Seven Traits of Narcissistic Adult Children

Narcissistic traits are increasing in our society, especially in people thirty years old and younger. This means their parents struggle with the problems their children are causing in their lives.

Here are seven traits of narcissistic, entitled adult children and the associated problems they present for their parents:

1. **Grandiosity:** They view themselves and their abilities as not reality based. This means they believe they are smarter and more capable than they really are. Therefore, they're not willing to do menial work or live in substandard conditions in their housing and lifestyle.

2. **Aggression and rage:** They express both when someone corrects them or challenges their beliefs and reality. Parents walk on eggshells and when they do something that angers the adult child, the child often cuts them off. This includes depriving the parents of a relationship with the grandchildren.

3. **Materialism:** They value possessions and affluent lifestyles but, because they feel entitled to them, they aren't as willing to work for them as their parents were. This results in high credit card debt and a large degree of irresponsibility. Many parents support their adult children financially even when they are married with children of their own. It’s common for parents to pay for housing, cell phones, and credit card debt.

4. **Self-admiration:** These adult children think highly of themselves, which is reflected in their selfies and self-focus. This carries over into relationships in which they are unable to put others first and be emphatic toward others’ feelings and needs.

5. **Unnatural Affection:** Narcissistic adult children don't have the same level of respect for their parents as prior generations did. They don’t desire relational involvement and closeness with their parents and don’t value fostering the relationship between their children and their parents.
6. **Shallow Values:** Their values are fame, wealth, and self-fulfillment. Primary values in our culture used to be freedom, hard work, sacrifice, family, and morality. These adult children don’t feel any obligation to sacrifice for their parents or to put themselves out in any way for them.

7. **Entitlement:** They expect financial help. They expect parents to meet their demands. They expect parents to be there for them, even though they aren’t there for the parents. People who exhibited this behavior used to be called spoiled brats; now, it is common, and many parents give in out of guilt or to maintain a relationship. If the adult children don’t get what they want, they don’t hesitate to be rude or cut the parents off.

As you can see, these seven traits of narcissistic adult children cause their parents pain and interfere with the relationship between the parents and their children and grandchildren in many ways.

By Karla Downing

Relationship Prayer

God,

Help me not to display any of these narcissistic traits in my life. Help me not to encourage or reward any of these traits in my children. Give me wisdom to know how to deal with them when I see them.

Relationship Challenge

❖ If you display any of these traits in any way, are you willing to change?
❖ If you are dealing with any of these traits in your children or grandchildren, are you willing to do anything different?

Scripture Meditation

2 Timothy 3:2-5

People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive,
disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God—having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them.

If you have any questions you would like to ask Karla, please feel free to email her.

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