

## Chapter 29

# THE EMOTIONAL DYNAMICS OF NARCISSISM

## *Inflated by Pride, Deflated by Shame*

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*I thought I truly, truly was not a good-enough journalist or a good-enough person. And the irony is that by trying to convince other people—and therefore myself—that I was better, I destroyed everything around me.*

—Stephen Glass, former journalist for the *New Republic*,  
who in 1997 was exposed as having fabricated numerous  
published news articles (*Mnookin*, 2003)

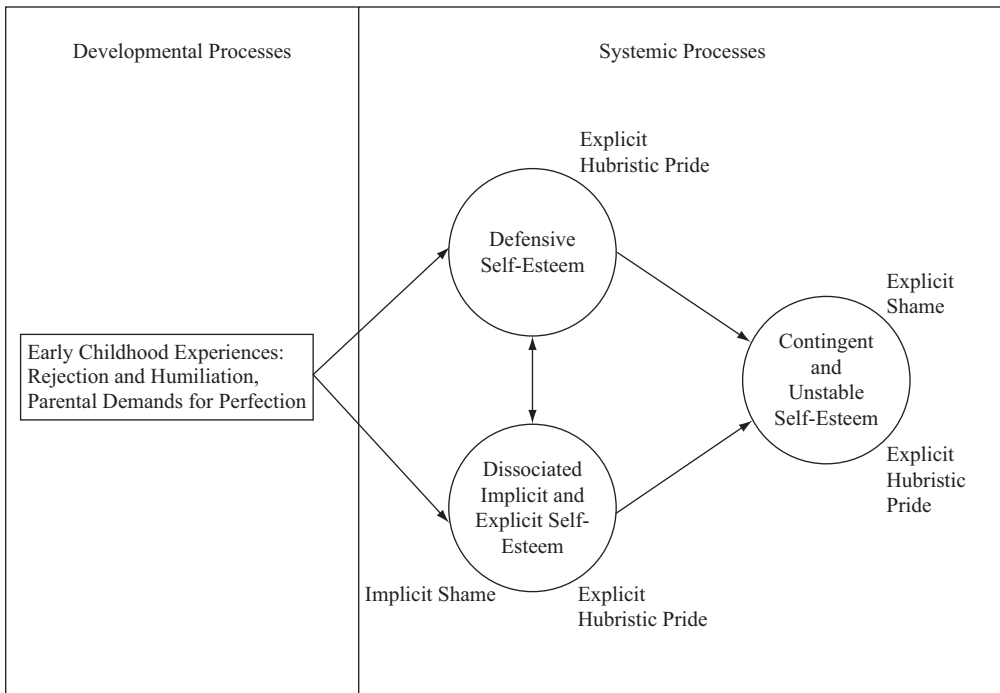
Since its introduction into the psychological literature, narcissism has been conceptualized as an emotional disorder—a result of excessive pride and shame. Following Freud (1914/1957), Kernberg (1975) argued that the central psychological process underlying the disorder—identification with an idealized ego—necessarily leads to pride. Kohut (1971) placed greater emphasis on shame, viewing it as the typical response to the “narcissistic wound”—a loss of grandiosity thought to occur in the narcissist’s early development. Lewis (1981) also viewed shame as central, but as an etiological factor underlying narcissism’s development, rather than a response to the narcissistic wound. In this view, narcissism is essentially a shame-coping response mechanism (Morrison, 1989). Broucek (1982) integrated both of these perspectives, arguing that shame is a response to the narcissistic wound *and* a stimulus to narcissistic self-aggrandizement. Eventually, shame became pinpointed as the “keystone” affect in narcissism (Broucek, 1982; Wright, O’Leary, & Balkin, 1989).

Thus, although social-personality researchers have only recently begun to emphasize the specific emotions underlying narcissism, clinicians and psychodynamic theorists have long argued that shame and pride critically shape this personality process. This emotion-focused perspective leads to one of the paradoxes of narcissism: how do two seemingly opposite emotions interact to produce a coherent personality?

### AN EMOTION-CENTERED MODEL OF NARCISSISM

Figure 29.1 presents a theoretical model of the central affective and self-regulatory processes underlying narcissism and associated fragile self-esteem (Kernis, 2003), with an emphasis on the driving forces of shame and pride. In this model, which draws on early clinical and more contemporary accounts of the cognitive-emotional processes that shape narcissistic self-regulation

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**Figure 29.1** A Process Model of Self-Conscious Emotions in Narcissism

(e.g., Brown & Bosson, 2001; Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001; Robins, Tracy, & Shaver, 2001; Tracy & Robins, 2003), the developmental events depicted in the left panel of the figure are thought to result in the formation of the intrapsychic system depicted in the right panel. In this account, *narcissism* encompasses both the grandiose and more vulnerable factors that constitute the disorder (Cain, Pincus, & Ansell, 2008); in our view, there are individual differences in both narcissistic grandiosity and vulnerability, such that narcissists can be high in both dimensions, and the relative prominence of each may vary over time. Below, we discuss each aspect of this model in detail.

In psychodynamic theories of narcissism, the syndrome is thought to first develop in early childhood when parents overidealize their young children and simultaneously place unrealistic demands on them. Few studies have examined the childhood predictors of adult narcissism, so this part of our model is largely theoretical; however, several studies provide evidence supporting the psychodynamic account. In one, adult narcissists (those high in grandiosity or vulnerability) were found to recall childhoods in which parents were both overly praising and cold (Otway & Vignoles, 2006). In another study that directly measured narcissism in young children using a self-report, child version of the Narcissistic Personality Inventory, children's narcissism was positively related to a combined parent/child report of negative parenting practices, including lack of supervision, inconsistent discipline, and corporal punishment (Barry, Frick, Adler, & Grafeman, 2007). In a more recent longitudinal study, teacher ratings of narcissistic personality tendencies at age 3 and 4 (e.g., "center of attention," "histrionic tendencies," "interpersonal antagonism") predicted psychologist ratings of "maladaptive narcissism" at age 23, but only for individuals whose mothers were high (at the age 3 assessment) on authoritarian parenting or low on either authoritative or permissive parenting (Cramer, in press).

In response to the presumed internal conflict resulting from feeling a need to be perfect, and feeling rejected when perfection is not achieved, children may develop dissociated positive and negative self-representations, so that they can be perfect at an explicit level and keep all negative self-images hidden at an implicit level (Brown & Bosson, 2001; Kernberg, 1975;

Kohut, 1971). The resulting theorized structural split in the self-representational system—implicit feelings of inadequacy coexisting with explicit feelings of grandiosity—makes the self vulnerable to threats to self-worth. To maintain an inflated sense of self-esteem, the narcissist must adopt a defensive self-regulatory style, denying negative experiences and overemphasizing positive ones. This process, known as compensatory self-enhancement, is characteristic of individuals who score high on measures of grandiose narcissism, and who, consistent with this account, demonstrate a combination of high explicit and low implicit self-esteem (Bosson, Brown, Zeigler-Hill, & Swann, 2003; Jordan, Spencer, Zanna, Hoshino-Browne, & Correll, 2003; McGregor & Marigold, 2003; Zeigler-Hill, 2006).<sup>2</sup>

It is within this developmental process that the self-conscious emotions of shame and hubristic pride are expected to become particularly important. Self-conscious emotions are those in which the self is both the evaluator and the evaluated; thus, they require self-awareness, or attentional focus directed toward one's self-representations (Buss, 2001; James, 1890). Through this self-evaluative process, individuals appraise whether potentially emotion-eliciting events (e.g., failure) are relevant to actual or ideal self-images, and whether the self is responsible for these events. This process is most likely to result in shame when the individual appraises a negative event as relevant to some important identity goal and as caused by internal forces (i.e., "I am responsible") that are also stable ("I always do this"), uncontrollable ("I can't help but do this"), and global ("It affects everything"; Covington & Omelich, 1981; Niedenthal, Tangney, & Gavanski, 1994; Tracy & Robins, 2006; Weiner, 1985). For the self-evaluative process to result in the grandiose and arrogant "hubristic" pride long documented in narcissists (Lewis, 2000; Tracy & Robins, 2004), a similar series of appraisals must be made for positive, rather than negative, events (Tracy & Robins, 2007a).

Several characteristics of narcissists make them prone to this shame- and hubristic pride-promoting pattern of self-focused attention and appraisals. Narcissism promotes excessive attentional focus on the self; narcissists score high on projective measures of chronic self-focus (Emmons, 1987), tend to direct conversations to themselves and glaze over others (Vangelisti, Knapp, & Daly, 1990), and frequently use first-person-singular pronouns (Raskin & Shaw, 2006). Thus, narcissists may be chronically self-evaluative, primed at any moment to find self-relevance in external events.

Furthermore, the narcissistic dissociation of explicit positive and implicit negative self-representations may create fertile ground for the co-existence of shame and hubristic pride. When negative self-representations are split off from overly idealized positive self-representations, the implicit self necessarily becomes globally negative, as all positive self-representations (with the exception of those about agency; Campbell, Bosson, Goheen, Lakey, & Kernis, 2007) become linked to the explicit grandiose self. The resulting globalized negative view of self may necessitate the internal, stable, global attributions following failure that lead to shame, as the individual becomes incapable of distinguishing a bad thing done from the bad self doing it. From this emotion-centered perspective, then, the defensive self-esteem characteristic of narcissists can be seen as a defense against excessive shame, as was suggested by Lewis (1981).

Just as the implicit self becomes globally negative, the narcissist's dissociated, explicit self may become globally positive and idealized, leading to stable, global attributions following success, with no distinction made between a good thing done and the good self doing it. The positive

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<sup>2</sup> Several studies have found interactions between implicit and explicit self-esteem predicting grandiose narcissism, assessed using the NPI (Jordan et al., 2003; Zeigler-Hill, 2006), a measure of compensatory conviction (McGregor & Marigold, 2003), and unrealistic optimism (Bosson et al., 2003). It is noteworthy, though, that several of these results may be partly due to the assessment of communal implicit self-esteem, rather than agentic, in these studies. Other research suggests that grandiose narcissists demonstrate high implicit self-esteem when agentic aspects of self are assessed (Campbell, Bosson, Goheen, Lakey, & Kernis, 2007).

self becomes an object of pride, but not simply pride in specific achievements. For the narcissist, positive views of the self are too essential to leave to the whim of actual accomplishments, for they are what prevent the individual from succumbing to shame and low self-esteem. Instead, narcissists come to experience a globalized “hubristic” pride, characterized by feelings of arrogance and egotism, which is distinct from the more achievement-based and pro-social “authentic” pride characterized by feelings of accomplishment and confidence (Tracy & Robins, 2007a).

Hubristic and authentic pride are largely independent (typical  $r = .12$ ; Tracy, Cheng, Robins, & Trzesniewski, 2009), and are associated with distinct cognitive antecedents and behavioral responses. Importantly, it is *hubristic* pride that is strongly positively associated with both the grandiose and vulnerable dimensions of narcissism, based on studies using the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI; Raskin & Terry, 1988) and the tendency to overestimate social consensus with one’s own beliefs (McGregor, Zanna, Holmes, & Spencer, 2001)—both typically considered measures of grandiose narcissism—and the Pathological Narcissism Inventory (PNI; Pincus et al., 2009) and the Narcissistic Personality Disorder Scale (NPDS; Ashby, 1978)—measures of vulnerable narcissism (Donnellan, 2010; Tracy et al., 2009). Thus, regardless of how it is assessed or conceptualized, narcissism is positively related to hubristic pride, suggesting that this form of pride is a core part of the narcissistic personality. Furthermore, hubristic pride is negatively correlated with both explicit and implicit self-esteem (Tracy et al., 2009), consistent with our model’s assumption that, at an implicit level, narcissists’ hold negative self-representations.

Overall, then, narcissistic self-regulation involves minimizing experiences of shame by keeping negative self-representations implicit, and maximizing experiences of hubristic pride by maintaining and inflating positive explicit self-representations. This dissociation between implicit and explicit self-representations likely promotes an unstable situation, much like water about to boil, causing negative self-representations and associated shame to occasionally bubble toward the surface of awareness. Indeed, recent research suggests that even grandiose narcissists, who are likely most capable of suppressing shame, are vulnerable to the influence of these negative self-representations. Individuals scoring high on the NPI were found to demonstrate automatic vigilance for implicit negative self-relevant concepts (e.g., “worthlessness”) after being primed with concepts representing a potential ego threat (i.e., “failure”; Horvath & Morf, 2009). This research further found that after initial heightened vigilance, narcissists showed subsequent repression of these negative self-relevant concepts (and, presumably, associated shame). Other research suggests that narcissists also regulate implicit shame by seeking external indicators of their self-worth (e.g., others’ approval, good grades, a compliment from a stranger), known as *contingencies* (Crocker & Wolfe, 2001), which are taken as proof of the veracity of their positive self-representations and allow for the maintenance of hubristic pride. The inauthenticity of pride experiences based on such contingencies is supported by the finding that individuals prone to hubristic pride tend to score low on trait authenticity (Tracy et al., 2009), a measure of unbiased insight into one’s emotions and motives (Goldman & Kernis, 2004).

Given that contingencies can never be completely stable, contingent self-esteem will eventually lead to unstable self-esteem over time. When contingencies are present, hubristic pride is experienced and explicit self-esteem rises, resulting in the pattern of thoughts and behaviors best characterized as grandiose narcissism. Yet, when contingencies are absent, implicit shame may rise to the surface of consciousness and lead to a drop in explicit self-esteem, resulting in more vulnerable narcissism (see Figure 29.1).

Supporting this account, individuals who score high on the full-scale NPI (i.e., grandiose narcissists) tend to be low in explicit shame-proneness (Gramzow & Tangney, 1992), whereas those who score high on measures of more vulnerable narcissism, such as the Exploitativeness scale of the NPI (controlling for shared variance with other NPI subscales), the PNI, the O’Brien (1987) Multiphasic Narcissism Inventory, the NPDS, and splitting, tend to be *high* in explicit shame-proneness (Gramzow & Tangney, 1992; Hibbard, 1992; Pincus et al., 2009). This pattern

suggests that for less well-regulated narcissists, negative events can and do promote the conscious experience of shame.

In addition to chronically boosting hubristic pride through external contingencies (i.e., self-enhancement), narcissists also engage in another pattern of behaviors that may help suppress shame: aggression and misbehaviors such as fighting, theft, and drug use. Indeed, anger, aggression, and hostility are well documented in grandiose narcissists, particularly in response to an ego-threat (Bushman & Baumeister, 1998; Donnellan, Trzesniewski, Robins, Moffitt, & Caspi, 2005; Paradise & Kernis, 1999; Paulhus, Robins, Trzesniewski, & Tracy, 2004; Tracy et al., 2009; Webster & Kirkpatrick, 2006). This emotional and behavioral pattern is difficult to explain without considering the narcissist's struggle with implicit shame. If narcissists genuinely believe their aggrandized self-representations, it is not clear why they would need to defend them so fiercely, rather than brush off any critique or insult. In our view, instead of blaming themselves for an insult and consciously experiencing shame, narcissists externalize blame and become angry and aggressive toward the offender.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, shame-proneness is positively associated with a tendency to make external attributions, suggesting that externalizing may be a viable strategy for coping with chronic shame (Tracy & Robins, 2006). Further supporting this account, Heiserman and Cook (1998) found that grandiose narcissists (individuals who scored high on the full-scale NPI) who wrote about an early-life shame experience subsequently reported heightened feelings of hostility. Similarly, adolescents high in grandiose narcissism were found to demonstrate aggression in response to an ego threat only when they experienced a shameful failure (Thomaes, Bushman, Stegge, & Olthof, 2008). These responses likely represent the "shame-rage spiral" observed by clinicians among individuals conveying both grandiose and vulnerable narcissism (Lewis, 1971; Scheff, 1998).

In sum, this overarching model of narcissism as a process involving the chronic experience and regulation of shame and hubristic pride has important implications for our understanding of narcissistic behaviors and consequences. Below, we highlight several benefits of this proposed model for research.

## **BENEFITS OF AN EMOTION-CENTERED APPROACH TO NARCISSISM**

### **Distinguishing Narcissism From Genuine Self-Esteem**

Our emphasis on the emotions underlying narcissism allows us to better distinguish two personality processes that are frequently confused or conflated: narcissistic self-aggrandizement (also known as narcissism, grandiose narcissism, self-enhancement, fragile self-esteem, self-deception, and nongenuine self-esteem) and genuine self-esteem (also known as self-esteem, stable self-esteem, nondefensive self-esteem; Baumeister, Campbell, Krueger, & Vohs, 2003; Kernis, 2003; Paulhus, 1984; Robins & John, 1997; Rosenthal & Hooley, 2010); Salmivalli, Kaukianen, Kaistaniemi, & Lagerspetz, 1999). Indeed, some researchers have suggested that low self-esteem and narcissism are opposite ends of the same continuum (e.g., Baumeister, Smart, & Boden, 1996), but this conceptualization obscures an important distinction. As Rosenberg (1965) articulated, "When we deal with self-esteem, we are asking whether the individual considers himself adequate—a person of worth—not whether he considers himself superior to others" (p. 62).

<sup>3</sup> The idea that implicit shame is the cause of narcissistic rage is also supported by studies of "Type A" heart attack survivors. These patients have been found to "harbor insecurities and in most cases insufficient self-esteem . . . not immediately apparent to the therapists or the participants themselves" (Friedman & Ulmer, 1984, p. 167).

Although our model articulates how positive self-views resulting from defensive self-regulation can be problematic, a growing body of research suggests that there is an alternative, adaptive way of experiencing self-favorability, which is empirically distinct from narcissism. Individuals who are not burdened by implicit low self-esteem and shame do not behave in the same defensive manner as individuals high in narcissism. For example, when faced with an ego threat, only individuals with dissociated implicit and explicit self-views and, specifically, low implicit and high explicit self-esteem, respond to the threat defensively and engage in compensatory self-enhancement (Bosson et al., 2003; Jordan et al., 2003; McGregor & Marigold, 2003). Individuals who do not show such dissociations tend to have more stable self-esteem (Zeigler-Hill, 2006), tend not to get defensive in the face of threat, and are less likely to self-enhance (Bosson et al., 2003). Similarly, individuals with noncontingent self-esteem show fewer decreases in self-esteem in response to negative life events (Crocker, Karpinski, Quinn, & Chase, 2003), and individuals high in self-esteem controlling for narcissism (i.e., genuine self-esteem) tend to be low in aggression and anti-social behaviors (Donnellan et al., 2005; Paulhus et al., 2004).

Individuals who experience genuine self-esteem thus seem able to benefit from positive self-evaluations without succumbing to the host of interpersonal and mental health problems associated with narcissism. Genuine self-esteem allows individuals to acknowledge their failures, faults, and limitations without defensiveness, anger, or shame, and integrate positive and negative self-representations into a complex but coherent global self-concept. Thus, despite the small-to-moderate-size positive correlation that typically emerges between measures of explicit self-esteem and the NPI, statistically removing this shared variance reveals starkly divergent correlations between the two partialled constructs (conceptualized as narcissism-free *genuine* self-esteem and self-esteem-free *narcissistic self-aggrandizement*) and a range of personality traits relevant to everyday social behavior and mental health (see Tracy et al., 2009).

Given these empirical findings, the self-evaluative system and underlying emotions that characterize individuals high in genuine self-esteem must be quite different from those that characterize narcissism. Rather than responding to success with hubristic pride, individuals high in genuine self-esteem tend to respond with authentic pride, an emotion marked by feelings of confidence, productivity, and self-worth (Tracy & Robins, 2007a). This adaptive emotional response, which is positively correlated with the socially desirable personality traits of extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness (Tracy et al., 2009), is attainable because the integration of positive and negative self-representations allows for more nuanced self-evaluations. If success occurs, it need not be attributed to a falsely inflated, stable, global self; credit can instead be given to specific actions taken by the self (e.g., hard work)—an appraisal found to promote the experience of authentic and *not* hubristic pride (Tracy & Robins, 2007a).

Likewise, when failures occur, individuals high in genuine self-esteem need not succumb to the shame-destined attributional trap of blaming the stable, global self; negative events, too, can be attributed to specific actions. Within the context of overall self-liking, self-acceptance, and self-competence, mistakes are not self-destructive agents of demoralization, but rather can be agents of change, pointing to areas of future improvement. Studies have found that attributing failure to unstable, specific, controllable aspects of the self promotes the negative self-conscious emotion of guilt, rather than shame (Brown & Weiner, 1984; Covington & Omelich, 1981; Jagacinski & Nicholls, 1984; Niedenthal et al., 1994; Tracy & Robins, 2006). Guilt, in turn, promotes a wide range of positive social behaviors, ranging from apology and confession to empathy and altruism (Batson, 1987; Baumeister, Stillwell, & Heatherton, 1994; Tangney & Dearing, 2002). Furthermore, proneness to guilt is positively related to self-esteem, but generally unrelated to narcissism (Gramzow & Tangney, 1992). Thus, distinct self-conscious emotions, both negative (guilt and shame) and positive (authentic and hubristic pride), play a critical role in determining whether individuals engage in the world as self-aggrandizing narcissists or genuine self-accepters.

## Placing Narcissism in an Evolutionary Framework

From an evolutionary perspective, the ancient Greek Narcissus experienced a number of maladaptive, fitness-reducing outcomes. Not only did he die from excessive hubristic pride, but he spent all of his time gazing at his own reflection instead of producing offspring with the nymph Echo. Contrary to the myth, however, the research literature suggests that narcissism has both fitness-relevant costs and benefits, and a simple characterization of narcissistic tendencies as exclusively adaptive or maladaptive is unjustified. Instead, narcissism is better thought of as a *mixed blessing* (Paulhus, 1998; Robins, Tracy, & Trzesniewski, 2008; Sedikides & Luke, 2008). Studies have shown that self-enhancers tend to make positive first impressions on their peers, and experience a boost in positive affect following an interaction with a group of previously unacquainted individuals, but after repeated interactions become disliked by these same peers (Paulhus, 1998), and over four years of college tend to decline in self-esteem and disengage from the academic context (Robins & Beer, 2001). By midlife, many narcissists suffer failures in work (McCall & Lombardo, 1983; Wink, 1991). In intimate interpersonal contexts, narcissism seems to facilitate short-term attraction and mating (Reise & Wright, 1996; Rhodewalt & Eddings, 2002), but ultimately contributes to relationship problems, as spouses come to find narcissistic partners disagreeable, intolerant, demanding, and moody (Campbell, 1999; Wink, 1991).

These findings raise interesting questions for evolutionary accounts of narcissism, but few researchers have articulated a comprehensive theory of narcissism's likely evolutionary origins (cf., Holtzman & Strube, Chapter 19, this volume).<sup>4</sup> By focusing on the shame and hubristic pride that drive narcissists' behaviors in both the relationship and work domains, we can locate narcissism within evolutionary accounts of these specific emotions. Growing evidence suggests that pride may have evolved to promote social status (Shariff & Tracy, 2009; Tiedens, 2000; Williams & Desteno, 2009), which in turn is associated with increased access to valued resources and higher fitness (Buss, 1989; Cowlshaw & Dunbar, 1991; Hopcroft, 2006; Turke & Betzig, 1985). Although these benefits likely apply to both facets of pride, recent research suggests that hubristic pride, in particular, may be an adaptation for securing a particular kind of social status known as *dominance* (Cheng, Tracy, & Henrich, 2010; Tracy, Shariff, & Cheng, 2010).

Dominance is a form of status based on force, threat, and intimidation, and it contrasts sharply with *prestige*, a form of status based on knowledge, wisdom, and earned respect (Henrich & Gil-White, 2001). Dominant individuals wield power by controlling costs and benefits in many domains, including access to resources, mates, and well-being. They create fear in subordinates by taking or threatening to withhold resources, and subordinates submit by complying with demands or providing deference. Prestige, in contrast, likely arose in evolutionary history when humans acquired the ability to obtain cultural information from other group members, and natural selection favored selectively attending and deferring to the most knowledgeable or skilled others. Prestigious individuals thus acquire power by virtue of their wisdom, and permitting followers to copy their skills, strategies, and know-how.

We have argued that hubristic pride evolved as the affective program that underpins the dominance system (Cheng et al., 2010; Tracy et al., 2010). By automatically propelling a suite of feelings, cognitions, and behaviors in response to status-relevant situations, hubristic pride may facilitate effective coping with opportunities for status attainment. More specifically, hubristic pride may promote and sustain dominance through its subjective feelings of superiority and arrogance, which may provide the necessary mental preparedness to exert force and intimidate subordinates, and its associated behavioral tendencies of aggression, hostility, and manipulation

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<sup>4</sup> Several researchers have argued that narcissistic traits may be an evolved solution to the opportunities and challenges posed by short-term mating (see Holtzman & Strube, this volume; Jonason, Li, & Buss, 2010). Here, we provide an explanation of how narcissism may provide adaptive benefits outside the mating domain as well as within it.

(Tracy et al., 2009)—which would facilitate the attainment of a dominant reputation. Consistent with this account, individuals who are dispositionally prone to hubristic pride tend to view themselves and be viewed by peers as high in dominance, but not prestige (Cheng et al., 2010).

If hubristic pride is an evolved mechanism for the attainment of dominance, we can better understand how narcissism—the personality process propelled by hubristic pride and shame—may have evolved. Narcissism may characterize individuals who, due to particular genetic dispositions and early life experiences, are most likely to benefit from adopting a dominance-oriented strategy to status attainment. Dominance is likely to be most profitable for those who possess traits and attributes conducive to intimidating and coercing others (i.e., large physical size or strength, and a dispositional tendency toward agency, aggression, and anti-social behaviors), and who lack the necessary skills, competencies, or intelligence to merit prestige. Regardless of whether narcissists are in fact incompetent and unsuccessful (narcissism is typically unrelated to objective indicators of success, such as grade point average and college completion; Robins & Beer, 2001), there is some evidence, reviewed above, that they see themselves this way, at least at an implicit level (though, interestingly, they also hold positive implicit self-views of agency, which may further facilitate the attainment of dominance; Campbell et al., 2007). Thus, the early life experiences that, theoretically, lead narcissists to experience implicit shame may combine with certain dispositional traits to promote a regulatory style that involves the explicit experience of hubristic pride and consequent power-seeking, allowing for the maintenance of a dominance-oriented strategy toward social influence.

Indeed, although prestige may be the more respected route to social influence in many contemporary social hierarchies, dominance can be equally effective, even among highly educated college students. In a recent study measuring peer-perceptions of newly acquainted individuals following a group task, individuals rated high in dominance were just as likely as those rated high in prestige to be viewed as influential over the group's decisions. These dominant individuals were also equally likely as the prestigious to score high on a behavioral measure of social influence (Cheng, Tracy, Henrich, Foulsham, & Kingstone, 2011). Thus, although dominant individuals, like narcissists, tend not to be well-liked (Cheng et al., 2010), they do tend to be powerful; they essentially make the adaptive choice of “getting ahead” at the expense of “getting along” (Hogan, 1983; Paulhus & John, 1998; Robins et al., 2001). This strategy may be what allows narcissists to emerge as leaders in social groups (Brunell et al., 2008; Rosenthal & Pittinsky, 2006), despite their poor leadership skills and being disliked by their peers (Harms, Wood, & Roberts, 2009).

The attainment of dominance also may facilitate success in the mating domain; dominant men are rated particularly attractive by women seeking short-term relationships (Snyder, Kirkpatrick, & Barrett, 2008), consistent with findings that narcissistic men tend to have unrestricted, brief sexual relationships low in commitment, and simultaneous multiple partners (Foster, Shrira, & Campbell, 2006; Reise & Wright, 1996; Rhodewalt & Eddings, 2002). Such short-term relationships can promote reproductive fitness, especially in those who, like narcissists, have difficulty maintaining long-term relationships. Thus, the narcissistic personality may be a result of the same selection pressures that led to a dominance-based hierarchical system, with narcissists best characterized as individuals whose trait profiles and early-life experiences make them prone to chronic shame and hubristic pride, and to seek dominance as an adaptive solution.

## IMPLICATIONS FOR ASSESSMENT

Our emphasis on emotions also has implications for assessment, both by researchers and clinicians diagnosing patients. Social-personality researchers typically assess narcissism using the NPI; based on Google Scholar, Raskin and Terry's (1988) measure has been cited 564 times, compared to 56 times for the NPDS (Ashby, 1978; Ashby, Lee, & Duke, 1979; see also Cain et al., 2008 for similar estimates). Yet the NPI does not capture the full construct; individuals



who score high on it are certainly self-aggrandizing, but they are also very well-defended; as was mentioned above, the NPI is strongly *negatively* correlated with explicit measures of shame-proneness (Gramzow & Tangney, 1992; Watson, Hickman, & Morris, 1996), positively with explicit self-esteem, and, in terms of zero-order correlations, unrelated to implicit self-esteem (Campbell et al., 2007; Jordan et al., 2003; Zeigler-Hill, 2006). One interpretation of this set of findings is that the NPI captures grandiose, but not vulnerable, narcissism, and that only the latter is characterized by the experience of shame (Fiscalini, 1993; Miller & Campbell, 2008; Rathvon & Holmstrom, 1996). However, findings of interactions between scores on measures of explicit and implicit self-esteem predicting the NPI suggest otherwise. Despite an absence of the theoretically expected negative zero-order correlation between the NPI and implicit self-esteem, individuals who have a combined profile of high explicit and low implicit self-esteem do tend to score high on the NPI (Jordan et al., 2003; Zeigler-Hill, 2006). This complicated set of relations, as well as recent evidence that the NPI subscales bear markedly divergent relations with various criterion measures (Ackerman et al., 2010), makes the measure somewhat problematic, at least for those who agree that shame is the cornerstone affect of narcissism.

The finding that hubristic pride is a core part of narcissism, no matter how narcissism is operationalized, points to a new method of assessment. Hubristic pride is easily measured, as either a momentary state or chronic trait-like tendency, via a brief 7-item self-report scale, which has high internal consistency (typical  $\alpha = .91$ ) and has been well validated (Tracy et al., 2009; Tracy & Robins, 2007a). Furthermore, trait hubristic pride predicts other traits that are theoretically relevant to narcissism but do not show expected relations with the NPI. Whereas the NPI tends to be unrelated to the NPDS and implicit self-esteem, and negatively related to low perceived social support, attachment anxiety and avoidance, and trait anxiety; hubristic pride positively predicts these dysfunctional traits, is negatively related to implicit self-esteem, and is still a positive predictor of the NPI (Tracy et al., 2009). Furthermore, in contrast to the negative relation between the NPI and explicit shame, hubristic pride is positively correlated with explicit shame-proneness (Tracy & Robins, 2007a). This divergence, between the NPI and hubristic pride, is likely due to the relatively high level of psychologically healthy functioning (or, effective emotion regulation) seen in the grandiose narcissists who score high on the NPI. Regardless, as the emotion associated with a range of narcissistic processes, hubristic pride seems to pick up a wider variety of narcissism-related behavioral propensities, and researchers who seek to uncover narcissism's full nomothetic network should consider including hubristic pride in their studies.

Another measurement-related benefit is that both pride and shame can be assessed from nonverbal behaviors, thus reducing the need to rely on self-report. Both emotions are associated with distinct, reliably recognized nonverbal expressions (Haidt & Keltner, 1999; Izard, 1971; Keltner, 1995; Tracy & Robins, 2004), which generalize to highly isolated villagers in traditional small-scale societies (Tracy & Robins, 2008; Tracy, Shariff, Zhao, & Henrich, 2010). These expressions are also reliably displayed in pride- and shame-eliciting situations, by individuals across cultures, including the congenitally blind (Tracy & Matsumoto, 2008). The accumulated findings thus suggest that these expressions are as universal as those associated with the small set of "basic" emotions known to have distinct, cross-culturally recognized expressions (Ekman & Friesen, 1971; Ekman, Sorenson, & Friesen, 1969), and, like those emotions, pride and shame can be reliably coded from nonverbal behaviors.

Behavioral coding might be a particularly fruitful avenue for assessing the implicit shame that drives narcissistic processes, given that unconscious shame is more likely to be revealed through behaviors than self-report. Similarly, we would expect that individuals high in narcissism would show frequent pride displays, but this has not been tested. Previous research suggests that hubristic and authentic pride share a single identifiable display—the two facets do not have distinct expressions (Tracy & Robins, 2007b)—but this finding should be corroborated by behavioral studies correlating actual pride displays with expressers' hubristic and authentic pride experiences, and trait levels of narcissism. Recent research suggests that individuals rated high in

dominance by their peers tend to show certain aspects of the pride display (e.g., arms extended out from the body, physical expansiveness), whereas those high in peer-rated prestige tend to show other aspects (e.g., smiling, head tilt back, chest expansion; Cheng et al., 2011). These findings suggest that there may be subtle behavioral indicators that distinguish authentic from hubristic pride expressions, and future research is needed to determine which of these behaviors correspond to narcissism.

Finally, the assessment of nonverbal behaviors may be useful for clinicians who suspect narcissism to underlie their patients' problems. A patient who shows a shame display while speaking in an incongruous self-aggrandizing manner might readily be diagnosed as having NPD (i.e., vulnerable narcissism), whereas one who speaks confidently and displays overt pride frequently throughout the course of an interview might be narcissistic, but in a more self-regulated, grandiose way. Many clinicians may already make inferences and diagnoses on the basis of these displays, but our process model might help elucidate why a patient is showing a particular expression, or why an expression does not correspond to a patient's self-report of his or her experience.

## CONCLUSION

Our proposed model may help clarify the affective and self-evaluative processes underlying narcissism. This model, and its emphasis on shame and hubristic pride, has several benefits: it can account for distinctions among variations of narcissism (e.g., regulated versus less-regulated, or grandiose versus vulnerable) and between narcissism and genuine self-esteem; it allows us to place narcissism in an evolutionary framework and pinpoint its adaptive benefits; and it highlights new means of assessment. Our hope is that this model will be of use to future researchers and clinicians who wish to better understand these complex, emotionally driven individuals, like Stephen Glass, whose intrapsychic dynamics and interpersonal behaviors defy simplistic characterization and, in our view, require an understanding of self-conscious emotions.

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