

HEALTHY PRIDE

- Realistic appreciation of one's worth
- Secure, humble, and authentic
- Does not need constant validation
- Can admit mistakes and be vulnerable
- Values mutual respect and reciprocity

CORE MESSAGE:
"I have value, and so do other people."

HEALTHY PRIDE vs NEUROTIC PRIDE

IN RELATIONSHIPS INITIATION & EARLY STAGE

HOW IT APPEARS IN EARLY RELATIONSHIPS

Narcissism is not always obvious. Confidence can look similar. The difference appears when the ideal image is threatened.

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|-----------------------|----|---------------------------|
| Seeks Connection | VS | Seeks Image Protection |
| Stays Open | VS | Stays Guarded |
| Handles Feedback Well | VS | Defensive or Dismissive |
| Respects Boundaries | VS | Feels Entitled |
| Curious About You | VS | Focused on Impressing You |

NEUROTIC PRIDE

- Defensive self-image hiding insecurity
- Needs admiration, approval, superiority
- Image > Authenticity
- Avoids vulnerability, fears shame & rejection
- Conditional self-worth based on status

CORE MESSAGE:
"If people see my weaknesses, I will lose value."

7 PILLARS OF HEALTHY PRIDE

- Self-Acceptance
- Authenticity
- Secure Identity
- Humility
- Accountability
- Emotional Regulation
- Reciprocity

THEY THINK...

- "I must not appear weak."
- "I must impress people."
- "Being ordinary is failure."
- "I must stay in control."
- "Rejection proves I am inadequate."
- "If they really knew me, they might leave."

THEY BEHAVE...

- Excessive bragging
- Name-dropping
- Competitive conversations
- Avoidance of vulnerability
- Intolerance for criticism
- Difficulty apologizing
- Constant image management

THEY DECIDE BASED ON...

- "How will this affect how others see me?"

Instead of:

- "What is right?"
- "What do I truly want?"
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- Image often outweighs authenticity.

22 REAL-LIFE EXAMPLES OF NEUROTIC PRIDE

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|---|--|---|----------------------------------|---|
| 1 Never admits being wrong | 2 Turns every conversation into an achievement story | 3 Cannot receive constructive feedback | 4 Always mentions status symbols | 5 Refuses help even when struggling |
| 6 Excessive name-dropping | 7 One-upmanship | 8 Avoids deep emotional topics | 9 Cannot say "I don't know" | 10 Rejects first to avoid rejection |
| 11 Overreacts to minor criticism | 12 Excessive self-presentation online | 13 Apologies contain excuses | 14 Constant need for admiration | 15 Difficulty celebrating others' success |
| 16 Romantic testing | 17 Competitive dating behavior | 18 Never reveals struggles | 19 Ghosts after embarrassment | 20 Obsession with winning arguments |
| 21 Seeks high-status partners for image | 22 Resents equal relationships | KEY RED FLAGS TO WATCH
When corrected > When told "no" > When others get attention > When vulnerability enters > When they experience failure | | |

22 GUIDELINES TO EVALUATE PRIDE IN EARLY RELATIONSHIPS

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|--|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| Observe responses to criticism | Notice treatment of service workers | Notice willingness to learn | Watch reactions to embarrassment |
| Notice if they apologize sincerely | Observe reactions when others succeed | Assess dependence on status symbols | Observe whether they monopolize conversations |
| Look for humility | Look for genuine curiosity about you | Look for accountability | Notice respect for differing opinions |
| Watch how they discuss failures | Notice frequency of self-promotion | Observe whether discussions feel competitive | Assess consistency between words & actions |
| Assess willingness to say "I don't know" | Assess emotional openness | Notice how often they seek admiration | Look for capacity for mutuality, not hierarchy |

22 Ask yourself one final question:
"Do I feel I am connecting with a real person, or with a carefully protected image?"

THE DEEPEST DISTINCTION



Healthy pride says:
"I am worthy even when imperfect."

VS



Neurotic pride says:
"I must appear worthy because I fear I am not."