

# *Discernment in Friendships & Dating*

When discerning emotionally healthy guys or gals for friendships, for dating, or for marriage, it is essential to understand a personality type called narcissism. In an extreme form, it is called a personality disorder. About 11% of guys and about 5% of girls have these dominant characteristics. Narcissists can be loud-and-proud (overt) or wall-flower-types (covert).

## *Look for These Identifying Patterns-of-Behaviors*

1. Entitlement: They express an attitude that they deserve something (like the best seats, to be first in line, rules don't apply to them etc.).
2. Blaming: Someone else is always the problem. They don't accept responsibility.
3. Control: They choose where to eat or what movie to watch rather than deferring to your preferences.
4. Dominate conversations: They will avoid talking things out by dominating the conversation. You will not feel 'heard' if you try to explain your thoughts or feelings.
5. Persuasive: They will attempt to convince you to see things their way and ignore how you might see things.
6. Manipulative: They will manipulate the facts or the situation to gain control. They might tell half-truths or even lie in a convincing way.
7. Attention-seeking: They want acknowledgement when they do something nice for you or for others (i.e. tell others about it, post on social media etc.).
8. Jealous/possessive: They will get upset if you do not give them enough attention and are jealous if you spend time with others.
9. Isolating: They will tend to isolate you from your friends and/or say unkind things about them.
10. Public image is different from the private: They appear pleasant and charming in public but act differently in private.

## *Ask*

Ask the Holy Spirit to give you wisdom and discernment for healthy relationships, then trust your instincts. God cares about your friendships, about those you date, and, eventually, about who you marry! God loves you and wants only the best for you!