

# Romantic Attraction: Personality Traits Most Desired by Narcissists?

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### Introduction

- ❖ Self-Orientation Model (Campbell, 1999) predicts that narcissists will be more attracted to other narcissists and someone they consider to be ‘perfect’ (Campbell, 1999).
- ❖ Tortoriello and colleagues (2017) found that narcissists have specific love styles in relationships that center around a ‘game-playing’ tactic. Allowing the narcissist to manipulate or control their partner in the relationship, explaining why a narcissist would target someone with low self-esteem. A person with low self-esteem may be seen as ‘weak’ or easy to manipulate to a narcissist.
- ❖ Narcissists seek partners that are self-enhancing and admiring, due to the high conflict present in a relationship with a narcissist (Wurst, Gerlach, Dufner, Rauthmann, Grosz, Küfner, & Back, 2017). This provides reasoning as to why as narcissist will perceive someone who is highly agreeable, as more desirable.
- ❖ Men are typically more narcissistic than women, so relationships between narcissism and personality traits would be stronger for men (Grijalva, Newman, Tay, Donnellan, Harms, Robins, & Yan, 2015).

### Hypotheses

1. Higher scores on the NPI will be positively correlated with attraction ratings to a narcissist.
2. Higher scores on the NPI will be positively correlated with attraction ratings of low self-esteem.
3. Higher scores on the NPI will be positively correlated with attraction ratings of high agreeableness.
4. These relationships will be stronger for men than women.

### Method

- ❖ Participants
  - 92 traditional undergraduate students
  - Age 18-22 years ( $M = 19.54$  years,  $SD = 0.87$ )
  - 85.9% Caucasian & 5.4% African-American
- ❖ Materials
  - Narcissistic Personality Inventory (Raskin & Terry, 1988)

- 13 Hypothetical Partner Descriptions  
Ex: This person is very trusting of others and is typically very genuine and honest. They also enjoy doing helpful things for others without receiving any type of compensation. Along with that, they are very cooperative and humble, as to not draw too much attention to themselves. This person is also very tender-minded, they show sympathy and concern for others.
- Ranking of Hypothetical Partners

### Results

Hypothetical Partners	Overall	Men	Women
High Narcissism	0.04 (0.18)	0.10 (0.16)	-0.02 (0.23)
Low Self-Esteem	-0.10 (0.13)	-0.004(0.26)	-0.25 (0.10)
High Self-Esteem	0.24*(0.10)	0.24 (0.11)	0.31**(0.10)
High Agreeableness	0.00 (0.26)	-0.31 (0.10)	0.11 (0.13)
Low Agreeableness	0.07 (0.14)	0.18 (0.12)	0.01 (0.23)

\* Correlation is significant at 0.05 level.  
\*\* Trend towards significant gender differences.

### Conclusion

- ❖ Narcissists are attracted to hypothetical partners that are described as narcissistic. This finding slightly supports the self-orientation model (Campbell, 1999).
- ❖ Narcissists are attracted to hypothetical partners that are described as having high self-esteem, not low self-esteem.
- ❖ Narcissists are attracted to a hypothetical partner described as having low agreeableness, however, there is more attraction to those who are highly agreeable.
- ❖ Different from Grijalva et al., (2015), findings, there were minimal gender differences. Women showed a trend towards gender differences with their attraction to hypothetical partners described as having high self-esteem.
- ❖ Top three most attractive personality traits for both low and high scores of narcissism:
  1. High Agreeableness
  2. High Extraversion
  3. High Self-Esteem

### References

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