CO-PARENTING WITH A NARCISSIST SURVIVAL GUIDE



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PROTECTION STRATEGIES

PROTECT YOUR CHILDREN AND YOUR SANITY

☐ All communication happens in writing (text, email, or co-parenting app)
☐ Keep conversations strictly about the children – no personal topics
☐ Use "gray rock" method – be boring, brief, and factual in responses ☐ Document everything – save all messages, record incidents
☐ Set specific pickup/drop-off times and stick to them
☐ Use neutral locations for exchanges when possible
☐ Never speak negatively about the other parent in front of children
☐ Have a witness present during exchanges if needed
☐ Create consistent routines at your home for stability ☐ Establish clear boundaries about what you will and won't discuss

COMMUNICATION SCRIPTS THAT WORKCOPY THESE RESPONSES FOR COMMON SITUATIONS:

When they try to start an argument:
"I'm only discussing matters related to [child's name]. Please keep communication focused on that."

When they make unreasonable demands:
"I'll need that request in writing with 24-48 hours notice."

When they try to guilt trip you:
"I'm doing what's best for [child's name]. Let's keep the focus on them."

When they're late or don't show: "I'll document this and adjust our schedule accordingly."

When they try to control your parenting: "I parent according to what works best at my home."



WARNING SIGNS YOUR CHILD IS BEING MANIPULATED

- ☐ Child seems anxious before/after visits with other parent
- ☐ Child asks unusual questions about your relationship or finances
- ☐ Child repeats adult phrases or concepts they shouldn't know
- ☐ Child feels responsible for the other parent's emotions
- ☐ Child shows regression in behavior after visits
- ☐ Child is reluctant to share what happens during visits
- ☐ Child makes statements like "Daddy/Mommy says you don't love me"
- ☐ Child seems to be keeping secrets or feels guilty about having fun with you
- ☐ Child asks why you "made Daddy/Mommy leave"
- ☐ Child shows signs of emotional distress without clear cause

HOW TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD

- ☐ Validate their feelings without badmouthing the other parent
- ☐ Keep routines consistent and predictable at your home
- ☐ Reassure them that the divorce/separation is not their fault
- ☐ Listen without judgment when they want to talk
- ☐ Provide age-appropriate explanations for difficult situations
- ☐ Consider child therapy with a trauma-informed therapist
- ☐ Create a safe space where they can express all emotions
- ☐ Teach them it's okay to have different rules at different homes
- ☐ Help them identify and name their emotions
- ☐ Reassure them of your unconditional love regularly



IMMEDIATE STEPS:

1. Document everything they tell you (date, time, exact words)
2. Contact your attorney immediately
3. Consider emergency therapy session for your child
4. Report to appropriate authorities if safety is at risk
5. Keep detailed records of all incidents

SUPPORT RESOURCES:

☐ Child's therapist contact: _____
☐ Your attorney contact: _____
☐ Family court contact: _____
☐ Crisis hotline: 988 (Suicide & Crisis Lifeline) _____
☐ Child abuse hotline: _____

SELF-CARE REMINDERS:

☐ You cannot control the other parent's behavior
☐ You can only control your response and your home environment
☐ Your healing journey benefits your children
☐ It's okay to seek support and therapy for yourself
☐ You're breaking generational cycles of abuse
☐ Your children will eventually see the truth



DATE

MOOD

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YOUR THOUGHTS

YOU'RE NOT JUST CO-PARENTING –
YOU'RE PROTECTING AND HEALING. YOUR STRENGTH MATTERS.

GOALS

TO DO

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Make a Positive Change in Your Life Today" www.themarymcconnell.com "Need ongoing support? Join our healing community!"

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