



The Narcissist's Playbook: When Exposure Sparks Retaliation





Neutralizing Narcissism: The Awakening Edition

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Collect

Introduction: When the Mirror Shatters

There is a pattern—one I have documented time and time again. It is a sequence so predictable, so rehearsed, that it borders on ritual. When a narcissist is exposed, when their tactics are laid bare, they do not pause for self-reflection. They do not seek truth. They do not engage in honest discourse.

Instead, they **retaliate**.

They **scramble to regain control**.

They **rewrite history** in real-time.

They **cast themselves as the victim** while threatening legal action, rallying allies, and attempting to discredit the person who dared hold up the mirror.

This is *The Narcissist's Playbook*—a step-by-step guide, executed with near-religious consistency, by those who feel their **mask slipping**.

Today, we dissect it in action.

Step 1: The Shift from Intellectual Discourse to Personal Attacks



At first, the narcissist enters a discussion **performing** curiosity. They position themselves as **the reasonable skeptic**, the **detached thinker**, the **explorer of ideas**.

But the moment their tactics are exposed, the game changes.

Suddenly, the conversation isn't about ideas anymore—it's about **you**.

- **They begin diagnosing you.** You're "aggressive," "obsessive," "unstable," "delusional."
- **They psychoanalyze you.** Your actions must be the result of "trauma," "insecurity," or a "fixation" with the topic.
- **They attempt character assassination.** They bring up past relationships, career history, or even childhood events to discredit your ability to engage in rational discourse.

This is not an accident.

It is a **deflection strategy**, designed to move attention away from their behavior and onto yours.

When **Joel Johnson** realized that his rhetorical tactics had been mapped and exposed, he immediately pivoted to **gaslighting the conversation into a discussion about me**.

Instead of engaging with the specific claims made about his intellectual posturing, he reframed the discussion as a **psychological evaluation of my identity, motivations, and mental health**.

This is **not debate**.

This is **narcissistic damage control**.



Step 2: The Legal Bluff

Once personal attacks fail to derail the conversation, the next move in *The Narcissist's Playbook* is the **legal bluff**.

- "I've sent everything to my lawyer."
- "This is slander/libel."
- "You will be hearing from someone soon."
- "You're going to have lawsuits and restraining orders filed against you."

These statements are **not actual legal claims**.

They are **attempts to induce fear and compliance**.

Narcissists **rarely follow through** on these threats because they are not rooted in genuine legal standing—they are **social weapons** designed to intimidate their target into silence.

A critical giveaway? **The speed at which the threat is made.**

Real lawsuits take time. Attorneys do not work on demand, especially over the weekend. A genuine defamation claim requires **proof of false statements made with malicious intent**—not merely the documentation of someone's own public behavior.



Joel's immediate pivot to **threats of lawsuits** was not based on an **actual legal strategy**—it was a **rehearsed manipulation tactic** meant to create **fear, uncertainty, and doubt**.

Step 3: Rallying the “Other Victims”

A narcissist is rarely alone in their retaliation. Once they feel isolated, they **attempt to create a coalition**—turning the exposure of their own behavior into a **group cause**.

- They claim to be reaching out to past “victims.”
- They say they have a list of people who also oppose you.
- They frame the exposure as a systemic injustice that must be fought.
- They claim to be forming an alliance with powerful institutions.
- They use phrases like “We’re coming for you” or “We’ll shut you down.”

This is meant to **shift the dynamic** from an individual being held accountable to a **coordinated attack** against an unjust aggressor.

Joel's sudden invocation of “**other victims**” and his mention of “**reaching out to Dallas Makerspace**” is a textbook example.

He is attempting to reframe himself **not as an individual engaging in manipulative discourse**, but as a **figurehead of a movement against an abuser**.



This is *pure DARVO*—Deny, Attack, Reverse Victim and Offender.

Reality check: If multiple people have had issues with you, **it doesn't mean those people are aligned.**

More often than not, this is a narcissist **grasping for credibility.**

Step 4: Smearing Publicly While Claiming Private Innocence

As they escalate their attack, a narcissist will **play two roles simultaneously:**

1. Publicly, they present you as the villain.

- They call you an abuser.
- They claim you are harassing or stalking them.
- They tell people you are a known liar.
- They say you are a threat to their safety.

2. Privately, they try to feign civility.

- "I actually liked this discussion before you got nasty."
- "I really wanted to engage in good faith."
- "It's unfortunate that you took this route."
- "If you just apologized, this wouldn't be an issue."



The goal?

To manipulate **bystanders and mutual connections** into seeing them as the reasonable party and you as the aggressor.

Joel pivoted between both tactics in real-time—publicly smearing while privately posturing as a wounded intellectual.

It's all a script. A rehearsed playbook meant to control perception.

Step 5: The Exit Monologue

Once it's clear that the exposure will not be undone, a narcissist makes **one final move**:

The **Exit Monologue**.

It is an **attempt to leave the conversation on their terms**. It often contains:

- **A final dismissal.** ("This is beneath me.")
- **A grand declaration.** ("I see through you.")
- **A reassertion of power.** ("You are nothing.")
- **A final bait.** ("But I remain curious.")

This is not an exit of defeat—it is a **performance of control**.



Joel's pivot into **Shakespearean soliloquy, philosophical musings, and grand statements about uncertainty and exploration** was his way of **writing his own exit script**.

But here's the truth:

No one believed it.

By that point, the manipulation was too obvious. The audience saw through it. And that's why, despite all the effort, the play **collapsed in real-time**.

Conclusion: Why This Matters

This case study isn't just about Joel.

It's about **a pattern**.

A pattern that repeats in **politics, media, corporations, relationships, and online spaces**.

A pattern that makes the world **hostile to accountability**.

When narcissists use these tactics, **most people back down**. Not because the narcissist is correct, but because **the sheer volume of manipulation exhausts the target**.

That is **why they keep doing it**.



They are **not trying to win the argument.**

They are trying to **outlast you.**

But here's the truth:

When we document these patterns—when we make them transparent—they lose their power.

Because narcissists don't just operate on deception—they rely on secrecy.

That's why I do this work.

And that's why I will continue to expose *The Narcissist's Playbook*—so that the next time someone tries to run it, the world already knows how the game ends.

And to Joel?

Enjoy your empty stage.

The house lights are on.

And the audience has left the building. 🗨️





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