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Psychotherapy
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Group Seminar Audio Series

Narcissistic Experience & Mystification: A Theory of Personal Change

Unfortunately, narcissistic dynamics are common in practically all domains of contemporary life. Due to this prevalence, people are increasingly confronted with narcissistic individuals who negatively impact their lives in complex ways. In this seminar, I offer a theory of personal change that centers on overcoming narcissistic victimization. This theory of change is based on the presence of two elements that characterize many different types of trauma: (1) a “narcissistic” person or situation negates your personal identity in some key way, and (2) this negation may seem so illogical or unbelievable that it is difficult to really comprehend -- this is “mystification.” Ironically, not only does the presence of these two factors cause great distress and turmoil, but it also serves to stimulate any important change one can make in his or her life. *This seminar was recorded on July 21, 2018 in Laguna Hills, CA.*

Key Excerpts:

- *At the center of the symbiotic relationship between mother and infant is a dynamic tension: each party is trying to get what it wants from the other. Inevitably, one’s needs will not be in accordance with the needs of the other.*
- *“Narcissistic experience” occurs when the needs and goals of one party are implicitly or explicitly denied because they intrude or violate the needs and preferences of the other.*
- *Narcissistic experience is literally “wired in” to all human reality, i.e., a person’s personal desires and wants must be negotiated with what the other person or institution expects and wants of the person. The human condition, in its very essence, involves narcissistic trauma and victimization: whatever situation you enter, you must compromise or censor some aspect of yourself to survive and adapt. This censoring and adaptation serve as the origin of narcissism.*

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Key Excerpts (continued)

- *As a narcissistically-injured child moves through development, their narcissism fully organizes and becomes employed in all relationships and contexts. Progressively, the child becomes more and more organized to censor no longer and is motivated, instead, to make others censor.*
- *The narcissistic adult no longer has a need and no longer feels vulnerability; narcissistic persons manipulate situations so that others with whom they are interacting feel their needs and vulnerabilities.*
- *Because narcissism is so prevalent today, people are victimized by narcissists all the time. But, ironically, overcoming narcissistic victimization may be approached as a pathway to achieving emotional growth and personal change.*
- *Overcoming narcissistic victimization involves a series of stages that include denial, dissociation, mystification, the activation of intuition, deconstruction, insight and mourning.*

