

Enlightened Narcissism



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In our society, narcissism is an insult and humility is vastly over-reported. The most ambitious politicians and celebrities routinely proclaim their humility on national television, while narcissism is the title of a personality disorder. We are encouraged to disguise our natural narcissism and to pretend humility, which can render us inauthentic, guilty and depressed. The hallmarks of *Narcissistic Personality Disorder* are a grandiose sense of self-importance and a powerful need for admiration. These

are also hallmarks of the most admirable and accomplished individuals in society. The difference between saints and pathological narcissists (jerks) lies primarily in their level of social sophistication. Jerks apparently do not realize that they actually need to be admirable in order to be admired, so they will do anything in their own selfish interest and then be enraged that their selfish behavior does not garner the admiration they always demand. Think Donald Trump. Saints recognize this same principle and often sacrifice their physical, financial and emotional well-being in order to do extremely admirable things. Enlightened narcissists in other fields prefer to be slightly less admirable without deprivation, as I do. The psychiatric diagnosis is reserved for jerks and it is a diagnosis I don't use.

Grandiose plans are prerequisite to major accomplishments. Admirable personal ethics are prerequisite to admiration. Enlightened narcissists understand that ethical pretensions are easily detected and they are therefore genuine, consistent and reliable. Enlightened narcissism is the foundation of ethical behavior, despite nearly universal claims to the contrary. Embrace and harness your natural narcissism! Trust me. Call me.

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