

# Negative Consequences of Being in a Narcissistic Relationship: A Comprehensive Worksheet

## Introduction

Being in a narcissistic relationship can have profound and lasting effects on your emotional, psychological, physical, social, behavioral, financial, spiritual, and long-term well-being. This 4-page worksheet helps you recognize these negative consequences, validate your experiences, and take steps toward healing and recovery. Use this tool personally, with a therapist, or as part of a support network, especially if you're recovering from narcissistic abuse. If you feel unsafe or experience ongoing harm, prioritize safety by contacting a crisis hotline or professional before proceeding (see resources at the end). Understanding these impacts empowers you to reclaim your life, rebuild self-worth, and foster resilience—start here to acknowledge your journey and plan for healing.

## Section 1: Understanding the Impact of Narcissistic Relationships

### Why Recognize These Consequences?

Narcissistic relationships often involve manipulation, control, and devaluation, leading to a wide range of negative effects across multiple areas of life. Recognizing these consequences validates your experiences, counters gaslighting, and guides recovery by highlighting areas needing attention. They're not your fault—they stem from the narcissist's behavior, not your worth.

- **Key Notes:** These impacts can vary in intensity and duration, often lingering after the relationship ends. Early recognition and action can prevent long-term harm and support healing.
- **Narcissistic Tactics:** Consequences often result from manipulation (e.g., gaslighting), control (e.g., isolation), and exploitation (e.g., financial abuse), as outlined in “Subtypes of Narcissism” and “Understanding the Cycle of Abuse” worksheets.

**Prompt:** Reflect on 1-2 ways narcissistic behavior has impacted you. How does understanding these consequences make you feel about your experience?

- **Example:** “Their criticism left me with low self-esteem and anxiety—I feel validated knowing it's the abuse, not me, and hopeful I can heal with support.”

**Tool:** Use an impact journal to track consequences, noting dates, emotions, and their effects on well-being. Review monthly to assess progress, identify patterns, and inform recovery

goals.

## Section 2: Documenting Negative Consequences

This section provides a framework to identify and reflect on the specific consequences you've experienced, using prompts and examples. Rate each consequence's impact (No Impact, Mild, Moderate, Severe) and provide a real-life example, then plan actions for healing.

### Consequences Table

For each category, rate the impact, describe an example, reflect on its effect, and list one action for recovery. Add custom consequences if needed.

| <b>Category</b>               | <b>Impact</b><br>(No Impact, Mild, Moderate, Severe) | <b>Specific Example</b> (Real-Life Incident) | <b>Reflection</b><br>(How It Affects You) | <b>Action for Recovery</b> (One Step) |
|-------------------------------|--|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Emotional Consequences</b> |  |  |   |                                       |
| Low Self-Esteem               |  |  |   |                                       |
| Anxiety and Depression        |  |  |   |                                       |
| Emotio                        |  |  |   |                                       |

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|--|--|--|--|--|
| nal<br>Exhaus<br>tion                                |  |  |  |  |
| Fear<br>and<br>Insecur<br>ity                        |  |  |  |  |
| <b>Psycho<br/>logical<br/>Conse<br/>quence<br/>s</b> |  |  |  |  |
| Gasligh<br>ting                                      |  |  |  |  |
| PTSD/<br>C-PTSD                                      |  |  |  |  |
| Cogniti<br>ve<br>Disson<br>ance                      |  |  |  |  |
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| <b>Physical<br/>Consequences</b> |  |  |  |  |
| Sleep<br>Disturbances            |  |  |  |  |
| Chronic<br>Stress                |  |  |  |  |
| Fatigue                          |  |  |  |  |
| <b>Social<br/>Consequences</b>   |  |  |  |  |
| Isolation                        |  |  |  |  |
| Damaged                          |  |  |  |  |

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|---|--|--|--|--|
| Relatio<br>nshins                                 |  |  |  |  |
| Social<br>Anxiety                                 |  |  |  |  |
| <b>Behavi<br/>oral<br/>Conse<br/>quence<br/>s</b> |  |  |  |  |
| Hyperv<br>igilanc<br>e                            |  |  |  |  |
| People<br>-<br>Pleasin<br>g                       |  |  |  |  |
| Avoida<br>nce                                     |  |  |  |  |
| <b>Financi<br/>al</b>                             |  |  |  |  |

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| <b>Consequences</b>           |  |  |  |  |
| Financial Control             |  |  |  |  |
| Economic Abuse                |  |  |  |  |
| Debt                          |  |  |  |  |
| <b>Spiritual Consequences</b> |  |  |  |  |
| Loss of Purpose               |  |  |  |  |
| Existential                   |  |  |  |  |

|                                   |  |  |  |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| Crisis                            |  |  |  |  |
| <b>Long-Term<br/>Consequences</b> |  |  |  |  |
| Difficulty<br>Trusting            |  |  |  |  |
| Relationship<br>Issues            |  |  |  |  |
| Personal<br>Growth<br>Stagnation  |  |  |  |  |
| <i>(Add<br/>your<br/>own,</i>     |  |  |  |  |



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|-------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| <i>e.g.,<br/>Identity<br/>Loss)</i> |  |  |  |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|

## Examples for Completing the Table

- **Category:**Low Self-Esteem (Emotional Consequences)
  - **Impact:** Severe
  - **Specific Example:** “They constantly called me ‘useless’ and criticized my appearance, leaving me feeling worthless after every argument last month.”
  - **Reflection:** “It erodes my confidence, makes me avoid social events, and increases my isolation and sadness, impacting my daily life.”
  - **Action for Recovery:** “I’ll practice daily affirmations (e.g., ‘I am worthy of love and respect’) from the ‘Self-Compassion Inventory’ worksheet, starting today, to rebuild self-esteem.”
- **Category:**Gaslighting (Psychological Consequences)
  - **Impact:** Moderate
  - **Specific Example:** “They denied yelling at me last week, saying, ‘That never happened—you’re imagining things,’ making me doubt my memory.”
  - **Reflection:** “It confuses me, increases anxiety, and erodes my reality, leaving me second-guessing myself in other relationships.”
  - **Action for Recovery:** “I’ll journal incidents using the ‘Recording Instances of Abuse’ worksheet weekly, validating my reality and seeking therapist support within two weeks.”

**Tool:** Use a consequences tracker (e.g., journal or app) to log these entries weekly, noting changes in impact, emotions, and recovery progress. Highlight 2-3 severe impacts for focused healing, setting a goal to review monthly.

Fill out the table with at least 5-7 consequences, rating impact, providing examples, reflecting on effects, and listing actions. Reflect on how documenting these validates your experience and motivates recovery.

## Section 3: Reflecting on the Impact and Planning Recovery

Reflect on the consequences’ overall effect and plan actionable steps to address them, fostering healing and well-being.

### Reflection Prompts

- **Which consequences feel most severe or persistent in your life? Why?**

- **Example:** “Low self-esteem and isolation feel most severe—they stem from years of criticism and control, making me doubt my worth and avoid others, worsening my loneliness and anxiety.”
- **How do these consequences affect your daily life, relationships, or long-term goals?**
  - **Example:** “They limit my social connections, increase stress at work, and hinder my personal growth—I want to heal to rebuild trust and pursue my dreams, but fear holds me back.”
- **How does recognizing these as narcissistic abuse, not your fault, make you feel about your recovery?**
  - **Example:** “It feels validating and hopeful—I’m not to blame, and with support, I can heal, regain confidence, and create a better future.”

**Tool:** Use a reflection journal to answer these biweekly, tracking changes in feelings, clarity, and motivation. Set a goal to review monthly, noting progress or adjustments for recovery.

Write down your reflections, including at least one specific feeling or example for each prompt. Reflect on how these insights guide your healing and inspire action.

## Action Steps for Recovery

Based on your reflections and table actions, take proactive steps to address consequences and rebuild your well-being.

1. **Rebuild Self-Esteem and Trust:** Use affirmations, therapy, and self-compassion practices to counter low self-esteem, difficulty trusting, and relationship issues.
  - **Actions:**
    - “I’ll practice 3 affirmations daily (e.g., ‘I am worthy of love’) from ‘Self-Compassion Inventory,’ starting today, logging their impact weekly.”
    - “I’ll schedule a therapy session within two weeks via Psychology Today ([www.psychologytoday.com](http://www.psychologytoday.com)) to address trust issues, using ‘Reframing Negative Thoughts’ for support.”
  - **Resources:** Refer to “Self-Compassion Inventory” and “Rebuilding Strength” worksheets; join Out of the Fog ([www.outofthefog.website](http://www.outofthefog.website)) for peer validation.
2. **Manage Anxiety, Depression, and PTSD/C-PTSD:** Engage in grounding, mindfulness, and professional support to reduce emotional and psychological distress.
  - **Actions:**
    - “I’ll practice 5 minutes of deep breathing daily from ‘Rebuilding Strength,’ starting tonight, to manage anxiety, logging its effect weekly.”
    - “I’ll join a PTSD support group via National Domestic Violence Hotline (1-800-799-7233) within three weeks, seeking coping strategies.”
  - **Resources:** Use “Self-Care for a Happier, Healthier You” for mindfulness, consult a trauma therapist via Verywell Mind ([www.verywellmind.com](http://www.verywellmind.com)).
3. **Address Physical and Behavioral Consequences:** Prioritize sleep, exercise, and boundaries to counter fatigue, hypervigilance, people-pleasing, and avoidance.
  - **Actions:**
    - “I’ll establish a 7-8 hour sleep routine with a screen-free hour before bed, starting this week, using ‘Self-Care for a Happier, Healthier You’ tips, logging energy gains.”

- “I’ll set one boundary (e.g., ‘No monitoring my phone’) this month using ‘Healthy Boundaries,’ practicing assertiveness to reduce hypervigilance, tracking its impact.”
  - **Resources:** Refer to “Physical Self-Care” in “Self-Care Guide for Healing from Narcissistic Abuse”; seek therapist guidance for behavioral shifts.
- 4. **Combat Isolation and Social Anxiety:**Reconnect with supports, join communities, and set boundaries to rebuild social connections and reduce damaged relationships.
  - **Actions:**
    - “I’ll call a trusted friend (Maria, 555-123-4567) weekly for 30 minutes, starting this Sunday, logging how it reduces isolation from ‘Self-Care for a Happier, Healthier You.’”
    - “I’ll join a local book club or online support group (e.g., Survivors of Narcissistic Abuse, [www.survivorsforum.wixsite.com/sona](http://www.survivorsforum.wixsite.com/sona)) within a month, tracking social anxiety reduction.”
  - **Resources:** Use “Social Self-Care” from “Self-Care for a Happier, Healthier You”; consult a therapist for social anxiety strategies.
- 5. **Recover Financially and Spiritually:**Address financial control, debt, loss of purpose, and existential crisis with legal support, budgeting, and value clarification.
  - **Actions:**
    - “I’ll consult a financial advisor or legal aid via Ending Violence Association of Canada (<https://endingviolence.org/>) within three weeks to manage debt and regain control, logging progress.”
    - “I’ll use ‘Values Clarification’ to identify my purpose (e.g., growth, peace), journaling weekly to counter loss of purpose, starting today.”
  - **Resources:** Refer to “Financial Consequences” in “Preparing to Leave” or “Self-Care Guide for Healing from Narcissistic Abuse”; seek spiritual support via local communities or therapists.

**Tool:** Use a recovery action planner (e.g., journal or app like Todoist) to schedule and monitor these steps, noting timelines, resources, and impacts. Set a goal to complete one action weekly, reflecting on its effect on well-being and healing.

Write down your action steps for 3-5 consequences, including timelines and expected impacts. Reflect on how these feel and whether they align with rebuilding your life and safety.

## Section 4: Healing and Recovery

### Why Healing Matters

Recognizing these consequences is the first step toward recovery, countering the narcissist’s impact and reclaiming your life. Healing involves rebuilding self-esteem, establishing boundaries, and fostering resilience to prevent long-term harm and support growth.

- **Key Strategies:**

- Therapy (e.g., CBT, trauma-focused) to process trauma and rebuild trust.
- Support groups (e.g., Out of the Fog, Survivors of Narcissistic Abuse) for validation and connection.

- Self-care (e.g., “Self-Care for a Happier, Healthier You,” “Rebuilding Strength”) to nurture well-being.
- Boundaries and safety planning (e.g., “Creating Your Safety Plan,” “Healthy Boundaries”) to protect against further harm.

**Prompt:** Reflect on 1-2 ways you’ll begin healing, including why they matter and how they feel. How does this process inspire hope or motivation for your future?

- **Example:** “I’ll start therapy to address PTSD—it matters for regaining peace and trust. It feels daunting but hopeful, motivating me to create a life free from fear and control.”

**Tool:** Use a healing tracker (e.g., journal or app) to log recovery steps, noting progress in well-being, relationships, and growth. Set a goal to review monthly, celebrating small victories and adjusting strategies.

## Additional Notes

- **You Are Not to Blame:** These consequences result from the narcissist’s behavior, not your worth or actions—trust in your resilience to heal and grow.
- **Seek Support if Overwhelmed:** If consequences feel overwhelming or you face ongoing abuse, reach out for help immediately—your safety and well-being are priorities.
- **Patience in Healing:** Recovery is non-linear, with ups and downs—be kind to yourself, celebrate progress, and trust in gradual improvement over time.

## Further Resources

- **National Hotlines:**
  - U.S.: National Domestic Violence Hotline – 1-800-799-7233, <https://www.thehotline.org/>
  - Canada: Canadian Women’s Foundation – 1-866-863-0511, <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/health-promotion/stop-family-violence/services.html>
- **Local Support:** Contact your local domestic violence shelter or crisis center (e.g., Sheltersafe.ca for Canada) for region-specific help and recovery programs.
- **Books:**
  - *Women Who Love Too Much* by Robin Norwood – Strategies for healing from toxic relationships and rebuilding self-worth.
  - *The Human Magnet Syndrome* by Ross Rosenberg – Insights on recovering from narcissistic abuse and its consequences.
- **Online:**
  - Out of the Fog ([www.outofthefog.website](http://www.outofthefog.website)) – Resources and support for understanding and healing from narcissistic abuse consequences.
  - Psychology Today (<https://www.psychologytoday.com/>) – Find therapists specializing in narcissistic abuse recovery and trauma.
- **Support Groups:**
  - Survivors of Narcissistic Abuse ([www.survivorsforum.wixsite.com/sona](http://www.survivorsforum.wixsite.com/sona)) – Online community for sharing experiences and recovery strategies.

- National Association of Adult Survivors of Child Abuse ([www.asca.org.au](http://www.asca.org.au)) – Support for long-term consequences like PTSD and trust issues.

## **Final Thoughts**

The negative consequences of a narcissistic relationship are profound, but recognizing them is a powerful step toward healing and empowerment. This worksheet helps you document, reflect on, and address these impacts across emotional, psychological, physical, social, behavioral, financial, spiritual, and long-term dimensions, guiding you to rebuild your life with resilience and hope. You deserve safety, worth, and joy—start by identifying one consequence, planning an action, or seeking support today. If you're in danger, act immediately—your journey to recovery and peace begins here, with compassion and strength.