



SIGNS OF COVERT NARCISSISM

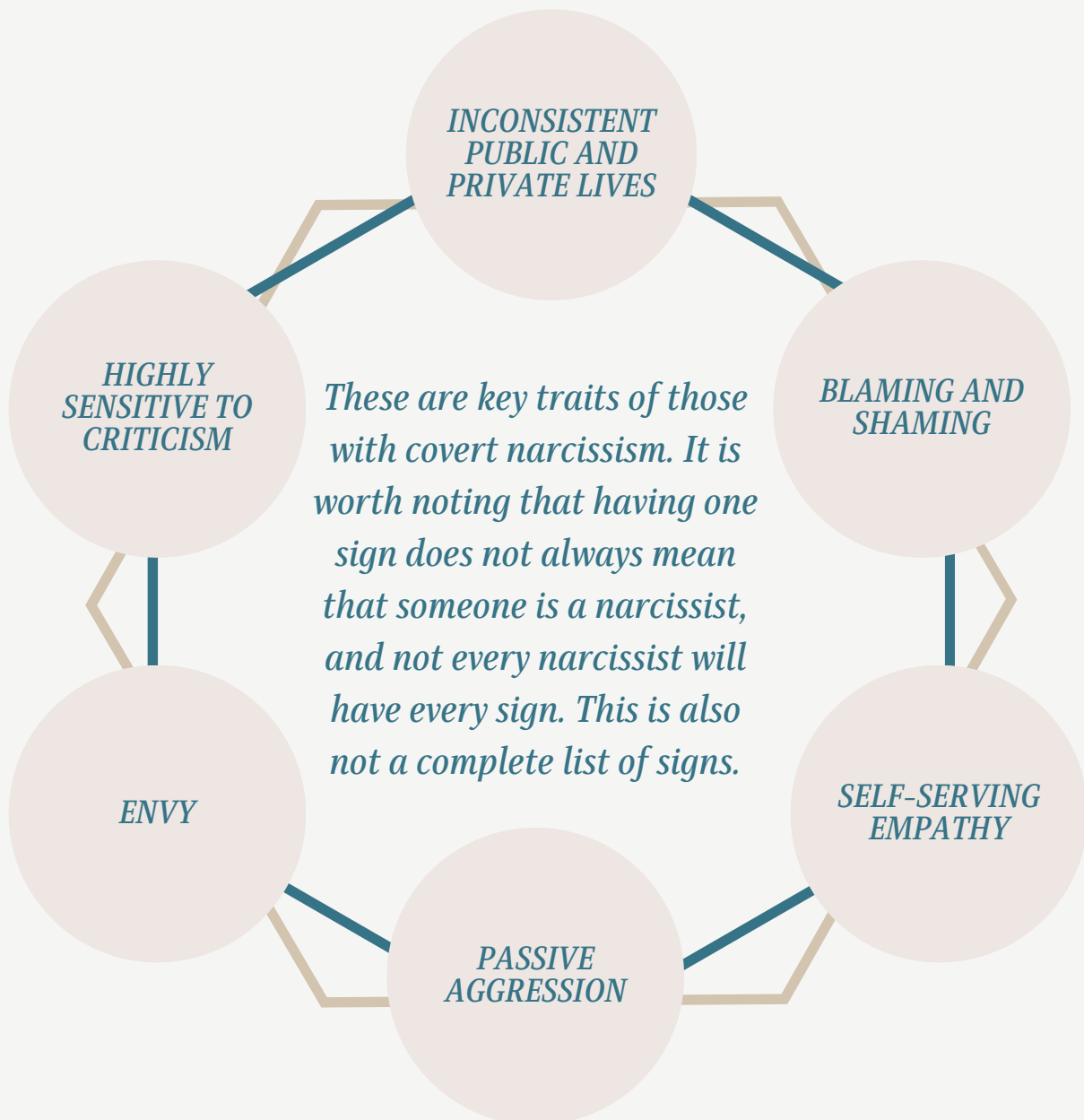
AND HOW TO RESPOND



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COVERT NARCISSIST TRAITS

A covert narcissist, also known as a vulnerable or closet narcissist, is an individual who exhibits many of the traits and behaviors associated with narcissism but in a more subtle and hidden manner. Covert narcissists often present themselves as introverted, vulnerable, or even self-effacing.



Inconsistent Public and Private Lives



In public, a covert narcissist can appear kind and supportive. They may present as moral, accomplished, calm and avoid confrontations to appear in control of their emotions. In private, however, they may be dismissive, resentful, unkind, and have questionable morals.

Highly Sensitive to Criticism



When someone criticizes a covert narcissist, they may make dismissive, sarcastic, and defensive comments to deflect the criticism. The criticism damages their idealized view of themselves, so they may take it much harder than others.

Blaming and Shaming



Covert narcissists subtly blame others for things that are their fault. They are uncomfortable with emotions such as shame and transfer these emotions onto others to avoid feeling negative about themselves. They make others feel bad so that they feel better and avoid responsibility.

Envy



Covert narcissists often feel envy of others who have things that they feel they are entitled to themselves. They may not outwardly express their envy but may express bitterness or resentment. They believe other people envy them because of the belief that they are special.

Self-Serving Empathy



Although they don't feel empathy, they can purposefully show empathy to achieve something. They may act kind but with the expectation of receiving something else in return. They present themselves as givers but intending to get something else in return.

Passive Aggression



Covert narcissists don't typically express outwardly aggressive behavior, but display subtler passive-aggressive behaviors to convey their frustrations or look superior. They could achieve this by sabotaging others' relationships, the silent treatment, or subtle blame-shifting.



DEALING WITH A COVERT NARCISSIST.

Continue to Educate Yourself

Educating yourself on NPD can help you understand the covert narcissists' strengths and weaknesses, so you can learn to manage the relationship better. Understanding the goals of covert narcissists and recognizing the tactics they are using to achieve this goal from you (e.g., such as maintaining control) will help ensure they are not using you as a power source.

Maintain Healthy Boundaries

As covert narcissists have no issue with exploiting others, they do not have healthy boundaries. The people in their lives need to put boundaries in for them. Boundaries are a good way of letting people know your values and that you are conveying to the narcissist that their tactics are not working. Remind yourself why you have set boundaries to stay focused when they attempt to cross those boundaries.

Create a Support System

When dealing with someone who has covert narcissism, it is important to have a support system outside of the relationship. Narcissists will emotionally manipulate and cause confusion and it is useful to talk things through with people outside of the relationship who can give a more realistic insight to the truth. This can help with any self-doubt you may have due to being manipulated.