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# 4 things you must know if you're divorcing a narcissist

by Daytime @ Nine / Kathryn Mitchem |



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Were you married to a narcissist and it's hasn't been easy moving on? Kathryn Mitchem is talking with Kimberly about some steps you can follow to move on from your ex.



You can't even believe that the person who promised to love, cherish and protect you would ever be the one who would completely devalue your needs and wants, let alone try to financially ruin you or keep your children from you once he finds a new partner.

I've coached hundreds of women through difficult divorces and have found that separating from this type of person can bring up some of the most challenging self-doubts and painful thoughts and emotions we might ever face in our lives.

"Am I as unlovable and unstable as they say I am? Even though I know it's not healthy, maybe I'm making the wrong decision and should should have fought harder to make our marriage work".

The self-doubts, accusations and threats can take a toll and deplete your energy, sending you to the edge, leaving you wondering how you will ever survive the deep pain that comes from the tyrant like behavior of the narcissist. There are nights you curl up in a ball on the floor just wishing it could all be over because the pain in the present, and the fear for the future is so overwhelming. I call this a Divorce 9-1-1 moment.

Because there is a small part of you that knows that you have the power to get through this and that your kids need you now more than ever, you peel yourself off the floor, start putting one foot in the other, and learn how to cope with this unfathomable situation that will be the new reality. When we realize that the only person we can change is ourselves, then the real work, and real reward, can begin.

To manage a difficult divorce, I suggest immersing in a daily (even 10 minutes a day helps) practice of yoga, meditation, self-awareness and self-love. Secure a Therapist or Divorce Coach to stand by your side as you slowly get stronger as support you as you learn how to deal with the daily stressors, and heal from the past issues that got you into this situation in the first place.

The most important principle to practice is this: accept what is, realize you cannot change the other person, and use your time and energy to heal and care for yourself instead of fighting the new reality. You have most likely given away a great deal of your sanity and power to this person throughout your marriage, and now it's time to reclaim your power and move on with your life.

You will survive this and you can eventually become one of the strongest and most loving people you know if you follow a few guidelines.

## 1) Stop Engaging

Set firm boundaries and keep your emotions in check so you don't end up wasting thousands of dollars in court (instead, save up for a great vacation with the kids...it's a lot more fun).

Your Ex may threaten to "destroy" you when you start to stand up for what you and your children need to move forward. They may threaten to take your kids away from you or never give you a penny in child support or alimony.

Remember this...they have a grandiose sense of self and it has nothing to do with you. They believe they can choose to act outside of legal boundaries and commitments so it's up to you to expect this type of behavior, then protect yourself and your children from it.

Make sure you have an excellent attorney with experience with this type of personality disorder so that you have all of the parenting and financial agreements in line. The law is here to protect you and your children. Have faith in this process and ignore any threats they make.

Then going forward after the divorce, it is almost always necessary to engage the help of parenting professionals and other court appointed child advocates who understand family dynamics such as polarization and alienation. They can enforce the parenting agreements and advocate for the children's best interests, which 100% of the time means keeping them OUT of the middle.

And please, take it from someone who has seen many make this mistake and learn the hard way...don't spend unnecessary time or money acting from your own hurt, trying to get back at them for their treatment of you. This serves no one, especially your children.

## 2) Take Nothing Personally

If you can remember this one fact, your life will start to get better immediately: the narcissist's behavior truly has nothing to do with you, it has everything to do with them and their unhealed wounds.

Because of their own pain, most often from childhood, they lack empathy. They are unwilling to recognize or identify with the feelings and needs of others, especially yours, since you are no longer on their "team".

They do not consider, or care about, the pain they inflict on others. I'm sure you have seen this pattern in other relationships in their lives while you were married. Now that you are the ex, you are no longer exempt from their unhealed pain. Do not expect them to listen, validate, understand or support you.

Use every bit of energy that you spend trying to change them, trying to get them to care about you again, on yourself instead. Self-care and self-love is the key. Running off to a new relationship almost never works. Drowning your sorrows in glasses of wine is a temporary fix. Take the time to heal yourself, to learn new patterns of setting healthy boundaries, and to rebuild your sense of inherent worthiness. Over time you will be ready to attract a much healthier partner when you are ready.

## 3) Never put the children in the middle, though your Ex likely will

The truth is, a narcissist will stop at nothing to try to destroy you, even if it means involving, and emotionally harming the kids. In their fantasy world, they will go to any and all lengths to promote the illusion that their beliefs are right and good, and yours are bad and wrong and you deserve to be punished.

He may fabricate lies and manipulate the children, sowing seeds of doubt in them and in you, hoping to make everyone question their own memory, perception, and sanity.

Detachment, acceptance, self-care with strong boundaries are the only way to get through, and eventually rebuild your life after this type of divorce. Even if you feel like nothing is changing and you wake up in the same hell you were in the day before with your narcissistic ex, every little baby step toward self healing by not reacting will help. Further down the road, you will be amazed at how strong you have become for yourself and your children.

Some of the greatest gifts come from the most difficult situations, especially those that send us to our knees. Please download my free ebook "No Mud, No Lotus—Tools for Tough Transitions" at: [ebook.kathrynmitchem.com](http://ebook.kathrynmitchem.com) for tools to help through difficult divorces.

## 4) Remember, you are not alone

Read about others in your situation and how they have coped. Learn the tools you need for self-care and by all means, ask for, and take steps toward getting the support you need.

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