive or suspicious comments off psychopathyawareness, however if you feel that you are being harassed by a troll, then I'd suggest that you adopt a similar strategy and ignore him or her. Not engaging with them works very well on lovefraud. Having said that, I am not saying that rocketgirl is a troll. I think in this case the debate degenerated because of the manner in which the argument was expressed. If we can do our best to express our points of view with consideration for each other's feelings, or if we feel offended, state so and communicate with each other respectfully, I think most arguments will be resolved pretty quickly. No support forum is without any tension. No human relationships are without tension. It's all about how we handle that tension that determines the quality of a support forum or of any human communication. If there are glitches or tension, let's smooth them over by communicating as respectfully as we can. If there's a troll or a very offensive person on this blog, I will block him or her as soon as I determine that's what he or she is. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 18, 2011 [3:50 am](#)

Rocketgirl, personally, I don't think you're a troll. What you said makes some common sense. But I've addressed the point about the value of informational websites and online support groups on psychopathy as an introduction to this subject and supplement to face-to-face therapy as well as a source of mutual support. If you don't feel that you need this information (because you are an expert/educator on the subject) and mutual support (because you have already healed) or wish to offer it to other victims, that's fine. This website is for those who do need this information and wish to share their experiences and to support each other through the process of healing from the psychopathic bond, which is a unique and traumatic experience. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 18, 2011 [3:53 am](#)

Donna, he's circling around you again, like a wolf around potential prey. Whether he's already bored with some of his new prey or just unwilling to let former prey go, his motives are predatory. I hope that you will continue the policy of No Contact. Claudia

Comment by whatwuzthat on August 18, 2011 [4:02 am](#)

Okay, I didn't realize a "troll" is someone who disrupts a blog site. I thought a troll lives under a bridge like in the fable Three Billy Goats Gruff.

My son who is 15 was telling me about "trolls" on his video game blog. Obviously I know less about blogging than I do about psychopathy. ;<)

Joanne

Comment by ibelcuthbert@rocketmail.com on August 18, 2011 [8:49 am](#)

Hi Claudia

Thank you . I agree with everything you have said on this debate. I actually did agree to an extent with what rocketgirl was saying, I was though trying to say, as you have pointed out, that we all take time to heal in different ways. It was more the tone of the post that I found slightly disconcerting.

When i found this site I felt that your articles were so well written, that they explained so much that I had thought about, beat myself up about, worried about. And when other bloggers posted their comments it was all situations I could relate to, feelings I had felt too and wondered if it was me that was mad. In the past four months since finding your site, and of course the no contact, I have become more myself again, not as stressed, stronger, more knowledgeable and know that I am on the road to being more like me again. However, I could not have done that without this site, or rather it would have taken me longer. Also without documenting my experiences I think they would have stayed inside, maybe forever, and I for one do not want to be carrying around that grief and hurt for the rest of my life. If you bury these things then one day I am sure they come back to haunt you and possibly affect your future happiness in relationships. I could not talk to my friends, as I have said before, because they simply do not understand fully the damage

that can be done. They of course agree that my ex was the most evil person that they have ever heard of, but to describe the scenarios, situations and the ultimate emotional damage is very difficult to convey unless you have been there.

I for one have never really been angry about what has happened to me, and I do try to get this over in my posts, though its hard as you can take so much out of context with the written word. I have felt a lot of sadness, grief, confusion, guilt, going over every small word that was said in my head a thousand times over and total frustration. However, I do not feel the same now, or rather it is not as intense. You cannot rationalise with the irrational, and to remove yourself and go no contact is the only way. It is the dealing with the aftermath on your own that is the part of the process that I for one found hard to do. But Claudia your articles and explanations and the other bloggers on your site has helped me immensely and I am a thousand times better than I was six months ago. I shall continue to read every piece you do and I thank you and everyone on this site for helping me get back to how I used to be.

Love

lesleyxxx

Comment by Michael on August 18, 2011 12:01 pm

Claudia and all; it would seem a reasonable and a realistic appraisal regarding the contributions offered above by someone claiming "professional" status, and yet allows herself to spiral into what I can only describe as a hyperbole of judgementalism, and insults. The cornerstone of any good therapist I'm sure- nuff said.

I maintain that recovery from a psychopathic / personality disordered cluster B is a very lengthy process in direct comparison to grieving the breakup of a normal relationship; we all know that there is a vast qualitative difference and they are not comparable. I believe that to send anybody the message that they should just "move on", get on with it, find someone else, or there are plenty more fish in the sea; this invalidates our experince and causes more damage as it undermines our experiences that gave rise to such awaful pain and shock.

Regarding your post Claudia; Cluster B's cannot really relate: intimacy is foreign to them because it involves an emotional constitution that can feel; feel love, compassion, sensitivity, or to put it another way; an emotional 3-6 year old cannot emotionally relate in an adult healthy way.

They cannot abide their sense of all encompassing emptiness; their futile attempts at intimacy and relationships are attempts to amp up the volume on their little ephemeral tiny little emotional whispers that are fleeting, erratic, and unstable depending on who is around to mirror them and collude (unwittingly) with their false mask.

Without mirrors they dont exist; and so they work hard at constructing a network or a hall of mirrors that provide them with this narcissistic supply. When they have a new source, dont expect even basic civility from them unless they need you as ego fuel. When the fuel dries up; expect decalrations of care about you, and they would love you to be friends. They neither want you to close (it messes with their freedom), nor to distant (they may need your fuel someday).

They move in and out of peoples lives, partners, friendships- its all really the same. We exist to serve a utilitarian function; we are objects to them. Their return is never carved in stone; it depends on how many sources of supply they have on the boil; it could be days, weeks, or years, or never at all. If you attempt to hold up a mirror to them and show them who they really are (or rather who they are not): they soon run for cover.

Michael

Comment by Michael on August 18, 2011 [12:20 pm](#)

Forgive my spelling and grammar!

Comment by ibelcuthbert@rocketmail.com on August 18, 2011 [12:56 pm](#)

Michael. Brilliant post, once again. Thank you for always nailing the description of life with and after a path. I just sit and nod my head and feel better by reading what you and Claudia say.

lesleyxx

Comment by rocketgirl on August 18, 2011 [2:08 pm](#)

Wow, Michael, unlike yourself, or the couple of women here, I did not insult anyone, nor single any one person out. I made observations..about being attacked, I told truths that there most likely are women writing to this forum who are Cluster B's themselves and become vitriolic when they perceive criticism when guidance and direction were provided. It seems that you have given yourself special status here and there is no room for another opinion than those narcissists who write in to praise your brilliance.

I'm not interested in being liked or desire your approval. I do not like being misquoted though. As in I never said moving on was immediate, never said moving on meant another relationship or that there are plenty of fish in the sea. Its a manipulative tactic to take something said and make it into a global problem.

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 18, 2011 [2:34 pm](#)

Michael, I appreciate your eloquent defense of victims and explanation why it's not so easy to simply move on. Ironically, many of us have been told to just build a bridge and get over it even by people who care about us. But usually they can't relate to what we have gone through with a pathological individual with whom we built a relationship that turned out to be a fraud. I also appreciate your clear explanation of the psychopath's underlying narcissism and need for narcissistic supply: it's the main reason why psychopaths can't let go of their targets. Without them, they would die of boredom because they'd have nobody to mirror them and would be left just with their empty selves. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 18, 2011 [2:37 pm](#)

Joanne, I learned this term from lovefraud. Yes, a troll is someone who either pretends to be a victim to disturb a support group or who disturbs a support group without any pretense, directly. We get both on psychopathyawareness occasionally, as on any support group, particularly since psychopaths enjoy playing games with others. But I try to identify and block most of them. If I can't detect them soon enough and they cause a disruption on the blog, I think it's a good idea for the support group to let me know about them and to ignore them until I block them. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 18, 2011 2:39 pm

Lesley, I appreciate everything you've said. I started this blog for people like you, to inform and help others as others have helped and informed me on lovefraud.com and other informational websites. If each victim can reach out and help others as best we can, then this information about personality disorders can help not just victims but also those who have not yet become involved with psychopaths or who are at the beginning phases of toxic relationships. Such websites can become preventive sources of information for the general public. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 18, 2011 2:52 pm

Rocketgirl, I recall that you wrote a few helpful posts on this blog to a contributor named Heather. I think sometimes debates become more unpleasant disagreements when we express things in a way that hurts others, even if our message was well-intentioned. At other times they become disagreements when we intend to hurt others. I don't know which was the case in this situation, but I'd hope that since you claim to be well-informed about personality disorders and a health professional (if I understood you correctly), you didn't intend to hurt or insult victims of personality disordered individuals, who have gone through so much pain already and whom few people who haven't gone through this shattering experience can understand. Personally, I give you the benefit of the doubt and interpret you to have said it's best to reduce the psychopath down to size (he or she is always an insignificant human being because of his or her incapacity to love or to have empathy) in order to diminish one's own suffering and pain after the relationship is over. In fact, I plan to write a blog post on this subject.

As for everyone else: if you feel offended by anyone on this blog or feel insulted, of course, feel free to defend your perspective as you would on any other forum. If the debate goes in circles or escalates, I'd suggest ignoring that individual, the "potted plant" policy that works well on lovefraud. But also please let me know, so that I can moderate the situation. Often the tension will be based on a misunderstanding and the insult on the form rather than content of the message. These kinds of misunderstandings can be clarified and smoothed over on a blog as they are in real life. It's my job as a moderator to try to do so. However, sometimes the tension will erupt as a result of a "troll" who pretends to be a victim or one who aims to harass victims without any pretense. Finally, on rare occasions offensive spam ends up on blogs. In all three situations, please let me know and I'll intervene as soon as I can to resolve the matter. After all, psychopathyawareness has become a support group, so I will do my best to keep this blog civil and supportive in both content and tone. Claudia

Comment by whatwuzthat on August 18, 2011 [2:56 pm](#)

Claudia, I do consider myself very lucky that the relationship didn't develop into anything involving life or financial commitment. At the time I was so wrapped up in the pain my ex was causing me I would have tried anything to make things work.

Since my ex was a friend / co worker for over a decade i kept ignoring all the glaring warning signs, I believed what he was telling me, and I let him come back and forth into my life thinking I was being supportive of his situation.

He had lost a high paying job which he will never be able to replace, and he claimed he was "stuck" with his 65 year old ex partner and he could not seem to rid himself of her. In reality he will never get rid of her, she is his favorite source of attention and an excellent blocking mechanism for developing a healthy relationship with someone closer to his age.

Why would a grown man live with a woman 15 years his senior as a room mate, extremely bizarre. People from our office use to talk about how weird it was. Sometimes I can't believe i got sucked into feeling sorry for him. He claims she is such a good friend yet he hid our relationship from her for over a year.

Now I realize that he is simply incapable of any kind of normal relationship no matter who he choses so I am far better off alone.

Thank you again for this wonderful blog. It has been so valuable to me.

Joanne

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 18, 2011 [2:59 pm](#)

Joanne, you're welcome, I'm so glad this blog could help you. And yes, you're very fortunate that you didn't entangle your financial resources with the psychopath as well. He'd have been fraudulent there too, as he was in your love life, and sapped them dry. Many victims are left with basically nothing because the psychopaths they were with conned them financially not only emotionally. Claudia

Comment by LINDA on August 18, 2011 [3:06 pm](#)

Michael, Claudia and all: Very well expressed!!! In my personal search for truth I have asked myself HOW I could have let this relationship escalate to such an unhealthy degree. I can only conclude that the facade and illusion of what he played for me was so powerful and convincing that it over rode the red flags; I simply did NOT want to accept what he REALLY was or maybe with pathologicals for awhile you are in some ways powerless to accept this reality? Now I ask myself a better question: Why am I experiencing such pain and turmoil over a relationship that NEVER EVEN existed? I entered the relationship with hope for a better future with a partner that seemed to be the perfect match for me and now I had to end the relationship knowing and trying to process that a relationship never existed because I was targeted by a psychopath.

Am I to conclude for one minute that I was disordered in some way myself for believing, loving and having hope for what is a normal process when it comes to matters of love? Of course not!!!! My counselor was firm and direct and he NEVER "coddled" me and even after asking him if I had some disorder myself he reassured me I was perfectly normal but was not at a place of being mentally healthy after being exposed to a path and it was his goal to get me on the path to becoming whole and healthy again. This is what these dangerous clusters do, they cause great mental harm to all their victims and targets; so not only do we have to heal emotionally from such a violation but mentally as well. Sorry but I have never quite had an experience such as this; someone who pretended to love me for 4 years in order to feed his disorder. Its also quite shocking to me that NO CONTACT would be difficult, after all who in the hell would WANT to contact someone this disturbed? Sometimes I wish he would call and say, "you were just dreaming, none of this really happened" but I woke up from my deep dream and realized I was really living in a nightmare for 4 years. I WOKE UP and with that I KNOW I can heal and recover from the damage this predator did to me.

Linda

Comment by [kelli \(http://.gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://.gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 18, 2011 3:11 pm
Rocket girl,

I think, initially, you made a few valid points with regards to recovery. There are times that I have myself wondered if it's healthy to read or blog as much as I do, if that may not in fact, slow the recovery process.

Having said that. Michael is one of the most valuable contributors here, in my opinion, and if you read other posts that he has put forth here, he has experience in working with Cluster B's as a mental health professional as well as having survived a Cluster B disordered individual. One of the things that is telling about the way you write is the accusations made that you can tell who is BPD here, narcissistic or whatever diagnosis your throwing out. If you are indeed a therapist, I think you might understand that your approach this way in not knowing any of us, is rather unethical, as well as presumptuous on your part. The "attacking" I'm perceiving is the assumptions made by other posters, via judgments and labels. I'm sure you know that this would trigger many here who are still dealing with their recovery process. The denial here on your part is that you've not insulted anyone, while clearly, other posters here would disagree with that. Your statement above, "I told truths that there most likely are women writing to this forum who are Cluster B's themselves and become vitriolic when they perceive criticism when guidance and direction were provided. It seems that you have given yourself special status here and there is no room for another opinion than those narcissists who write in to praise your brilliance". This, in its entirety alone is a projection.

What you feel is your truth, may not be the truth of others. Michael, Claudia, nor anyone else here has assigned themselves special status, but that statement does imply that you do. When you don't.

There is a great deal of disrespect in your perspective with regards to other posters here and, I think, a desire to stir the pot for those who are struggling in their process.

Comment by Michael on August 18, 2011 3:34 pm

Rocketgirl; I am sorry that you believe I have misquoted you. You may note that I have only quotes around two words; those being "move on" which are the precise words you use at the end of your post above. The rest of that same sentence I believe accurately captures the flavor and sentiments of the attitude you apparently convey. On a final note, referring to a person and or persons as "losers" I believe correctly constitutes an insult.

In regards to your view that I have in some way assigned myself special status; my status is the same as all others who contribute by sharing their stories, and narrative, and the knowledge that they have accrued about personality cluster B disorders along their journey towards recovery. Personally I welcome and value your opinion; however your attitude and insulting tone is not welcome; whether it is targeted at myself or anyone else who benefits and shares this illuminating resource and climate for support. With this in mind, if your provocative posturing attitude resurfaces I will simply ignore you until you leave it at the doorstep. When you do leave this attitude at the doorstep; I would be grateful and appreciative to exchange views and experiences with you around pathological relationships.

you say-"when they perceive criticism when guidance and direction were provided". Perhaps there may be some value with all respect rocketgirl that you save your guidance and direction, which I'm sure you provide with the best of intentions, for those who ask for it. Lest you may potentially be misunderstood as conveying the message of- I know what is best for you, stop being this and be more that; if you know what I mean.

Comment by ibelcuthbert@rocketmail.com on August 18, 2011 3:44 pm

Keli and Claudia

Thanks for your two posts. To be perfectly honest I find rocket girls comments, especially her last post which Keli you have quoted from, a personal attack on me and my comment to Michael about his brilliant post. If I didn't know any better I would think that she was my ex path in cognito as I do find that some of the wording of some of her posts seems to be laced with disgust, ill patience and condescension all of which he was very good at. If I am reading these incorrectly then I apologise.

On any of my posts since rocket girl joined us on this I have tried to explain myself in a kind way and have most definitely not insulted anyone (i have added "hahaha as i try to convey my laughter and trying to bring some lightness back into what became a very negative exchange). I actually feel like I am trying to fight my corner with someone who is like my ex and that should not be happening . As I have said before though you cannot rationalise with the irrational, as any post rocket girl seems to read she "sees" insults and vitriolic rage which none of us have, I think , meant to project throughout this whole thread.

As i said before I agreed with what she was saying in some of her post, I just found the tone and

delivery somewhat dubious.

Ignoring is indeed the only way forwards.

Lesleyxx

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 18, 2011 [3:50 pm](#)

Linda,

From some of the readings I've been doing about Cluster B's, etc, it takes victims approximately 18 months to recover. Some it takes longer, others a shorter period of time. I think there are so many variables that an average time is all that can be given. I too, have asked my therapist if I'm disordered and have worried about it. I had a major trigger this week, information I found out about my ex and it was back to square one again. She told me that everything I'm going through is normal, but same as yours, I'm not in a healthy place yet. PTSD to the max. This is why I chose a therapist who does EMDR therapy. She is very knowledgeable about Cluster B's and the victims of such. I trust her judgment and feel that working with her will help me develop new skills and to rid myself of the toxins that remain from my ex. I also think that being with a Cluster B for a long time, requires one to take on their traits just to deal with them. This becomes a habit or "addiction". I was reading about oxytocin the other day and the article read that it takes two years OXYTOCIN FREE to get past a pathological. It was very interesting and helpful to me. Oxytocin is a very powerful hormone for women, and the pathological uses it to keep us tied to him, mainly through sex, but also through warm fuzzies and the bone tosses he/she gives us when they believe we are leaving the relationship. THE push/pull stuff we've talked about here. Each day I'm learning something new. It does take a long time to integrate information from brain to heart.
Kelli

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 18, 2011 [3:58 pm](#)

Lesley,

And that is the danger right there, the triggers that I fear other posters would have. This has happened to me before too. If the poster who is triggering you feels like the insulting machinations of your ex, it would be hard to post about your experience without feeling as if you're going to experience some sort of retribution for having done so. That's not what this blog is about, nor does it help with your healing process. Tone and delivery is what our ex's counted on to invalidate us or to "shut us up" as it were. I think the label of "losers" that she used, for me, sums up her perspective of some bloggers here. That's enough to put the ignore switch on, yet the insulting of posters continues and is bothersome to me, not for me so much personally, as it is to see other bloggers triggered or upset. Kelli

Comment by Michael on August 18, 2011 [4:32 pm](#)

Linda; that is one of the bizzare mind benders with a cluster B; it is all so disorientating. Cognitive dissonance, splitting, high levels of Oxytocin released during make up sex, intermittent reinforcement, promises made to change, declarations of a special attachment, bond, special sexual connection, lies, manipulation, gaslighting your reality off base, all combine and weave

together an incredibly potent web of illusion and deceit, that keeps us ensnared. Eventually though I was unable to reconcile the conflicting gaping grand canyon between what she said; and what she did. I began to feel in some weird ambient way that I had been gradually taken emotional hostage; a little piece at a time. Towards the end I just stopped talking about how I felt; when i did I became a dysfunctional mirror to her. I remember reading something very striking in boomerang love; it was a sign above a door into the life of a Cluster B which read "abandon yourself all ye who enter here". How very true! she just could not talk about her own behaviour, she would either mirror my own position back to me and take on the identity of my upset, lie, project, or exercise complete emotional detachment (revealing there was not any real attachment to begin with), threaten to abandon the relationship, sometimes in a nebulous manner, hinting at it, she would sometimes talk almost from a third person perspective as though she was commenting on someone elses relationship, a relationship that she was not in; very weird indeed.

Comment by rocketgirl on August 18, 2011 [5:03 pm](#)

Claudia, I am sure you have blocked my responses. I'll say it again, I think your articles are fabulous and helpful and relevant, but these people writing into this forum are so deep into their Ian dysfunction, reading their analysis of what they went through doesn't seem helpful at all, these people are in just a different kind of trap, and pompous Michael enjoys keeping them there, instinctively I can read that. I say cut the forum aspect of your blog, its not helping. I know other people in the healing arts who think these types of forums are full of personality disordered folks, who may be victims, too, but they're just learning how to be better at their victim game... remember psychopaths try to make you feel sorry for them , they attack on a person to person basis with vitriol, that's what you've got going here.

Comment by Michael on August 18, 2011 [5:12 pm](#)

Claudia, Linda, Kelli, Lesley, and all. I have been thinking about the psychological and emotional damage a cluster B / psychopathy personality construct has on our lives and why?

In all relationships there is an element of mirroring; mirroring is by and large that mechanism that helps lubricate social interaction; particularly in the getting to know you, getting to know all about you phase (forgive the reference to the sound of music if you can :-))

Through the process of "getting to know you", we accrue experience of the "other", our hearts (feelings / emotions) form the floor that this experience rests upon and fills. We grow to care and love others, and have real compassion and can empathise and therefore feel them.

Now imagine, as it is with our cluster B's that their experience travels through their senses, down into their emptiness where their heart (feelings / emotions) should be, and falls straight out of their backside. It can take years to figure out their lack of narrative with us. We were to busy being taken in by their manipulative bullshit (and my oh my they are good at spinning the BS). I believe that when they discard us only this time they do not immediately bounce back with the same gusto (most often they may give you the "I can only offer you friendship, routine) it is almost always when they have lined up a replacement.

If humans do mirror to some extent, which they do; is it any wonder that when we are finally exposed to the truth via their sudden departure, as they skip off remorseless, we find ourselves feeling hollowed out inside, we feel empty? We wake up to the con and realise we had our hearts stolen; it is only temporary, and in some respects it gives us a transient emotional inside look at the cluster B's heart (or lack of it); our empathy falls down the big bottomless black hole that was cloak and guised as the "love of our life".

Comment by LINDA on August 18, 2011 [5:19 pm](#)

Kelli: Thanks for your response regarding "being at a place of being mentally healthy" I realize these monsters prey upon our weaknesses and God knows we all have them. However, I will never believe my personal weakness is that of a Cluster B disorder, as I am not a predator who is deliberate in destroying others for my personal amusement and gain; and I am going to react "flippantly" to that diagnosis especially from an individual who doesn't even know my middle name let alone my history. As far as the term "loser"? I may have lost many things due to this experience but I am in no way a loser and either is anybody else on this site. Furthermore I fail to see how we are narcissists who praise Michael with his narratives; Michael has a true gift for expressing himself and I admire that talent, he has also given me some facts to think about in his personal experience as well as others. I will continue to read Claudia's great articles but I will refrain from further comments at this time until this insulting poster is removed. I have always enjoyed exchanging our thoughts and feelings with you Kelli. Linda

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 18, 2011 [5:32 pm](#)

Michael,

I agree with this. But I have a question. Eight months out now, almost nine actually, I'm still struggling with cog/dis. While initially, it was a relief to be out from all the daily abuse, I have since learned that he has remarried someone young, beautiful and rich and she is also with child at the moment. Now I feel like I'm back to square one all over again. I'm just coming to terms with the reality that the whole thing was a lie, HE was the lie and the profile of what he is NOW, is not someone I KNEW eight months ago. Everything from what he wears to political/religious affiliations has completely changed. I realized he is "rebuilding" his image. In trying to cope with unbelievable sadness and despairing about all of this, I'm working very hard to recall the behaviors I saw early on that are symptomatic and across the board for Cluster B's. Can he change? Has he changed? Yes, in a way he HAS, through the mirroring of someone else. He will be whatever she wants him to be and that is exactly what's happening. But isn't it so, that with a Cluster B, the mask must slip eventually as a result of the underlying behaviors? IN other words, can a Cluster B hide this aspect of themselves for a very long time? In thinking about this more, The mask he wore for me was much different, nor do I think it was on as tightly as it was for other women he pursued or was with (wives). I wonder about the behaviors I saw now. Were THEY even real? It's a very confusing painful time for me right now in accepting what happened and the gaping hole that still lives for me in that it was me and NOT him. Even though involvement was me too, if that makes sense. There are now questions given the catch he got that

he married, as to whether or not the abuse, or his core behaviors were just with me. My therapist has shared that a lot of women feel this way when the path moves onto someone else and seems so "happy". Do the core behaviors change? I don't think I'm asking this correctly. Kelli

Comment by whatwuzthat on August 18, 2011 [6:12 pm](#)

Hi Michael,

I can relate to your comments:

"Cognitive dissonance, splitting, high levels of Oxytocin released during make up sex, intermittent reinforcement, promises made to change, declarations of a special attachment, bond, special sexual connection, lies, manipulation, gaslighting your reality off base, all combine and weave together an incredibly potent web of illusion and deceit, that keeps us ensnared. Eventually though I was unable to reconcile the conflicting gaping grand canyon between what she said; and what she did. I began to feel in some weird ambient way that I had been gradually taken emotional hostage" Exactly ... very well put. Sounds identical to my relationship.

"(most often they may give you the "I can only offer you friendship, routine) it is almost always when they have lined up a replacement." Mine kept saying he didn't want to be in a relationship right now, yet he was already in another one for 4 months whilst I was still trying to understand/cope with his sudden sexually fueled bizzare departure.

" we are finally exposed to the truth via their sudden departure" — This too was my experience.

It sounds like the therapist you have been working with has provided you with a wealth of information. Thanks for sharing what you've learned.

Regardless of all the noise and opinion of those who think these conversations are not helping us heal, for me that is not the case. The information shared here is very empowering.

Joanne

Comment by Michael on August 18, 2011 [6:26 pm](#)

Kelli; to begin with 9 months is not such a long time in terms of the process of recovery; people of course do recover at their own pace, mediated by a host of both internal and external resources. I can only draw on my own personal experience here, but in past failed relationships, I have hurt like buggery for 3-4 months as I moved through the grieving stages, but then as we all do, I picked ourselves up and get back in the race.

A pathological relationship is different; we go from the initial shock and disbelief, we feel numb, we are hurtled into even more confusion then we experienced when we were still in the relationship. Mass confusion is the hallmark. I repeat- mass confusion is the hallmark. we try to re-engage them, looking for the signs that our history with them was real, only to find that it has all fallen through the bottomless bucket I refer to in an earlier post. It is all gone; no history, no

narrative; your left with a story, a relationship that never was; and you will not get any closure that's for sure. someone else is now fulfilling your function Kelli; but that is all, a function, if he is indeed cluster B. She is not through the looking glass, but you are. She will have to walk the same path you walked.

We ruminate, dissect, angle in our heads, engage in self reproach, self doubt, and we are plagued by so many questions we can feel like we are drowning. We ask ourselves- was it me, if i had done something differently would we still be together, will they ride off into the sunset with their next victim, perhaps they have changed and grown; a common experience is that the discarded who have at least been given a definition or have come across info online that resonates with their experience are plagued with this question- "is he / she or isnt he / she".

To answer your question; the behaviours will vary, because the objects vary. However the core traits will not. his core emptiness no matter how well concealed will not suddenly become whole / filled. Cluster B's in all their childlike peter pan approach to relationships, tend to idealise. They need so desperately to believe we are the one, we are the perfect love that will push them through their emptiness and they will experience love; however it always alludes them. They grow bored with us as is their tendency to do so. If they cannot love you, and yet at the same time they cannot live without you (a mirror); then all that is left is a relentless drive to control and manipulate you. But guess which self serving need drives their manipulation?

Comment by Michael on August 18, 2011 [6:57 pm](#)

Claudia and all; I have stated my view before in previous posts. Recovery is not a single decision, nor is it an event. Recovery is very much a process that involves initially educating ourselves around the cluster B personality, and the relationship dynamics. Then as we begin to grasp and understand this with the increasingly clarity that being separated from them affords us; we begin to gain increasing clarity and perspective. No contact, which is also a process and not a decision; is the vehicle that provides us with beginning the painful and very difficult process of becoming disembroiled and unmeshed. we begin to separate and our psychic homeostasis begins to return to normal.

we have witnessed the emptiness behind the mask; we can provide testimony to the unbelievable pain that we previously could not have comprehended as we found ourselves tumbling helplessly down their bottomless pit.

We recover, piece by piece, one step at a time. Once we comprehend enough our cluster B's plight, and how it impacted on us; we begin focusing on us. Before we can, in my view we have to come to terms with the fact that rather than meet our soul mate, we fell into a meaningless bottomless pit that was disguised as our soulmate. Go figure!

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 18, 2011 [6:57 pm](#)

Michael,

Those indeed are the questions I'm asking myself. I have so much self doubt about my experience. About the abuse. So many questions that are unanswered and never will be. I don't know what to make of the "story", the last ten years of my life. I can't even label it anymore, as it has no meaning now. It's almost as if it was a mirage and in a sense it was, given what he is....I haven't figured out how to come to terms with that. His moving on so quickly, particularly with the woman that he has and status she gives him, has me questioning myself, my experience with him and my perceptions of what I thought I was dealing with in him. Was I wrong? I don't know anymore and this puts me into despairing and more ruminating which is driving me crazy!

Is the boredom they experience with us, a time when they realize they can no longer keep the mask on? Is this when the honeymoon is over?

Your last question is a good one. I have no idea which self serving need drives their manipulation, because, from what I experienced, there were MANY. Thanks for your post. It provokes much thought for me going through the process. I think my grieving was somewhat delayed and am now experiencing the full impact with this new information. Kelli

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 18, 2011 [7:00 pm](#)

I think this is an important point Michael, as I'm now discovering with regards to the process, however, the length that it is taking is very discouraging at times. I just want to be done with this.

Comment by Michael on August 18, 2011 [7:12 pm](#)

Kelli, boredom is synonymous with the psychopaths lack of feeling, and emptiness. The honeymoon is over when they realise they have you hooked and your invested. It is not unusual, in fact very common for a cluster B to begin introducing triangulations, moving goalposts, devaluing you, push me pull you mean and sweet cycles. You begin to accrue evidence that this honest integruous person is lieing to you. It takes a long time and lets not forget that they can on the surface of things be charming, witty, upbeat, charismatic, good conversation and so on. Let us not forget that for the most part; their mask of sanity is well and truly in situ.

Comment by Michael on August 18, 2011 [7:18 pm](#)

Kelli; of course you do want to be done with this. But you will get there. There will come a time when you wake up and get through a day when you think- I havnt thought about him all day. It takes time; we need to be kind to ourselves and trust that all that we are, our humanness is moving us forward and we are growing in the right direction. Once we see the pit in all its bottomless emptiness, we stop falling and turn our back on it; we see what we they are.

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 18, 2011 [7:47 pm](#)

Michael,

Infidelity seems synonymous with Cluster B's. He now seems "faithful" to this one. Is it possible, that some will stay faithful, despite boredom, if they are getting what they want from the person, in particular, money?

One of the things that is just blowing my mind, is how they can change their ENTIRE personas to be unrecognizable to past victims, while totally mirroring the new victim. I've been reading and listening to a lot of Thomas Sheridan. Have you heard of him? For some reason, I can't post links here, but his you tube videos and radio interviews about his book and psychopaths is incredibly helpful to me as this site is. He doesn't come from a professional perspective, but like Claudia, from a the perspective of a survivor and he has had many run ins with psychopaths. Because each of our situations appear to be so different, yet eerily similar in some respects, I learn so much from varying perspective and insights rather than just one. That's why this blog is so helpful, the articles so helpful and various reads I've indulged in. Have you heard of this guy? If you've not, check him out!

Comment by LINDA on August 18, 2011 [8:34 pm](#)

Michael:how they can change their ENTIRE personas to be unrecognizable to past victims, while totally mirroring the new victim.

I guess that comes just as close to Jeckyl and Hyde as you can get. To further elaborate on that note they must maintain and remember the stage of the game they are at with each and every target they are working. They just hung up the phone talking to victim 1 who is in the mirroring stage as victim 10 is calling him/her that is in a devalue and discard stage. They must keep track of who they are punishing and who they are idolizing at any given moment, and of course which calls they must answer and which calls they dont need to answer.

Someone just asked me about Thomas Sheridan a few days ago so it might be worth some good reading on my part. Michael when it comes down to it I guess it doesnt matter which stage or cycle of the game we were in it was all an act anyway; even when they discard you there was NEVER a real reason or justification for someone to discard you in such a cruel manner. They were just bored with you or you no longer provided them with the thrill of the initial hunt; this is when they try to blame us for what their disorder is. It took me a long time to stop blaming myself for HIS disorder but once I did it got easier. When you are with a disordered person you will never have order. Linda

Comment by LINDA on August 18, 2011 [8:39 pm](#)

Sorry I mean to reply to Kelli, geez I am not with it today – forgive me But yes Kelli when we see what they really do and sit back and watch them in action you can really see the sickness they have x0

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 18, 2011 [8:52 pm](#)

Linda,

It's very indirect, but it was the weirdest thing. WHO IS THIS Person??? I don't even know. For some reason, that kicked me. I don't quite know how to describe it! I guess in my mind, it's PROOF that he was/is the chameleon I thought he was. One of the things about the relationship

that use to tip me off, was the forever present of anything. Angry or happy or sexual, it was ALL in the moment. That still blows me away even now, but it does make sense given the new persona too. in the NOW. No past, no future....it's astounding to realize or try to understand. Kelli

Comment by Laney on August 18, 2011 [9:40 pm](#)

If I may make an attempt here....

Anything he told you about what his core values are, what he believes in, or what he wants out of life, was a lie, and subject to change on a whim depending who is is adapting his mask to entice.

What does not change are the abusive behaviors, the domination, the control, the leading people on and getting them to believe whatever ensures their compliance.

Is he happy with her? Maybe, if she is entertaining enough and compliant enough at any given moment.

Is she happy with him? Very possibly yes, he is performing for her, but she is seeing the red flag behaviors like we all did, and disbelieving her own intuition. Eventually she will have to make a choice...like us...of accepting reality or living in his lie.

I also got the insight from Claudia that they make sure to keep the mask on tightly if they have more to gain from the situation. When there is less to lose, aka not being top priority anymore, they don't work as hard at the act and allow their true nature to be more exposed.

I guess whether they keep the act up depends upon their continued incentive to do so. But they will find ways to entertain themselves at the partner's expense, even if she/he is allowed to go on about life completely blind to it.

Comment by Anna efstathiou on August 19, 2011 [10:15 am](#)

Claudia thank you I have been through long term PTSD anxiety and depression according to my counsellor but nothing helps me more and keeps me feeling sane than your posts you have helped me regain my self belief and strength the psycho decimated my career I have 4 degrees and 2 masters it's been 3 years of part time work but thanks to your posts and 2 books that had an impact i am finally putting on a positive face and attracting more Work everything you wrote is logical well documentes and basket up by exemples well thought out explanations i wish i could express how therapeutic and soul saving your posts have been please keep going and mâke this site. Much more exposed regards Anna in Australia

Comment by LINDA on August 19, 2011 [1:24 pm](#)

Michael: These thoughts you wrote triggers some thoughts of my own. During our entire time together I never ONCE saw him interact with others; he was always sneaking me off to some hotel like some dirty little secret, so it was always JUST US. I did however HEAR him interact with others on his dispatch radio while on duty, or when he talked to others on his cell phone in my presence. On that note, I observed he was different in his behavior with them. Kelli was

asking about their masks and I do believe they are a totally different person with each and every interaction they engage in. I would have LOVED to see him in a group that would have been REALLY interesting to observe. I imagine he would have been Mr. Smooth and the life of the party as many of them are. Years from now I will only view him as the masked man who pretended to be the "love of my life", actually I view him as that now but still working through some of the shock of what I encountered with a Cluster F, (I like to call him Cluster F—k) because that is exactly what he did to my mind.

Strange how I dont hate him, because this is who and what he is and he does it to everyone, it wasnt personal he certainly didnt turn into a psychopath for me, he was a psychopath long before I met him. He is a disgusting, immoral, remorseless, twisted, and perverted vile person who goes around pretending he is the opposite of the true evil that he is and this sick encounter caused me pain I never knew existed. The pain from the broken heart was the EASY part to recover from, it was the psychological pain and damage that just about destroyed me, seems that is the last in the aftermath that we struggle to get back.

Linda

Comment by LINDA on August 19, 2011 [1:41 pm](#)

Kelli: I also made that observation, everything was for the moment, and in the present here and now. No past, and certainly no future as he promised (what a joke) when he did speak of the future it was always vague nothing ever concrete. His favorite expression was: I dont know, I dont have a crystal ball to predict these things, or when I would ask, when will I see you again he would say; when I am standing in front of you, that could be 10 years from now, he was a clever manipulating bastard and a very very smart path he knew how to work people and keep them coming back. He knew the blame game, shame game, projection game, he had them MASTERED; he spent his LIFE doing this as I spent most of my life being a wife, mother and raising my children. Kelli at least we can reflect back in time to cherish certain memories and we can have hope for a better future; their past and future is the SAME – past destruction and future destruction that is what is behind them and that is what is ahead of them. I thank God my future will NEVER be with him even for a given "moment" he will always remain in my past. Linda

Comment by Michael on August 19, 2011 [7:19 pm](#)

Linda;I have read Sheridan's book puzzling people. It is worth a read. I think their ability to switch persona's can be understood in relation to their core emptiness. It took a long time to begin to wrap my head around this as it is almost impossible to comprehend.

Imagine an emptiness inside; the literature and the DSM lists in for example borderline personality disorder- a chronic feeling of emptiness; we find the same description with malignant narcissism or pathological narcissism. The same description of psychopaths also includes this lack of self, or emptiness.

However these descriptions when you research them are not a "feeling" of emptiness, emptiness

is not a feeling, it is a lack of feeling, or being hollow of emotion. Add to this, "identity disturbance" or "unstable" self image or sense of self. It builds a picture of no feeling and no sense of self- doesn't really leave much does it, what is left?

There is another theme across the cluster B continuum; narcissism and borderline and the false self, and psychopathy the mask of sanity. A mask, false self- comprised of what? Chameleon behaviour, mirroring. Narcissistic supply appears to be describing the mirrored reflection others provide that the cluster B uses to shore up and construct a face, a mask, a sense of self. Their sense of self ends where the reflection begins if that makes sense, a kind of patchwork comprised from what Gary in another post described as bits and pieces from other people; like a mosaic. Being highly and fiercely dependent on narcissistic supply is not the same as loving the object that provides the mirror. In fact these mirrors are by and large interchangeable. They can be easily swapped depending on availability of mirrors. When mirrors begin expressing needs, you will often hear words like suffocated, pressurised, needy, slipping into their vocabulary. We begin to feel devalued.

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 19, 2011 7:38 pm

I'm curious as to whether or not the devaluing begins once the "object" starts expressing their needs? It's interesting that you note that emptiness is not a feeling. VERY interesting and a very good point. No emotions is what it means. You're right in that emptiness isn't a feeling, but a lack of feeling. Perhaps this is tossed around too much as to mean that it IS a feeling. Maybe that also adds to the confusion in understanding a cluster B Michael. That somehow I could have fixed that emptiness. It can't be fixed. What is at the core then of their behaviors if the emptiness is true? For example, my ex was a big time baby when it came to anything physically wrong and had migraines almost constantly. The rage. The lying.what is at the CORE of Cluster B's? What is THEIRS so to speak, or is EVERYTHING borrowed as a mirror from others, or rather an accumulation of victims that are borrowed from? I've actually witnessed my ex take on the beliefs that I HAD about marriage. They were not his own, but this was projected as truth from him???

Comment by LINDA on August 19, 2011 8:24 pm

Kelli: you ask a good question, for me personally once I started asking questions the devaluing didn't begin however, the idolizing ended on his part. I think he was slowly trying to condition me to accept what the reality of it was; he still was charming and the mask was still there but he would NOT ALLOW the questioning and he made that clear with his answers; he would say things to keep me off track and confuse me but still the continual lure and promise of what was to never ever happen. The devaluing began for me when the mask was off, when HE KNEW I knew the con and gig was up it was then he tried to make me accept him for what he was and what he wanted me for; of course with a few bones and crumbs he would toss me now and then to keep the dog coming back for the prize. I think they HATE wearing those masks, it's a pain in the ass for them so they try and secure their targets and prey as quickly as possible – once they get them hooked they can loosen the straps on the mask – that is my take on it anyway and as I reflect back – Linda

Comment by Michael on August 19, 2011 8:29 pm

Kelli; before I share my view and take a stab at answering your question: I need to make it clear that in spite of my professional background; I offer my views as a survivor of a psychopathic relationship encounter, and someone who has researched, and read about cluster B and the psychopathic personality construct and the relationship dynamics that are the hallmark of this / these disorder/s.

The devaluing can be triggered by many factors; the availability of other mirrors, a perceived slight, a challenge (I do not mean a confrontational challenge; it could be a challenge around how they have upset you, or pretty much anything), their boredom. Cluster B's try to manipulate us into being just where they need us; that's the goal. It is not about love or care with a psychopath; it is getting from us what they need; and their need is ultimately self serving and overshadows any needs we may have. Remember; they can neither see us nor feel our needs. We are as much a stranger to them as they are unto themselves.

Comment by LINDA on August 19, 2011 8:40 pm

Michael: Thank you for that interpretation, very interesting as you state I think their ability to switch persona's can be understood in relation to their core emptiness. I remember when his mother died he was upset that I did not attend the funeral, (he put on quite a grieving act as his mother left him over a million) at any rate, his Gf asked why I didn't come to the funeral (I being his adoptive cousin) and he said to her, " Gosh I don't know she must be a shallow person" HOW DO YOU LIKE THAT? Talk about PURE PROJECTION at its finest huh Michael? I wanted to tell the GF at that time I declined an invitation to the funeral because your boyfriend wanted me to stay at your place and sleep with you both after the funeral and have a threesome so I thought it best to not attend, so WHO is shallow now? And who is grieving after such a loss – WHAT A JOKE – I don't know maybe it's just me but after my parents passed away I really didn't feel like having a threesome with members that paid their respects at their funeral, gosh but maybe I am wrong there mmmmm UNBELIEVABLE – He was a JOKE and he still manages to fool so many people even the woman that lives with him 24-7 – followers that have been lead astray I guess by the cult leader

They have NO sense of self there is NOTHING there NOTHING, they take bits and pieces just as you described like a mosaic to try to build an inner self from others – Linda

Comment by Michael on August 19, 2011 8:43 pm

Linda that is so true; the more we tolerate the more they push the boundaries on what we will accept; My ex actually told me at one point she could only see me once per fortnight, but we would be special companions, and fuckbuddies. She told me this before and after, that I was the second love of her life, she could be the father of my baby, and she did not want to lose me from her life. Within 7 months she was seducing her next victim; idealising him on facebook- she wrote "you are the most handsome guy on this side of the river, I will be checking in on your handsomeness regularly". (check out sheridans description of flattery on you tube). This was just

a few months after my serious head injury which almost killed me. When I challenged her about these emails, she told me I do not fancy him; he is not my equal!! She gave me the same flattery routine when I met her.

Comment by Laney on August 19, 2011 [8:49 pm](#)

I hear you on the projection, Linda...

In his final diatribe (final? we'll see...) he texted me that, "as on so many other occasions", it was obvious that his feelings didn't matter a f-ck to me. There's some more gold for the projection bank.

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 19, 2011 [9:59 pm](#)

MIchael, I do understand that, but your perceptions are interesting and provoke thought for me in understanding my experiences with my ex. I realize they come from your own experiences with a Cluster B.

I find the idealization and thus devaluation very interesting. What trips it for them. Why the honeymoon ends, why the devaluation begins. I know I have a further question about this, but I think I need to give it some more thought as to how to articulate it. But it starting to make more sense retrospectively, regarding my own experience. Kelli

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 19, 2011 [10:08 pm](#)

Linda,

Your response makes so much sense, as I've heard it said before by another blogger on another site who emphasized this constantly: "they can't WAIT to hook you to get that mask off, spaths don't like being nice". This was being explained to me when I found out ex was dating his new millionaire wife and was going to marry her. The sooner that happened the better, FOR HIM, because he could then let the mask slip and she would be hooked and trapped. This courtship was definitely whirlwind. His profile on another site was a COMPLETE morph into what she is. This is marriage three for him. And a shock for a lot of people. He didn't want anyone to know about me, because he hasn't told her. From my perspective, it has to be so energy depleting to be someone you are not. How can the mask stay on as long as it apparently does? Or does it and we miss the times when it does slip because it's so shocking. For me, it was three months into the intimate part of the relationship. Is this an integral part of what a psychopath is, or is it changeable. The morphing is comical yet at the same time fascinating when considering them as the predators they are. If I saw him anywhere, the only thing that would be recognizable is how he looks. I wouldn't know HIM with this new morphing at all! I just can't see how those who are close to him, particularly his ex wife and children do not see the obvious morphing. Of course I don't talk to them either. Kelli

Comment by Tricia on August 19, 2011 [10:41 pm](#)

I can relate to what you say about dying a hundred times Linda. I keep dying over although Im doing better now. He has never contacted me since last Oct when I told him he was disordered and I knew he had NPD although at the time I didnt realise he was actually a psychopath. It's a more powerful term.

However he did start to shake which shocked me because he never got flustered or never lost his cool calm demeanor before this. So exposing him is what really terrified him. It provoked an emotion. What I dont know is what his capabilities might have been had he not left (which he did quickly). My instincts had told me to put the large chopping knife I had been using, away in a drawer just before he came. He had never been physically violent but I think he may well have after exposing him for what he was. I saw him once since on April 1st. He just said ' ha ha it's April Fool's Day'

He had done a major smear campaign in the area to discredit me in case I talked about him as this is where his new targets were living.

Sometimes I feel sad that Im such a piece of shit – not even worth checking to see if I came through major surgery a fortnight after speaking to him in Oct. He didnt even know or care if I had lived or died. – The 'greatest love of my life- the one I have been waiting for. Stay with me always please?' And I believed him.

There is no cruelty like this. It is emotional brutality beyond belief.

Comment by LINDA on August 19, 2011 11:01 pm

Kelli: I have asked that same question, how can they keep the mask on soooooo long and fool those that are with them 24-7. I think the problem is they really dont. I have talked to countless women who have lived with them and been married to them and its NOT PRETTY Kelli their partners go through a discard cycle constantly I have heard them complain repeatedly how they are ignored for no reason what so ever, they are discarded as they live with them and then they reel them back in with attention, flattery, some good sex to keep them believing they love them. Compare it to your car, you have to change the oil every so often to keep it running properly – same with the psychopath they have to attend to their partner now and then to keep them around. Do I think they wear the mask with them as they did with us initially? HELL NO, but its a different mask Kelli – its a mask of lies and betrayal and deception gone is the mask of the love of our life they too were idolized at one time to reel them in. Do I think he has passionate sex as he had with me? ha ha HELL NO, and if he does its not very often which would stand to reason because I am an attractive woman and after 6 months with me ED started to set in and he could not get excited unless there was an element of filth and perversion so what makes me think after being with her for 8 years they could possibly have anything that would excite him? Maybe she has orgies with him who knows, who cares if that is her idea of a healthy relationship then she can have it. If that is the arrangement they have to have open sex with others then she IS disordered and even if she is willing to do that he STILL sneaks behind her back without her knowledge. I dont think that is the case I dont think he brings her into that world she is probably just a loving nice gal who thinks he loves her and she has no idea she is living her life with a sexual predator. I think the mask they wear for their partners is a mask to hide their infidelities and sexual perversions, other than that he comes home to her and sits down to home cooked meals and it gives him the image of being a regular normal guy. I will bet you any money though she is

probably sexually starved in the relationship because he is always spent from his side perverted infidelities and regular sex just doesn't do much for him. My counselor pretty much outlined what his relationship was like – now here is the part my counselor said that scares me – he could shoot her in the back of the head and not have a drop of remorse because she means NOTHING to him only what services she provides for him. That SCARED ME!!!

I am ranting here but I know how you feel Kelli for so long I wondered what does she have that I never had that he chose HER and I was just a dirty secret when she has NOTHING more than I have. However, would I really want to live my life with a sexual predator no matter how wonderful it might SEEM? The sick thoughts that go through his mind and the immoral acts he wanted me to do? I didn't lose a damn thing, just the illusion of what seemed so perfect, her life with this man is FAR from perfect and in a sense I was never really betrayed for she gets nothing more than I ever got, JUST AN ILLUSION x0x0 linda

Comment by Tricia on August 19, 2011 11:56 pm

Hi Rocketgirl, I can understand clearly what you are saying. I feel you are coming over as somewhat aggressive but maybe it's more of a no-nonsense attitude.

I know that I need one to one professional help and when I can afford the luxury of that I fully intend to get it. I have had a few sessions with a leading hypnotherapist and one session with a psychotherapist.

However, finding this website and the articles on Psychopathy has literally saved my life because I became suicidal after the emotional brutality meted out to me by a psychopath. My daily medication has been this site. And I have come on immensely over the last few months- due to this site.

If you have not personally lived , slept, eaten with , woken up with a full blown psychopath for years, then you cannot put yourself in the shoes of one who has – regardless of how 'qualified' you might believe yourself to be!! Believe me it is not any kind of experience to be understood by one who has not personally experienced it.

It really is murder of the soul and spirit. So the mind is affected. We cannot help that. There is damage done. We are trying to repair it as best as we can and understanding the disorder is probably the best way initially.

The best analogy I can think of is a person who is learning to walk again after being paralysed. One little step at a time.

We have been spiritually and emotionally paralysed and are trying to learn how to see, smell, taste, feel – again- having been brutalised.

Im talking here to people who understand completely how I feel and I also feel personally that Claudia is at least as qualified as any professional. Have you seen her work ? It is easily the best site with information on psychopathy. She is a wonderful educator and has taught me so much.

Dont be such an intellectual snob Rocketgirl – there are so many ways to become professional – first hand experience is one way also !!

Tricia

Comment by Gary on August 20, 2011 [12:24 am](#)

Stranger is a good word/description to use in regards to a relationship with a cluster B. They cant feel an intimate connection. Looking back every day was like the weather. The oldest and easiest way to start a conversation with a stranger. I beleive Cluster B's take the modeling of a person to the next level. or should I say they don't know When to stop modeling and transition into their own personality(because they don't have one). All people model others.Its human nature to model someone you just meet, whether it be hand gestures, posture or tone and how the words are spoken. that's how humans gain rapport. Sometimes its subconscious and we don't realise we are doing it. I am starting to beleive that is what hooks us/me. They are so much like us. We feel we connect. We feel they understand us. Well duh of course we do they in a sense become us. We love us. they play on our narcissistic tendencies. I've been doing a lot of thinking about the past. Looking back, knowing what I know now, I recall times where I actually seeing my ex morph. I have never known her to be her own person. As of today she is someone else. I do not know that person. She is a stranger. she has been a stranger for all these years. continually modeling/mirroring me to keep the rapport and the lie going. Commenting every day about the weather. I'm sure I said stuff that has been said already, my own mirroring of sorts lol.. Sometimes, if I write it down I understand even better instead of the thoughts running through my head. The hardest thing for me to grasp is, I think I do understand. I know what she is. I know she is bad. But I have this, I beleive subconscious wall "protecting" her. Preventing me from moving on, almost sabotaging potential relationships with normal good women. I've been through failed relationships but man this one takes the cake.

Gary

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 20, 2011 [12:29 am](#)

Anna, gathering information from helpful books and websites, as you and so many other contributors have been doing, is essential. It's obviously not a substitute for individual therapy, but it will help you in therapy to come into it well-informed. It also can help you choose the right therapist, who addresses and is knowledgeable about personality disorders and PTSD and can help you. I'm so glad that this and other websites have been helpful to you. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 20, 2011 [12:31 am](#)

Michael, everything you've written about Cluster B makes so much sense: the fragmentation and multiplicity of Cluster B personalities, based on mirroring so many individuals to dupe and use them. But also, underneath it all, an insatiable quest for omnipotence which motivates the need for conquest and destruction. Like all narcissistic personalities, psychopaths worship their own altar. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 20, 2011 [12:35 am](#)

Gary, it's not surprising that there's a part of you "protecting" the memory of your disordered ex because Cluster B personalities build an illusion more tempting and in some ways more real-seeming than normal human beings. The reason the deceptive illusion seems more real is because it mirrors what we want to be and hear from another person, at least during the idealization period. Reality is harsh and imperfect. When we can bracket it to focus on positive elements we do. Psychopaths tap into our need to escape from an imperfect reality to the ideals we seek most. Then they destroy them, and in so doing, sometimes also us. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 20, 2011 [12:40 am](#)

Tricia and Joanne, thanks for your thoughtful input. I think common sense makes perfect sense, as long as it comes with good intentions and is expressed with some sense of compassion. Besides, in every subject and field it's helpful to have two kinds of input, for a more complete picture of what we want or need to learn: the one from experts that know the field more or less objectively, in terms of the research they conduct on others, and inspiring inside information from those who have experienced a phenomenon and know it from the inside. That's why information provided by professional therapists is complementary to the inside information and mutual support provided by victims. Besides, often the two converge, at least in part, since many victims acquire the more or less objective information as well by reading books and blog posts written by therapists and specialists on personality disorders. And let's remember that those who have been burned by psychopaths have a huge incentive to inform themselves about this subject and to help others in their position and the general public. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 20, 2011 [12:47 am](#)

Linda, you're not ranting at all. You write about a mysterious phenomenon: how can psychopaths manage not just to fool and seduce so many people but also to turn some of them into zombies like them. Because some victims escape in time, with their dignity. Others, however, are hollowed out of their personality after years of staying with a psychopath. The psychopath isolates them from their loved ones. He instigates fights so that there's tension with their family and friends. He erodes the victim's self-respect and moral boundaries by either enticing her or pressuring her into unethical or lewd behavior. Each time she gives in to his demands, a part of her identity is lost. All the while he does the same thing to dozens of other victims, sometimes hundreds. He presents their relationship as special, but that is the biggest illusion of all, however enticing it may be to believe you are part of an extraordinary love bond. Instead, you are the lesser part of an extraordinary fraud, predicated upon your obedience and abuse. By the time he's through with you, there may be nothing left to move on. Each victim who finds helpful psychopathy websites or reads books on the subject at least has a chance of seeing through the fraudulent illusion and escaping with something left of their personality and resources. Each victim who informs herself or himself about personality disorders is therefore lucky, since this information still doesn't reach

the general public and is still found mostly after you've been burned, when you're looking for it. That's why each time each of us informs others, or offers support here or on other blogs, we contribute to spreading this information and potentially sparing others from harm. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 20, 2011 12:50 am

Laney, absolutely. Psychopaths conduct a cost-benefit analysis of every person and situation. The more they have to gain from a person, even if it's just short-term gain, the more effort they put into the mask, the illusion created just for you. Usually, however, they have little to gain from familiar conquests because part of their gain is excitement. Psychopaths need a rush, a constant sense of excitement to feel alive. Lasting relationships can't offer that. Love can be lasting, but the initial rush of conquest and novelty wears off in any relationship, particularly in something as shallow as the psychopathic bond. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 20, 2011 12:55 am

Joanne, yes, psychopaths do everything exclusively in their perceived self-interest. When they offer you just friendship, it's because they have others lined up who are momentarily more exciting to them. Your honeymoon period is officially over for good, but they're keeping you in reserve as a friend with benefits and backup. Claudia

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 20, 2011 12:55 am

Linda,

That is so interesting that you got to talk to other women who have lived with these men. Mine use to say to me when I encouraged him to go back and work his marriage "Nope. Too much work."

He once asked me if he could have sex with me on a regular basis but "maintenance" her when he needed too!! UGH!!! WHO SAYS THAT STUFF???

I think right now, he's probably pretty happy with his new wife. Lots of money and investments to make, debt to clear, work on the house, etc. Keeps him busy for years. I personally don't think she'll ever find out. He morphs and hides very well. I saw through the fakery and I saw all of the lies...but I ignored it, but I didn't have to live with him either. I will never know what that's like, but I know he has to work a lot harder at it when he doesn't have another woman to PREVENT that for him. And it won't be me. Kelli

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 20, 2011 12:56 am

Linda,

You're not ranting. I've learned so much from everyone that posts here. Kelli

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 20, 2011 12:58 am

Kelli, psychopaths can't change in the sense of doing anything that requires real empathy or love. They lack this capacity. They can only fake those or experience the superficial feeling of falling in love and being temporarily excited by a new romantic conquest, particularly one with other benefits (like financial benefits, for instance). The changes a psychopath makes are very superficial: to the image he projects in order to lure a new target or targets and get what he wants from her or them. These changes are based on lies, hiding, and manipulation, plus some genuine superficial excitement that has no root whatsoever in mutual respect or love. That's why nobody can be happy with a psychopath, particularly if he or she can see clearly the whole picture about them. Claudia

Comment by Gary on August 20, 2011 [1:00 am](#)

this could be out there but being they don't have a self. Could they become bored with mirroring / modeling. they don't want to be us anymore "When they grow up". Like a three year old who wants to be the President one day, then wants to be an astronaut the next. a three year old has no sense of what they want to be. They are still in the discovery and defining stages. Obviously our three year old's are adults, They cant get away with the fantasy of wanting to be something they're not. especially us. They stopped developing at that stage. It is not excepted in society like a true three year old... Oh that joey is so cute he wants to be the president. what is acceptable to them the path is when they become bored they start to devalue and destroy you. Making you feel like your the bad guy or there is something wrong with you. They look normal and excepted by society and can move on to Be the astronaut. leaving a path of destructed lives. Dont know if this makes sense or not.

Gary

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 20, 2011 [1:00 am](#)

Michael, thanks, as usual for your very apt analyses and observations. Robert Hare and Paul Babiak make a similar observation in their joint book, Snakes in Suits: that victims get to see the real psychopath, with less of a mask on, only once he dumps them or shows his true colors because he no longer wants or needs them. The rest—everything good you see during the luring phase—is all a BS mask, a lure, an illusion. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 20, 2011 [1:28 am](#)

Gary, it does make sense. Psychopaths are so empty that they get bored with everything and everyone and change masks, partners and jobs frequently and easily. But when they change partners, it's always because they consider those partners as not good enough for them anymore. They're bored with them and they used up their value. Psychopaths are consummate narcissists, always projecting blame for what goes wrong with their numerous relationships on other people because they consider themselves so superior to them. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 20, 2011 [1:39 am](#)

Michael and Kelli, thanks for your fruitful discussion about why recovery takes time. The more a victim has invested, emotionally and maybe even financially, into the psychopathic bond and the more the psychopath has isolated her and brainwashed her, obviously, the harder it is for her to recover and the more sources of support she will need. Friends, family, therapy, informational websites and support groups all help and work together to first eliminate the illusion created by the psychopath and secondly to anchor her in real life and build up her self-confidence. Because the psychopathic bond is a parasitic bond. The psychopath will feed upon a victim for her emotions, admiration, money, then leave her or debase her when he gets bored with her and finds other promising targets, other victims. Only by finding out the truth about the psychopathic bond and finding meaning in real life, rather than the psychopathic illusion, can she rebuild herself and her life. And this process takes time (and happens at different speeds for different victims). I tend to think that the only ones who can't recover at all are those who have been fleeced of a sense of self. You can recover from financial disaster. You can recover from emotional rape and even physical rape. You can recover from a broken heart. But you can't recover when there's nothing left of the person you used to be and when all your sense of self and meaning comes from a psychopath and the fraudulent relationship he created with you. Claudia

Comment by Gary on August 20, 2011 [2:35 am](#)

Claudia,

I'm starting to think I fall into the lost self statement you made at the end of your comment to Micheal.. I feel I understand what happened, who she is, what she is. I am not myself anymore. It has effected my relationship with my son and her / my step son. I have become fairly educated in how the mind or lack there of of a Cluster B works, or doesn't work. what I really want to do is just yell at her. Tell her what I think of her. I know she wont give a damn but I don't know I think I might feel better getting it off my chest. I have so much built up. I have bit my tongue around the kids. It is getting very hard to be tight lipped. I know, I hope some day they will realise it, but I am truly loosing patients. I like to think I'm a strong male. as I've said before I've been involved in failed relationships but nothing like this. The coldness and outright lying and accusations are just too much to handle sometimes. I don't know I think I really need an explosion of sorts. I want to point a finger at her. I want to tell her she is an empty emotionless piece of shit. what really sucks is nothing, absolutely nothing phases her. She received a drunk driving recently and I though, there, you got what you had comming. Well, it did not phase her one little bit. She is indestructible. As I've said before I will never recieve justice. why does that bother me so much? It is a big world and that is just one little freak of nature.

Gary

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 20, 2011 [2:54 am](#)

Gary, I understand how you feel. Anybody who has experienced the degree of betrayal a disordered person is capable of dishing out feels very angry. That's only normal. Everything about the relationship was based on lies; is a fraud. Not only that, but Cluster B's are excellent at conducting a smear campaign and making you look like the disordered one. It's important to address this; however, without stooping at their level. Inform your children, but in a manner that

won't traumatize them or make them feel caught in the middle of a parental war. Tell them the truth about her when they're mature enough to handle it. As for your anger, is there any way you could handle it constructively? I think in some ways you do already. You are not letting it affect your relationship and paternal responsibility with your children, which is most important. You are functioning in your professional life. And you are already making something positive out of this personal disaster by contributing to this blog. In sharing with others, you help them just as they help you. Some of the details you offer and your analyses help readers who may be going through similar experiences. The more you can find ways to turn a negative into a positive, something destructive (the psychopathic bond) into something constructive (helping yourself, your family and fellow victims), the better you will feel about yourself and the stronger you will become. But if you stoop to a psychopath's level and engage in a similar smear campaign or continue fighting with her, it will only enmesh you into a family tension with no end in sight and drain your energy, maybe even your financial resources, further. Moreover, such a fight with your disordered ex-wife risks tainting your good relationship with your children. I'm definitely not saying to be passive. Just take the higher road, which focuses on what can be built out of the ruins of your former marriage, not on what can be further destroyed. Claudia

Comment by LINDA on August 20, 2011 [3:11 am](#)

Kelli, Claudia and all: Claudia spoke of how they slowly erode us of who we are this is EXACTLY what he did to me, I was becoming someone and something I WAS NOT. There was a time I actually considered having a threesome and I think you will all be quite surprised why I never could: Because I loved him and I knew it would kill me to watch him have sex with someone else while I watched, that sounds crazy doesn't it? Oh he called me insecure and jealous and as I thought about what he called me I said NO, I AM NORMAL and there may be individuals who can do that but I AM NOT ONE OF THEM, and I will never give up my personal beliefs for the sick convictions of others. As I thought about his GF it hit me one day and I said OH MY GOD imagine what this man would have convinced me to do if I had lived with him, what have I turned into, what am I doing this is NOT ME he has slowly over the course of 4 years changed who I was, in the end it came down to a battle to fight to get back who I was or continue to let this disordered person destroy me. So Claudia you are SO RIGHT that they can destroy your identity over time and you don't even realize what is happening until it's too late.

Michael and Kelli I notice both of your ex paths wanted to be F-k buddies, gee far cry from the initial love of our lives eh? That is basically what mine materialized into also – let's just get together every couple of months for a fuck fest and hey bring along others if you want the more the merrier. Gary I really could relate when you said: you have had some failed relationships in your life but this one takes the cake, it made me chuckle not because the situation was funny but just in the way you described it, boy this one sure was a hum dinger for me as well – I have had my share of normal heartaches but THIS was the supreme heartbreak from anything I have ever encountered. I try though with all my might to find humor (once and awhile) I could tell others someday I once found the love of my life until he wanted to watch Fred, Larry and whoever have sex with me also as he watched and played with Larry so it didn't quite work out, we had some differences along the way ha ha ha ha Actually I have one very close friend who knows of my

experience and she was so creeped out by this person and what he did to me that she didnt even want to drive by his newly built home he built that I wanted to show her she kept saying, ok Linda lets get the hell out of here this guy gives me the creeps and I dont want to be anywhere NEAR where he is. That alone should tell you Claudia how their victims become so conditioned to their behavior, and there I was driving to see his new million dollar home he built not thinking a thing of it, she viewed him as something from a freak show or lifetime movie. For a good year my friend would always inform me of cops that were caught for this or that and would say, God I hope that freak is not calling you Linda, he is very scary and SHE IS RIGHT but when we are caught up in their pathology we dont really see it, but I DO NOW. and more than ever I see now how much I changed into a person I could never be. x0 Linda

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 20, 2011 3:18 am
Gary,

I hope what I'm about to ask is not terribly intrusive, but it was the first thing that occurred to me as I read your post and Claudia's response. Have you concerned seeking the services of a therapist who is knowledgeable about personality disorders? I suggest this because it could really help diffuse some of your anger, as well as a constructive way of venting it, just as you do here. I completely understand your frustration at feeling that you are enduring a major injustice and the truth is that you ARE, but I think it's how we inevitably handle it that sets us free from the bitterness associated with that God awful feeling! I go through this as well, however, I truly feel as I pass through more of this process, that the bitterness and anger will pass with time. I also think that truly understanding the psychopaths and the REASONS for their behaviors, or what fuels them (predation) cannot be studied enough. Eventually, something WILL hit you with reading, blogging and therapy to where you will REALLY see that you are far better of a human being (can we call them that?) than a mere predator. She will have VICTIMS the rest of her life, while YOU have love, even if it's painful right now. I had a light bulb moment reading about psychopaths on another forum. I read several, blog on this and another. I just keep searching, reading and doing my therapy. It DOES eventually kick in.

Gary, i also wonder if it's possible for you to lessen even more, your contact with her. Is it possible to limit it to just email? Sometimes there are intermediaries that will assist so that you can have less exposure and more time to heal. I think the more you discuss with her, the more anger you will feel.

I don't know how old your children are, and I do apologize if you've already stated that here, but they do need to know the truth of your ex wife's behavior if it is affecting THEM, or if she is trying to come between you and your children. that is a HUGE slippery slope to which I am blessed to have only dealt with for a short time before my ex psycho hubby split and wanted nothing to do with my childdren. The biggest thing for you to show your children, no matter what, is as much LOVE as humanly possible while setting appropriate emotional boundaries.

Your example will set the tone for them for life. Not only in dealing with their mother as they get older, but with others as well. I'm really glad you posted today as I was concerned about how you were doing. Hang in there.

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 20, 2011 3:25 am

Linda, what you describe is what so many victims feel and go through. Psychopaths can turn loving women and men into their puppets and get them to engage in such depraved and humiliating behavior that they'd have never even dreamed of engaging in, not even in their worst nightmares. And they do so gradually, exactly as you describe: by using your own love and passion for him against you, turning you against your better interest and judgment in the name of "us". But the "us"—a unified and loving couple—is only an illusion in the psychopathic bond. For a psychopath there's only him and his interest, no real us. The us is a convenient fiction he uses to manipulate you and others and make their victims feel special. In a way, however, from what you describe your own love for this psychopath saved you from depravity. He may have asked you to engage in perverse acts with him and others out of love (a fiction, since no loving person asks his partner to engage in humiliating or depraved acts against her will), but you couldn't, out of real love. You retained so much of your dignity, Linda, and you are rebuilding your identity, boundaries and self-esteem. Claudia

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 20, 2011 4:22 am

Linda,

In a way, I was involved in a threesome with my ex, but it's more commonly referred to as TRIANGULATION. Mine never asked me to do threesomes or anything like that. he was more into having sex so the world could see (anywhere outside in his yard) and was obsessed with me using a vibrator in front of him (I refused this, because he wanted this so badly in the end, it wasn't about having some "sex fun" in a loving relationship). Mine loved to be spanked however and he would spank me, but when he first did this to me, I was utterly shocked as he had not mentioned it to me prior to the act. He got bored so easily that the things we did amounted to nothing more than a novelty for him. He loved hot tubbing though and having sex in one. Yep, loved it so much, we did it twice, would have been a third had I given in to his demand another time. He really was very boring to me. I think he had some sexual hangups, and was rather 'prudish' in a way compared to a lot of psychopaths who are ultra sensual/sexual. It didn't feel that way to me, although he absolutely LOVED blow jobs and I gave him many over the years. He did not like giving oral sex, so I didn't get that but twice. Because he was raised in such a strict religious environment, it was nailed into his ass that he needed to be married to have sex at all. He has a madonna whore complex. He called his wife a prude, but I'm not sure that was the dealio as after the divorce when he was targeting another victim he told her the same line he delivered to me at first "Yea my wife was exchanging hot sexy steamy words stuff with her boyfriend and I could have done those thing with her but I never had the chance" LOL! Wait...you were married seventeen years and didn't ahve the "chance". He spoon fed me that shit constantly. I often

wonder what the motive was for that....a sort of teach me baby or a set up for taking care of his poor needs because he was so deprived, but it worked. he hardly had to do anything sexually except put his dick in and ejaculate. Even that was boring. They are not all the same. kelli

Comment by [kelli \(http://.gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://.gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 20, 2011 4:48 am
Claudia,

Funny, I don't think I responded about the article at all, given the thread and where it went initially, however, I would like to say that the article was really good, but also to say psychopaths rarely let go of their dominance bonds is, I think, more the exception, rather than the rule. Many psychopaths give up their dominance bonds and I think we need to be really careful here because the ones that do let go are often thought of as NOT being psychopathic. This can be troubling for some survivors that are working hard to accept that what they went through was, indeed, with a psychopath. Some are ardent stalkers, others are not. Because my psychopathic ex used condoms for every sex act, does it make him less psychopathic? I read on another site that psychopaths refuse to wear condoms and that this was a huge red flag. Well, my GOD, I hope someone looking for the truth of psychopaths doesn't read that and hope they are safe because a man DOES use condoms. Yes, mine was a safe sex boy. LOL! But his bottom line behaviors did NOT change. I also believe some are able to be "faithful" in the sense that they CAN live with, be married to ONE woman depending upon how valuable she is to him and what she brings into the relationship (money, great sex, image building, what have you) for quite some time or for how long the woman will put up with the abuse. While there are many similarities in psychopaths, there are also differences in culture, environmental upbringing, religion, that can determine how their psychopathy is manifested, but whether they are faithful or not a stalker or not, or a safety boy with condoms, they're still psychopaths.

Comment by Michael on August 20, 2011 6:12 am

Gary, Claudia; yes this makes so much sense. I think this is another facet of devaluation. Like small children becoming bored with being / playing with one toy then discards the toy / mask for a new one. The next new one, because of it's shiny newness; inevitably devalues us (we've lost our shine), and idealises the new mirror. I think they must say to themselves "i'm bored with my reflection in this mirror, I bet I look even more fantastic in the new one". Add to this by now we are getting a tad unsettled and pissed off at the ever increasing momentum of our devaluation; we contaminate the reflection.

Comment by Michael on August 20, 2011 8:03 am

Gary; I still wrestle with the anger at the total injustice of it all. It is like I want to sit her down and say "listen you bottomless black hole of goddam nothingness; you actually do not know the damage and pain you caused me do you". For so long I just wanted to shake her, then sit her down and say listen to what Ive learned about what the hell you are.

Firstly you are correct- because even if I did have the opportunity everything I said would fall down the same black hole as everything else. That's if any of it would get passed her false self / mask; which of course it wouldn't. I think this is one of the key things that has impacted on me

and chaged me; the fact that the whole 5 year encounter was so utterly meaningless. This I believe is a natural fallout from believing there was a bond steeped in meaning, that as it transpired, was not a bond at all and absolutley without meaning. It is a form of emotional, spiritual rape.

You may find this difficult to believe; I certainly did, but the anger does disipate. what works for me is giving my self permission to feel it (but be mindful how you express it); I let it wash over me, and I'm acutely aware that I cannot touch her or reach her in anyway. Unlike normal people who have hurt us, we can lose our temper and express our pain by giving them a piece of our mind; and they will feel remorseful and apologise and mean it! This cannot happen with psychopaths; thay are fundamentally unaccountable. They just deny all their awful crap and invalidate us further. Besides they have no heart to bruise anyway.

Here is a useful link, which you may have come across; these articles are some of the best Ive come across in terms of captuting the painful torment a borderline (and narcissist, psychopath) leaves you with. They will help you begin to make sense of it al on an emotional level.

<http://gettinbetter.com/anycost.html> (<http://gettinbetter.com/anycost.html>)

This is a good one to start with, click on articles and scroll down to her articles on borderlines; you will find articles that deal with all phases of the dynamic- from getting out, staying out, when children are involved, and the pain, anger, and deep betrayal. She describes a disordered individual as being like a tornado that rips through our world leaving devastation behind them; then they just vanish like the soulless whisps that they are- persona gone!

Comment by Michael on August 20, 2011 8:14 am

Gary; also, and I dont know if this will make sense. As my knowledge increased, not only on a mindful or intellectual knowing; but also on an emotional level or emotionally knowing. I began to realise that my emotions only have value or meaning with non-disordered people. In other words the expression of my feelings to someone who is emotionally not there, hollow, empty, without feeling; is by definition moot.

I am not a huge fan of Sam Vakin; but some of his writings make sense. He wrote – “trying to discuss feelings with a narcissist (and therefore borderline, psychopath) is like trying to discuss atheism with a religous fundamentalist”. Why discuss any feelings with or show them to someone who does not know / experience empathy?

Comment by Michael on August 20, 2011 8:25 am

Claudia, and all; Sandra Brown in her book makes an assertion that I am in doubt is wholly accurate and true. The first step towards recovery is eductaion around what the psychopath / cluster b is; and how they are different. This takes a lot of understanding before we can finally get a firm grip on what is a very slippery bar of soap. This forum and others like it are invaluable in this endeavour. I am finding this forum incredibly helpful in shapening my focus and cutting through the confusion of having emotionally / psychologically interfaced with one of these strange, and naturally destructive sub species.

Comment by Michael on August 20, 2011 8:28 am

Above should read "I am in no doubt" 😊

Comment by Michael on August 20, 2011 11:06 am

Kelli; you ask a very interesting question; If I interpret your question accurately you seem to be asking where does there false self / mask / mirroring end, and where do they begin? This is a toughie but I'm going to take a shot at it.

Cluster B's as we know have IQ's that are as varied as non cluster B's. This is mediated and influenced by a complex mix of socio-cultural, economic, and social class issues / processes, that influence everybody's intellectual development (as well as genetic influences mixed into the pot as well). Some are exceptionally bright, and others not so bright (that is not to suggest a person's value should be measured by their IQ or intelligence)!

Cognitively speaking cluster B's have the capacity to "learn" new information- they can be adept at say for example advanced statistical analysis, or pass a degree with flying colors. Their executive functioning is by and large able to function within normal parameters. However, how is it that their logic can all go out of whack, and their recall can seem at times non-existent, at other times distorted, and still other times so bent and screwed we again feel gaslight as we sit thinking WTF!

I think object constancy plays a key role here. Let's say that your path has had a good dose of mirroring that day; they have been to university, or a function, or had a dinner party, or is idealising some new victim somewhere. Their egos are fuelled and they are pumped up with a good dose of mirroring- so they believe they know who they are. Their here and nowness disallows any recall of any previous empty lack of selfness. When they are in this state you're not needed as a mirror (I've had enough mirroring thank you very much).

But to continue with my bottomless bucket metaphor- it all falls out of the bottom. They cannot retain it; It just bleeds out of them very quickly; then they are again experiencing that sense of not existing. I think it helps to conceptualise the lack of retainer, or hole in the soul in the following way-

A lack of emotional constitution- rich normal adult spectrum of emotion- which is the foundation of empathy, compassion, love. These feelings are the social glue that enables us to bond with others. They also form the floor of learning (not cognitive learning), emotional and spiritual growth and learning through experiencing remorse when we make mistakes. Being without these, renders them the cold, callous, cruel, remorseless, compassionless, insightful and repugnant non-humans that they truly are.

Once it has bled through them they need more mirroring; if you deny them this mirroring when there is no other source, I guarantee you they will play the pity card and you suddenly find yourself consoling a little 3 year old. Not unlike a 3 year old they soak up like sponges other people's values, attitudes, and even little idiosyncratic speech quirks that others may have.

It can be useful to think of them as machines who live in their heads (this is their false self), and they have to constantly juggle and strive for maintaining narcissitic supply to mediate and balance, and stabilise their precariously balanced psyche.

As a means of doing this; they are always busy- my ex described herself as a “doer”- and needing to keep busy. They fill their lives with anything as long as there are other people (mirrors, potential supplies etc). A partner represents a more staple supply- they can predict supply and even schedule when they need you for this supply- (which feels controlling to us, which it is of course). They do not function well with uncertainty.

Comment by Michael on August 20, 2011 11:17 am

continued- when they are in their heads (false self, an amalgamation of cognitions and “knowing” stuff, and mirroring) they appear perfectly normal, well rounded, and balanced individuals- they have the illusion of being whole, rather than a hole.

Move them into intimacy, feeling / emotion territory and notice now as they try to meld their cognitions with fleeting, thin, superficial little proto emotions, their logic slips into distortion land. They clam up and say nothing, rage, run away, or try to mirror your feelings but you get the feeling that they aren't quite getting it right. They either become a deer caught in the headlights, do their vanishing act, or take you down a crazy making conversation that leaves you pulling your hair out thinking “why the hell can this person not see my point of view”!!!! The answer to this one is because it is literally because they actually cannot see your point of view.

Dont know if that helps

Comment by LINDA on August 20, 2011 1:50 pm

Kelli and all: OH Kelli, thank you for sharing something so private with all of us and what you endured sexually with this creature, however this triggered some painful experiences on my behalf. My x path had some pretty disturbing sexual fetishes, (you may want to write these down in your journal Claudia but so far nothing surprises you) Its difficult to even convey what I want to share but I think by sharing with others it may help some of the sexual damage I am trying to overcome. When we were meeting on a regular basis I was told to either shave it, or let it grow 4 inches long that would include my private part, my legs and armpits His favorite line being “dont harm one hair on that P—y” I never much complied with these folical requests as I thought it was rather insignificant; however he was actually MAD when I didnt comply when he saw me. Maybe the long hair under the armpits was his way of fantasizing he was with a man and he could have the best of both worlds when we were together, as well as a strap on he wanted me to use on him. Like I am going to march into a adult bookstore and purchase one of these items, ya right but wait my goodness wonder why he didnt provide the strap on as I am sure he has quite a collection of them (but that would be giving himself away wouldnt it?)

Mine also performed oral on me TWICE in 4 years, I found this to be rather odd but respected the fact maybe some men are just not into that and that was ok I didnt dwell on it. In our last encounter a year ago he proceeded with oral and in shock I said, NO NO its ok you dont have to

do that, he then put his hands around my neck and mildly choked me in my struggle until I gave in when it was done and finished on HIS part he forced my head down on him and said now clean it off – I resisted of course and he laid on top of me and as he got up he tried to urinate on me. I struggled to get out of bed to the bathroom and said, I AM DONE, that was the LAST time I was with him I knew in that moment I had just seen the tip of the iceberg with this mans sadistic behavior, I asked him if he kept plastic sheets on his bed at home when you wanted to urinate on your GF and he just grinned and said nothing. There were a few times he would pull my hair and MAKE me tell him I loved him – again control and sadistic dominance – and I think he and his GF sit kissy face in front of his fireplace engaged in NORMAL romance, ha ha hardly!!!! I remember that day like yesterday after he left I sat on my front porch and tried to remember the initial masked man I had met 4 years prior; this man who held my hand and offered me his support, and friendship and who was nothing more than a perfect charming, modest, and humble gentlemen vs what he transformed into – I think I walked around in total shock for a good week – I stayed in my bedroom and just watched movies day and night to try and forget what I just experienced. I have not had sex since then it seems I view mens anatomy as lethal and dangerous weapons vs an extension of themselves to share in what should be a normal intimate exchange. My views on that however are getting better as I come to clearly understand and process how twisted and disturbed this person was and it was absolutely no reflection on me personally – this is the hard part on overcoming the role of a victim to KNOW it was purely the act of someone who is criminally minded and it could have happened to anyone, I can let this experience destroy my life and views or I can rise above it and not let someone that was clearly disturbed destroy what is left of my life, not an easy task but I will FIGHT to overcome this x0Linda

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 20, 2011 2:07 pm
Michael,

Wow! I do understand what you're saying. One of the things I noticed about my ex was his inability to sit still....but then he would get lazy- ie: sit around watching sports all day and drinking. Either way, there always had to be stimulus. TV's always had to be on, sex was had often, working in the yard, doing nothing basically, or running place to place or going from one project to another without completion...always running.....trying to find something, ANYTHING, to fill the void. He was also a compulsive shopper, knee jerk reactions to having found something on craigslist. A hoarder.....talking with him about anything meaningful, except at the beginning of the relationship was pointless. Circular, bordering on boring. I love discussing politics and religion, what's going on in the world, he REFUSED to discuss this at all! The only thing that could be discussed was his job and it was always about who did what to him that day. He hated his boss. Said his coworkers hated him. Would rage if he talked about his ex wife and what he perceived she was doing to him, while in fairness I would share what she must be feeling and her side of the situation in that i'm sure she's not purposely being vindictive (She wasn't, he was), but boy if I said something like that, the IMMEDIATE rage. Simply because I did not agree with his machinations of her in HIS head. There was no fairness, there was HIM. If there was an issue in

the relationship, he would dodge it. Turn it. Twist it. It was one of the MOST confusing, frustrating things I've ever been through in my life. I don't know how many times I've told myself during some of those arguments/discussions "this CAN'T be normal!"

I was reading on another forum yesterday about the predations of the psychopath or cluster b. I do think it's very important to study this, read as much as possible, just for the fact that it takes so long to absorb what has happened to someone involved with a pathological. While I was reading about predation, it dawned on me that my perceptions of him while viewed through rose colored glasses or what would be normal in the case of loving someone is NOT how they think at all. In essence, I projected my perceptions onto him as feeling the same, without realizing that what I felt for him, was seen as no less than opportunistic, parasitic, and a well to feed off of. Knowing this eased some of the fear associated with it all, but it did not ease the pain, nor did it alleviate the confusion in untying the many knots he tied in my head. Everything has suffered. My writing, my ability to process information, form words, trust connect, have all been jeopardized with my involvement with him. After nine months now, I finally feel as if I'm coming out of the fog if not ever so slowly. Every facet of my life was permeated with his stench. . This is where I have drawn the conclusion that EVERYONE to a psychopath is potential prey. They do not care. It's about what is in it for them at the time. It truly is emotional rape. Spiritual rape, even sexual abuse. I still have a question I know I want to ask about all of this. I'm stuck on was it just me he abused. I think that way because I was the OW in teh situation. The dynamics involved in an affair relationship are different than being married to or living with a psychopath. It is easier to take on the shame, my own and his. . This is where I have to keep focus on the behaviors, that he exhibited while also trying to disentangle from the mess that was the affair itself. Was it he, me or both? I threw my moral compass out the window. It's very difficult to explain and express. With the predation factor, this is easy to recognize, but emotionally coming to terms with it, is far more difficult. I so badly want to be free of him, the nightmares, the constant thoughts, the fear of running into him..so I keep reading. I keep telling myself that if I see him, he would be unrecognizable to me. that he is not human in the real sense. that he has morphed into the mirror of his new wife. I don't even recognize him anymore. How do I make sense of the ten years spent and lost? This is now the very painful part for me. Feeling like an idiot for having been duped, for engrossing myself in the fantasy he created of forever togetherness when that was never to be. I allowed the abuse for much too long. I was reading somewhere that we are fooling ourselves to believe that karma comes to these people. I believe there is truth in that. It is where the major injustice lies. They ARE "happy" as long as they have someone to mirror. It's the victims that suffer. There will be many more. While he has been successful at rebuilding his image, he has destroyed my reputation, I've lost friendships and he has a smear campaign and new image that makes his new life look like a fairy tale. This, I have to learn to find a way to accept and try to live in peace. NOrmal people do not wound others on purpose and move on as if they never caused pain, or act as if it was that person's fault that things didn't work out. How can there be remorse, when they do not feel at all? This is truly where the heartache lies. There is never closure. Ever. One of the things I've discovered on this journey is others who do get it about pathology and can put their experiences aside as a blessing in disguise and a life lesson learned. My therapist is one

of these, so when I ask, "Why did this happen? WHY did he do this?"

The answer is always the same from those who "GET" pathology... "Because it's who he is and it's just what he does".

Kelli

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 20, 2011 [2:15 pm](#)

Michael,

I'm also curious about the book *Puzzling People*. Was it not you that said you read this book? When affordable to me, I wish to purchase it. I've been watching Thomas Sheridan's videos, as well as listening to radio interviews and I find his knowledge, although not an expert, fascinating. I appreciate the differing perspectives about Cluster B's. There is mention of exercises in the back of this book. Would you mind elaborating on what those exercises are? Kelli

Comment by Tricia on August 20, 2011 [3:14 pm](#)

Michael, Im so stunned by the psychopathic mind-set, that I feel I could almost spend the rest of my days studying it. They are so different and yet I feel we still need to study more. Maybe there will never be a proper understanding of the psychopath.

For me they seem to be the embodiment of 'anti-love'. The psycho I lived with was into all kinds of stuff :- he would consult the 'i-ching' to see what path our relationship was taking. he was also into 'divining' and there were books on magic etc. I think he probably dabbled with the 'occult' and I found a website called 'infinateself'. I looked this up and found it was all in latin with references to the occult. So I looked up stuff on the occult and came across - 'Haitian Occult' I was a bit scared but continued reading about Haitian Occult and was shocked by their views on 'good people' and 'bad people'. As far as i know this is a type of religion in Haiti? Their value system is exactly that of the psychopathic mindset. In other words what we perceive as good and wholesome is to them 'bad and stupid'. A good person in that belief system is one who uses others to benefit themselves. This is admired and seen as being 'strong, powerful and 'good'!!!!!! A weak and 'bad' person in that belief system is one who loves and cares and is kind and thinks of others!!!!!!

I couldnt believe what I was reading but it was exactly the same value system as the Psychopath I had been living with.

Just thought I'd pass on this information but haven't looked into that site since. I felt I was indeed dealing with the Devil himself.

My ex P's 33 year old daughter has a notice on the introductory page of her Facebook that goes something like : - " I am Vain, I am Selfish and" Sorry cant remember the rest but you get the gist? She is like him - his 'Star Child' and one of the vainest creatures I have ever come across. But this is their 'value system'. All that is 'good' is in their eyes 'weak' and 'love' is also a negative trait in their eyes. There was a whole psychopathic 'dynamic' going on with all his children (by 3 different women) and even by the ex's. One ex I spoke to about my difficulties almost shouted at

me: – 'YOU ARE TOOOOOO NICE TRISH!!!!'

So this was a very negative trait – being 'nice' 'good' 'kind'. I was also told by him in the end:-
'You are toooooo innocent Trish'

Yes every 'christian' virtue that I had valued in myself and in others was now being turned upside down and suddenly became a 'vice' ????

Just some food for thought.

Thank you for your great insights and compassion Michael.

Tricia

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 20, 2011 3:22 pm

Linda,

I think sharing about the sexual part of what was the relationship, for me, isn't nearly as bad as some others who have been through so much worse in trying to please their psychos. I've read story after story of bondage and unimaginable horrors associated with sex once the psychopath had them in his grip. Mine was MILD in comparison, even though his objectifying behavior was just as traumatic for me. I totally related to what you said about when he tried oral "oh you don't; have to do that". I said the same to mine, and I pushed his head away from me. I did that because I couldn't; understand WHY he was doing this. Now i get it. Then I didn't. This was towards the end too. The choking part I get too. Mine would put his hand up to my neck and squeeze,, let go, squeeze, let go..but the last time he did it, I had to gentle wiggle myself out of his grip and he was already on top of me. It scared the daylights out of me. It's so interesting to me how we all share our stories here. My therapist made an observation the other day when I sharing some of the things he did, she said, "you know when I hear one story, it doesn't seem so traumatizing, but when put into context with everything else, it makes perfect sense". I was shocked by that because, to me, each thing he did, the lies, the actions, behaviors was traumatic because I lived it and the feeling associated with it. You just KNOW what you KNOW when you're with them. Some of the sexual stuff, sex play, what have you, is a good thing in a normal, healthy, trusting relationship, but when it's with a psychopath no matter how mild or extreme or somewhere in between, there is ALWAYS deviancy associated with it. That is VERY difficult to convey to people you're telling the story too. How do you explain subtle deviancy and brain washing, Linda?> That's the part that is so difficult in the recovery process. Sharing the story. It is doubly difficult when you're speaking to someone who has no clue about psychopathy. I think, in the end, it's forums like this, as well as educating ourselves as much as we can, or in therapy with someone who gets pathology, that we find validation, but I think it also comes from inside ourselves too. I'm learning how to try my damndest to validate my own experience. It's very, very hard. I'm sorry you suffered what you did at his hands. I'm glad you're reaching the point now where you understand what it was an what has happened. I personally so appreciate your sharing your story because it helps me tremendously in understanding my own too. Kelli

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 20, 2011 3:30 pm

Michael,

I'm curious, was your cluster b a borderline? I'm seeing that females are diagnosed borderline and males narcissist, although I have seen females as narcissists in my lifetime. I read the article you referred to Gary. I've not read it all the way through yet, but I found it very informative and very interesting in similarities to narcissists, psychopaths, the only difference being that borderlines CAN be rehabilitated but most will choose not to be. This is the difference it seems between the realms of cluster B or low / no conscience that never will get treatment, let alone admit they have a problem. Is this what you've found in your research? Kelli

Comment by LINDA on August 20, 2011 [4:48 pm](#)

Kelli: I could not agree more, its OK to have fun in expressing your sexual desires, its ok to act and play these things out but NOT how these individuals do, they take it to EXTREME deviate measures. Once I called mine and he said he was on his way to renew his hunting license (the great white hunter indeed) and I said was your license expired when you were hunting me and he said, No it was open season on you, so there you have it right from the source himself or on another occasion he was pushing me to bring home someone for "US" at a local bar, (ya right) and then he said you can do it all you have to do is get them "under your spell" interesting I said, much like you did with me? Then he got up and said, I am leaving I am not playing these childish games with you, ok Peter Pan run off to never never land I thought and go play with tinkerbelle — On another occasion I was pissed that day and left him a message that said, well you must be busy sharing togetherness with your live in partner and hung up he called back and said, " well, arent YOU still in love with YOUR husband? I told him oh no Fred I am in love with only YOU just as you wanted me to be, you are the love of my life, my soul mate remember THAT gig you played with me ? You can guess what he did, ya thats right, he hung up – So I tried to give him the message I knew what he was and what his whole sick game was but he DIDNT CARE and he would just ignore these attempts, oh oh Michael I wasnt holding up the mirror was I? How dare I take down that mirror and have him see me as a separate person from himself a person that actually had my own set of feelings, beliefs and concerns SHAME ON ME for not trying to feed his lack of self and identity!!!! They really are quite trivial Claudia but the pain of the whole experience was far from trivial. I have left this encounter I must say though with a deeper and richer understanding of humanity – I am more REAL and genuine than I have ever been in my entire life and I can spot a fraud, fake 10 miles away, even those that are not pathological to this degree can put on some pretty good fronts. Put a path in front of me and just by nature that uncomfortable pit in my stomach will start to eat at me; he is TOO this or that, unless he is 90 years old and was the GENUINE hero my father was who made everyone feel wonderful I am OUTTA THERE.

Linda

Comment by Gary on August 20, 2011 [5:02 pm](#)

Michael,

That link you placed in a response to a post I made was absolutely excellent, incredible. I have read a lot on personality disorders. I have found myself relating a lot. But as that article stated, I was still searching for "Proof" that article is me to a t. I am actually going to read it again and again. It was so shockingly true to me I had a hard time focusing, my mind was racing, I puked in my mouth. My god I cant even explain how exact that was. Even the childhood references. I have never read anything that hit home like that did. I think it really gave me a glimpse of who I am and what is happening to me. My anger has subsided a bit after reading that. It has been replaced by an understanding I have been searching for. I want to thank you for sharing that link. You have no idea how much that article hit home for me. I am going to sit back and let it soak a bit and read it again. I really needed that. Anger and rage was staring to control me. Dont get me wrong I'm still pissed but I understand my anger better.

Take care and thanks man,

Gary

Comment by [kelli \(http://.gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://.gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 20, 2011 [5:21 pm](#)

Linda,

I'm completely understand. You know as I read your post, it helps me to reflect on my conversations that were so twisted like that with my own ex. It's that mindfucking mechanism that takes sooooo long to overcome. I often feel so frustrated with the back and forth the cog/dis, the confusion. someone on another blog shared with me that confusion is a good thing! It means you're beginning to heal! I think these kinds of twisted conversations become habitual over the long haul, ie: addiction to our psychopaths. It's a habit of trying to make sense of nonsense. Trying to wrap your brain around it enough to understand them. Then there is the unpredictable. They "pretend" to understand you sometimes, only to create unpredictability in actions that say they didn't get it at all. It takes a long time, a really long time, to get out of the habit of thinking in that way, communicating in that way and it's elevated my understanding of others and why we're such a mess coming out of these relationships. The bottom line is so very true, and it is referred to in Sandra Brown's book about psychopaths The intent is HARM. Relational harm. And it truly does feel like a Cluster Fuck and a major bitch slap, relationship wise. As far as your having shared about spotting them a mile away? I can too. I had a stalker on my hands a short time ago and it was NOT my ex. It was a guy that I REFUSED to date who asked me out. I had to THREATEN him to STOP, CEASE and DESIST communicating to me on my phone or I would take LEGAL action. That stopped it, but it was VERY scary. They have no boundaries, once you are a target, anything goes. The lies, the manipulations, the deception, all to get you to believe the story so they can destroy you. It is truly evil. Kelli

Comment by Gary on August 20, 2011 [5:25 pm](#)

Kelli, I recommend finishing the article. For me it was dead on. I am going to read it again. That is my ex. That is me. Those are the issues I'm struggling with right now.

Gary

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 20, 2011 [5:34 pm](#)

Gary,

Thank you, I intend to do so at some point today. I have many questions about it though. I wonder if there aren't differences in borderline females now, from narcissistic male or if the Cluster B falls within all of those categories in that they overlap one another? I'm not sure now, when I thought that was the case. I think that throws me off about borderlines is that they can be treated whereas with other forms of Cluster B they cannot be? It is a VERY interesting read so far and gives me great insight into what you and Michael have experienced. Kelli

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 20, 2011 [5:35 pm](#)

Gary,

If you don't mind, what issues do you see yourself struggling with as a result of reading?

Comment by Gary on August 20, 2011 [6:48 pm](#)

Kelli,

I guess I lost who I am or was. I would fall into the people pleaser category. I have always been that way. Willing to help out someone. That made me the perfect target. I struggle with a lot right now, every day is different. Some of it going back to childhood, which was brought to life somewhat in the article. My father was an over the road truck driver for some time. The other day actually my Sister and I were talking about my ex and what I think she is. The conversation turned to our father. We are starting to wonder if our Father is disordered. I guess what I am really struggling with is what I let myself get involved with. What I turned a blind eye to. How I let myself fall prey. After reading that I have a lot to think about. I tend to be one to sit by myself and try and organise my thoughts. I have to read the article again after processing what I read the first time. I just know it really hit home. That article nailed my ex. I totally related to it. I just cant explain it in words right now. Do you understand where I'm coming from? Trust is a big thing for me. I trusted my ex. She played the "victim" card and is very good at it. She came across as genuine. I know I have been struggling to figure this out. I don't know I guess I cant really answer your question right now. Or maybe I did, I don't know. I know in my heart but cant find the right words. My head is spinning... I need a nap lol.

Gary

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 20, 2011 [6:55 pm](#)

Gary,

I understand head spinning. I also understand about the childhood issues. I also understand about trust issues. And I can also see you need to process what you've read. Reading, I know for me, brings up all kinds of challenges with regards to myself too. Sometimes, it can be a bit scary. Hang in there.

Comment by Susan on August 20, 2011 [7:21 pm](#)

I've not been following the thread, I just read the original post, so forgive me for making a comment out of sequence. But just wanted to say that as usual, Claudia's writing is right on target.

I've probably written this before, but the psychopath I was involved in first dumped me when I was 16 in a very cruel and devastating way. He came back into my life on and off and in a big way when I was 19, and asked me to come live with his parents, I said no. And at 21 he told me not to marry the man I was going to marry, but to give him another chance. I didn't. Over the years he tried to entice me with phone calls and letters and tried to reach me through my employers. I kept telling him to leave me alone and I really didn't think about him at all. Finally at age 56 he hit me at a weak point and I agreed to meet him and that began the worst experience of my life. So yes, they keep coming back. As in for 40 years!

The only way I got him to totally leave me alone was threatening what I would do if he ever contacted me again (and meaning it) and letting him know what evidence I had, law enforcement had, girlfriends had...and that if anything ever happened to me, they would be going after him as the first suspect.

Everything Claudia writes is so on target. So her is fiction book, *The Seducer*, and I believe reading it is very healing.

Comment by Susan on August 20, 2011 8:18 pm
Keli,

I now have had a chance to read the thread, and I especially love two things you wrote:

Every facet of my life was permeated with his stench.

I threw my moral compass out the window.

I was the OW also, plus married myself, though my husband gave me "permission"....my husband had his own issues we had to work through later.

But an important thing that a therapist said to me is "The shame belongs to him (the psychopath). Don't take on his shame." His stench, as you so wonderfully put it, led to the throwing out of the moral compass. You were a different person before him and after him. It helps me to think of cases like Patti Hearst (if you are old enough to remember) and realize that there are situations in which we do get covered with their stench and do lose our moral compass. And the shame is on them, not us.

There does come a point I think when you

- 1) are over the incredible heart break of the sudden and devastating loss of what appeared to be true love
- 2) have gained intellectual understanding of who and what they are and no longer flip flop in

your mind between the good guy and bad guy image.

3) are finally over the urge to kill him

4) begin to feel like their stench has left you

It is at that point that I began to reflect on what red flags I had ignored and why, and what was the dream, the story, the qualities, the promise that had seemed irresistible to me. For me, that was not a process of blaming myself, but more like an assessment to figure out how to best protect myself in the future. Like if a man physically attacks me, what makes me go limp, what makes me fight back, what strengths do I have, what weaknesses, compare to a huge male? That is what you learn in self-defense classes. So in my mind I have carried out a self-defense course, to understand where I'm vulnerable, what lures make me start to ignore red flags, etc. I think until you figure that out, you are at risk of becoming a victim again, though certainly it helps to know how to recognize them also!

Sorting out the infidelity issue was a separate issue. Dr. Bob Huizenga's works on the internet helped me, even though it is written for the wronged spouse, not the "cheater". He identifies 7 or so types of affairs, and one of them is the affair by the woman who everyone is so shocked that she would do something like that. Very often, that woman has some kind of abuse, and often sexual trauma in her past, and that was certainly true for me. My husband and I had much to forgive each other for, and it was made easier by understanding our pasts were driving us, not each other. So we both worked on finding better ways of dealing with our pasts, and that fixed the marriage.

I still struggle sometimes with intrusive thoughts, but it is getting better.

As far as the harm to his wife, I really think she knows. I talked at length to a relative of hers who will give her the information if ever they think it will help her, for instance if she is about to divorce him. I didn't feel I had the right to just announce myself to her and cause her all that pain, especially knowing he would find a way to convince her it was a lie or all her fault.

Comment by Susan on August 20, 2011 8:43 pm

PS I should add, I do think ANYONE can become a victim again...they are mindbogglingly manipulative....but the more awareness you have of yourself and their traits, the less likely it is to happen again, and the more quickly you will realize what is happening.

Regardless of what you think of her guilt or innocence, it was fascinating to learn what lies Casey Anthony had told her parents' for years and she got away with those lies!!! Before being involved with a psychopath, I would have thought her parents were naive, stupid, and that certainly *I* would not have been fooled in that situation. But now that I've been involved with a psychopath, I can understand how it happened, and how much they wanted to believe in Casey....what dreams they were seduced by, what horrible alternative explanations they didn't want to face.... and that is just about her lies about having a job, let alone what happened later!

I read that studies show 1/3 of people will confess to a crime they didn't commit, just to get away from the interrogation by police (who at least are following some basic rules about what is allowable or not, unlike the psychopath). How much more desperate was I to avoid the horrible truth that I was involved with a sex addict, a misogynist, a sexual assaulter, an alcoholic, a liar, a sadistic scum bag, someone who wanted to hurt me on purpose or even destroy me on purpose....At the time I would have rather been interrogated all day by the police than face that truth. And to have to stop believing in him (a very rich successful doctor...how could he be those other things?), in the story (he had loved me for 40 years), the promise (he would always love me and be here for me) and the dream (that somehow he would save me from all future hurt and pain and be my safety net, medically, financially, sexually, emotionally).

I was also seduced by FUN...getting away from all my responsibilities...his wealth (though he ended up costing me \$\$, of course)...his status...by the high of feeling lust again, flirting again, the excitement, the intensity, the escapism.

So my therapist said it was very important for me to find NEW ways to bring those things into my life, in a healthy way, for instance, reestablishing flirting with my husband and realizing when a man flirts with a married woman, and is not her husband, that is actually an insult to what that man thinks of me and a huge red flag. I had to learn to reframe things that had appealed to me before. And establish new avenues for healthy fun.

Comment by Michael on August 20, 2011 [11:31 pm](#)

Kelli; when you follow Sharis's articles; she adjusts and modifies her position around the potential for borderlines to change. she begins by taking the premise that BPD is an emotional developmental disorder. As does much of the literature. As her own knowledge base expands and she incorporates genetic and biological differences into her understanding; anatomical and functional differences in relation the amygdala, emotional processing etc; we see that these physiological differences and abnormalities are found within psychopathy. I firmly believe that BPD, NPD, and APD reflect the medical model construct and categorisation of what is essentially the psychopathic personality construct.

Comment by Michael on August 20, 2011 [11:51 pm](#)

Kelli and all; i firmly believe that Sandra Browns conclusions are correct and valid. BPD, NPD, and APD are medical model misnomers. They represent the medicalisation of "psychopathy"; which is itself a medical term.

If you think about what the medical model of any illness disease process postulates- it is that you can through a process of information gathering around symptoms, which leads to a diagnosis, and thus leads to a prognosis, which in turn leads to the prescribing of medical interventions- this forms the basis of the medical model of all illness and disease processes; and trauma.

Cluster B's cannot and do not change; yes they can cognitively accrue information, but that is it. There can be no spiritual and emotional growth; they lack the cradle which is the prerequisite, remember?

Having followed sharis's articles for some time now; I have noticed in all credit to her, that she has evolved her hypothesis around cluster B and the borderline. she broadened her hypothesis from developmental, to the biological; and she was right to do so. Psychopaths are hardwired; and they cannot and will not change when it comes to repairing their bottomless bucket.

Comment by Michael on August 21, 2011 [12:21 am](#)

Gary; and all, BPD's are psychopaths. I refer you to Claudia's articles; devalue and discard etc. When I read the articles; I noticed that she was describing the fallout from a pathological cluster B relationship dynamic.

Love and blessings to you all.

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 21, 2011 [12:36 am](#)

Linda, the key element of psychopathy is manipulation and deception. Psychopaths play games/ ruses with their victims. It's not willing sexual behavior or informed, chosen relationships. The psychopathic bond is fraudulent through and through. I think you've drawn the comparison to rape. It's an emotional rape, at the very least. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 21, 2011 [12:41 am](#)

Michael, we appreciate your very clear explanation of Cluster B personality disorders (narcissism, psychopathy and borderline personality disorder) and the key elements they share in common. It's important, as you indicate, to keep in mind that these disordered individuals can come from very diverse cultural and family backgrounds, levels of education, etc. But what they share—the incapacity to bond emotionally with others and a lack of empathy—makes them extremely dangerous to the rest of society. Their intellectual intelligence and sometimes their education often masks this fundamental emotional deficiency, which makes them even more toxic to others. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 21, 2011 [12:42 am](#)

Michael, your explanations help a lot, as usual. Many thanks for taking the time to share your knowledge about personality disorders so clearly. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 21, 2011 [12:44 am](#)

Linda, this sounds so horrible and abusive! I'm so sorry you had to experience this. But it's not that unusual. As I explain in the article Psychopaths as Lovers, psychopaths begin the relationship on equal footing, pretending to respect and want to please you. However, over time, they push the envelope so that the relationship, both sexual and emotional, becomes abusive and unequal, with them in charge. This is what happens when sexual relationships are about power and control, as they always are for psychopaths, rather than mutual pleasure or love. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 21, 2011 [12:46 am](#)

Michael, yes, Cluster B's can't change. As Sandra Brown MA puts it: Pathology is forever. The victims who hang on hoping for change or who try to mold themselves to please pathological individuals remain trapped in a life built on lies, control and brainwashing: in short, a life of psychological torture. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 21, 2011 [12:48 am](#)

Susan, I think in the case of Casey Anthony's parents, they may be disordered as well. Often psychopaths have narcissistic parents who need to project perfection upon their children to maintain their own image of a "special" family, superior to the rest. This seemed to have been the case with Joran's father and Neil Entwistle's parents, who sided with their murderous, psychopathic sons even in the face of all evidence, without any consideration or empathy for their victims. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 21, 2011 [12:52 am](#)

Susan, thanks for sharing with us your experience, which is in many ways similar to mine. Yes, after you go through the red flags you ignored, you begin to see the psychopathic bond for what it was—a malicious fraud—and the psychopath for the trivial being that he is. Then the stench leaves you, because you no longer idealize or long for any aspect of that toxic relationship. Later on in this process of healing, you also get over the sense of betrayal and hatred. Psychopaths don't deserve that much of our emotional energy. I think the people who stay with psychopaths forever, on the other hand, are those who have similar or complementary emotional deficiencies. Because once you see a psychopath's evil, you are forced to make a choice: colluding with his injurious behavior towards others or leaving him. Few choices in life come as clear-cut as this fundamental choice between potential good and the absolute evil of any psychopath. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 21, 2011 [12:56 am](#)

Kelli, once we engage with any psychopathic individual (even without meaning to), we place ourselves in danger. But it seems to me that the best way to deal with these individuals is to be firm and forceful and take legal action against them if necessary. Generally speaking, those who give in to these bullies place themselves in far greater danger than those who don't. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 21, 2011 [1:03 am](#)

Gary, it's interesting that you mention the victim role, since Martha Stout states in *The Sociopath Next Door* that one of the main red flags of sociopathy is what she calls the "pity ploy". My sociopathic ex described his wife as cold, unattractive, frigid, etc. He depicted himself as stuck in an empty marriage. He said he had "settled" for his wife because he needed to obtain American citizenship. While being engaged to his wife he had affairs with other women he had considered

marrying for this reason, including an office mate and a foreign woman with American citizenship. This strategy was clearly a pity ploy, to let me know how bad his marriage was and convince me of the lie that I was the love, and woman, of his life. But it was simultaneously a huge red flag that I should have noticed had I not been so focused on the "special passion" we supposedly had, and how I'd save him from a dead, empty marriage. Essentially, this man had admitted that he had used his wife to get citizenship and that he had lined other backups, with whom he had cheated on her when they were engaged. If he had done this to the woman who loved and stood by him all those years, he'd do it to anybody. His usurious, back-stabbing behavior towards his wife was such a huge red flag that I should have run away instantly from him, no more questions asked. So it's absolutely right, and necessary, that we each ask ourselves, and analyze, why we failed to see the inevitable red flags—of callous, self-serving behavior—that each sociopath gives. They can't hide them all, not even during the luring phase when they take most care to put on their mask. In criticizing others and blaming what they did wrong upon them and their deficiencies, psychopaths offer us a clear picture of their general contempt for other human beings: if we're not too blinded by their lies and illusions to see it. Claudia

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 21, 2011 4:52 am
Susan,

I'm so glad you shared your story here! I relate so well to so much of it. You seem very stable and I'm glad that you've been able to salvage your marriage as well!

It's really difficult to know how or where to respond to your post as it's very overwhelming for me emotionally, but I'll give it a shot. When I started out with this man, we were friends for two years first. Bitching to one another about our marriages. his was a lie, mine was the truth. I was trying to escape a twenty year marriage to a psychopath. He was violent and verbally/emotionally aggressive. My "friend" was extremely calm, cool and collected, NEVER raised his voice to me once and was supportive and loving (GAG). He never encouraged me to get out of the marriage, as it was My business, but I did anyway as it was becoming far too dangerous physically to continue. Long story short, I got out. The promise was that he was eventually going to be out of his marriage too. Another lie. The carrot was there for a very long time. The abuse was there from the get go, but I blew it off because it wasn't the same as the abuse I had endured all through my marriage. I often thought I was misperceiving or that I misunderstood him in some way. I didn't listen to my gut. The promise was that we would eventually be together, love another, move in, share our children, blah blah blah. By then it was way too late for me once we became intimate, I was deeply hooked into that promise and he was very busy making sure that the carrot was always above my head. There was one time in particular I attempted to get out of the affair and he hoovered me back. To this day I wish to GOD I had never answered that email. Long story short here I survived the separation from my ex husband but not unscathed and nor did my children, although I was enormously relieved to be free of it. There was no way it could be saved. So I waited for my prince.....and waited.....and waited.....and believed many more lies, put up with ten times more abuse, all with the "baby, we're soul mates" crap just hang on....It all began to change when I went back to school. I started gaining some self confidence. Ultimately, he

discovered his wife having an affair (short version of story here for sure), and went immediately back home, wrote this guy a letter blasting him for being with "his wife" all without telling his wife that he was still involved with me. So I told her. And that was her ticket out of insanity. . . As weird as this sounds, she is very happy now and healthier than ever, loving and supportive family all around her. And I'm the happiest for her. They divorced and she wanted it done as quickly as possible so basically she got all his money and he got joint custody. Perfect for a psychopath as he enjoys the image of Disneyland Dad and the control he still tries to have over his ex wife. We dated for a few months after the divorce, however we went from "I told you to be patient and to wait (through the divorce), I told you to wait"

What was I waiting for, while busting my ass off through school? He was alcoholic and I was drinking heavily with him when I'd not touched the stuff before I met him. I quit. He kept right on. He tried to sabotage my efforts to go to school, became intensely demanding, called me all kinds of names, gaslighting etc, all the pathological vitriol came spewing forth from this man. I saw ugly in him before, but I saw nothing but absolute traumatic deviancy in the end. It was what he always WAS. I had to bail. And I did. He stalked me for a few months, but was also on dating websites trolling women with money. He landed one. When he did, he stopped contacting me. I've been out almost nine months now, still putting my life together again. PTSD, depression, anxiety, it's all there. I have NO desire for a relationship with any man AT ALL and it will be a long, LONG time before I do, if I ever do again. I see red flags and I bust. I was recently stalked by some jerk off of my Facebook, a friend of a friend and after I told him there was no way I was dating him. That's all it TOOK. Once you know what it is, it isn't rocket science to see anymore. I have men friends that are good and kind to me. Healthy relationships, just not intimate relationships in the sexual sense. I'm far too unhealthy and have far too many issues to deal with inside of myself to even THINK about anything like that right now. I don't pin hopes of it, but I do see glimmers to which that perhaps someday, I'll meet someone who is healthy. But not now. I also have many issues to mend with my children as a result of this mess. But I'm willing to endure the pain of it all, because while this is all very painful to me, I do see, that when we really get into my childhood issues, also full of pathologicals, the future will look somewhat brighter. A man is not going to fix this for me. I have too now. Running into the arms of another for the sake of distraction or to some perceived prince charming (MAJOR BULL FROG), to overlook the issues I should have dealt with long ago now, is not an option for me. It's hard and it IS very painful, but I'm determined to make it happen. Thanks Susan and I truly hope that your marriage will continue to be blessed, healthy and on the mend. Kelli

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 21, 2011 5:22 am
Michael, it is my understanding that there is MUCH debate over what to label the Cluster B disorders in the new DSM. It will be interesting to see what they come up with. Many of the symptoms and illnesses overlap one another. Would it be reliable to construct a medical model of JUST psychopathy that encompasses ALL the Cluster B disorders, with perhaps secondary symptoms, prognosis and/or perceived treatments? You'd be surprised how many therapists cannot accept the concept that a Cluster B of any of the disorders cannot change given treatment. In Sandra's book, the knowledge of this given to lawyers fighting for a cluster B in court would

have a heyday in backing up the psychopaths claims that he is NOT responsible for his behavior, but instead of putting his opponent as the one at fault, it would be the disorder itself. I can see that there would be MANY mistakes made, given the debate as to whether or not psychopathy or any personality disorder can be cured. A loving and good friend of mine discussed psychopathy about a week ago within the context of a friend of hers that she believed to be in a pathological relationship. She compared this man to a schizophrenic, understanding that this was what psychopathy meant and the symptoms she outlined were NOT of schizophrenia. She believed, until I shared with her about psychopathy, that it could be CURED. She is an intelligent, well meaning human being and a faithful believer in her Christianity, but the ignorance of this disorder, as well as the continued debate and those perspectives of therapists who believe the psychopaths can be cured or should not be responsible for their behaviors is incredibly dangerous. It doesn't matter to me what the disorder is called ultimately, but how it is going to be submitted, the symptoms that will be outlined and EDUCATION on how to avoid these people or how to deal with them in justice system, thus saving MANY lives. There is LOTS of good information out there that discusses personality disorders by those in the field and those who have been severely damaged by a psychopath. The more the merrier, but I find different perspectives enlightening, particularly amongst survivors, more so even than a professional with a degree. There are few professionals out there that I believe are right on and Sandra is one of them, but far more are out of the loop and need to be educated about psychopathy across the board. I'll be returning to school to finish my degree this fall. There is not ONE psych class that addresses personality disorders to the degree that they need too and as Sandra also mentions, not even in graduate school. If it is taught, there is so much misinformation about rehabilitation of psychopaths, it is clear much more work needs to be done in this area so that more lives are saved.

There is information all over the net about how borderlines can be rehabilitated providing they are willing to do the work. Does this differ from psychopathy in general? Are they of a "higher" conscienced group than the low/no conscience disorders? Do you see how confusing this can become? I do not assign myself one guru of psychopathy. What I would like to see is some sort of meeting of the minds and much more research done with regards to personality disorders in general and any disinformation obliterated for appropriate and ACCURATE education.

Sorry Michael, I guess this ruffles the feathers a bit LOL...I don't mean to make light, but this truly is a serious issue that grows increasingly important to me everyday. Kelli

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 21, 2011 5:42 am
Whew!

Anyway, I wanted to share something tonight about what it means in my life to be progressing. I'm still dealing with all the cog/dis and today was an exceptionally difficult day as this was family day for myself and my children, who have recently committed to Saturday night dinners. I've enjoyed this immensely, as I try to reconnect to my children and get to know better, my grandchildren. Family day would not have happened except a few times a year on holidays. I had my head so far up my ex's ass, I'd forgotten what it was like to really BE with my children and my

grandchildren. It is joy, yet there is still disconnect. I do pray. A lot and one of my biggest prayers is that God will help to get rid of the toxins of him, continue to heal ME and make me the best grandma and mother to my children that I can be. Also the best student, also the best wiener dog owner I can be, well you get the picture. I'll never be perfect, but I'd like it to be the best for me. That I'm doing my best and while doing my best, FEELING love and joy again. I hope that makes sense....

So while watching my granddaughter play on the back porch and just chatting with her, she had a yo yo she really wanted to play with. I observed her looking at it, the string was all pulled out, yet still attached on the inside. She was FASCINATED with this. "Grandma, how do I get the string to role up again?" I had a yo yo when I was a child and for the life of me, could not remember how to wrap that thing up. I so didn't want to disappoint her. So I asked one of my son to come and help teach her how to wind it up.....so he wound up that yo yo, as fast as he could and in no time, BLING BLING! Time to play yo yo WOOT! but she sat there a minute, just staring at this marvel of a litle toy. She was so enthralled with it, the color of it, that it glows in the dark, I didn't have the heart to ask what she was thinking...so finally, with a big smile on her face, she gets up from the bench and she gives it all she's got and throws that sucker out there.....only to not see it come back to her. She looked at me with her big blue eyes and set it down. I could see the disappointment on her face because it wasn't doing exactly what she expected it too....so she went inside and came back out with another NEW toy five minutes later! This one was even better than that LAST ONE.....I wonder if you see where this is going. It wasn't better than that last, it was the same...and she....while mildly entertained IN THE MOMENT, was instantly bored with the toy when it refused to do what she wanted it to do.....so I gave her what was more real, a big hug and a big kiss and off to read some of grandma's children's books I had found in a box today....

And as simple as this is, this is what I learned about my ex today by watching her with those toys. She's not a psychopath of course, but for analogies sake, she's five now. She expects the toys to be functional the way she wants them to be. They weren't. So the tantrum and then complete disinterest and onto the next....and that's just what he did to me. What a psychopath does to all of us.

But what he never did, was to reassure me, with a kiss and a hug that meant anything at all, the way I was able to with my granddaughter today.

So our next step into becoming more of a grandma is that my granddaughter and I will be having a sleepover. She asked if we could have one soon. I was overjoyed. How much fun will that be? The littlest things are coming back to me now...for awhile so so so small...and maybe to some of you here, further ahead in the healing process, well it is small...but for me, it is hope. And I'm still young enough to enjoy it. 😊

God bless and good night. 😊

Comment by Michael on August 21, 2011 [8:45 am](#)

Hi Kelli; There is a split between camps around whether a borderline can change. You will find many sites on line claiming miracle cures for BPD, some from folk claiming to have recovered from BPD and so on. In mainstream psychiatry BPD is often thought of as taboo and psychiatrists generally do not wish to have a borderline on their caseload. A similar attitude prevails within the psychotherapeutic community.

The biggest change in DSM iv I believe is the removal of narcissistic personality disorder; which may not be such a bad thing, depending on how you look at it I guess. Many folk take the view that pathological narcissists are psychopaths, and they should be referred to as such. I would be inclined to agree with this position. What do you call a psychopath who never falls foul of the law, holds down a good job, and is considered an upstanding member of the community by those who do not see through the mask? A narcissist it would seem.

When you look at the literature and explore the net, the core traits, and or description, and the relationship dynamics pertaining to cluster B all look the same? I agree Kelli there is so much confusion out there and people are not quite sure what to make of this often conflicting and confusing information.

I have often come across sites, blogs etc where many people ask questions such as these- "my ex I think was a high functioning borderline, does that make her a narcissist", or "I think my ex borderline had some psychopathy / sociopathy traits as well", and so it goes on.

Many very well informed information resources make the claim- "borderlines are also narcissistic", or "all borderlines have narcissistic traits", again, and so it goes on!

It gets more confusing- co-morbidity; narcissists have borderline traits, borderlines have psychopathy traits, narcissists have psychopathy traits, all psychopaths are narcissistic, borderpaths, narcissistic psychopaths; and just about every other possible permutation you can imagine. So what exactly are we looking at here? Are we really looking at the same thing when we get to the core of the issue?

What do they (the medical model catergorisations) all have in common?

They all lack empathy, do not experience remorse, lack responsibility, have empty souls, lack compassion, impulsivity, highly controlling, pathological liars, emotionally absent or very emotionally superficial, totally self serving, problems with anger, narcissistically re-engineer reality so it conforms with their false self (therefore gaslighting us), a high level of defensive mechanisms (particularly projection, denial, and intellectualisation). Idealise and devalue patterns of relating, and the list goes on. They play the pity card, and the next day look down on you as though they are in some way superior. They all wear masks, false selves, masks of sanity. They all tend to have dichotomised personalities, self contradicting.

Many, if not most of these facets of their personality are so well hidden, that they are only revealed when one enters into a relationship with them; and their true selves, or lack of selves begins to emerge. They eventually take off their mask and we see behind it. And when we do see

behind the mask; we are shocked!

Comment by Michael on August 21, 2011 9:06 am

Kelli; re sheridans book; if you like I could scan the pages re the exercises and email them to you? Or i could forward them to Claudia and she could forward them on to you 😊

Gary; Kelli, reread schriebers article and replace the word borderline with psychopath: the articles resonate the same. With the exception of her view that borderlines can make some changes with years of therapy and commitment (but she humorously states “you have a better chance of flying to the moon strapped to a banana”). In her later articles she makes reference to newly discovered anatomical differences in the brain; e.g. the amygdala, and the other parts of the brain, that guess what? The differences are the precise same regions of the brain that are found to abnormal in psychopaths.

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 21, 2011 1:58 pm

Michael, I suppose that lack of empathy and the incapacity for deeper emotions makes all Cluster B personality disordered individuals far more similar to one another than they are to regular human beings, who can feel. Gender, cultural upbringing, level of education, really don't matter when it comes to Cluster B's half as much as their lack of emotional bonding and the need to play malicious games at other people's expense to entertain themselves and in order to dominate them. These disordered individuals can come from any social and cultural background and be male or female—hence the many male and female victims on this and other blogs who share very similar stories—and can wear a wide variety of masks. But our stories are so similar because their patterns of behavior and underlying callousness is so similar. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 21, 2011 2:01 pm

Kelli, good analogy! Yes, psychopaths use their victims like a yo-yo, pushing them away when they're bored or to watch them suffer from the breakup (and thus feel more important), then pulling them back to have them as backups, confirm their power over them and not allow them to move on and be far happier without them. When a yo-yo is the object of this game what you have is fun. When a person is treated like a yo-yo what you have is a mind game by a disordered individual who needs to feel in control. Claudia

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 21, 2011 2:52 pm
Michael,

You pretty much outlined above what I have to noticed, although isn't it interesting how we all word it differently LOL! This must be part of the reason why the psychiatric community fails to come to a solid conclusion about Cluster B. My concern is that if they DON'T label it something that is solid, with main traits and secondary overlaps, it would confuse people more.

Interestingly, there is another forum i go to, that is a Narcissists group. More than one on there have labeled their past partners as Psychopaths, not narcissists. I think Narcissist is most common,

however, but I think overused and oversimplified because you are correct, the bottom line core traits are the same. Lack of empathy, lack of remorse or guilt, pathological lying, manipulating. CORE traits. I just think that if the confusion could be cleared up a bit if we have ONE defined label. I'm aware that they are removing Narcissism from the DSM. I've not read much about why, have you? One of the reasons I love Sandra's book is because she puts it ALL what I consider to be overlapping conditions under psychopathy. My preference is actually pathological. I also thk one of the core traits should be INEVITABLE HARM. PREDATORY. These people get into relationships to destroy, without a host they cannot feed. They need relationship, ie: mirrors or they would NOT survive!

When I was reading Sandra's book, it started me on a quest to find out more about the regions of the brain that are affected by psychopathy. I've read just a few articles about this, have seen some pics of the brain scans done, but it appears that solid evidence is yet to be obtained, or more information is needed. I like the brain explanation too, but unless you're a scientist, the basic victim is not likely to be too much interested in that. I wonder if there is a way to simplify it. I love scientific information with regards to this, but I don't see psychopaths that are not in prison lining up to have brain scans done. 😊

Michael, I would very much like to see the exercises out of Sheridan's book. I'm very anxious to read the book, but will have to wait a week or two before I can get it. I really like Sheridan's approach and that he seems to put psychopathy into terms where its a basic, simply approach, as well as his own experiences. I have more thoughts on this and would like to discuss those more later. Michael, feel free to have Claudia give you my email addy.

Comment by [whatwuzthat](http://_/_gravatar.com/_/whatwuzthat) (http://_/_gravatar.com/_/whatwuzthat) on August 21, 2011 3:13 pm
Hi Michael,

Would you mind reposting the link to this article by Shreiber? I can't seem to find it in this L O N G series of comments.

Joanne

Comment by Gary on August 21, 2011 3:19 pm

Hi All, I have to say this has been a very educational weekend in my recovery process. I have began looking into my own psyche. Asking questions like, What has happened in my life that has made me vulnerable? I need to take my focus off of "what is wrong with my ex." and turn it to why was I attracted to her?. Why did I ignore and turn a blind eye to things that didn't seem right? Why am I still hung up on this Woman? I had what I like to call a "good" childhood. There may be more to it though. Yes my ex is a cluster B, I have no doubt in my mind. She played "the victim" and I played the "Hero.". That's why I need to look at myself, not as the blame but what was driving me then and now. Why did I stay so long when I knew it was wrong? I know she is evil. I know she cant be helped. I may have some deep seated issues in my subconscious. Nothing

major but obviously something I have to deal with. Without this site and the contributors, I don't know where I'd be right now. I feel I'm heading in the right direction and appreciate you all.

Gary

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 21, 2011 [3:36 pm](#)

Joanne...LOL! yes, it's a very L O N G thread LOL!

Gary, I understand right where you are. I'm dealing with that in therapy right now, via my reactions within the relationship. I had a horrendous childhood, full of pathologicals. I want to encourage you here by saying you're taking a HUGE step in personal growth and spiritual awareness! GOOD FOR YOU! That tells me you are TOTALLY opposite your psychopath. I would like to caution you however, just so you are aware, it's so good to see what attracted us to the psychopath in the first place. What we need to fix, the red flags we missed, but please try not to take too much blame on yourself about it. They can fool the very best and often do. IT isn't your weakness that she preyed on, but your strengths! I think it's safe to say that they did that to all of us. It may have been loneliness or a deep vulnerability, but either way, what happened is NOT your fault, but a good self examination NEVER hurts, self awareness so you are NEVER taken in again! Kelli

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 21, 2011 [3:42 pm](#)

Michael,

I just wanted you to know that I have still yet to finish that article. While reading it, I did turn borderline into psychopath while reading it. I'll spend time reading it today.

Also, I want to know if anyone here has read "Why Does HE Do That?" By Lundy Bancroft. Michael, I don't know if you've read this one, but I can tell you, you can read it and turn the she into he, as the writer makes this distinction that both genders can be victims of abuse. I'm reading it again as I've not for a long time and many lightbulbs are going off. he only mentions personality disorders a time or two in the book, but if you look at it overall, most of these abusers appear to be psychopaths, given the descriptions. I wonder if this guy will eventually connect the two more distinctly and write a book about it because it would be a FASCINATING read. Gary and Linda, I think this would be a great read for both of you too. Linda, the book does go into detail about the machinations of triangulations and what the mind set of the abuser is. It's mind blowing~kelli

Comment by Michael on August 21, 2011 [5:24 pm](#)

Linda, my pleasure; this one is a link to the same site- "if looks could kill, anatomy of a borderline"- all the BPD articles on schreibers site are outstanding; you will find "at any cost, saving your life after a borderline", "shell shocked- clearing the fallout from a borderline break up" ,,,,,there is plenty more on there to read.

<http://gettinbetter.com/anatomy.html> (<http://gettinbetter.com/anatomy.html>)

Comment by Michael on August 21, 2011 [5:37 pm](#)

Kelli; sounds like a useful and helpful read; I may invest in a copy. You are absolutely right in that the science behind the aetiology of cluster B is of little use to survivors of their toxicity; over and above informing people that these disorders are not fixable / curable, and they do not / cannot change. This is useful to be aware of because many people hang on in there thinking, as did I, she/he will change.

Comment by Michael on August 21, 2011 [5:39 pm](#)

Joanne; oops; sorry Joanne, got lost in the lengthy thread, humblest apologies 😊 schrieber link above.

Comment by Michael on August 21, 2011 [5:46 pm](#)

Claudia; well said, they are much more alike, in comparison to non cluster B disordered people. The dynamics as you quite rightly point out are so strikingly similar; as is the horrendous impact they have on us. Lack of ability to love / bond, callousness, lack of compassion. I recall my ex asking me in 2008 "how would I know If I feel love"? She was not inviting me into some existential devate around the nature of the emotion of love. She literally did not know.

Comment by Michael on August 21, 2011 [6:04 pm](#)

Gary; your welcome, i am delighted that you find them helpful. Last year after my final discard and her pulling the plug on her "me and Michael" persona; I fell apart. I was in absolute shock and disbelief, I smoked 60 a day, couldnt eat, sleep, i was completely numb. The articles kept me functioning enough to just drag my self into work. I was still going through the process of no contact (yes i believe no contact is a process, I will post an article link that explains this position, and it made perfect sense and resonated with my experience), and I contacted her and she had devalued her new object quickly, so he retreated. She attempted to plug back into me, I could tell she was desperate for narcissistic supply. She offered to cook me a steak and asked if I was going to come and sleep over. I got no closure; she just pulled the pity ploy and she began crying in an infantile manner; and guess what? muggins here ended up consoling her. What is it about these psychopathic individuals that are either pumped up and condescending control freaks, or they are sniveling little children? I actually felt like picking up this little girl who appeared and say there there its ok- and like schrieber suggests,- I wanted to distract her with a lollipop!

Michael

Comment by [kelli \(http://.gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://.gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 21, 2011 [6:20 pm](#)

Michael,

I apologize if it was implying that the science part of it was not important as it certainly is, but I think initially, to a survivor, once they figure out that they've been dealing with a psychopath, just trying to wrap their brains about what that means in itself is a challenge. Perhaps in the future as science evolves more around this disorder and there is more research, science MAY be able to simplify it more to a level of understanding for those who are not particularly scientifically motivated to understanding psychopathy. I know that for me, initially, I could have cared less

about the science part of it, research, etc. Once the survivor wraps their mind around what happened and then there is a level of acceptance it turns into being about them. Or being about ourselves, kinda I think where Gary is right now, how did this happen, how did I allow this? For others, and speaking only for myself right now (although I've discussed this with Claudia in the past), in the immediate aftermath ie: on average, I'm guessing about the first year, it's decompensation time, but I came out of this relationship with SEVERE PTSD and substance abuse issues. I no longer indulge in substance and realized that this developed during the course of my relationship with my ex, I stopped and then cycled for awhile in the aftermath to "cope". NOT a good coping skill! As in Sandra's book, the aftermath is discussed and the victims are often so traumatized and so brainwashed and exhausted from years of him/her, that their symptoms of PTSD can often resemble personality disorders, mainly BPD. This is why I take such a huge interest in this. I questioned myself constantly about this and my triggers and behaviors in the aftermath, was this gasoline to fire AM I BPD? I went immediately to therapy. I went through two therapists before I found the one I'm seeing now, who is very well versed in personality disorders and assures me that I do not have one, but that I DO suffer from severe PTSD, depression and anxiety. She also specializes in EMDR therapy, and after having talked with many others who have undergone this particular treatment, have found it to be enormously helpful! I'm becoming much more mindful of my reactions and triggers, my many childhood wounds. I have found that anything resembling a criticism (and it may be something completely benign), I have reacted to since the split. The constant berating, criticizing and emotional abuse, nearly killed me. Any perceived manipulation, I've reacted to as well. While this is very hard to talk about, and is very frightening in the aftermath, it's VERY important because so many survivors who are concerned about reactions, responses, triggers, believe they are "sick" to, as sick as the disordered human being they have been with. To an extent, this is true. This is why in an earlier post, I referred to having his toxic stench all over me. I don't know that it's possible to come out of these relationships without disturbance of some sort. My therapist told me that it could take up to a full year to finally start to level out. Part of the anger for me, has also been the frustration I've felt in responding to my triggers or reacting to them. It had become a habit with him and one I do not wish to continue. The enmeshment is so deep, that confusion is likely to be the result. This is what makes psychopaths so incredibly dangerous and the importance of public education so critical to saving lives and minds. The book "Why does he do that?" Is an incredible read, and I think you would be able to relate to much of it and be surprised that so many elements of psychopathy, with the abusive mindset are present. Kelli

Comment by Michael on August 21, 2011 [6:22 pm](#)

Kelli; I agree with you totally. If we could have a more clear definable category that in a sense condensed down the core traits, this would cut through a lot of the confusion out there. An Albatross and a humming bird, although they look so different, and there are differences in behaviour; they are both birds. If that analogy makes sense. I will be emailing Claudia later, and I will ask her to forward your email so we can link up.

Comment by Susan on August 21, 2011 [6:35 pm](#)

Kelli, everything you wrote sounds right on to me, and I am confident you are well on your way to the happy life you deserve! I've noticed I'm making healthier female friends too! Thank you for your kind remarks and wishes.

Comment by Susan on August 21, 2011 [6:43 pm](#)

My therapist told me the easiest problems to solve are anxiety, depression, lack of self-confidence, phobias, etc (And think how hard it is for some people to conquer those things!) . Next are addictions. Last are personality disorders. She told me most insurance will not cover treatment for cluster B personality disorders, because there is no cure. Even if therapy COULD work, it is going to be harder task than overcoming any addiction, and we all know how hard that is! I personally think it will be as impossible to cure as Down's Syndrome. I truly believe their brains (P's) don't work right. However, they do know the difference between what is legal and what is not, so they can be held responsible for their crimes. Those that laws cover!

Comment by Michael on August 21, 2011 [7:05 pm](#)

Kelli; No apology necessary. You raise a very valid point around the confusion that the science of these disorders can contribute too, and also how they have very limited value and contribute very little to people who are in the process of recovery from a pathological encounter. Over and above the point I make re their lack of capacity to change because they are hardwired this way; there is little value in knowing which part of this faulty wiring is involved in this dysfunction.

I am a firm advocate that step 1 in the recovery process is education about the nature of pathology and psychopathy. I needed to wrap my head around it; I had to find answers, it became almost an obsession; trying to make sense of an experience that i could make absolutley no sense of. That quest to find answers over these last 3 years has brought me here. I spent the first year in total confusion, the second year, I was beginning to gain some clarity, and now I have a firm, and robust grip on that slippery bar of soap I referred to in an earlier post.

I recall coming across Sandra's assertion that survivors of pathologicals experience symptoms that seem to look like BPD.

Kelli I think this is a fascinating subject because I thought about this issue a lot, and still do on occasion. I have come across many stories and descriptions; and I have a friend who is a survivor who went through a phase of wondering if she was personality disordered. I went through a similar experience.

I have some tentative theories around what is happening with this issue. I wonder how much this might resonate with other posters.

Cognitive dissonance is a symptom of the pathological relationship experience. Note in BPD literature BPD'S / NPD,s / and psychopaths split us, we are black, or white; worthy, or not worthy; controllable, or not controllable; idealised, or devalued.

Interfacing with this dichotomised person (we try to relate to the mask, and whats behind the mask at the same time)- means we split them in return. We see them as all black, or all white, very trust worthy, but totally untrustworthy etc.

Add to this we now seem to have what appears to be a “fear of abandonment”, Hmmm I wonder where the fear of abandonment comes from in their victims- (she loves me she loves me not!). Survivors experience suicidal ideation, ping ponging back and forth towards the end of the dynamic- note how this also looks like idealisation and devaluation. I wonder though Kelli; often people who are perhaps mistakingly miss-diagnosed with BPD, as Sandra suggests, also present with other symptoms including anxiety disorders, panic attacks, moderate to severe depression, and so on. How many of you out there have experienced your ex having a bout of depression, or having an anxiety disorder, or any other affective mood disorder. Don't these disorders, i.e. depression, debilitating anxiety etc involve emotional or affective states? My view is that true cluster B's do not experience depressive episodes, or anxiety disorders that are commonly seen in primary care.

There are other issues related to this; and it is a very complex issue I believe; I will save those for a later post. But it does link in with recovery and education.

Comment by Michael on August 21, 2011 [7:23 pm](#)

All; forgive me if this comes across as stating the obvious, but I think this is a very good indicator that we have dealt with someone who is psychopathic –

Consider a depressive episode- “an episode of low mood that has a longer than two week duration”. Characterised by a loss of interest or pleasure in previous activities or anhedonia, tearfulness, broken sleep or insomnia, or over sleeping, poor appetite, overwhelming feelings of sadness and hopelessness, poor concentration, flattening of affect etc.

My ex was in the main always in a monotone, upbeat kind of mood. There was never any real variation in mood or affect. Any variation she did make from this curiously static emotional state, was always very short lived. This often gave her a “what ever I got so pissed off about the other day, didn't happen”!

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 21, 2011 [7:33 pm](#)

Michael,

I went to that site and read and read. I was particularly astounded by the borderline “waif” I RELATED to that. Some of the behaviors I've noted in myself are of the borderline “waif” variety. I see some of this going way way back. Maybe you can clarify this better for me, but it seems as if the waif borderline does experience emotions, that borderlines DO, but are polar opposite of narcissism in that their hypersensitivity is of an emotional variety, rather than image protection of themselves? Does this make sense? I have a martyr complex as big as the nearest mountain where I live, yet also a victimy, help me type feel to it. I see EXACTLY where this comes from from my childhood. I can now pinpoint it. One of the reasons I REFUSE to be involved in any relationship and keep my circle of friends very small is because I am UNCERTAIN of myself right now. I SEE where I'm completely flawed. This relationship may well actually be a blessing in disguise for the very reasons that I'm stating here, it brought forth all the VILE within ME to deal with! I know I DO experience a great deal of anxiety, sadness and anger about what's happened, both in my life

and within the relationship. I understand how Gary feels now after having read all of that, but maybe for different reasons. She is an excellent source of information and I'm very glad you posted this link, for it has enlightened me in a VERY profound way. Kelli

Comment by Michael on August 21, 2011 [8:13 pm](#)

Kelli; it is difficult to assess the emotional constitution of another; the only tool we have is empathy. This is one of the issues that continues to grate and know at me. I wonder if hypersensitivity is the same as feeling deep emotional bonds; or feeling anything deeply for that matter. Emotional states are by and large pervasive; if they were pervasive (or to put it another way, consistent), we would not find ourselves minced up in the chaos that bonding to a narcissist / borderline / psychopath typically brings. Of course emotional states are subject to change; but as Sheridan quite rightly points out; pathological relationships do not evolve and plateau, and end in a normal way. If you could graph them, they look like spikes, there is no plateau, just an oscillation between idealisation and devaluation that is, unknown to us, all driven by a need for a mirror.

Comment by Joanne on August 21, 2011 [8:23 pm](#)

Michael, I can really identify with this post. Especially an obsessive need to find the answers. Also your timeline .. 1 year of confusion before the pieces start to come together and the aftermath of PTSD symptoms. You are correct in your declaration that education is the key.

Joanne

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 21, 2011 [8:27 pm](#)

Michael, Might you be able to clarify your statement "the only tool we have is empathy. This is one of the issues that continues to grate and know at me". I'm wondering what about empathy is knowing and grating on you? I'm sorry if I'm misunderstanding you. I'm seeing a connection somewhere in what you're saying, but not grasping it.

I wonder the same thing. What IS hypersensitivity. Is it a DEEP emotional REACTION, perceived? Does it come from a depth of emotion?

in just sort of working this through a bit, it was/is my understanding that pathologicals are incapable of empathy, remorse or guilt or deep grieving. Does this, in fact, include the borderline? When I read about the waif borderline, what i got from it was that there was deep feelings of shame? An emotional level of depth when I read it was perceived, but skewed? I would appreciate it if you would read the article and let me know what your interpretation of it is.

Wow, I cannot believe how deep this is becoming for me and no way to express how much this is affecting me. this must be what it means when I've heard in recovery circles, it starts out as about them, then it becomes about ourselves. Kelli

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 21, 2011 [9:07 pm](#)

Michael,

in one of your posts above, you mentioned about whether or not any of our ex's were diagnosed with anxiety disorder or depressive disorder. Mine never was and even though he saw a therapist, there was never any change. I think the therapist ordeal was a mandated one by his employer. It's interesting that this is mentioned because the reactions I saw out of mine were not anxiety or depression related in the slightest. If there was show about that, it was clearly faked. In fact, most of the time he was cool, calm and collected, exception, his rages that amounted to childish temper tantrums. he never once showed ANY expression when he knew he hurt me, except with smile on his face (smirk). Mine would rarely sweat either, which was interesting. The anxiety or panic I thought I was witnessing was more hyperactivity and arousal to a potential harm to another, or it was completely faked.

Comment by Michael on August 21, 2011 9:29 pm

Kelli, Sorry kelli my last post was vague. I think what i meant was there is so much potential for confusion around feeling and emotion in regards to psychopathy. For example, how much do they feel? do they feel a limited spectrum of emotion, the full spectrum but choose not to be driven by emotion, nothing at all, or fleeting superficial emotions that are narrow in spectrum and childlike, or primordial?

I know there are devices that can measure or infer a persons emotional response; but we cannot plug our exes into one. Even if we could would they pass a lie detector test? I dont know; what I do know is that these encounters cause mass confusion and emotional devastation; and part of figuring out their emotions is one of them.

The best "tool" ever invented by that great big old cosmos of ours "thats the old hippy in me comming out!", in terms of being feeling entities, is empathy. Sounds a bit mechanistic; I'm not explaining this very well; but our "feeling" is what enables us to feel another. Maybe Ive had one glass of chardonnay to many! 😊

What knaws on me is how do we, or can we, ever really know what their experience was of any emotion, whether pervasive or not, shallow, or whatever? How do we know? Can we know?

I think all we have, and we could not wish for anything better, is our empathy. I can say that I believe my ex could not empathise with me; not because she singled me out. She could not, and cannot empathise. Or could she? I sometimes wonder. What if she did, but like all other emotional experiences could not hold them due to a lacking in object constancy. Borderlines are have been described as emotional heamaphilliacs. But what does this mean; does it mean their feelings just bleed through them and they stop experiencing them? I think Kelli that they do not experience emotion the way "normal" people do; their emotions are fleeting, extremely shallow, short lived, and ephemeral. The volume is turned down on their emotions to the point they hardly notice them. And if they do, no matter how intense they experience them, they soon flicker away and act like they never experienced them.

Comment by kelli (<http://gravatar.com/kelli1964>) on August 21, 2011 9:46 pm
Michael,

So they could and would never FEEL the depth of pain and emotion such as the rest of us do about what they've done to us? If a narc/borderline/spath were dumped wouldl THEY go through this range of emotion? Most of the time if they're being dumped they STALK, well, shoot they stalk when they're not being dumped if they're between supply too....anyway, ok, for example. My daughter is pregnant and she's having an argument with her boyfriend. So she comes up to talk to me and bursts into tears. The IMMEDIATE feeling I have, is SADNESS for her, because I hate seeing her cry. It HURTS me for her. It won't last forever though,because we talk and she feels better. That's fleeting though, but if i were with a PD, I would NOT be able to feel that empathy towards my child, even if it's over an upset that will pass? I'm thoroughly confused on this issue now.

All of us, I believe, have a degree of narcissism. They mirror us, in the beginning,but as has been stated before, we're falling in love with ourselves, essentially because of that mirroring. Is that correct? They make us feel special and LOVED. So when the relationship ends, and we are devastated, they are not, when we are sad during the relationship, or cry or show emotion, they do not FEEL our pain, correct? I'm sorry, I don't mean to complicate this, but something is coming up for me about this and I feel like I'm getting somewhere here....

Okay, another question, empathy is putting ourselves into another's shoes, the ability to feel their pain. Does this mean the pathological can feel pain, if it's not related to empathy? Or is that a stupid question? Or do they not even have feelings to hurt, as Martha Stout says? Do borderlines have feelings, while narcissists and psychopaths/sociopaths don't?

Thanks for hashing this out with me Michael. I'm learning a lot from all of this. Kelli

Comment by Gary on August 21, 2011 [10:11 pm](#)

Kelli it is deep. Yes that is where I'm at "no way to express it." I will say I do feel better (today). I'm moving my focus off of her and onto myself. Not taking the blame or blaming myself. I'm looking for answers deep within myself. A lot of what you said has hit me also. I'm a firm believer that if you look within yourself and ask the right questions you will find the answers. Education is where we learn the right questions to ask. The hard part is if you ask yourself the wrong question you will also find the wrong answer and that is where the confusion lies.

Gary

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravavatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravavatar.com/kelli1964) on August 21, 2011 [10:20 pm](#)

Gary,

your last two sentences are very profound for me. I'm glad you're feeling better today. I think not blaming yourself, if you can do that, is a good thing. I have a tendency to beat myself up quite a bit. Maybe more than I ought, but in doing so, I'm asking more questions about my own behavior now, my past and learning to understand what the questions are, so I can ask them, and heal from all of this. I have learned so much about myself here the last few months. I appreciate your input

Gary and I want you and Michael to know that I feel very encouraged by your input because it's reassuring to know that there are men in this world who are capable of depth of emotion, love and growth. I'm so grateful for this blog. Kelli

Comment by Gary on August 21, 2011 [10:34 pm](#)

what scares me about all this new knowledge is, if borderlines do have a smidgen of feelings can the narcissist in me help her? if in fact she is a borderline. That is a question I don't want to ask myself. I wonder if that's the "Mr. fix it" narcissist side of me asking the questions ?

Gary

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 21, 2011 [11:05 pm](#)

GARY!!

DO NOT GO THERE! Here's why. I think if borderlines can be helped, they have to WANT to be helped! I think it's rare that this happens. And it takes a LONG LONG TIME! Clearly yours DOES NOT want to be helped! Take that narcissist side of you and put it into YOURSELF, strengthening your resolve to stay out of a toxic situation and, I think, the better question is, What makes you want to help someone who clearly is sick and doesn't WANT the help! Stay STRONG, Gary. I was in no way implying that ANYONE should help any pathological disorder! Kelli

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 21, 2011 [11:13 pm](#)

Linda and Lesley, I've been thinking about you two and hope you're doing okay! Kelli

Comment by Gary on August 21, 2011 [11:36 pm](#)

Keiii,

You are exactly right. an example of questions I cant ask myself. Its questions like that that have hung me up in the past and put me in a bad place.

Gary

Comment by Susan on August 21, 2011 [11:53 pm](#)

You know what helped me? My therapist at one point mentioned that she had been married, then divorced, to a man who cheated on her. I said, "Was he a narcissist?". She answered, truthfully I think, that she had never thought about it.

That was a huge shock to me! I didn't understand how she couldn't have thought about it, with all her training. But she wasn't in a client/therapist relationship with him, so all she was focusing on, was whether or not the marriage was worth continuing. She didn't care WHY he was acting the way he was, the fact was, he was not treating her lovingly, it was not a good relationship.

In the end it didn't matter to me if the jerk I was with was treating me badly because.....(fill in the blank—because of his childhood, because of guilt, because he is a psychopath, because he had tooth ache). All that mattered was he was indeed treating me very badly and very consistently. So badly that even thinking of him made me have the runs. Clearly my body was shouting at me: "you cannot have anything more to do with him!"

Soon after that I sat on a plane next to a man who had no romantic interest in me, nor me in him, but he asked me questions about what I was working on during the flight, offered me encouragement, wished me luck as we departed. And it hit me that the complete stranger had shown more interest in ME, and more support and kindness than the psychopath ever had. I told the therapist about it, and she said, yes, you had almost forgotten what it is like to be with someone who is capable of non-manipulative empathy and caring support.

And I realized I had gradually come to accept cruelty, and that bad treatment had become normalized for me. It was a great wake up moment for me.

I agree that an ESSENTIAL, MUST-HAVE part of healing is learning what a psychopath is, a borderline, etc. But the more important lesson for me was what traits did I have that kept me hanging in despite the horrendous treatment. Part of it was because of GOOD traits in me, such as relationship commitment, the ability to forgive, to trust, the ability to look for the best in others, loyalty, etc. I think my healing took a step forward once I stopped analyzing him, and started looking more at my behavior and traits, and realizing some of my GOOD traits had been exploited. And began to think more and more about "rules" I could create for myself, that would prevent a situation like this from happening again.

One way to make rules, as the book *The Betrayal Bond* states, is listing some bottom line behaviors you simply will not engage in, no matter what. For me, one simple rule was not responding to flirtatiousness in men other than my husband, and for myself to refuse to flirt.

Anyway, I guess the point I was trying to make is for me, my therapist helped me see that it didn't matter if he was a good man that aliens had programmed to act this way....the fact was he was acting very badly toward me, consistently, and THAT was the fact to focus on.

And I knew I was really on the road to healing when I said, "Just because he needs "fixing", does not mean I should or must or can be the person to do it, even if it can be done." It is insane to try to help someone who just keeps inflicting almost unbearable pain upon you on purpose, very knowingly....unless they are your small child.

I was clearly insane for a time! 😊

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 21, 2011 11:56 pm
Gary,

It's understandable though. I think it's safe to say that a lot of us have asked those same questions while within the relationship and shortly thereafter in the aftermath.

Hang in there, Gary. It WILL get better for you! Kelli

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 22, 2011 1:15 am

Michael, I don't think that hypersensitivity is the same thing as empathy. It can be, but it can also be a symptom of self-indulgence or self-absorption sometimes. I know, for instance, that narcissistic artists are proverbially hypersensitive: especially to other people's judgements of them. I think real, meaningful empathy entails an emotional component—of feeling or being sensitive to other people's pain, not just one's own—as well as a rational component, of being kind, other-regarding and fair even when you don't feel that emotional empathy. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 22, 2011 [1:21 am](#)

Susan, I think that's right, since personality disorders are not curable at all. Even when depression or phobias can't be cured via behavioral therapy—such as repeated exposure to what you fear, analysis of why you fear it, etc—the problem can be partially addressed with medication as well. Nothing that causes significant improvements can be done, however, for Cluster B personality disorders. The improvements pathological individuals make are still self-serving and temporary, to get what they want, as usual. Psychopaths do, indeed, suffer from something akin to an emotional retardation. The fact that they're nonetheless often intellectually very smart or at least cunning, makes them very dangerous since they use their brainpower to manipulate, deceive and hurt others.

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 22, 2011 [1:24 am](#)

Susan, I think the names or categories—like narcissism and sociopathy—are helpful in so far as they are associated with specific clinical characteristics, that give us a frame of reference by which to judge a bad individual and a sense of whether or not the person is capable of improving and becoming better. If you know you don't want to be with a person who has treated you badly, the clinical label may not matter, as it didn't for your therapist. But if you're considering giving that person another chance, then it helps to be very well-informed about what kind of person you're giving that second chance. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 22, 2011 [1:29 am](#)

Gary, absolutely, there are wrong and right questions in the introspection that follows a relationship with a pathological. Sometimes victims cling so much to the idealization phase that they ask themselves, over and over, why did he or she leave me; what could I have done better to prevent it; had I behaved another way would I have gotten a better result; what could I have done to save the relationship? These questions get victims stuck in counterfactual ruminations that don't lead anywhere realistic, since there's nothing any victim can do to cure a psychopath, get him or her to have a heart, and thus behave more lovingly (in fact, not just manner). But questions like what drew me to a psychopath; what personality traits or vulnerabilities did he or she latch onto to lure me; why did I ignore the red flags are relevant, since they make us more aware of our vulnerabilities and stronger when we face disordered individuals the next time. Claudia

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 22, 2011 [1:59 am](#)

Claudia

That is a VERY insightful comment and full of such wisdom too. I think hypersensitivity can also be a result of trauma, PTSD and anxiety too. It's interesting because I never saw my ex as hypersensitive at all. Sensitive = feeling. that would be the last word I would use to describe him. I equate sensitive with someone who has feeling. Kelli

Comment by [kelli \(http://.gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://.gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 22, 2011 [2:31 am](#)
Joanne,

I wondered if you were able to read the link provided and what your thoughts are about it?

Comment by Sam on August 22, 2011 [2:41 am](#)
Hi Susan and everyone –

Great thread here – so much going on! I can relate to the “Who was that?” comments when you see the s’path with new people and contexts, the defensiveness when someone tells you to move on and get over it, the shocking conversations with normal strangers who demonstrate support that you never got from the s’path, the need to see the way people treat you in a different light. I agree Susan, that if a married man flirts with you it is a sign of disrespect all around.

I also agree that this recovery process is not linear, and all of us are on different timelines even if there are some common threads to our recovery. Lately I am getting relief from meditation. I’m learning to gently and kindly control my thoughts which in turn controls my moods. I suspect that a lot of us are very hard on ourselves (at least that is what the spath encouraged in me!), and I can really put myself through the ringer every day. So I am learning to not beat myself up, to label a thought as a thought, a feeling as a feeling, none are absolute or true or a condemnation of me or my situation. Ditto, this is also helping with the PTSD and its triggers. When I feel fear or anger, I try to feel it rise and go, label it as such as let it go. I am NOT great at this yet. Tonight while doing laundry I worked myself into a tither that I will NEVER get an apology from the s’path, and then I imagined up one to gain some satisfaction, and consequently brought myself to tears. Afterwards I realized that I did this to myself, I put myself on that little mental trip, and really, in that moment, I was fine and just doing laundry. But so the recovery from a pathological relationship goes, so I pat myself on the back, tell myself it is OK, and hope I can catch myself sooner next time.

Rocketgirl had a little truth in that we do need to move on, let go, but we need to be kind to ourselves about our timeline, and be gentle with our need to “vent” and understand. I enjoy the Buddhist description of the “Middle way”. Try to get a better path, but don’t beat yourself off if you go off track. Perhaps all of us in recovery can be helped by a meditation group – but maybe in the later stages.

If I can get better at controlling my thoughts and consequently happier, then this will be a little sliver lining to this horrible experience. God know, I need one.

Sam

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 22, 2011 [2:52 am](#)

Kelli, psychopaths tend to be overtly insensitive, taking their callousness as a point of pride (except for the honeymoon phase, when they can fake sensitivity as well as they can fake other good qualities). But quite often narcissists are hypersensitive, especially to their own problems and perceived slights. By way of contrast, true sensitivity is measured in terms of how attuned you are to the feelings of others and how caringly and appropriately you respond to their plights. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 22, 2011 [3:00 am](#)

Sam, it's good to hear from you again. I'm glad that mediation helps you to cope with the PTSD. Just as psychopaths generate anxiety—by making contradictory statements, changing their minds constantly, gaslighting us and fostering tensions and jealousies—so meditation and other positive ways of controlling our thoughts and emotions can reverse this process and help us feel much better, or at least much calmer. When we're calmer, we can see things much more clearly, from a more rational perspective. Which in turn puts the relationship with the psychopath in perspective as well. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 22, 2011 [3:11 am](#)

Tricia, to psychopaths and narcissists being nice, sweet, kind or good means being weak. And they equate innocence with ignorance and even stupidity. They can't understand, on an emotional level, caring, love, empathy, kindness—except, of course, as a weakness of “dupes” to be exploited—because they've never experienced these emotions. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 22, 2011 [3:22 am](#)

Kelli, your psychopathic ex has the semblance of a fairytale new marriage based on deception and hiding so much of his past and his real identity (or lack thereof). I recall reading that Staci Peterson would taunt, along with Drew Peterson himself, his most recent ex-wife during the period of time she was idealized by him. But once she married him, within a few months the honeymoon phase ended and with it so did the mask. She became Drew's main dupe, main target, main punching bag and suffered an identical fate to his ex-wife. Idealize, devalue and discard... plus, on rare occasions, also murder. It's impossible for any newfound partner to escape this inevitable process when involved with a psychopath. The psychopath may never feel remorse or lose, but his or her lovelessness makes him/her perpetually dissatisfied. And the new victims of psychopaths become as unhappy (and mistreated) as the former ones. Claudia

Comment by Michael on August 22, 2011 [8:55 am](#)

Kelli, I agree it can be a confusing issue. Again the information out there is all over the place. I've read that Narc's feel the full spectrum of emotion but cannot empathise because they cannot see / feel past their own nose. I've read elsewhere that Narc's cannot love. Do borderlines feel, while paths / narcs do not? I think the closest we can come to answering this question is all cluster B's including psychopaths experience some emotion; otherwise how is it that psychopaths can cry (during the pity ploy). It would seem that they all share one thing in common regarding emotion; and that is that they are emotionally developmentally arrested between the ages of 3 and 6 (whatever the cause). This crops up in most if not all of the information out there. Whether they are emotionally pinched off from themselves, or emotionally blocked, or whatever is going on – I think it can be useful to consider the following-

How is it that they are able to (or at least appear to) attach very quickly during the seduction, idealisation stage?

How is it that they all expose us to highly toxic push me pull you dynamic? characterised by the all to familiar mean and sweet cycle.

It occurred to me only recently that during the whole 5 years, my ex never once told me to my face that she loved me; she either texted that she loved me, or emailed me.

How is it that they are able to detach from the relationship so quickly and leap frog straight into another? Without experiencing the process of grieving.

How is it that when issues arise, and you voice upset / frustration / or try to get them to see your point of view, they can instantly withdraw all care, even if it pertains to your health and well being. My ex told me a story about her ex when we first met. He cut his hand open "badly" and she refused to drive him to the hospital because she "had to go the gym". I had a similar experience following my head injury and my ear was seeping liquid; she said "what are you telling me for I have plans".

How is it that when they discard you after they have lined up a replacement, they are not in the remotest bit interested in how, or what you feel; they are emotionally oblivious? It becomes instantly none of their business.

How can they profess to need you so badly one moment, then within days or sometimes even hours withdraw their claims of love, caring etc.

How is that during the relationship; there is an absence of emotional intimacy on their part – the sharing of affection and love in all its nuances?

I could add to this list; and I think that in answering some of these questions it is useful / helpful to look at the overall picture of the relationship; taking a birds eye view of the whole interaction / dynamic. If I do this in relation to my own experience it would look something like this, from my exes perspective-

“When I first met you Michael, I thought it might be prudent of me to lie about how long I had been single; so I told you it was 9 months, when in fact it was only 4 weeks prior. I idealised you, you were shiny new and I loved my new reflection in your mirror. It was exciting and new, I could have sworn I felt something. I was in between narcissistic supply and when I seduced you. I soon grew bored with you, and without making you aware, I tried to manipulate my ex with a Hoover manoeuvre as I believed I was losing my influence and control over him. While doing this I thought I would also join dating sites and troll for new supply, while I try to manipulate my ex, while at the same time tell you that I could be the mother of your child. As things progressed I wanted you just where I needed, I can schedule you in for my supply once per fortnight; I do not want to be committed to you, meet your needs, or consider your needs in any way. We will have sex when I want it, I will not discuss anything with you if I choose not to; I'm not interested in your truth, only mine. If you deviate from my total self-serving expectations, I will belittle you, devalue you, shame you, and not look in your mirror. I will deceive you and lie to you if it serves me to manipulate you, as my need for supply trumps all. Besides I'm lining up new fall back supply behind your back. Your needs and feelings do not matter to me. Once I have changed mirrors, I have no use for you so do not expect any closure or empathy; OK you shocked at my sudden emotional departure and are left feeling deeply betrayed, conned, but that has nothing to do with me so go and see a counsellor. But I can offer you friendship, so don't go too far as I may return for supply when I get round to devaluing your replacement. No doubt your replacement will express needs at some point, and his function as a mirror will fail. I don't meet needs, I am a free spirit and I am not getting involved in that smothering emotion you call love; I do not do intimacy; sorry (but I don't really mean it!).

Comment by ibelcuthbert@rocketmail.com on August 22, 2011 11:06 am

Hi everyone

Been reading all the thread and there is so much there! I just find it all so informative and get so much understanding out of it all.

Re the who were they?? comments, I most definitely agree, my one would just change his colours to fit whoever he decided he got a more thrilling hit out of at that given moment. I felt I was with someone who just appeared and disappeared emotionally, moodwise and physically depending on his preferred interest at that time. And you had the other side to that, that you (and you were consistently just YOU were suddenly boring, pathetic, had no common interests with the ex etc etc)

When he was discarding me there was the “I am not ready for a relationship, we can only be friends (that he can decide to have sex with you if he wants to)” but he of course was in a “relationship, or rather several straight after I had left to come back to Scotland. There was the “you are suffocating me, I feel pressured by you loving me, you want too much sex, you are too needy” –Michael I think one of your posts listed these things.

Re the what flavour of mentalness are they – I've thought about this too over the months. My ex used to say he had Attention Deficit Disorder – which he did, though he was making reference to his job (he worked from home) or any household chore he went off to do was then left and then returned to later. But of course he also had ADD for relationships and people!! I think they can have several problems going on in their heads which merge and “fudge” into each other at points.

As i think Susan said, at the end of the day they were horrible to you and that is what you have to keep in mind.

My friend, who is a mental health nurse told me that years ago mental hospitals (in Scotland anyway) would not touch psychopaths with a barge pole. If they admitted them to the hospital they were so dangerous, manipulative, calculating, lying and devious (and all the other qualities they have!) that they caused chaos with the other patients and ultimately the whole mental hospital. No one wanted them. He told me nowadays the mental hospitals and prisons are full of them as no one can deal with them on the outside. You really cannot underestimate the damage these people do to others lives, and as we all know, I don't mean murderers etc, I mean emotionally, personally, financially.

I know I say it all the time but this site and Claudia's articles that are then followed up by comments, posts, experiences, information from other bloggers, it all adds up to you getting stronger. When you start to understand what they are, and i mean UNDERSTAND what they ARE, by that I do not mean that you understand that they maybe have a liberal view of sex or they are a bit controlling or a bit moody (which is what I used to excuse my ex for.. and can say oh that is just what they are like but they have good points). What I mean is when you realise what is underneath, which is nothing and you realise that they do indeed do this to harm others for a kick, when you really see them in all their true colours, which ironically they don't have any "colour" as they are all so transparent, then you start to feel stronger. When you know what you are dealing with then you can start to deal with it, if that makes any sense!!

Sorry my posts are always rambling, nonsensical and not very informative but I think you all know what i mean!! I am amongst friends!! Hahaha.

By the way my ex once summed up really how he was. Not to me directly but he wrote a poem (about himself -who else!?) to his ex gf entitled "Forever Detached". I think that just about sums up what they are to anyone. He clearly knew very well what he was and how he treated others, and felt that poetry was the one romantic way to get over such a damaging and destructing condition. You've got to hand it to them, they can surely pile the sugar onto the bitterest pill! Hope you are all ok, Keli thanks for asking how me and Linda are. I'm ok - I hope Linda is!
Lesley.xxx

Comment by Michael on August 22, 2011 [12:27 pm](#)

Hi Lesley; this is true; they want absolutely no holding to you whatsoever. It is strange that most if not eventually come to using these words- "pressured", "suffocated", "I need space" etc. In clinical BPD speak they refer to this as a fear of engulfment- engulfment my foot: This is cluster B speak for I want to be able to do whatever I want; while at the same time they want to keep you on an emotional leash, and will use any manipulative tactic they can muster to ensure you remain at the foot of their sacrificial alter (fear of abandonment!). Abandonment my foot! This is about keeping a hold on you while they forage for new supply if thier sources are getting a little thin on the ground. The double standards that they hold, which Claudia refers to in earlier post's is evident here. Ideally they would like you to sacrifice yourself willingly to meeting their needs and forego any needs you may have. I think this gives them a rush of power. We often feel controlled in these dynamics, and that is because we are being manipulated and controlled; they want all the toys in their pram, to rehash an earlier metaphor.

Comment by LINDA on August 22, 2011 [2:07 pm](#)

Kelli: I am ok, just took a little break for a bit, those 'ol sexual memories sometimes triggers negative emotions (no not ptsd I seem to have a handle on that the past 6 months) but when I think back to our intimate moments (I guess on my part only) I am sad and feel very angry – sad in remembering how deeply I felt love for this person, angry that NOTHING was felt on his part from his heart and I played right into his game as he wanted me to. I was played and conned and more or less raped on all levels. I think only one thing was real and true; that he was very very attracted to me; I could always see the excitement and control in his eyes and I thought it was passion in the beginning.

Gary you speak of how angry you are and I can certainly relate, even now as I have come to terms with what this person was and it was never my fault I still have one thought: HE STILL in the end conned and played me and there is nothing I can ever say to him that would make a difference. I could tell a normal person who hurt me hey you are a rotten SOB and they would at least give that a moments thought (but a normal person would never hurt me in this way I realize) all these individuals will do is walk away because you are too much trouble and they dont want to hear about your sob story as they did nothing wrong, besides Gary " I needed a good F-k" as he once said. So that is what he thought it was all these years – well I guess that would make sense considering most of them are just male whores and pimps anyway. It hurts and we are angry because we were dealing with someone who had no conscience no remorse; without those they are at liberty to do almost anything they want to do and say anything they want in order to get it. I am trying to understand my sadness and anger as something that is normal and I have to understand the source of the disorder that did this to me, I try to remove the man and more or less view that I was dealing with a disease in a way. Linda

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 22, 2011 [2:39 pm](#)

Linda, I'm sure we can all relate to what you say, since it's the sense of betrayal that still lingers, long after our other emotions are gone for these frauds. And yes, the flickers of excitement you saw in his eyes wasn't love or even passion, but the excitement of a predator catching his prey; the excitement of power, dupery and control. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 22, 2011 [2:42 pm](#)

Michael, great point: after they suffocate you with constant monitoring and control they begin complaining that they're feeling suffocated and controlled by your legitimate concerns or normal need for communication, so that they can go on cheating and lying with immunity behind your back. If you find out and still stay with them, then they do it to your face, claiming that their passion is gone (and it's your fault, of course). Claudia

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 22, 2011 [2:45 pm](#)

Hi Lesley!

So glad to see you and Linda! in the beginning, we do indeed, through the idealization phase, give them all they want....then suddenly, we are off the pedestal and most times it's so shocking we don't know why.

Really what this phase is, is manipulation. Nothing more. Manipulated into the relationship, then the controlling, emotionally abusive behaviors begin....even if ever so subtly. It was NEVER about love at all.

Kelli

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 22, 2011 2:46 pm

Lesley, psychopaths and other disordered individuals become open about their double standards—absolute freedom and anything goes for them; isolation from loved ones, constant monitoring and no slack for their victims—once you're emotionally hooked on them. By that time you have already been focusing on the psychopathic bond, under the guise of "love", to the exclusion of almost everything else and, if you're blinded enough by the ruse, may put up with these double standards. A lot of victims do at least for awhile, before they become unbearable. Those victims who stay in those situations forever lose not only their dignity, but also their sense of self. Claudia

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 22, 2011 2:48 pm
Linda,

It's interesting what variety of stench they leave behind that we wind up dealing with the most. Mine is a sexual stench too, clearly exploitation. I'm just now beginning to see how much of a sexually coercive bastard he really was. That's the hardest to deal with. I'm sorry that anything I said triggered you. It is a very sensitive subject. Please accept my apologies. Kelli

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 22, 2011 2:49 pm

Michael, I think that some people with borderline personality disorder may feel more deeply, since from what I've read this is a neurosis based disorder, unlike psychopathy and narcissism. Also, the symptoms of BPD can be similar to those of PTSD: mood oscillations and rapid shifts between idealization and devaluation, as victims of psychopaths come to terms with the fraudulent nature of the psychopathic bond, yet still cling to positive memories of the luring phase. For BPD's however, the oscillations between idealization and devaluation are not associated with any particular trauma or stress; they're just part of the personality disorder. At any rate, this issue is worth exploring further to shed more light upon it. We look forward to your insights on this subject, since I know you're researching it. However, many individuals have overlapping personality disorders: BPD and psychopathy, in which case their emotions are shallow and temporary, often staged, the way they are for actors who get into a role. Psychopaths are natural "method actors". Claudia

Comment by ibelcuthbert@rocketmail.com on August 22, 2011 2:54 pm

Hi Michael

Thanks for responding to my post. In the past few months I've gotten so much clarity from this site and what Claudia writes about and your posts and thoughts. Also of course i've not heard from my ex for months, which has made a huge difference to my mental health. My head was mashed up, that is the only way to describe it. And also, and I think you said this too, you go into shock. You just cannot get a grip on WTF has just happened to you. I think he hated me that much as I kept demanding that he see my side – clearly on hindsight that was a waste of time! hahaha but i think it made him hate me more (or have more contempt for me as I think they cannot really hate as if they can hate then does that not mean they can love?? – and we all know they cant do that) – because I demanded he saw me as important and a living breathing human being and what I was going through he was totally responsible for. Though we have all on this site tried to do that and all been treated the same!!

He also said that I loved too much, that I crushed all the good out of “the relationship” and at the time I had concerns I had done just that. But I hadn't – now I see none of it was my fault, and I've totally stopped beating myself up about any of it, re blame for things going wrong with my ex are concerned. There is all the other stuff, like the pain of the hurt they caused you by their nasty ways of going on, their mean and sweet cycles, their lies about missing you then kicking you in the teeth, the harsh horrible truth that you totally done over by a pathological liar, who not only ruined everything but blamed YOU for it all going wrong! It is funny I look back on some things my ex said when we were still together and I remember the feeling of utter incredulousness I had from some of the selfish statements he came out with. The audacity of these types is just immeasurable, and you are right, they keep you on an emotional leash..what a great term! I was thinking the other day that I really was one of the lucky ones with mine. His wife, he left her with a two week old baby, as he could not handle the “pressure” – his ex gf (that he still messes around with) she ended up in prison for fraud (which I'm not convinced didn't have something to do with him) and his last gf (who was a psychiatrist) ended up in the Priory (again i think caused by him). Poor souls. And he, to this day, still manages to control every one of their lives. I'll be honest here, I used to and that is USED to wish he cared for me and wanted me back in his life the same way he seemed to want them. But then, after time and reading the info on this site, I realised that he doesn't want ANY of them, he cares for no one, and that as you say Michael, they are just bottomless pits of emptiness and darkness.

I think no contact, time, good friends, finding this site and others like it and making new friends through our experiences and learning to find out as much as you can about your situation and then slowly finding yourself again and starting to enjoy being yourself is the way to go – for me, I just take it slowly and am glad I have found all of you.

lesleyxx

Comment by ibelcuthbert@rocketmail.com on August 22, 2011 3:00 pm

Definitely Claudia! I was constantly blamed for suffocating our relationship, purely because i was not wiling to put up with the double standards. And as I told you in one of my other posts, my ex path did start doing whatever he liked infront of his then gf, ie. sleeping with other girls in the next room or infront of her. And that is what thought I held when I imagined what sort of

life/future i would have with him. Absolute emotional abuse – hurt you could not ever measure and never get over.

lesleyxxx

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 22, 2011 3:05 pm

Lesley, we're glad you found us too and have seen the progress of your recovery with our very eyes, on this blog. What you say about the fates of your psychopathic ex's other victims goes to show that these disordered individuals leave a wake of destruction for everyone behind them. If any victim begins to wonder if these psychopaths can make someone else happy, or can be happy with someone else for life—with commitment, fidelity, mutual love, etc—it helps to read comments like yours as a reality check. The answer is: they can't and don't even want to. The largest part of the thrill of conquest for them is duping and using others. This goal is the very opposite of love, trust and commitment. Claudia

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 22, 2011 3:06 pm

Lesley,

You're so right about all of what you've said above. Maybe it says something about us in that they won't bother to have control if he understands that we won't allow it or they get that they can't squeeze another drop out of your emotional blood. I've begun to see that mine tried contact one more time on Mother's Day to see if I would respond the way I use too. I didn't. Three days later, he married and I haven't heard from him again. He has enough money and control over new wife and ex wife to keep him busy for awhile. It would be easy to set up a nice triangulation there. When I think about that, I'm so relieved to be out of it. I've met new friends too. that has helped sooooo much in the recovery process, folks that understand the experience, plus a great therapist. I have had somewhat of an epiphany now that we're delving into the control issue. When he was emailing or calling twenty times a day, this wasn't about he missed me or loved me, it was about control. When he realized I would literally GROVEL when he STOPPED doing that twenty times a day, he knew he didn't have to exert so much power because he already had it. that's when I realize now, I was hooked. He didn't have to work so hard and they HATE working a relationship. They don't know how. Kelli

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 22, 2011 3:32 pm

Lesley, psychopaths do whatever they can get away with doing because, as we know, they have no conscience and no limits. If victims put up with overt humiliation and abuse, they'll do that. For those that don't, they do it behind their backs anyway and make more to hide their identities and activities (for as long as they get enough use-value out of those victims). That's why it really doesn't matter if you try to set limits in a psychopathic bond or reach any compromise or agreement with the psychopath. He (or she) has no respect whatsoever for any agreements, compromises, rules, fairness and—above all—for any other human being. Claudia

Comment by LINDA on August 22, 2011 [3:52 pm](#)

Kelli: Oh no no no absolutely not, you did not trigger anything; its good for me to actually write what this man did see it in black and white, read it and say, hey Linda this is the truth and reality of it all this is what he is and as Claudia said it was never ever for one moment about passion he was just excited in his predatory state knowing he was getting what he hunted for. So after it was all said and done even the fricking cuddling was FAKED, ARE YOU SERIOUS? He allowed cuddle time with him to make sure I was convinced he felt some tenderness for me – but in actuality he could have just walked out the door and said see ya next time baby, and next time try to bring another person with ya. I look back now and realized I was cuddling up next to a monster. I remember how I used to watch him when he slept – one time I reached out to touch his hair and he woke up and said, hey what are you doing and I pretended and said, what are you talking about but he KNEW so he pulled me closer to him and he fell back asleep as I lay there crying and he never even knew I was sobbing because he was snoring, (go figure) I was crying because I knew in my heart this man would never ever love me I think it was at that point I knew I had been taken for a ride. I could just sense all his behavior towards me was fake, I could just feel it in my heart. Its like he knew he had to give me an acting performance in order to achieve what his real agenda was.

For the longest time I thought he acted because he didnt want to hurt me how is that for a laugh? The acting was only to secure me and nothing more. I might as well have cuddled up to a snake x0 Linda

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 22, 2011 [4:13 pm](#)
Linda,

Great comparison. Cuddling up to a snake.

I completely relate. Particularly about knowing it in your heart.

UGH. Having a hard time today.

Kelli

Comment by lesley on August 22, 2011 [4:40 pm](#)

Hi Claudia and Keli

They most definitely keep raising the bar, moving the goalposts, really the whole relationship is unstable because they are. When it boils down to it nothing you do can make it better because anything you do is wrong. I just always kept the memory of what he told me his ex gf let him away with as whenever I thought of it I felt a bit sick, and also thought Lesley, would you let him do that to you? And every time I thought no. never. Well actually he sort of did try and get me to do it, but when we had split up. he phoned me and said that he wanted to have sex with ME whilst his ex gf watched (i think Claudia i've said this on another post) – but i was to remember that i was the “lucky one as it would be ME he was f8king not her...” and well that was the end for me. My capacity for reasoning any kind of behaviour stopped being topped up right at that

moment. I think Keli maybe they know when they've finally done it, when they've finally tipped the scales and know you won't put up with it and they stop playing games with you. Not that they will admit that, they will say that they got sick of your demanding ways or that you were too mad to keep in touch with, which of course is a description of what they are like, not you or us. And it is all about control. I was the same as you Keli. Mine used to phone me loads every day. Loads of texts loads of emails. Then when we split up, if I contacted him he'd freak, he could not handle all these "comms" hahaha that has just reminded me what he called them..comms..due to his ex army experience – and if I contacted him when he told me not to then I was "shut down" as I had not done what he had told me to do, which was basically leave him alone until he fancied yanking my chain for while. Total control Keli, from the getgo to the end. My ex even admitted he was as a controlling b*stard. They know what they are and what they do, and they are proud of it. I notice your ex contacted you just days on Mothers day and just before he got married to someone else. It is all deliberate to upset you and make you think there was some hidden meaning of love and reaching out to you in their message. Its such a shame that it is never that. When my ex sent me a valentine (he said he wasn't going to send it but hey you know me Lesley, I'm unpredictable..) just February past when I phoned him to say thanks and I was so touched, he went into a rage, told me it meant NOTHING and he knew he shouldn't have done it as it would cause him trouble. He just did it for the laugh, just to hurt, just to cause me even more mass confusion as Michael so aptly calls it! its horrible Keli, because they then trigger you to start thinking and wondering and screwing yourself up in knots, for nothing. Thanks Claudia. I do feel so much better thanks to you and everyone honestly. And really the thought of, as you point out, every ex is left with their life, heart, finances, whatever, in tatters, like someone said on another site, everyone's lives are left like a trail of used up sweetie wrappers. Love lesleyxxx

Comment by [kelli \(http://.gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://.gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 22, 2011 [4:55 pm](#)
Lesley,

I was so triggered when it happened. For days and weeks. I had to reiterate, yet once again, that I knew who he was and that I never wanted to hear from him again. Ever. Well, I haven't. I believe that was to hurt me. One last dig before he delved into the new persona he now has. It almost felt patronizing to me now that I think about. At first, I thought it was a set up to begin yet another triangulation. I don't think so. It was just a dig. That's all.

But the reality that he did it at all, told me at the time that he had not changed in the slightest. No one would do that to purposely hurt as he has done many many times. Now he HAS to be nice to her. She has looooooooooooooots of money. And quite frankly, I hope that it gets to him soon. That he's just tired of being "nice". When he tired of being nice, this is when he gets bored, but I do think he can keep the mask on for quite awhile if it serves his purposes and money was just what he was looking for.

Kelli

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 22, 2011 5:02 pm

Kelli, even if he wants her money, he'll get bored and tired of playing nice and keeping his real intentions and identity hidden. My psychopathic ex has always used his wife for money and even called her a "workhorse"; however, this didn't stop him from taking her for granted, cheating on her from the start of their relationship, every step of the way (they never had a faithful moment) and, since she found out about his cheating, doing it openly, to humiliate her further. Some of the wives or girlfriends who put up with the abuse find some compensatory pleasure in the fact that he abuses other women as well. Such wives or girlfriends may also be disordered/pathological individuals themselves or they may have been psychologically destroyed by the psychopath beyond the point of no return. Hopefully your ex's new wife will have the strength to leave him, as his previous wives did, once she wakes up and sees him for what he is. And it will inevitably happen, sooner or later. The test of her character is reflected by how she reacts to the truth once it can no longer be masked or hidden. Of course, fortunately for you, this is no longer your problem. Thank goodness you escaped from his clutches. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 22, 2011 5:06 pm

Lesley, what you describe is the process I also described in the post on Psychopaths as Lovers: a gradual pushing the envelope, as the relationship degenerates from the simulation of love and intimacy to sexual perversion and control (which is what it always was for the psychopath). Starting off on your terms, with the lure of the illusion of love, was only a way of getting the victim hooked, emotionally not only physically. Pressuring the victim to engage in increasingly humiliating or perverted acts is, for a psychopath, a testament to his power; an aphrodisiac. And the overt sadism and debasement of the victim towards the end is, for the psychopath, the icing on the cake and a natural climax, so to speak, to the whole sordid experience. Claudia

Comment by LINDA on August 22, 2011 5:23 pm

Kelli: Sorry you are hurting today, I hurt everyday on some level but some days are much worse than others. I can imagine the horrible feelings of pain, and doubt you have as he is involved so tightly with this other RICH woman. Go figure she is wealthy, more for him to latch onto, ask yourself this, if she was dirty poor would he be with her? You really have to wonder. I spent so much of my time in such a horrible state of mind knowing my x path has been living with this woman for over 8 years now. Furthermore as he was promising me a future with him guess what he was doing? Building his mansion for the two of them to move into, two years ago we were to spend a weekend at his new home and there neatly lined up on the steps in the garage were her little shoes its the first thing I noticed as I walked into the home, so he gives me a tour of his home (as if this is supposed to impress me) no doubt it was a beautiful custom built home he designed and not one thing out of place, so we proceed into the bedroom the bedroom is the size of my living room and dining room put together and the bathroom is as large as my kitchen, but hey he is better at swindling others than I am so..... There on the dresser is a pic of them together on some tropical vacation, they look so happy he is smiling with his arm around her under a waterfall, as I went into the walk in closet all her clothes were on one side and I get such a sick

sick feeling – I looked at him and said, I cant do this I am sorry this was a mistake and started to leave, he grabs me and says stop it, I said, ME STOP IT? YOU STOP IT, WTF did you do to me and why did you do this to me? I was hysterical, I said you LIED to be you told me you did not want a future with this woman but from looking around you INDEED have quite a present and future with her – I had to RUN to get out of that house and I said if you touch me I will call your captain so stay the hell away from me. We didnt speak for a long time after than he called and called and called until I gave in because I thought I meant something to him but guess again, just a skilled predator in high pursuit. SO Kelli I KNOW the pain of what you are going through knowing he is with someone else and they SEEM happy and perfect, but then again can I really say this woman is the love of his life as he is sneaking around calling me the second she leaves for a few days he invites me to be with him would I want to be that woman? And I am not the ONLY woman he is sleeping around with I was just ONE in many. You can look at it from another angle if WE were the live in we would have that special place in their life the one they share their life with on a daily basis but we would have to live with someone who cheated on us because they were sex addicts and predators. Kelli you could be the most beautiful woman in the world it does not matter to these types, I could be Miss America, Martha Stewart and a career woman of the year and it would not be enough he would STILL sleep with some prostitute or some low life, or some married woman, or single women, or man, (ha) it makes no difference what qualities you have or dont have that would stop them from cheating and being predators – thats my take on it anyway – So Kelli dont ever ever beat yourself up that someone better or prettier came along, that is just not the case I cant tell you how many psychopaths have discarded their beautiful smart partners for someone you would not believe took their place – I know one woman whose psychopath is now with a bisexual bodybuilder and not at all attractive in the face, I mean WTF like that will offer him a stable future ha ha ha They are NUTS, and quite frankly the day I really figure them out will scare me. x0x0 linda

Comment by Michael on August 22, 2011 [6:06 pm](#)

Claudia, this is indeed very true. As the dynamic progresses it becomes increasingly evident that their aim is to break your spirit through lies, manipulation, and deceit. All of these things come naturally to them in a predatorial kind of way. They do not need to plan, it is just what comes naturally to them. So wounded are they; that the more they break our spirit and lose track of ourselves, the more powerful they feel, and the more in control. Is it any wonder that they feel evil to us. Everything about these non people is a paradox.

Comment by [kelli \(http://.gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://.gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 22, 2011 [6:11 pm](#)

Linda,

I so appreciate your post! As you describe going through the house, i understood just how you felt. She lives in HIS house while she owns a million dollar home. He wanted to put work into HIS house to up the value and he lives on beautiful property. His kids also go to school nearby and part of the divorce agreement is that he stays in the same area. Works out great for him! Mine, from all that I know of him, stays faithful to whomever he is with at least throughout the idealization phase, unless there is more to get of it, and in this case, money. He is very good at

hiding and what he does. I think the mask slipped for me sooner because there was nothing I offered that hung on his reputation or image, in fact, it was BAD for his image and reputation. The OW factor. He knows this. this is where, even though I know it's so painful for you or any other woman to know, that his cheating isn't just with you, but with many. I don't know that about mine. His reputation as loving father, husband and now rich boy, is enough to keep him faithful. At least for awhile. For him, money has always talked. Always. He's a compulsive spender and a major OCD hoarder. Now he's into "investments" LOL and giving to charity. Amazing, considering how much debt he was in.

Truthfully, it's really hard for me and this is where my cog/dis is. I was the only one he was ever with that he didn't find 'worthy' enough of marrying. Yes, I had hoped he would "choose" me and that carrot dangle was there right through the divorce and after, until I found out he was on a dating site. Then I discovered the first target. She had money too. I didn't. He also lied to his son about me, when I was in his house, while he hid me from him. Tell me how any of that behavior could just change? Would he stop being abusive to any woman because of money and great sex? Maybe he is treating her well for what he gets out of it. The one thing I could not give. And truthfully, even if I could have, the relationship was too long and he was already filled with absolute contempt for me. He was so incredibly cruel to me. And I loved him. I apologize. I hate when I have these days. It's a struggle when I do. It's when the fantasy takes over. But i feel horrible about myself. Kelli

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 22, 2011 8:23 pm

Kelli, I know that you dwell on the fact he didn't marry you, but when you think about who would want to marry a user, a cheater, a liar, a psychopath it helps put things in proper perspective. Each of his previous wives, even if they didn't realize he's a psychopath, have realized he was disordered and that they were getting a bad deal. The only women who think they're getting a dream partner/lover with a psychopath are those who are completely blind to his actions and true nature. They find themselves in an unenviable position.

But, for some reason, you still envy her. I think the underlying issue is a search for validation from the psychopath. He's trained you for several years to pin your self-esteem on him. When you aspired to accomplish something, from what you say, he distracted you and undermined your efforts. That way you'd be even more emotionally dependent on him and needy of his approval. I think each time you feel any jealousy towards the new wife, think about why you need or needed that psychopath's validation. Because this envy isn't so much about her but about your own need for validation from him. Otherwise his choices of other women wouldn't matter to you at all. And they shouldn't matter, since a psychopath's judgment of others is warped by his malicious and predatory motivations. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 22, 2011 8:27 pm

Michael, it's interesting that you say the predatory behavior and deceit comes naturally for psychopaths. My psychopathic ex would lie to his wife with great ease and flourish, providing on the spot incredible false details, mixed with only a slight grain of truth, like I had never heard anyone do before. He took great pleasure in lying to her and to me; it literally aroused him to be manipulating and deceiving women who loved and trusted him. He had persuaded me that he was on the brink of divorce, with his wife in another state and that she was so cold and unattractive as a person that she didn't deserve better treatment. He was supposedly giving her a chance to establish her life in the new state so he can "let her down easy". But in reality, of course, he was cheating, lying and stringing both of us along, plus many others as well. When I asked him how he can do that so easily he responded that he just wings it. He didn't like to plan lies in advance for his wife, since he was a far better liar by coming up with stories on the spot. This glibness also fed his sense of superiority. Claudia

Comment by Susan on August 22, 2011 [9:38 pm](#)

No second chances given here. Not for jaw-dropping behavior. Not for people who make my gut feel funny. Only for people who have a long history of kindness and loving and sane behavior with me. Those people deserve a second and third chance.

I do agree understanding the traits and the fact that all cluster B's are not going to change (unless science comes up with a miracle) was absolutely essential in my healing process when I was trying to make sense of the whole experience....until I realized it all made perfect sense once I realized he was ALL about power over me. Plain and simple.

Comment by Susan on August 22, 2011 [9:39 pm](#)

AMEN!

Comment by Michael on August 22, 2011 [11:19 pm](#)

Claudia, I hear what you are saying and you raise some interesting points. I'm inclined to firstly say that there is much confusion out there around what we have been dealing with. In spite of the relationship dynamics, the lack of empathy we have experienced along the way, and the devaluing; we relentlessly forage for answers.

Im not sure if BPD was considered a neurosis disorder (what now be considered an anxiety disorder). What I do know is that BPD results in the same relationship harm. Their condition is not ego dystonic, they are not in pervasive distress. On the contrary, they are ego syntonic; they are remorseless.

You say- "Also, the symptoms of BPD can be similar to those of PTSD: mood oscillations and rapid shifts between idealization and devaluation, as victims of psychopaths come to terms with the fraudulent nature of the psychopathic bond, yet still cling to positive memories of the luring phase. For BPD's however, the oscillations between idealization and devaluation are not associated with any particular trauma or stress; they're just part of the personality disorder".

Claudia I believe they are. BPD is a relationship issue that confronts us with the same issues we experience with psychopathy, That is a lacking in empathy, a lack of remorse, and lacking in accountability or responsibility. Borderlines fall comfortably withing the Axis two dimension. They are personality, and not anxiety disorders.

Comment by Michael on August 22, 2011 [11:22 pm](#)

One of these days I will spell and grammer check before posting !

Comment by Susan on August 22, 2011 [11:31 pm](#)

Claudia,

I want to thank you again for allowing people to comment and dialogue. Patrick Carnes, who wrote the Betrayal Bond (and experienced one in his college days) states "one of the principal functions of a support network is to tell your story to a group of people who will understand what happened to you because it happened to them also." He says it helps reframe your story in a larger context helping you and others to see their own stories as part of a greater story.

Another book of Claudia's, Velvet Totalitarianism, made me realize just how important it is to fight psychopathy where ever and when ever we find it! The realizations we come to from these relationships are at first so completely devastating, but after awhile we realize that the experience, if we truly learn from it, has shaped us into a person who will no longer tolerate exploitation of any kind, who will speak the truth against evil, one who has no tolerance for lies. It is a powerful place to land.

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 22, 2011 [11:41 pm](#)

Michael, I hope that you'll write the book on BPD to shed more light on this subject. I think the traits of psychopathy are pretty clear and have been since Cleckley wrote The Mask of Sanity decades ago. Robert Hare's checklist confirms these earlier findings and updates them. Borderline Personality Disorder, however, remains more mysterious because some of its symptoms are so close to Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (particularly the mood swings and the oscillations between idealization and devaluation). Also, since some BPD experience despondency—or at least fake it—it may be confused with manic depression. But if, as you say, BPD shares with psychopathy a lack of empathy and capacity for emotional bonding, then it's worth analyzing and discussing both personality disorders together. Interestingly enough, psychopathy, which we're pretty clear about, is mostly found in men and BPD more in women. More research and books are needed to clarify BPD and more mainstream, general-public books to spread the word—or consensus—about psychopathy, so that those who haven't been lured and burned by psychopaths won't be. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 22, 2011 [11:45 pm](#)

Susan, it's the fact that I've lived through a totalitarian regime run by a sociopath (Nicolae Ceausescu) that made me very interested in this subject. It's also why I wrote Velvet Totalitarianism, my first novel, to show the connection between personality disordered leaders and toxic regimes that humiliate and enslave their citizens. Ironically, after having escaped from communist Romania as a child, I made the grave error of choosing a sociopath out of my own free will. Fortunately, I also escaped that bond, just as my family fled Romania. Both times it was a close call. Claudia

Comment by Michael on August 23, 2011 [12:14 am](#)

Claudia; BPD is not to be confused with PTSD. It is confusing, as there is an inference or relationship between PTSD and BPD. This stems in part from the correlation between BPD and PTSD. For example, according to the literature, as many as 70 – 80 % have experienced some form of trauma or sexual abuse.

However the theory between trauma and denial; does not explain overnight emotional detachment, callous disregard, a lack of empathy, and an obvious and deliberate attempt to not see things from your perspective. Then weirdly enough, forget that you even sat down and tried and struggled to even recall what the reason for the original upset was about.

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 23, 2011 [12:37 am](#)

Michael, You're right. That's why BPD has far more in common with psychopathy and narcissism than with neuroses or depression. And why it's incurable and so dangerous for victims. It seems that several men who post here have fallen victim to BPD women. But sometimes the symptoms of BPD can resemble manic depression or PTSD, which is why the pity ploy can be so effective. It's great you intend to write about this. Some of your articles may be relevant to psychopathyawareness, given that both psychopathy and BPD are personality disorders founded in lack of emotional bonding and lack of empathy. With a better understanding of BPD, which is more common in women than psychopathy, we can also reach out to help more male victims. This blog is about gender equality, since personality disorders basically know no gender and that's why there are so many male and female victims. Claudia

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 23, 2011 [12:52 am](#)

Michael,

If borderlines fall on the continuum alongside other Cluster B's, lacking remorse, guilt, empathy, why are there websites all over the place that say BPD is curable? One would think that if someone had BPD, and they wanted to change, this would imply that they DO have empathy, are capable of remorse and feel guilt. I'm capable of all three, however, my symptoms and sometimes the way I feel and react, do not imply that, therefore associated with PTSD. I think this is really frightening for me, trying to label myself in thinking about my part and why I allowed this into my life and there are so many factors involved. Sorry, I think I'm confusing myself more about

this. I've been studying a lot of disorders as well as learning disabilities, to which I definitely believe I have (ADD), which is not diagnosed yet, but I'm seeing my doctor to discuss it. I fit into almost every single symptom of Adult ADD. I'm very confused right now. Very. Kelli

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 23, 2011 [12:56 am](#)
Claudia,

It is rare that someone sees both sides of the fence in their lives the way you have. I really believe this has helped you to help others understand psychopathy, not just from a personal level, but a universal level within regimes as well as within our own United States. I believe Cluster B's run various forms of government, so much so, I'm not inclined to vote when the time comes. That is very sad, but our society I think perpetuates psychopathy, in fact, glorifies it to some extent, and this is why public education is so critical for change. thanks for your contributions. Kelli

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 23, 2011 [12:57 am](#)
Susan,

I really enjoy reading your posts. You are SO CLEAR and I find that so encouraging to me. Kelli

Comment by Gary on August 23, 2011 [1:03 am](#)
Claudia, Michael. I would definitely be interested. I am starting to wonder if I am a victim of a BPD woman.
Gary

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 23, 2011 [1:41 am](#)
Kelli, thanks. I appreciate your contributions as well. Now that I've written novels about a psychopathic dictator and a psychopathic seducer, I'm going to delve into the subject of cults, since cult leaders tend to be psychopaths as well. Moreover, they use very similar techniques to the seducers. But this time, I'll stay firmly on the other side of the fence and won't be speaking from any personal contact with a psychopath! I've had more than enough exposure to these pathologicals for one lifetime. Claudia

Comment by Gary on August 23, 2011 [2:13 am](#)
I had an interesting thought / question. Could being involved with a suspected Cluster B or someone with BPD bring out a feeling of BPD in yourself?. I've done a little research into BPD, provoked a bit by this thread. I can actually see some symptoms in myself in the aftermath of my ex. Loss of self worth, poor self image, mood changes, irritability, anxiety. All things I did not have or recall prior to. Damn I'm a mess lol.

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 23, 2011 [2:35 am](#)

Gary, what you've just described/identified in yourself are the classic symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), which most victims of personality disordered individuals experience during and after their relationships with the pathologicals, when they realize they've been conned, emotionally and perhaps also financially, by a fraud who can't even love. BPD's have these symptoms PLUS the incapacity to bond emotionally to others and lack of empathy, which are the main hallmarks of an (incurable) personality disorder. The symptoms of psychopathy and narcissism are very clear and distinct. There's pretty much a professional consensus about them. With BPD, however, there's some confusion even among specialists because some of its symptoms (anxiety, mood changes, low self-esteem) are common to depression (especially manic depression) and PTSD. That's why it's important to emphasize that it's the lack of empathy and emotional bonding, not the rest of the symptoms, that makes BPD a full-blown personality disorder, LIKE narcissism and psychopathy, and UNLIKE manic depression or PTSD. If you can bond emotionally with others (not just attach to them to use them, but actually care about them deeply) and if you can have empathy, then you don't have BPD or any other personality disorder. You probably have PTSD resulting from the deep scars left by your personality disordered ex, whom you suspect has BPD. A good therapist trained in personality disorders would be able to clarify these issues and make a diagnosis in person. Meanwhile, however, continue to read more about BPD and PTSD, so that if you decide to see such a therapist, you'll be well-informed and have much more productive sessions. Claudia

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 23, 2011 [3:36 am](#)

Gary,

I'm so glad you brought that up with such honesty! I've been going through the same and my PTSD is rather severe with regards to this past relationship. I think the fact that you ask yourself the question proves that you don't. I think Claudia makes a VERY important distinction with regards to BPD and the elements that link it to Cluster B's in general: LACK OF REMORSE, LACK OF EMPATHY, LACK OF GUILT ARE THE HALL MARKS OF THESE DISORDERS.

There is also another hallmark related element that goes universally with all the Cluster B's, which is the PITY PLAY. Let's discuss that for a second. This is so much more than feeling wounded after a relationship or when you're suffering from depression. In Martha Stouts book, "The Sociopath Next Door", She has a list of 13 rules when dealing with a sociopath. This is rule number 9 and I quote: " respect should be reserved for the kind and the morally courageous. PITY is another socially valuable response, and it should be reserved for innocent people who are in genuine pain or who have fallen on misfortune. IF, INSTEAD YOU FIND YOURSELF PITTING SOMEONE WHO CONSISTENTLY HURTS YOU OR OTHER PEOPLE, AND WHO ACTIVELY CAMPAIGNS FOR YOUR SYMPATHY, THE CHANCES ARE CLOSE TO 100% THAT YOU ARE DEALING WITH A SOCIOPATH".

Now, this is VERY important and something to hold very tightly too. When someone hurts you, as she says, CONSISTENTLY and who actively campaigns for your sympathy....HURTS YOU CONSISTENTLY. This, from my perspective, means someone who has NO remorse, no guilt and

NO EMPATHY. someone who is genuinely sorry will think about what they have done to hurt you and make HONEST amends with you. Say you asked your wife NOT to hurt you in the way she has CONSISTENTLY and the behavior is denied, there is no apologies and it continues, you can be certain you are dealing with a Cluster B. If someone can love, they wouldn't WANT to hurt you over and over.

I hope this helps. Kelli

Comment by Michael on August 23, 2011 9:18 am

Claudia, Gary, Kelli and all; There are many sites out there that claim BPD is curable, and there are as many out there that claim it is not curable. Some say there can be some modification of impulsive behaviours but the traits and personality remain the same. Some say that through years of intensive psychotherapy, the goal is to try to encourage emotional development so they can grow from an emotional 6 year old to an age appropriate emotional constitution. Most sites that deal with relationship dynamics and non BPD partners say "run for cover" and dont look back.

The book that I want to write, and I'm in the process of fleshing out some ideas, is not about BPD per say. What I'm interested in is trying to cut through the confusing and conflictiing information out there. When your in the aftermath of the realtionship; nost likely you are dealing with cog dis, mass confusion, shock, PTSD symptoms, a lack of self esteem, self efficacy, and self confidence. Most likely you will be tormented with doubt- is he/she disordered or not, which disorder do they have and so on. Am I disordered is another commn issue / experience. Add to all of this your probably dealing with relationship addiction issues as well, and an overwhelming need for closure, of which of course we have none.

It quite a lethal cocktail isnt it? The first step towards recovery is educating ourselves about cluster b, when we do it is interesting just how many, discover psychopathy. What I would like to do in my book is cut through the confusion; for example is it possible to condense down, and home in on specific core traits that bind these disorders together; if cluster b was a tree, and BPD, NPD, HPD, APD are the branches, is there a trunk? I believe there is and when we look closely and begin to weed our way through the infinite number of ways these traits manifest in behaviours; it is possible to identify key central issues / core traits that drive the overall dynamic. This is why although our stories are very different, there are patterns that emerge, similarites in the dynamics. Because there are so few therapists out there trained in relational harm caused by the pathological relationship, and because as sandra brown rightly asserts- the first step towards recovery is getting a firm conceptual foothold on what we have been dealing with. I think a book that can really help people cut through the mass of confusing issues would be such a useful resource.

It can be so confusing because most begin their education as I did with looking at behaviours- then we tunnel down to the nitty gritty. It is a confusing journey; and we make this journey in a comprimised state because of the aftermath symptoms above.

Evidence is gathering momentum that BPD for example represents the medicalisation, mediated

by cultural and sociological gender issues, of high functioning (or low functioning), socialised female psychopaths. Many, if not most psychiatrists are poorly trained in recognising and diagnosing cluster b disorders.

Comment by Michael on August 23, 2011 [9:34 am](#)

I want to construct the book in a kind of ethnographic style. Drawing on my own experience of a pathological relationship with someone who is very high functioning- she holds down her job, joint parents her son within "good enough parent" parameters (although she is constantly at war with her son's dad, there is always some issue going on I am very much aware of why). The high functioning variety can be the most damaging and insidious- as Schrieber notes "because they are so good at convincing you that it is you who is defective and nuts"!!

I would like to draw on other survivor's experiences as well; and put together a map of sorts that can help people to navigate their way out of the labyrinthine maze that the cluster b takes us to the heart of, then vanishes!

Comment by Michael on August 23, 2011 [9:36 am](#)

All – If you could ask one or two questions that would have helped you find your way out of the confusing maze, what would those questions be?

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 23, 2011 [10:11 am](#)

Michael, this sounds like a very promising and even necessary book to me. I believe that personality disorders such as psychopathy and narcissism are so thoroughly studied and well known that there's a clinical consensus about their symptoms. Psychopathy has been described accurately by Hervey Cleckley in *Without Conscience* in the 1940's; Robert Hare and other contemporary specialists have refined those studies. No credible source finds psychopathy curable today. Every credible source describes it as a personality disorder. However, with BPD, it's another story. Based on what I've read as well, there isn't such a clear consensus because, as you state, while most experts declare it as a personality disorder like psychopathy and narcissism, some see it as a neurotic or depression based disorder, which could benefit from treatment. A book like yours would place BPD in the context of incurable, Cluster B personality disorders, along with psychopathy and narcissism, whose main trunk is lack of empathy and incapacity for deeper emotional bonding or love. It's good to have hope, but not about hopeless things. One should call a spade a spade and not confuse the public or give false hopes. Cluster B personality disorders can't be cured, since they stem from fundamental character/emotional deficiencies. We look forward to seeing chapters of your upcoming book and when it's done, to reading the book itself. Claudia

Comment by Michael on August 23, 2011 [10:37 am](#)

Claudia, thank you. There are practitioners out there who believe Narcissism is curable! see for example *Narcissism, denial of the true self*- Lowen M.D.

He places narcissism along a continuum- phallic narcissism – narcissistic character – Borderline personality – Psychopathic personality – paranoid personality. He advocates these categories are just different forms of narcissism. He states that “This extreme lack of human fellow-feeling makes psychopathic personalities very difficult to treat”, therefore suggesting that they are treatable. He talks about a denial of feeling rather than a lack of feeling; across the whole continuum. The confusion for survivors is never ending!

Comment by Gary on August 23, 2011 [11:16 am](#)

Michael, to answer your question,.. Why was it so easy for me to over look the red flags that are now so clear? What kept me in a relationship that became toxic? How do I convince myself I cant help this monster. How to except the fact I've lived a lie with a liar and move on? How do these people keep functioning?

Gary

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 23, 2011 [11:29 am](#)

Michael, I think when credible experts state that narcissism is curable they're probably referring to narcissistic tendencies, which most people have, not to the full-blown personality disorder. Malignant narcissism, for instance, is characterized by a total egocentricity, which makes it very close to psychopathy, the most dangerous and incurable personality disorder. I think that too few therapists are specifically trained in personality disorders. Psychopaths may comprise only 4 percent of the population but, being so malicious and promiscuous, they may harm about 25 percent of the population for all we know. The bottom line is that there's no cure for personality disorders because they're based on emotional and character deficiencies that are too fundamental, once the person reaches adulthood. At any rate, a book about Cluster B personality disorders which clarifies the confusion—particularly regarding BPD, which generates most debate—would definitely help the general public, not only victims. Claudia

Comment by lesley on August 23, 2011 [11:34 am](#)

Hi Keli

I totally understand why you wonder and get upset about why he has married another woman and seems to be happy with her and doesn't appear to want you. I know my ex is “seeing” a girl in Tel Aviv – she paints like he does, she lives in his favourite place in the world, she is far enough away that he can do what he likes back in England. I beat myself up about all these things, especially the fact that one of his friends told me that “the relationship suited him (my ex) better (than the one with me as I lived with him) as she lived so far away” – this was especially galling to me, as A. he could have had a long distance relationship with me if he'd wanted (which would have meant that I would not have had to give the job I loved to go and live with him and B. He didnt WANT a long distance relationship when he was seeing me. I also beat myself up that she can paint and I couldn't; along with all the other stuff that he flung it in my face that I didnt do or that I did not possess the qualities that he admired in someone.

Also, before he met me my ex lived with a very wealthy woman. She was a psychiatrist; her main clients were rich Arabs. My ex kept his house but went to live with her and no doubt enjoyed all

the luxuries she could give him, holidays paid for, meals out, and beautiful hotels. But, and its a big BUT, he told me that he had a computer set up in her basement, he said he had it like "his office" – and he basically did what he liked down there, no doubt cyber stalking other women, setting up dates, going on dating websites. The woman he lived with probably had no idea what he was up to. He also told me he'd met random girls for s*x etc in carparks when "he felt the strain of being in a relationship with someone with mental issues (ie. Her!) was too much for him" – but this is their behaviour, the symptom (or just a facet of it) which shows itself when the path can't be bothered pretending to be nice any more.

However, for all the money and great holidays etc and the fact he got away with anything, he still left her: the reason: because she told him whilst they were on holiday about some of her childhood experiences and I quote "it put me off sex, really ruined the experience for me" ..(ie him). I do not know how much of that story is true, but my point is that when these lowlifes cannot pretend to be nice, cannot stand your neediness, your love, cannot stand to put up the pretence of being in a normal relationship anymore no amount of money, holidays, deviant sex, freedom to do what they want within that relationship, supposed things in common with the new person, nothing will stop them doing EXACTLY what they have done to every other girl. And that is either leave them or force the partner to leave. Everything is still never enough for them Keli. Because they are, as Michael and Claudia have detailed, just empty bottomless holes and no amount of sustenance no matter in what form, will ever satisfy them and bring them happiness. I dont know if trying to hold that thought will help you, but it did me. It took the edge of me blaming myself, screwing myself up in knots whilst i tried to mentally change how i was as a person for someone that changed his idea of what he wanted in a person every 5 minutes. They drive you crazy with it and if you let it it can ultimately destroy you. But if you can clear your head, even a little at a time, then you start to think more clearly and you see that they will never be happy with anyone. I may never meet someone that made me feel the feelings i felt for my ex, and that i want to be with. But there again, he wanted to destroy me for being who I am and no one is worth that.

Hope you are feeling better today.

lesleyxx

Comment by Michael on August 23, 2011 [11:49 am](#)

Claudia, absolutley, I agree; but believe it or not this guy claims that the Narcissism across the continuum I mentioned above are treatable, including psychopathic narcissists. Lowen is from the psychoanalytical school of thought. My ex has a friend who is diagnosed BPD, she is from a similar upper middle class background. She has been in therapy for more than 10 years. Back end of last year when I had my last brief batch of contact hoping for closure; my ex told me her friend rings her up saying "I'm so empty"!

It does not matter in my view / experience how much you shovel into these people it falls through them. their cognitive recall as Ive mentioned before is pretty much intact, but even cognitive recall can be patchy, fragmented, and at times disorted. They can reauthor factual history to meld in and fit with their here and nowness. Most peculiar. You find this with

Narcissists, Borderlines, and note Hare mentions amnesia issues, convenient gaps in memory recall, and gaslighting. Another curiosity is that all 3 – Borderlines, narcissists, psychopaths, can contradict themselves even in the same sentence.

Here's one of many examples with my ex-

“you did lie to me E..., and caused me a lot of pain; “Yes I did Michael, but I'm into global truth”
!

Comment by Michael on August 23, 2011 12:30 pm

Gary, It is easy to have 20/20 vision with hindsight. The answer to this is that we are lovebombed, and idealised during the honeymoon. We are also emotionally bonded and attached. So we have a powerful, and potent emotional and cognitive bias. In addition, because we are naive re their disorder, we attribute our “normalness” onto them. We naturally endow them with having a self; we are looking at and interacting with what is a three dimensional illusion- at least it appears three dimensional. Add to this mix a tendency quite naturally to go through the whole A-Z of excuses, e.g. bad case of PMT, maybe had a bad day, maybe I need to reflect on how I may have contributed to the issue / red flag. Then also stir in some apologies (but listen carefully, they somehow manage to nudge from under self responsibility, this can be subtle), that are meaningless whether they “meant it at the time I said it” or not; because they do what ever it was they apologised for, again and again. Top off with a little bit of gaslighting and voila- Red Flags overlooked.

We do not appreciate the full gravity of what we missed until we disengage and become unmeshed. We are so embroiled when we are in there, it's a little like trying to see your own nose.

What kept you in? Did she expose you to the mean and sweet cycle; if she did you were probably subject to intermittent reinforcement. Make up sex? probably kept you dosed with oxytocin, as well as believing that sex equates to bonding. Again all powerful reinforcers. Pathological lying? This one creeps up on you as you notice the ever increasing contradictions between what she said and what she did. Again the honeymoon experience will influence your bias to believe her. They can gaslight you through lies, half truths, distorted lies; you name it. You reach a point where your not sure what to believe anymore. Denial? This is also highly potent. “I can change her, she loves me really, we have a history, this is just another glitch, it will work out, we can get through this” and so on. We also split them, this leads to the cognitive dissonance symptoms Sandra Brown refers to. This can also set us up to think we may be borderline- our psyches, or our hearts and minds are interfaced with a pathological dynamic that has a malignancy to it. This crazy making feeling subsides with time, healing, and knowledge around what we were interfaced with.

how do I convince myself I cannot help this monster? The only way to become convinced is to learn about cluster B pathology; this is the key, it is crucial / critical. I still struggle with this one- I think there is a danger that we can over think this one. It is part of the whole package of runination that occurs during, and after the relationship. I still have moments where I think maybe she will have a realisation, and she will recognise that their is an issue: Gary this will not

happen, and even if she did, which she wont, but for arguments sake, no therapy in the world can fill these fractured bottomless wells. It is not an expression of narcissism to think you can help her; it is just an unrealistic hope.

Accepting you lived a lie with a liar? It was a follie au deaux, and you were an innocent dance partner. Your innocence is lost, and it is an awakening of sorts. I sound like a broken record, but education is STEP 1. You lived a lie, she is a liar, in fact she is a lie- and everyone else is as much a stranger to her as she is to herself.

How do they function? Narcissistic supply- without mirrors she does not exist. Their world are full of mirrors, at work, the neighbours, family, so called friends- all of these are mirrors. A partner provides a regular dependable mirror, until that mirror reflects back what they do not want to see- and what is that you might ask? The truth Gary.

Hope this helps

Comment by [kelli \(http://.gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://.gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 23, 2011 2:02 pm
Michael,

Since there is no closure with a Cluster B and once we wake up to what happened to each of us in the aftermath, one of the things most troubling to me is how to put what was just an illusion of a relationship into perspective. Since they felt nothing and the entire relationship was a lie, yet I felt love all throughout, how do I settle that in my mind? It is very painful to know that he never loved me. That I believed lies. The only "truth" i can understand at this point, is to own how I feel, even while he felt nothing. How do I find meaning out of what is now, a senseless tragedy. Kelli

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 23, 2011 2:02 pm

Michael, therapists who believe that personality disorders can be cured are delivering a fraud to their patients and to the public. But I'm not surprised to hear this happens, since there are fraudulent practices in every field, particularly the more subjective ones. If there's anything objective about psychology, however, it's the nature of personality disorders. They are founded, at core, upon lack of emotional depth and capacity to bond, a kind of emotional retardation, (which also leads to lack of empathy, playing games, chronic deceitfulness) which cannot be cured through a talking cure or psychoanalysis any more than mental retardation can. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 23, 2011 2:15 pm

Kelli, perhaps it would help you to keep in mind an analogy to financial scams. There are people who invest their entire incomes on scams run by these psychopaths, believing that they are legitimate businesses. Instead, these businesses are imaginary; pure fraud. Yet the victims really believed they were real, trusted the scam artists, and gave all their hard-earned money to these conartists. The same thing happened to you, only on an emotional level. You invested your life and emotion on an emotional scam executed well by a social predator. He wasn't out to get your

money, as he is his new wife's. He was out to get control over you. Control over you and others makes him feel alive and very important. We can understand quite well financial scams, which happen all the time. But there are also emotional scams, which function in the same way, but can be even more devastating since they involve our emotions and our entire personhood. Claudia

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 23, 2011 2:39 pm
Claudia

My ex loved and loves money. I'm sure he's high as a kite right now, investing his heart out, getting his house fixed up, having his debts paid off, getting sex as much as he wants. Why would he NOT be happy? This was what he was hoping for out of the first target, he just happened to get it out of this one. What I want to know, is that if this is what makes him happy, wouldn't that alleviate the abusiveness that he was? that he's not at all bored with her, but happy with her because she's the well spring so there is no reason to abuse? I mean with cruelty. There is so much talk about the idealization phase. When mine is displaying this, you'd really think he was in love. When we were first together, he talked of nothing other than his second wife. Constantly. As if he had no identity of his own. When I asked him, "why do you always talk about her, what about you?" He went silent. You can bet he's idealizing this one that way too to everyone he meets. But is that the way he is treating her at home? My ex seemed to walk the talk early on. He loved being at home with his wife. He had so many "projects" going where he lived. There is so much information about the idealization phase and that as soon as the psychopath knows you're hooked the bait and switch begins. I don't think this has happened yet. Is it possible that it ever would? HAS he changed because he's come into money? Can he adopt this facade and keep it in place forever? I don't know. I just don't know. Kelli

Comment by Michael on August 23, 2011 2:41 pm

Kelli; this is what brings the initial SHOCK and full gravity of the awakening you describe. This one gnaws away at the survivor. I believe there is only one perspective that we can take that shines a light on this; and that is the truth of the heart of the matter.

First of all I empathise with you Kelli, it is excruciatingly painful.

I think that by definition a pathological relationship is meaningless. It was not a relationship in any way shape or form. A relationship flows both ways; it is symbiont. A pathological relationship is parasitical. The awful truth is that there is no meaning to be found in a pathological relationship. Everything you thought you gave, the love etc, had no currency; this is one reason why our interactions with them are discrete, and uninformed by previous interactions. Once the exchange is no longer here and now, it is past, and once it is past, it is as though it was never said, or happened.

The meaning you seek may only come from a new appreciation of what we all previously took for granted before the pathological relationship; that is our, and others ability to feel love, compassion, and the ability to connect and bond with others in a symbiont way. I believe we never take for granted these emotions again. In a sense, a pathological reminds us what is actually the only real meaning and real value of being alive; and that is love. What else is there that makes life truly worth while?

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 23, 2011 3:10 pm

Kelli, Michael is absolutely right. Psychopaths can't develop the capacity for deeper love and compassion. They lack it fundamentally, that's why their illness is called a personality or character disorder. It's true that psychopaths are gleeful when they get what they want: a new conquest and money, or better yet, a new conquest with money, whom they can exploit. But that glee is momentary. It can't last because it has no foundation in an honest appreciation of the other person, caring for her welfare, mutual respect. Its foundation is power, control and using another person and her resources. How can anything good spring from such a sordid foundation? It can't. And it never does. But I really hope that you'll examine with your new therapist, whom you stated is informed about psychopathy and is helpful, why you still feel bad about the fact that this psychopath no longer wanted to use you. I know you see this need for his validation as irrational, yet it's real, and it's a stumbling block for you. If you got over the idea that this man's validation means anything, then you'd get over the pain over the fact he chose another woman, with more money than you. It doesn't matter who this predator chooses. He will treat each person as an opportunity for him to exploit and as prey. Claudia

Comment by Michael on August 23, 2011 3:32 pm

Kelli; I understand the need for validation, and how this relates to closure. Psychopaths / cluster B's dont really know what closure is; nor do they understand why you would want it. Would you give closure to your old toaster when you throw it out because it didnt toast to your liking? Closure to a psychopath is analogous to your saying to them, I would like to sit down and have an open, honest, transparent, discussion around how we are both feeling so we can both move on feeling a lot better about what happened between us. can you see how they get caught in the headlights here? Have you read "A soul with no footprints"?

Would you like the link?

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 23, 2011 3:43 pm

Michael,

Sure.

Claudia, You're right, it is a stumbling block for me. And I don't understand it. I guess because of the images, I see him as normal. Doing normal things. Being happy. He spent so much time telling me how UNHAPPY I made him. In the end, he told me, "I want to be loved. I want to be accepted. It's a shame that this didn't happen here".

I'll never forget those words Claudia. They have left an permanent mark on my soul. So much cruelty in the end. so he finds someone.....beautiful, young and with money.

And I simply feel worthless. He still has power in my life. I still believe that it was me, in some way, although on a logical level, I know it was not. Words hurt. These burned into my heart.

How could I not see him as anything but happy right now? And up until he met her, that I was the soul reason he wasn't happy for years. It is the most cruel of things, because I loved him with all of my heart.

Kelli

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 23, 2011 [4:21 pm](#)

Kelli, I think the need for validation from a psychopath is always the biggest issue. It's how psychopaths lure victims and find their vulnerability. They lure you through flattery and keep you through isolation and abuse. The entire process—the initial carrot and the later stick—is all about a victim's need for validation. I've witnessed this process first-hand in seeing how my psychopathic ex treated his wife and how much her identity depended upon his approval. He'd manipulate her like his puppet—getting her to leave her lucrative job, set up house in another state so that he could have as many affairs as he wanted without her interference, get her to spend four hours a day exercising so she could lose weight—all this to get his approval and love, which she got less and less over time. During the whole time that she was struggling like a fish on a hook to please him, he was telling me that she was unattractive both body and soul and pressuring me to divorce my husband so he can marry me. And I was not the only one he was manipulating while he had shipped her to another state; there were countless other women he was involved with sexually. All this to say that for psychopaths approval is just a form of manipulation and control. Nothing anyone does or fails to do can please them for long; they will always need more victims and more power over each victim. Moreover, rather than expressing love and gratitude for your sacrifices they will regard you as their dupe and as weak for having submitted to their will and tried to please them. This is why it's so important for you and any victim to absorb this on an emotional level, via therapy and reading about personality disorders, so that the psychopath will cease to have any influence on your perception of yourself. It's the most dangerous hook any psychopath has over a victim. Some victims depend so much on a psychopath for their self-worth that they're completely gutted out of their personalities without him. Those victims become shells of human beings. But for most victims there's hope and that hope is predicated upon a sense of self-worth that doesn't come from the psychopathic bond or any other distorted standards.

Claudia

Comment by Michael on August 23, 2011 [4:45 pm](#)

This is hugely insightful Claudia. Because Psychopaths cannot love; all they can do is manipulate, dominate, deceive, and try to maneuver you into a controlled position. I believe this is instinctive with them; it comes naturally to them like a predatory drive. Their game and modus operandi is all about oneupmanship. Once their game begins and they systematically test out the goal posts of our boundaries, they take from you what they want, and give nothing in return. The ultimate climax and rush is for them, is witnessing you sacrifice yourself willingly to their needs and desires.

Comment by Michael on August 23, 2011 [4:51 pm](#)

Kelli; may I ask you a question. I asked earlier if you could ask any one or two questions, what might those questions be. Can I go out on a limb here. Would one of your questions that you would love to be answered look something like this- "how do I really know if he is disordered, im pretty sure he is, 99% sure in fact, but its the 1% that truly bothers and niggles me"?

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 23, 2011 5:29 pm
Michael,

Yes. It bothers and niggles me deeply. And I feel if I could get past that major stumbling block, I'd be on my way to healing much faster, taking the focus off of him, eliminating some of the confusion and working harder on the things that need work.

Yes. That bothers me most of all. Kelli

Comment by [kelli \(http://gravatar.com/kelli1964\)](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) on August 23, 2011 5:46 pm
Michael,

I'm going to try to articulate this the best way that I can. Claudia, your post is extremely insightful. I worked my ass off to gain his approval of me. He was in a position of AUTHORITY over me from the beginning because I was his CLIENT. All knowing, all powerful and I was blown away and impressed by my perspective of the time of happy family man, calm cool and collected. NEVER lost his temper (not until we became intimate), always handled things in a no non sense way. We became fast friends and STAYED friends for two years before anything happened. I believed that image and clung to it. I never questioned or doubted or saw anything out of the ordinary until we became more intimate. He remains in that position of authority over hundreds of very vulnerable individuals. REcently, there was a big change over at work. He lost his management position, but went back to what he was doing prior, but they gave him yet ANOTHER added clientele who are the most EXTREMELY vulnerable, more than all the rest. This boggled my mind, given what his boss knew of him. Can you say, "redeemed myself?" Yea, he's on a high alright. And on that pedestal he sits for all the qualities I fell for in the first place. Is he a psychopath? Well, his behavior with me would indicate that this is true...but the image and additional work load of the vulnerable a new rich, young wife, added children.....WAS he a psychopath? What was it about me that he didn't approve? What is it that was so wonderful that I missed taht he kept telling me he missed because he was such a great guy, as he always told me. If he was so great, why did he abuse so much and so severely? Was it just a cae of a man unhappy in his marriage so he cheated? Because he appears faithful now. Maybe he was right? Just need to find the RIGHT woman....IS he a psychopath? Maybe about 50% sure Michael.

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 23, 2011 6:16 pm

Kelli, a person who compulsively cheats, lies, and creates a false mask to lure partners is not looking for the right woman, but for the right dupe or scapegoat, as Steve Becker wrote in one of his lovefraud articles. Psychopaths don't look for love at all. They look for a rush or a high of infatuation, which they call falling in love because that's the closest approximation to love they

can feel. We all know that infatuation fades after the novelty of a relationship wears off, and that mutual respect, caring, empathy and equality are the key components of real love. Psychopaths can't feel that for anyone. So, yes, your ex was looking for another person to give him a rush and to use for sex, image, and money. He found her. But because he can't love her or anyone, neither she nor anyone else will stay "the right woman" for long. Claudia

Comment by Michael on August 23, 2011 6:29 pm

Kelli, Im wondering if you experienced any of the following core dynamics. Remember that in the main, these people have their masks in situ and you can have lengthy periods of what appears to be normalcy within the relationship.

Did he make you feel central and highly valuable in his life one day, then seem to treat you as an annoyance the next. did he oscillate between these two positions? Did he swing between sachrine sweet, and disinterested, bored, indifferent or / and callous. Did he tell you that he loved you, and was able to follow this through with intimate closeness? Did he accept ownership for his share in discord within the relationship, or did you find yourself pulling you hair out just trying to get him to see your point of view. Did you get the feeling that he felt you, and if you did was his behaviour consistent with someone who felt you? Where their occasions when you tried to reason with him but he just did not make any logical sense. Did you feel extremely confused and emotionally disorientated, but could never get him to see why you felt this way? Did you ever communicate to him that you felt insecure within the relationship; but the birds eye view to you looked like he could never see why you felt insecure? Did he contradict himself?

<http://narcissism-support.blogspot.com/2009/01/soul-with-no-footprints.html>
(<http://narcissism-support.blogspot.com/2009/01/soul-with-no-footprints.html>)

Comment by [kelli](http://gravatar.com/kelli1964) (<http://gravatar.com/kelli1964>) on August 23, 2011 6:54 pm
((((((Michael))))))

thank you for that link. It has me in tears. And it is all true. Perhaps that is the most difficult to accept, but it all makes so much sense.

I'll think about your questions. Seems everything I went through with him is a blur, put into different terms. A soul with no footprints.

Kelli

Comment by [psychopathyawareness](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) (<https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com>) on August 23, 2011 9:03 pm

Michael, thanks for sharing with us this excellent article and helpful blog link. Claudia

Comment by lesley on August 24, 2011 1:00 pm

that is a great link Michael. my two questions would be "am I the one that is going mad and if not what is wrong with this person" (for whlst i was in the relationship) and second would be after it was over and dealing with the contempt and immediate shutdown of any, albeit false, care "why

is my ex treating me this way, why does he hate me so much?". these are the two things that stick in my mind.

lesleyxx

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 24, 2011 6:00 pm

Laney, great observations, particularly about what changes in a psychopath to mirror each given victim and what doesn't change (the deception, domination and need for control). These become more transparent once the relationship progresses, both if the victim puts up with the abuse and if he or she begins to see the real psychopath (in which case he or she invests far less energy in maintaining the mask of decency towards that victim). The masks sticks on only for those victims who idolize the psychopath, for acquaintances who don't know him and for those in the idealization or luring phase of the relationship. For everyone else, it doesn't, which is why most people who encounter a psychopath know at the very least that he has a very bad character (even if they're not informed about personality disorders). Claudia

Comment by Michael on August 24, 2011 9:15 pm

Lesley; your first question "am I the one that is going mad and if not what is wrong with this person"? Working on the principle that given what you have thus far learned through your reading, reflection and research; has lead you to so far suspect very strongly that he has cluster b traits / psychopathy personality construct. As you read, and listen to others share their stories; and there are many issues that resonate with your own experience, the chances are very good that you have been dealing with a complex personality construct of the cluster b type. Here is a quote from Sandra Browns book- women who love psychopaths; What I would say is that this is one of the most important pieces of information provided in her book. I think that as research continues, as I have alluded to earlier, the branches of cluster b – NPD BPD APD stem from a trunk. That trunk is psychopathy. All of cleckleys original traits, later revised and fine tuned by Hare- take a close look and cross reference them with cluster b criteria. It can be confusing, because if you look at the criteria for BPD, or NPD for example, they are not traits but rather relational, interpersonal, or intrapsychic dynamics; where as on the other hand the psychopathy checklist is a list of traits, or attributes. Let me illustrate-

"2.A pattern of unstable and intense interpersonal relationships characterized by alternating between extremes of idealization and devaluation." This is a dynamic.

"3.Identity disturbance: markedly and persistently unstable self-image or sense of self." so is this one. they all are if you look at all nine.

"8.Inappropriate anger or difficulty controlling anger (e.g., frequent displays of temper, constant anger, recurrent physical fights)."

"4.Impulsivity in at least two areas that are potentially self-damaging (e.g., promiscuous sex, eating disorders, binge eating, substance abuse, reckless driving)."

Lets look at NPD-

“2.Is preoccupied with fantasies of unlimited success, power, brilliance, beauty, or ideal love”

7.Lacks empathy: is unwilling to recognize or identify with the feelings and needs of others

You probably have looked at these before. They are not the most useful descriptions when one is dealing with the aftermath of a relationship. These descriptions capture nothing in relation to the impact they have on their partners; Which as we know, is catastrophic and global. These individuals are psychologically and emotionally highly toxic; they cause severe damage in a way that is multi layered and highly complex.

Having said that, through my reading, researching, and reflecting on my own experience; when you deconstruct these criteria and consider Hares Checklist- they LINK. They are related.

You first question- “am I going mad”? Lesley these relationships are always crazy making- the whole relationship is one big Gaslight.

I must say that i do not believe they sit twisting their metaphorical moustache, and think “the next person I seduce I am going to slowly drive them nuts and emotionally try to destroy them”. I do not believe they do; that presupposes a normal person whos been seduced by the dark side (forgive the star wars analogy). No such reflection occurs; it comes naturally to them, it is just simply what they do. However this is not to say that as the dynamic progresses they do not intentionally cause harm; they do. In fact it is inevitable. You can not lack a moral compass, lack empathy, lack compassion, lack responsibility and insight, lack real feelings, lack depth no deeper than toe deep, lack remorse, and lack integrity and the ability to attach and love,,,without doing harm. I eventually learned to think about this way; a predator does not have to think and reflect on how to approach being preadatorial; they just do what they do. If you lack the above qualities, and at the same time another person has something you need or want, the only option is to dominate and control.

Comment by Michael on August 24, 2011 [9:17 pm](#)

I lumped them together in a way most victims can understand for our discussion. I agree with recent research that explained:11

“Our results provide empirical evidence that psychopathy constitutes a personality construct made up of different characteristics of the DSM antisocial, narcissistic and borderline personality disorders...One clinical implication of our results is that in cases where a Cluster B personality disorder is diagnosed a high psychopathy value is to be expected, especially where antisocial, borderline or narcissistic personality disorder is involved.”

11 Huchzemeier,C., Friedemann G., Brub, E., Godt, N., Kohler, D., Hinrichs, G., and Aldenhoff, J. (2007). The Relationship Between DSM-IV Cluster B

Personality Disorders and Psychopathy According to Hare's Criteria: Clarification and Resolution of Previous Contradictions. Behavioral Sciences and the Law, 25:901-911 2007

Comment by Michael on August 24, 2011 9:19 pm

Sandra Browns reference to formal reserach in the area posted above.

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 24, 2011 10:23 pm

Michael, these are such clear explanations! Thank you so much. Your knowledge and insights bring a lot to this blog. As you begin to write some of the chapters for your upcoming book, maybe we could start, from time to time, posting some of them on this blog, as blog posts. At any rate, as you can see from reader comments, many of them would be relevant to psychopathyawareness. Claudia

Comment by lesley on August 25, 2011 11:52 am

Thanks Michael! That is great. I mean I know for sure my ex is a psycho. He is text book as far as i'm concerned. However, you are totally right that NPD BPD and APD all sort of merge and fudge together. When i was with my ex, I knew there was something not right with him, as we all know on this site, that feeling in your gut that your loving partner was trying in some sick covert way to screw your head up but you couldn't put your finger on it how he was EXACTLY doing it or if it was you going nutso. I didnt really start to look into what could be mentally wrong with him until I started reading the Keith Moon book, Dear Boy, when i was still with my ex. In the book the author goes into BPD and that, at the time of Keith's youth, such things were not thought of or there was not a medical term for them, apart from "difficult" or "mentally unstable" or something along those lines. As I read the traits etc I kept looking at my ex thinking, that is HIM, that is how he goes on. I knew there was something that was just not healthy in him. He was an alcoholic, though he had not drank for 16 years, and I first went onto the AA sites for partners who are experiencing difficulties. Nothing though was coming up, it was my sister that said he could be narcissistic, which most definitely fitted the way he was. But he had this edge to him, this kick out of hurting you, setting you up for a fall, kicking you right where it hurt and taking full enjoyment out of it. I said at the time he was selfish beyond selfish, I did not know the word then, to describe what I was trying to say about him. But i found it here, absolute narcissism. I saw it one day, the hate, in his face, i was sitting at the garden table in the sun and he was doing some gardening – I had taken us out a cup of tea and was sitting having a cigarette before i went to help him. Because I was sitting and not doing what he wanted immediately, he threw the secateurs at me, but cleverly so it looked like he had sort of meant to throw them on the table. I ignored him, i didnt miss a beat i just kept talking to him, but I knew then that he was bad, rotten, I could see it in his face Michael and Claudia, the mask was most definitely off.

Thank you for always helping me, was feeling a bit low and then i read your posts and it made me feel better.

lesleyxxxxx

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 25, 2011 2:29 pm

Lesley, speaking of AA to pick up women: my psychopathic ex bragged that he was going to sexaholics anonymous to pick up women: all this while he was engaged to his current wife and cheating on her with an office mate, a student and many other women, some of which his wife found out about and still married him! What I can't fully grasp is how some women can put up with so much humiliation and still stand by "their man". It really is a phenomenon similar to the brainwashing that occurs in cults, where the double standards between the cult leader and the followers is so glaring yet so accepted. Claudia

Comment by lesley on August 25, 2011 3:10 pm

Hi Claudia

I was never an AA member but I know what you mean. My exes ex gf (the one he still "sees") was in AA. Also he saw several girls that he met there before he was in touch with me. We went to an AA members house one day for a barbecue and there was a young girl there and I felt slightly uncomfortable about how my ex was being with her, all that faux caring and concern – do you know what i mean? Also when he took me to a meeting where he made out I was his rock, there was a girl there that I am sure he had his eye on as his next target, which is why he made out he was so wonderful (as a partner) at the meeting.

They do brainwash their victims and AA members or people with "issues" are more at risk, I mean the fact that my ex's ex is still seeing him for threesomes 4 years after he dumped her says it all to me. I cannot understand that Claudia, how she can let him away with it for years, in front of her face, watching him and listening to him go on about other girls/women that he "loves"?? It would eat me up, its so so toxic. He once said to me that as I "wouldn't behave" then all contact was going to be stopped. If behaving means being controlled by someone that is void of any feeling for anything let alone their partner then I'll choose not to behave thanks! I do think my ex was a sex addict too (your article about them being insatiable was spot on) – he really was just a classic case. He could be used for research!! The cult thing is exactly the same i think too. My ex wanted women to worship him, to have several women giving him sexual gratification at the same time, so he could watch them fight over him and beg at the alter that was his sexual god like state. I just could not deal with that – at the time I actually felt my own head fighting over my moral highground hahaha – but it was not just about that, i was not in any way being a prude. I was fighting for my own right to not be used as some sort of sexual appendage. Of course the flipside to him was that he made out that life was not all about sex and that he had so much more to offer. He didn't.

I can totally see how cult leaders do it though, its frightening.

lesleyxxx

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 25, 2011 3:16 pm

Lesley, I think even in their family lives psychopaths cultivate a cult-like worship by those under their spell, otherwise they couldn't get away with such glaring double standards. This psychology is very complex, because it's not just the psychology of the psychopaths themselves, whose

characteristics are well-studied and well-known, but also of a whole range of victims: some of whom are less dominant sociopaths themselves, some of whom are malignant narcissists in need of a “special” relationship with the psychopath, some of whom are... other things. If we could understand better how cults function psychologically, we could understand better also how evil dictators can rise to power as well as the dynamics of the psychopathic bond in “romantic” or familial relationships. Cults are the middle zone—between the microcosm of the personal life and the macrocosm of the evil regimes—to help us see better the whole process of psychopathic power and how it casts its spell. Claudia

Comment by lesley on August 26, 2011 [1:24 pm](#)

Claudia. How true. my ex's father was a tyrant really, although great fun and totally charming in company. I suppose cults are just one huge dysfunctional family and the leaders have total control over all of their victims. Its amazing that they can hold that intense control for so long over so many for years – with only a few breaking rank. Frightening!

lesleyxxx

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 26, 2011 [2:20 pm](#)

Lesley, it's all the more frightening since the double standards are so transparent (perhaps even more so than in families with psychopaths) and the requests are so outrageous and often evil. Yet they're followed by some... We know that the cult leaders are very often psychopaths or malignant narcissists. But who are the followers? Some have personality disorders and some may not. Claudia

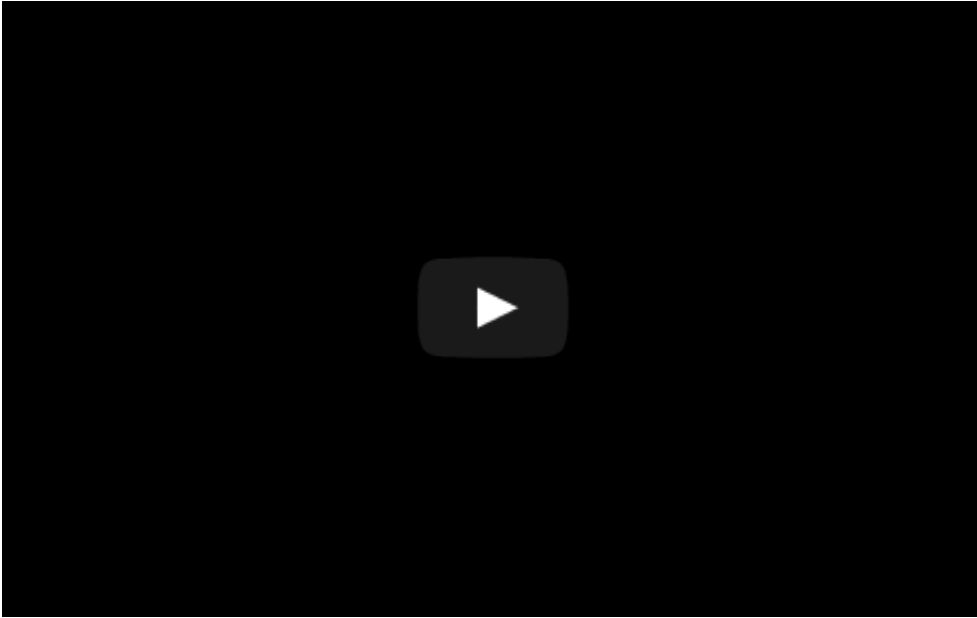
Comment by lesley on August 26, 2011 [2:43 pm](#)

I know, that is true, Surely they cannot be totally full of other disordered human beings who gladly put up with the ridiculous and often sick demands of the leader? Its just mass brainwashing and in some ways no wonder these types think they are omnipotent, because to their followers, they are. its must be so upsetting for someone's family when they lose them to a cult – it must be worse surely in some ways than them being dead. sort of like living with a pyscho! lesleyxxx

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on August 26, 2011 [2:58 pm](#)

Lesley, individual psychopaths usually promise us true love, a special relationship, unbelievable romance, true commitment, etc: everything each of us wants. Cult leaders make even grander promises, on a spiritual scale, that offer a panacea for every human hardship and misery. I think that their followers literally idolize them as one would divinity. Cults intermix pathology, religion, government and, in a strange way, romance too. A glimpse into (researching) them would reveal so much about pathological charisma. Claudia

Comment by [psychopathyawareness \(https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com\)](https://psychopathyawareness.wordpress.com) on November 4, 2011 [4:11 pm](#)



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