

# Self-Care Guide for Healing from Narcissistic Abuse: A Comprehensive Worksheet

## Introduction

Navigating the aftermath of narcissistic abuse can be deeply challenging, but your journey toward healing and recovery is a courageous step forward. This 4-page worksheet is designed to be a supportive companion, offering practical tools, strategies, and insights to empower you to reclaim your life, rebuild your self-worth, and foster resilience. Whether you're just recognizing the abuse's impact or further along in your recovery, this guide provides a structured approach to self-care across physical, emotional, mental, and social dimensions. If you feel unsafe or experience ongoing harm, prioritize safety by contacting a crisis hotline or professional before proceeding (see resources at the end). Healing is personal and non-linear—use this worksheet to take small, meaningful steps toward empowerment and well-being.

## Section 1: Understanding Narcissistic Abuse

### What Is Narcissistic Abuse?

Narcissistic abuse is a form of emotional and psychological abuse inflicted by individuals with narcissistic traits, such as an inflated sense of self-importance, excessive need for admiration, and lack of empathy. It often involves manipulation, gaslighting, and control to undermine your reality, self-worth, and autonomy.

- **Key Characteristics:**

- Manipulation: Tactics like lying, exaggerating, or distorting facts to maintain power.
- Gaslighting: Making you doubt your memory, perceptions, or sanity (e.g., “That never happened”).
- Control: Dictating your thoughts, emotions, actions, or decisions, overtly or subtly.

- **Signs and Symptoms:**

- Feeling worthless or insignificant due to constant criticism.
- Persistent self-doubt and second-guessing your abilities.
- Emotional distress (e.g., anxiety, sadness, confusion) or physical symptoms (e.g., headaches, fatigue).
- Isolation from friends, family, or support networks.
- Hypervigilance, feeling like you're “walking on eggshells.”

- **Impact on Mental and Emotional Health:**

- Anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, PTSD, trust issues, emotional dysregulation, shame, and guilt.

**Prompt:** Reflect on 2-3 signs or impacts you've experienced. How have they affected your daily life or well-being? Write down one way understanding this validates your journey.

- **Example:** “I feel worthless after their constant put-downs, which makes me avoid social events. Recognizing this as narcissistic abuse helps me see it’s not my fault.”

**Tool:** Use a narcissistic abuse journal to track signs, symptoms, and their impact, noting dates, emotions, and patterns. Review monthly to assess progress and identify recovery goals.

## Section 2: Immediate Steps for Self-Care

### Establishing Safety

Your safety is the priority—take immediate steps to protect yourself physically and emotionally.

- **Prompt:** Outline 3-5 actions to establish safety, including specific steps and resources.
  - **Examples:**
    - **Create a Safety Plan:** Identify safe spaces (e.g., Maria’s house, 555-123-4567, or a local shelter like ShelterSafe.ca). Pack an emergency bag (clothes, meds, documents) stored discreetly at a friend’s or shelter.
    - **Seek a Safe Place:** If in danger, leave for a trusted friend’s home or shelter (e.g., Anytown Domestic Violence Shelter, 1-800-555-1234). Plan discreet routes and times.
    - **Reach Out for Support:** Call the National Domestic Violence Hotline (1-800-799-7233) or, in Canada, Crisis Services Canada (1-833-456-4566) for 24/7 guidance and referrals.

**Tool:** Use the “Creating Your Safety Plan” worksheet to develop a detailed plan, including contacts, safe places, and emergency items. Practice one action this week, logging its impact.

### Building a Support System

Surround yourself with understanding, supportive people to aid recovery.

- **Prompt:** List 3-5 supports (people, groups, hotlines), including their roles, contact info, and why they’re helpful.
  - **Examples:**
    - **Support:** Maria Lopez (Friend)
      - **Role:** Emotional support, safe storage for items
      - **Contact:** 555-123-4567
      - **Why Helpful:** She listens without judgment and keeps my emergency bag secure.
    - **Support:** Narcissistic Abuse Recovery Program (Online)
      - **Role:** Peer support, education
      - **Contact:** [www.melanietoniaevans.com](http://www.melanietoniaevans.com)
      - **Why Helpful:** Offers forums and articles to connect with survivors and learn coping strategies.

**Tool:** Use a support network tracker (e.g., spreadsheet or Circle of Friends app) to log interactions, noting frequency and benefits. Set a goal to connect with one support weekly.

## Creating a Safe and Supportive Environment

Foster a nurturing space for healing.

- **Prompt:** Describe 2-3 ways to create a safe environment, including specific actions and sensory details.
  - **Examples:**
    - **Establish Boundaries:** Tell Maria, “I need no contact with my abuser—please don’t share my location.” Create a peaceful corner with candles, soft blankets, and music for calm.
    - **Practice Self-Care:** Start a daily 10-minute meditation using Calm ([www.calm.com](http://www.calm.com)) to reduce stress, focusing on the sound of waves and lavender scent.

**Tool:** Use the “Healthy Boundaries” and “Rebuilding Strength” worksheets for boundary-setting and self-care strategies. Schedule one safe environment action this week, logging its impact.

## Section 3: Emotional Healing Techniques

### Mindfulness and Meditation

These practices help you stay present, reduce anxiety, and promote emotional balance.

- **Prompt:** List 2-3 mindfulness or meditation activities you’ll try, including how often and why they matter.
  - **Examples:**
    - **Activity:** Deep breathing for 5 minutes daily.
      - **Frequency:** Morning and evening.
      - **Why It Matters:** Calms my anxiety, grounds me after triggers, and helps me focus on the present.
    - **Activity:** Mindful observation of nature (e.g., park walk) for 15 minutes weekly.
      - **Frequency:** Saturday mornings.
      - **Why It Matters:** Connects me to peace, reduces hypervigilance, and counters isolation.

**Tool:** Use a mindfulness tracker (e.g., Calm or Headspace app) to log sessions, noting mood shifts and stress reduction. Practice one technique daily, reflecting on its impact.

### Journaling

Writing helps process emotions, gain clarity, and release stress.

- **Prompt:** List 2-3 journaling practices you’ll try, including frequency, prompts, and benefits.
  - **Examples:**

- **Practice:**Daily journaling for 10 minutes.
  - **Frequency:** Nightly.
  - **Prompt:** “What emotions am I feeling today, and why?”
  - **Benefits:** Clarifies my feelings, reduces overwhelm, and validates my experiences.
- **Practice:**Gratitude journaling twice weekly.
  - **Frequency:** Monday and Thursday evenings.
  - **Prompt:** “What three things am I grateful for today?”
  - **Benefits:** Shifts my mindset to positivity, counters shame, and boosts mood.

**Tool:** Use a journaling app (e.g., Day One) or notebook, noting entries’ impact on emotions and stress. Set a goal to journal 5-7 times weekly, reflecting on progress.

## Affirmations

Positive statements rebuild self-esteem and counter negative self-talk from abuse.

- **Prompt:**Create 3-5 affirmations, including why they matter and how you’ll use them.
  - **Examples:**
    - **Affirmation:**“I am worthy of love and respect.”
      - **Why It Matters:** Counters feelings of worthlessness from the abuse.
      - **How I’ll Use It:** Repeat daily in the mirror and write on sticky notes around my safe space.
    - **Affirmation:**“I trust myself and my decisions.”
      - **Why It Matters:** Rebuilds confidence eroded by gaslighting.
      - **How I’ll Use It:** Say it during grounding or before setting boundaries, 2-3 times daily.

**Tool:** Use an affirmations app (e.g., I Am) or create cards, practicing 2-3 times daily. Log their impact on self-esteem and anxiety in your journal.

## Section 4: Physical Self-Care

Nurturing your body supports overall recovery from narcissistic abuse.

- **Prompt:**List 2-3 physical self-care activities, including frequency, benefits, and how you’ll incorporate them.
  - **Examples:**
    - **Activity:**Walking 30 minutes three times weekly.
      - **Frequency:** Monday, Wednesday, Friday mornings.
      - **Benefits:** Boosts mood, reduces stress, and increases energy after feeling drained by abuse.
      - **How I’ll Incorporate It:** Schedule walks in the park, bringing music for motivation.
    - **Activity:**Eating a balanced breakfast daily.
      - **Frequency:** Every morning.
      - **Benefits:** Stabilizes energy, improves mood, and counters fatigue from trauma.

- **How I'll Incorporate It:** Prepare oats, fruit, and nuts the night before for a quick, nourishing start.
- **Activity:** Sleeping 7-8 hours nightly with a bedtime routine.
  - **Frequency:** Daily.
  - **Benefits:** Enhances emotional regulation, reduces hypervigilance, and aids healing.
  - **How I'll Incorporate It:** Avoid screens 1 hour before bed, read a calming book, and use blackout curtains.

**Tool:** Use a physical self-care tracker (e.g., Habitica) to log activities, noting energy, mood, and stress changes. Set a goal to practice one activity daily, reflecting on its impact.

## Section 5: Creating Healthy Boundaries

Boundaries protect your well-being and prevent further abuse.

- **Prompt:** Identify 2-3 boundaries you'll set, including why they're needed, how you'll communicate them, and how you'll enforce them.
  - **Examples:**
    - **Boundary:** No contact with my abuser unless mediated by a therapist.
      - **Why Needed:** Prevents manipulation, gaslighting, and emotional harm.
      - **How I'll Communicate It:** "I need no direct contact with you for my safety—let's use my therapist as a mediator."
      - **How I'll Enforce It:** Block their number, inform supports, and seek legal protection if needed.
    - **Boundary:** No criticism of my appearance or decisions from friends/family.
      - **Why Needed:** Counters self-doubt from abuse, protects my self-esteem.
      - **How I'll Communicate It:** "I feel hurt when you comment on my choices—please focus on support instead."
      - **How I'll Enforce It:** Limit contact if ignored, seek support from validating friends.

**Tool:** Use the "Healthy Boundaries" worksheet for scripts, practice, and tracking. Set a goal to establish one boundary this week, logging its impact on safety and well-being.

## Section 6: Building Resilience

Resilience helps you adapt and recover from narcissistic abuse's challenges.

- **Prompt:** List 2-3 resilience-building strategies, including frequency, benefits, and how you'll implement them.
  - **Examples:**
    - **Strategy:** Developing a growth mindset through daily affirmations.
      - **Frequency:** Morning and evening.
      - **Benefits:** Counters shame, boosts confidence, and sees challenges as growth opportunities.

- **How I'll Implement It:** Repeat, "I am resilient and growing stronger," using cards or an app.
- **Strategy:**Joining a support group biweekly.
  - **Frequency:** Every other Thursday evening.
  - **Benefits:** Builds community, validates experiences, and offers coping strategies.
  - **How I'll Implement It:** Register via Survivors of Narcissistic Abuse ([www.survivorsforum.wixsite.com/sona](http://www.survivorsforum.wixsite.com/sona)), attend virtually for safety.

**Tool:** Use a resilience tracker (e.g., journal or app) to log strategies, noting progress in adaptability, self-compassion, and coping. Set a goal to practice one strategy weekly, reflecting on its impact.

## Section 7: Resources and Further Reading

Access these supports for ongoing recovery.

- **Prompt:**List 2-3 resources you'll explore, including why they're helpful and how you'll use them.
  - **Examples:**
    - **Resource:**"Disarming the Narcissist" by Wendy T. Behary
      - **Why Helpful:** Offers strategies for managing narcissistic relationships and setting boundaries.
      - **How I'll Use It:** Read 1 chapter weekly, journaling insights and applying tips to my life.
    - **Resource:** Psychology Today Therapist Directory ([www.psychologytoday.com](http://www.psychologytoday.com))
      - **Why Helpful:** Connects me with therapists specializing in narcissistic abuse recovery.
      - **How I'll Use It:** Search for a local therapist, schedule a session within two weeks.

**Tool:** Use a resource tracker (e.g., spreadsheet) to log usage, benefits, and progress. Set a goal to engage with one resource monthly, logging its impact on recovery.

## Section 8: Conclusion and Reflection

- **Prompt:**Reflect on 2-3 steps you'll take from this guide, including timelines and why they matter. How do you feel about your healing journey?
  - **Example:** "I'll create a safety plan this week—it matters for my security. I'll journal daily for emotional healing, starting tomorrow—it validates my experiences. I feel hopeful but cautious, trusting in small steps to reclaim my life."

**Tool:** Use a recovery journal to track steps, feelings, and progress, reviewing monthly to celebrate growth and adjust goals.

## Additional Notes

- **Healing Is Non-Linear:** Expect ups and downs—be patient and compassionate with yourself. Celebrate small victories, like setting a boundary or feeling safer.

- **You Are Not Alone:** Millions recover from narcissistic abuse—connect with supports to feel less isolated and gain strength.
- **Prioritize Safety:** If unsafe, use emergency contacts (e.g., Crisis Services Canada: 1-833-456-4566) and create a safety plan immediately.

## Emergency Contacts and Appendix

- **Canada:**
  - Crisis Services Canada: 1-833-456-4566 (24/7) or text 45645 (4 PM – 12 AM ET)
  - Kids Help Phone: 1-800-668-6868 or text CONNECT to 686868
  - Emergency Services: 911
- **USA:**
  - National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255 (24/7)
  - Crisis Text Line: Text HOME to 741741
  - Emergency Services: 911
- **England:**
  - Samaritans: 116 123 (24/7)
  - Mind: 0300 123 3393 or text 86463
  - Emergency Services: 999

**Appendix (Worksheets and Templates):** Visit [narcED.org/resources](http://narcED.org/resources) for printable tools like journaling, boundary-setting, and self-care planning worksheets. Use these to complement this guide, logging progress and adjusting as needed.