

why do narcissist cheat

why do narcissist cheat is a question that draws significant attention from psychologists, relationship experts, and individuals affected by narcissistic partners. Understanding the motivations and behaviors behind narcissistic infidelity involves exploring the complex interplay of personality traits, emotional needs, and relational dynamics unique to narcissists. This article delves into the psychological reasons narcissists cheat, the patterns of their cheating behavior, and the impact on their partners and relationships. By examining these factors, readers can gain insight into the underlying causes of narcissistic cheating and how it differs from infidelity in other contexts. The discussion further includes signs to recognize narcissistic cheating and strategies for dealing with such situations.

- Psychological Motivations Behind Narcissistic Cheating
- Patterns and Characteristics of Narcissistic Infidelity
- Impact of Narcissistic Cheating on Partners and Relationships
- Recognizing the Signs of Narcissistic Cheating
- Strategies for Coping with Narcissistic Infidelity

Psychological Motivations Behind Narcissistic Cheating

Understanding why do narcissist cheat requires examining their core personality traits and psychological needs. Narcissists are characterized by an inflated sense of self-importance, a constant need for admiration, and a lack of empathy. These traits often drive their behaviors, including infidelity, as they seek to maintain their grandiose self-image and satisfy their emotional voids.

Need for Validation and Admiration

Narcissists frequently cheat because they crave external validation and admiration. Their self-esteem is often fragile, and they rely heavily on others to affirm their worth. Engaging in affairs allows them to receive attention and admiration from new sources, reinforcing their inflated self-perception.

Desire for Control and Power

Infidelity can also be a means for narcissists to exert control and power within a relationship. Cheating enables them to manipulate both their partner and the new individual, enhancing their sense of dominance and superiority. This behavior aligns with their tendency to exploit others for personal gain.

Lack of Empathy and Emotional Connection

Due to a deficient capacity for empathy, narcissists often fail to consider the emotional consequences of their cheating on their partners. Their inability to form deep emotional bonds makes infidelity less about emotional dissatisfaction and more about fulfilling their own needs without regard for others.

Patterns and Characteristics of Narcissistic Infidelity

The pattern of cheating exhibited by narcissists is distinct and often predictable. Recognizing these characteristics helps in understanding the nature of their infidelity and its underlying causes.

Serial Cheating and Multiple Affairs

Narcissists are prone to serial cheating, engaging in multiple affairs over time rather than isolated incidents. This pattern reflects their insatiable need for admiration and excitement, as well as their inability to commit emotionally to one partner.

Deceptive and Manipulative Behavior

Cheating narcissists often employ sophisticated deception to conceal their infidelity. They may use gaslighting, lying, and manipulation to maintain control and avoid accountability, making it difficult for partners to detect or confront their behavior.

Superficial Relationships Outside the Primary Partnership

The affairs of narcissists are typically superficial and lack genuine emotional intimacy. These relationships serve to boost the narcissist's ego rather than fulfill meaningful emotional needs, which they are often incapable of sustaining.

Impact of Narcissistic Cheating on Partners and Relationships

Narcissistic cheating has profound effects on the betrayed partners and the overall health of the relationship. The unique dynamics of narcissistic infidelity often lead to severe emotional and psychological consequences.

Emotional Trauma and Self-Doubt

Partners of narcissists frequently experience intense emotional trauma, including feelings of betrayal, confusion, and diminished self-worth. The narcissist's manipulation can exacerbate these effects, leading to long-lasting psychological harm.

Erosion of Trust and Relationship Stability

The repeated infidelity and deceit characteristic of narcissists erode the foundation of trust in the relationship. This instability often results in chronic conflict, insecurity, and eventual dissolution of the partnership if unaddressed.

Enabling and Codependency

In some cases, partners may develop enabling behaviors or codependent tendencies, attempting to placate the narcissist or rationalize their cheating. This dynamic can trap individuals in unhealthy relationships with little chance of positive change.

Recognizing the Signs of Narcissistic Cheating

Identifying narcissistic cheating early can be challenging due to the manipulative tactics employed by narcissists. However, certain signs often indicate infidelity in these relationships.

Signs of Deception and Secretive Behavior

Narcissists who cheat tend to become secretive about their communications, use multiple devices, or frequently change passwords. They may also exhibit unexplained absences or inconsistencies in their stories.

Excessive Charm and Flattery Towards Others

A narcissist engaging in infidelity often displays an exaggerated charm when interacting with others, seeking to impress potential partners or maintain their image as desirable and superior.

Emotional Detachment from Primary Partner

As narcissists pursue affairs, they may show signs of emotional withdrawal or indifference toward their primary partner, signaling a shift in their attention and priorities.

- Unexplained changes in behavior or routine
- Increased defensiveness when questioned
- Sudden focus on appearance and grooming
- Reluctance to discuss future plans

Strategies for Coping with Narcissistic Infidelity

Dealing with narcissistic cheating requires careful consideration and strategies tailored to the unique challenges posed by this type of

infidelity.

Establishing Boundaries and Self-Care

Setting clear boundaries is crucial when coping with a narcissist's infidelity. Prioritizing self-care and emotional well-being helps partners regain control and reduce the impact of the narcissist's manipulations.

Seeking Professional Support

Therapeutic intervention, including individual counseling and support groups, can provide essential guidance and validation for those affected by narcissistic cheating. Professional help aids in understanding the dynamics and planning steps forward.

Evaluating Relationship Viability

Given the repeated nature of narcissistic infidelity, partners must critically assess whether the relationship is sustainable or if separation is the healthiest option. This evaluation should consider emotional safety, trust, and potential for genuine change.

1. Recognize the pattern of narcissistic cheating and its motivations
2. Maintain emotional boundaries and seek external support
3. Make informed decisions about the future of the relationship
4. Focus on personal healing and rebuilding self-esteem

Frequently Asked Questions

Why do narcissists tend to cheat in relationships?

Narcissists often cheat because they crave admiration and validation from multiple sources, seeking to boost their fragile self-esteem and maintain a sense of superiority.

Is cheating a way for narcissists to feel more powerful?

Yes, cheating can serve as a means for narcissists to assert control and dominance, reinforcing their belief that they can have whatever or whoever they desire.

Do narcissists feel guilt after cheating?

Typically, narcissists show little to no genuine guilt after cheating because they prioritize their own needs and often lack empathy for their partners.

Can a narcissist be faithful in a relationship?

While it's possible, narcissists generally struggle with faithfulness due to their constant need for external validation and attention, which can drive them to seek affairs.

How does a narcissist justify their cheating behavior?

Narcissists often rationalize cheating by blaming their partner, feeling entitled to seek pleasure elsewhere, or minimizing the impact of their actions.

Does the fear of losing control influence a narcissist to cheat?

Yes, narcissists may cheat to regain a sense of control or excitement, especially if they feel their partner is becoming less attentive or challenging their dominance.

Are narcissists more likely to cheat than non-narcissists?

Research suggests that narcissists have a higher likelihood of cheating due to traits like entitlement, lack of empathy, and a desire for admiration.

How can understanding narcissistic cheating help victims heal?

Understanding that narcissistic cheating stems from deep-seated insecurities and personality traits can help victims detach emotionally, avoid self-blame, and seek appropriate support for healing.

Additional Resources

1. *The Narcissist's Playbook: Understanding Why They Cheat*

This book delves into the psychological makeup of narcissists and explains the underlying motivations behind their infidelity. It explores how narcissistic traits such as entitlement, lack of empathy, and the need for admiration drive their cheating behaviors. The author also offers insights into recognizing these patterns early in relationships.

2. *Behind the Mask: The Secret Life of Narcissists Who Cheat*

Offering a deep dive into the dual lives led by narcissists, this book uncovers the reasons why narcissists often engage in extramarital affairs. It highlights the disconnect between their public persona and private actions, shedding light on their compulsive need for validation outside their primary relationship.

3. *Why Narcissists Cheat: The Emotional Void and Its Consequences*

This book focuses on the emotional emptiness that narcissists experience, which often leads them to seek multiple partners. It explains how their inability to form genuine emotional connections fuels infidelity and discusses the impact this has on their partners and families.

4. *The Anatomy of Narcissistic Infidelity*

A comprehensive examination of the behavioral patterns and psychological triggers that lead narcissists to cheat. The author investigates various types of narcissism and how each subtype manifests in infidelity, providing case studies and expert commentary.

5. *Chasing Admiration: Why Narcissists Seek Affairs*

This book explores the narcissist's incessant need for attention and admiration as a primary factor behind their cheating. It explains how extramarital affairs serve as a source of ego reinforcement and status, often at the expense of their committed relationships.

6. *Narcissism and Betrayal: The Infidelity Connection*

Focusing on the betrayal aspect, this book examines how narcissistic tendencies translate into unfaithful behavior. It discusses the manipulative strategies narcissists use to conceal their cheating and the psychological effects on their partners.

7. *Unfaithful by Nature: Narcissists and Their Compulsive Cheating*

This title investigates the compulsive nature of cheating in narcissistic individuals. It provides an in-depth look at how their personality traits predispose them to repeated infidelity and offers advice for those affected by such betrayals.

8. *The Narcissist's Guide to Cheating: Patterns and Prevention*

Combining psychological theory with practical advice, this book outlines common patterns of narcissistic cheating and suggests ways to prevent or address it in relationships. It is a valuable resource for both partners and therapists dealing with narcissistic infidelity.

9. *Deception and Desire: Why Narcissists Can't Stay Faithful*

This book explores the inner conflicts and desires that drive narcissists to cheat repeatedly. It discusses the paradox of their need for control and love, and how their flawed self-image propels them toward infidelity despite the consequences.

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why do narcissist cheat: *Leave a Cheater, Gain a Life* Tracy Schorn, 2016-05-10 *Leave a Cheater, Gain a Life* is a no-nonsense self-help guide for anyone who has ever been cheated on. Here's advice not based on saving your relationship after infidelity -- but saving your sanity. When it comes to cheating, a lot of the attention is focused on cheaters -- their unmet needs or their challenges with monogamy. But Tracy Schorn (aka Chump Lady) lampoons such blameshifting and puts the focus squarely on the-cheated-upon (chumps) and their needs. Combining solid advice that champions self-respect, along with hilarious cartoons satirizing the pomposity of cheaters, *Leave a Cheater, Gain a Life* offers a fresh voice for chumps who want (and need) a new message about infidelity. This book will offer advice on Stupid sh*t cheaters say and how to respond, Rookie mistakes of the recently chumped and how to disarm your fears, Why chumps take the blame and how to protect yourself, and more. Full of snark, sass, and real wisdom about how to bounce back after the gut blow of betrayal, Schorn is the friend who guides you through this nightmare and gives you hope for a better life ahead.

why do narcissist cheat: *A to Z of Narcissism and Narcissistic Personality Disorder* *Encyclopedia* Sam Vaknin, 2014-12-13 Almost 1000 pages of A to Z entries: the first comprehensive encyclopedia of pathological narcissism and Narcissistic Personality Disorder in clinical and non-clinical settings; family, workplace, church, community, law enforcement and judiciary, and politics.

why do narcissist cheat: *When a Man Cheats on You* Tatiana Busan, 2025-09-14 After months or years of mutual trust and support, discovering that the man you love is spending time with another woman is a real shock, with painful consequences. You feel disgust, because you can no longer look at him in the same way. You feel disappointment, because you realize that he has played with your feelings. But after all this pain, can an unfaithful man really still be part of your life? When you discover betrayal, there are only two possibilities: forgive or end the relationship. Betrayal is one of the most painful emotional experiences a woman can go through in a relationship. The pain is not only for what he has done, but for everything you have given while he chose another woman. The temptation in those moments is to react instinctively: to cry desperately in front of him, to control his every move, to confront the other woman, to obsessively ask yourself what she has that you don't. Betrayal causes wounds that are felt both physically and emotionally; it is a direct attack on your self-esteem, your confidence, and your dignity. But it is precisely in these moments of crisis that you can find the opportunity to rediscover yourself, increase your self-esteem, and not give in to the temptation to lose your dignity. Suffering betrayal is one of the most difficult emotional wounds for a woman to overcome. The worst punishment is having a man who betrays you and whom you can no longer trust. The relationship is no longer special after betrayal. Perhaps your mind is telling

you to remove this man from your life, but your heart, still in love, wants to forgive him in the hope that he will not hurt you again. Deciding whether to save the relationship or end it is entirely up to you. The important thing is to do what is right for you! I cannot tell you whether to break up with your partner or forgive his betrayal: it is up to you to decide. In this book, I offer suggestions, strategies, and methods for both decisions, but the final choice is always yours: to decide whether to forgive an unfaithful man or let him go. This book is a powerful guide designed to help you overcome one of the most painful moments in life: betrayal by the man you love. I accompany you step by step on the path to healing, offering you practical tools to: understand why it happened; manage pain, anger, and disappointment; rebuild your self-esteem and self-confidence; free yourself from guilt and fear of the future; return to happiness and love with awareness. In this book, you will discover: • Why Infidelity Happens in Relationships • How to Find Out If a Man Is Cheating on You • Why Some Men Feel the Need to Cheat • Discover the Reasons Why Men Cheat • How and When to Confront Him If You Find Out He's Cheating • How a Man Acts After He Cheats • When Love and Pain Collide: Forgive or Walk Away? • Your Man Is Cheating on You but Keeps Denying It • Why You Shouldn't Forgive Cheating • There Are No Excuses for a Man Who Cheats • Can Cheating Really Be Forgiven? • How to Deal with a Man After Discovering His Infidelity • Can a Relationship Really Be Saved After Cheating? • How to Rebuild Trust as a Couple After Cheating • How to Save a Relationship After Cheating • How to Get a Man to Be Faithful • How to Avoid Cheating • How to Deal with an Unfaithful Man Who Plays the Victim • How to Make a Man Regret Cheating on You • How to Get Over Cheating • The Psychological Effects of Being Cheated on by the Man You Love • How to Keep Your Dignity When He's Cheating on You with Another Woman • How to Regain Your Self-Esteem After Cheating • How to Turn Betrayal into an Opportunity for Growth • How to Start Trusting Men Again • Why You Attracted a Man Who Cheated on You • How to Manifest Love and Loyalty After Being Betrayed

why do narcissist cheat: Lying, Cheating, Bullying and Narcissism George G. Bear, 2024-02-20 This vibrant book examines individual and societal factors contributing to the rise of lying, cheating, bullying, and narcissism, with emphasis on the influence of Trumpism and the valuing of "getting things done" over the importance of self-discipline and issues of morality. George Bear explores individual and environmental factors that influence the development of self-discipline. He examines reasons for the growing prevalence of lying, cheating, bullying, and narcissism and their underlying factors, and the role of parenting and peer relationships in their development. The volume highlights the critical roles that moral reasoning, moral emotions, and mechanisms of moral disengagement play in dishonest and harmful behavior. Lying, Cheating, Bullying, and Narcissism is for students and scholars of child development, parenting, psychopathology, and criminology; professionals in psychology, mental health, and education; as well as others interested in the prevalence and roots of lying, cheating, bullying, and narcissism in America.

why do narcissist cheat: The Narcissist on Instagram: Epigrams and Observations - Vol II, 2025-09-03 I. Scams, Scandals, and Scoundrels II. Men, Women, Gender Wars III. Narcissists, Psychopaths, and Other Predators IV. Sex and Intimacy: Forgotten Arts V. Democracy, History, and Other Fictions VI. Me, Me, and Me VII. Public Intellect, Private Rants

why do narcissist cheat: Narcissism: Understanding Narcissistic Personality Disorder Charlie Mason, 2021-02-22 In 1914, Sigmund Freud first introduced the idea of a narcissistic disorder, but that concept was not made official until approximately 50 years ago. Now, narcissism is a popular buzzword on social media, blogs, and online quizzes. But what is narcissism really about and how do you know if you're in a relationship with one? More importantly, if you discover that you are connected to a narcissist, what are the dangers, how do you protect yourself, and how do you escape? There is a vast difference between someone exhibiting narcissistic traits and someone afflicted with actual NPD or Narcissistic Personality Disorder. In addition, other disorders can seem similar to NPD. We'll show you what to look for so you can tell the difference. In *Narcissism: Understanding Narcissistic Personality Disorder*, we'll explore how one becomes a narcissist, and what happens to a person that suddenly robs them of empathy—a trait directly tied to our humanity.

We'll uncover the different categories of narcissism, from the mild and generally harmless, to the extreme, malignant type—the one you especially want to keep a great distance from. This book can be especially helpful to those who are already in a relationship with a narcissist, because if you or someone you know is, it can be hard to determine what's real and what's been fabricated by moment after moment of devastating psychological and emotional abuse! We will also cover what to do and how to navigate the very tricky process of dealing with a narcissist long-term, for parents with ex-spouses, for adult children of narcissists, or those who have a narcissist in the family. How can you protect yourself or a loved one from falling victim to a narcissist? Narcissism: Understanding Narcissistic Personality Disorder can help you gain the knowledge necessary to survive the devastating results of narcissistic, emotional abuse. You'll learn what to look for in determining if someone is, in fact, a narcissist. You'll learn the devious ways a narcissist draws you in, before they turn around and systematically break you down, your ego, self-confidence and all, and most importantly, you'll learn how to escape the narcissist's power and begin the healing process towards a better life, utilizing tools and support to rebuild, relearn, and restore your strength, sanity, and sense of self. Understand the difference between the various types and sub-types of narcissism, including which ones are the most dangerous. Learn to recognize the red flags of an impending toxic relationship and how a narcissist will do anything to draw you into their web of lies. Take a closer look at narcissistic families and the effects they have on children, as well as how children can cope with the abuse later in life. Learn how to navigate an emotionally abusive relationship with your reality and your sanity intact, until you have the chance to escape from it. Get an inside look at how a narcissist thinks and operates. Understand the differences between a healthy relationship and a potentially toxic one. Learn the differences between other personality disorders and narcissism, and how one can be grown out of while narcissism is usually permanent.

why do narcissist cheat: The Narcissist Next Door Jeffrey Kluger, 2015-09-08 A timely and provocative exploration of narcissism, from Donald Trump to Kanye West to Lance Armstrong, that shows us how to recognize and handle the narcissists we encounter every day. Narcissists are everywhere. There are millions of them in the United States alone: politicians, entertainers, businesspeople, your neighbors. Recognizing and understanding them is crucial to your not being overtaken by them, says Jeffrey Kluger in his provocative book about this insidious disorder. The odds are good that you know a narcissist—probably a lot of them. You see them in your office, on TV, maybe even in the mirror. The odds are also good that they are intelligent, confident, and articulate—the center of attention. With intelligence, sight and wit, Kluger explains the startling new research into narcissism and the insights that research is yielding. He explains how narcissism and narcissists affect our lives at work and at home, on the road, and in the halls of government; what to do when we encounter narcissists; and how to neutralize narcissism's effects before it's too late. As a writer and editor at Time, Kluger knows how to take science's cutting-edge research and transform it into perceptive, accessible writing—which he does brilliantly in *The Narcissist Next Door*. Highly readable and deeply engaging, this book helps us understand narcissism and narcissists more fully.

why do narcissist cheat: *How to Talk to a Borderline* Joan Lachkar, 2011-01-07 In *How to Talk to a Borderline*, Joan Lachkar introduces Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) and outlines the challenges and difficulties it presents to clinicians. She expands current understanding of BPD by outlining eight different kinds of borderline personality disorders and how each of these requires specific communication techniques and methods. Case examples are offered throughout the text and in some cases describe the kinds of partners borderlines attract. This book offers new approaches to communicating, working with, and treating borderline personality disorders while integrating more contemporary treatment methods.

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and the tools needed to heal from the emotional trauma. *Breaking Free from Narcissistic Bonds* is not just another self-help book; it is a lifeline for those who feel lost in the chaos of a toxic relationship. This book will help you. Recognize the different types of narcissists and their tactics. Understand why you ended up in such a relationship in the first place. Navigate the challenges of living with a narcissist and set healthy boundaries. Make informed decisions about whether to stay or leave and how to move forward. Heal from the emotional wounds inflicted by narcissistic abuse, and rediscover your true self. As you read this book, you'll feel validated, understood, and encouraged to reclaim your life. Each chapter is designed to provide you with the knowledge, strength, and confidence needed to break free from the narcissistic bonds that have held you back for far too long. Don't let another day go by feeling trapped and powerless in a toxic relationship. It's time to take control of your life, heal your emotional wounds, and embrace a brighter future filled with self-love and happiness. *Breaking Free from Narcissistic Bonds* is the key to unlocking the door to your new, fulfilling life. Start your journey to healing and freedom today.

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who played a role in her intricate story.

why do narcissist cheat: Codependency & Narcissistic Abuse: The Complete Codependent & Narcissism Recovery Guide for Identifying, Disarming, and Dealing With Narcissists and Abusive Relationships! Eva Spencer, 2022-05-04 Break Free from Codependency & Narcissistic Abuse - The Complete Guide to Healing, Disarming Toxic People, and Reclaiming Your Life Are you ready to identify and disarm narcissists and heal from abusive relationships? Codependency & Narcissistic Abuse is your comprehensive recovery guide to understanding codependency, narcissistic personality disorder (NPD), and the toxic dynamics that can destroy your self-worth. This book empowers you to protect yourself, regain your confidence, and build a happier, healthier life. Master the Art of Codependency Recovery and Defend Against Narcissistic Abuse If you feel drained, manipulated, or trapped in a relationship, this guide offers actionable steps to help you break free from the chains of narcissistic abuse. With insights into the patterns of codependency and narcissism, this book equips you to recognize and disarm toxic people before they can harm you, helping you reclaim your life and find peace within yourself. What You'll Discover in Codependency & Narcissistic Abuse: - Take Control of Your Life: Learn how to identify and disarm abusive individuals and break free from the toxic relationships that have held you back. - Rebuild Your Confidence: Rediscover your self-worth and rebuild your confidence with expert advice on healing from emotional trauma. - Protect Yourself from Abusers: Learn to spot narcissists and manipulative personalities before they enter your life, ensuring you stay safe and never fall into their traps again. If you enjoyed Codependent No More by Melody Beattie, The Narcissist's Playbook by Dana Morningstar, or Healing from Hidden Abuse by Shannon Thomas, you'll love Codependency & Narcissistic Abuse. Start Your Journey to Healing and Empowerment Today! Scroll up, click on Buy Now, and begin your recovery with the powerful tools and insights in Codependency & Narcissistic Abuse.

why do narcissist cheat: Know Your Enemy: Reflections Of NPD Sparkster Hubs, 2013-01-22 In addition to describing the sheer insidious (and often covert) nature of the narcissist, Sparkster Hubs unveils the mask of sanity by taking you on a journey through the disturbing worlds of disguised mental and emotional abuse, hidden celebrity and government occultism, conspiracy (theory), NLP (Neuro Linguistic Programming), various personality disorders and even on to topics as controversial as psychological murder. Sparkster adequately explains with detail and precision how such disturbing behaviour is carried out and how it can have a profound effect on the lives, mind and soul of victims. The cases of Jimmy Savile and Yvonne Freaney are used as examples. Know Your Enemy: Reflections Of NPD is full of insightful and enlightening, but sometimes highly disturbing and potentially shocking, information which has been written with clarity in a down-to-Earth, no-holds-barred, style. Never before has such a book been written. Warning: This book is not for the weak-minded.

why do narcissist cheat: THE COVERT NARCISSIST AMANDA HOPE, Are you interested in knowing what a covert narcissist is? If yes, then this is the right book for you! Narcissists are often manipulative, obsessed with their own needs and desires, and indifferent to others' needs. But there is another equally challenging type of narcissist: the covert narcissist. A covert narcissist is also self-centered and manipulative but has a generally charming demeanor that keeps his or her faults under wraps. They are highly attuned to other people's reactions and adept at using mind games to their advantage. Unlike regular narcissists, it can be hard to spot a covert narcissist; they can fly under the radar for years without detection. But leave no doubt, they are just as dangerous as their overt counterparts -- if not more so. □□□ This book covers the following topics: □□□ Who Can Be a Covert Narcissist? How to Recognize a Covert Narcissist? Control and Manipulation Tactics The Isolation All the Stages of a Relationship with a Covert Narcissist Your Body Knew: Common Illnesses Divorcing a Covert Narcissist ...And many more! Perhaps it's telling that many people can recognize covert narcissists on sight and yet struggle to see them in their loved ones - and in this, I suspect there is a bit of projection going on. I'm sure we all want our relationships with family, friends, and colleagues to be more harmonious and less fraught than the truth sometimes is.

Moreover, it's important not to make judgments about those we love based on how they present themselves; thus, we can unwittingly fall into a form of narcissistic injury that engenders resentment on their part. Ready to get started? Click the button to BUY NOW YOUR COPY!

why do narcissist cheat: The Everything Guide to Narcissistic Personality Disorder

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