

*In client's experience,
how effective is
counselling in helping
those who have been
affected by a loved one's
narcissism?*



An LC&CTA HPD 2 group
research project
2020.



Findings

- Counselling was indeed found to be very effective in the respondents' experiences to those who have been affected by a loved one's Narcissism, despite the modality. This bears out Carl Rogers' statement: - "*..man's tendency to actualise himself, to become his potentialities*".
- Severe abuse (emotional, verbal, sexual, physical) was typically experienced as the primary effect of a loved one's Narcissism. The abuse was manipulation, gas-lighting and parasitic behaviour. This was perpetrated from parents or partner. Abusive coercion/control isolated loved ones from their family and friends. Abuse was detrimental to the loved ones of Narcissists.
- Self-esteem diminished by withholding comforting physical affection.
- Anger and depression also noted from loved ones of Narcissists.
- There is a need for more easily accessible Support Groups for Narcissists. Research is needed as to whether these Support Groups might be fully utilised due to the nature of Narcissists.

(Research limitations: - our small respondent group limits the generalisability of our findings)

Conclusions

In accord with our respondents' experiences we suggest that counselling *is* effective for those who have been negatively affected by a loved one's narcissistic behaviour/abuse. We propose this because it appears that in each of our respondent's interviews counselling was cited as being specifically useful in facilitating our respondents' ability to validate their own abuse experience, this led to them gaining a self-defined Self-Concept and ultimately the rebuilding of their self-esteem. Furthermore, we found it was the overarching theme of empowerment, that seemed to be the most central and commonly felt experience in our respondent's experiences of being in a counselling alliance.

We suggest that counsellors would best help clients in this group if the psychotherapeutic interventions focused on these areas within the healing-alliance.