Is This Narcissistic Behavior?

5 patterns to recognize when the same problems keep happening and nothing seems to change.

If you keep walking away from the same conversations confused, blamed, or questioning yourself, this guide is for you. This is not a diagnosis. It is a quick way to recognize five patterns that often show up when the behavior is not just difficult, but part of a deeper unhealthy dynamic.

1

The rules are not the same for both of you.
They expect patience, access, honesty, or consideration that they do not consistently give back.

2

Your concerns become arguments about you.
You bring up something they did, and suddenly you are defending your tone, your timing, or why you mentioned it at all.

3

The same problem keeps coming back.
There may be apologies, excuses, or promises, but the pattern itself keeps repeating.

4

Your boundaries become something to argue about.
Ordinary limits like privacy, time, space, rest, or independence somehow keep turning into conflict.

5

You have started changing your behavior to avoid their reactions.
You rehearse what to say, explain too much, avoid certain topics, or stop doing normal things just to keep the peace.

What Happens When You Look at the Pattern?

One behavior by itself does not always tell you much. What matters is what keeps happening, how it gets handled, and whether anything actually changes.

1

A disagreement that gets resolved

You bring up a concern. The other person may not like hearing it, but they can still listen, acknowledge it, and work with you to fix it. The issue gets addressed, and the person follows through.

2

A repeating unhealthy pattern

You bring up a concern. The focus shifts to your tone, your timing, or your motives. You leave feeling blamed, confused, or guilty, and the same problem shows up again later.

What to pay attention to

- Are the same kinds of problems happening over and over?
- When you raise a concern, does it get addressed or redirected?
- Do both people's needs matter, or do one person's needs always come first?
- Have you started doubting yourself more and more?

These behaviors are not proof that somebody is narcissistic. They are worth paying attention to regardless of what you call them. One serious incident can matter even without repetition. This guide is for recognition, not diagnosis.

Recognizing these behaviors is one thing. Understanding how they connect is another. Watch your inbox for more Torch & Soul education, where we will start putting the pieces together.