



Conscious Life presents
**HEALING TOXIC
RELATIONSHIPS**

Breaking Free From Narcissists

Guest: Dr Judith Orloff

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[00:00:10] Alex Howard

Welcome, everyone, to this interview, where I'm super excited to be talking with Dr Judith Orloff. We'll be talking about some of the themes in her new book, *The Genius of Empathy*. We'll be exploring subjects such as narcissism, sociopaths, and how we can really spot those damaging and toxic dynamics in relationship, but then also how do you take back your power, and how do you break free?

So to give you a bit of Judith's background, Dr Judith Orloff is the New York Times best-selling author of *The Empath's Survival Guide*. Dr Orloff is a psychiatrist, an empath, and on the UCLA psychiatric clinical faculty. She synthesizes the pearls of traditional medicine with cutting edge knowledge of intuition, energy, and spirituality, and specializes in treating highly sensitive people in her private practice.

Her latest books are *Affirmations for Empaths*, and *Thriving as an Empath*. And then her upcoming book, *The Genius of Empathy*, is on pre-order now. Dr Orloff's work has been featured on the Today Show, CNN, Oprah Magazine, and The New York Times. So welcome, Judith. I always enjoy our conversations, and I'm really grateful to have you back for another one.

Dr Judith Orloff

Thank you. I'm so glad to be here.

Alex Howard

So you very kindly sent me the manuscript for your new book, which at the time this interview airs, will be on pre-order. And your book, this new one, is *The Genius of Empathy*. I'd love you to say a little bit about how understanding empathy, and the gifts and the potential of it, can help us navigate those sticky places and those difficult places in relationship.

Dr Judith Orloff

Empathy is essential if you want to have successful relationships. You have to be able to empathize with your friends, or your partners, or your co-workers, whether you agree with them or not. The empathy allows you to walk in somebody else's shoes, even for a second, so you can see their perspective, as opposed to just wronging them, or judging them, or everything that we all do.

But empathy lets you see, oh, that's where they're coming from, or, oh, they did have a narcissistic mother, and that's why they can't love. That's why they're having a hard time loving.

[00:02:42]

The genius of empathy is that it gives you an inside view of the person so you can deal with it in a different way, rather than just being triggered. And so empathy is the ability to open your heart, but not take on the angst of everybody else. The problem with empathy is sometimes people think they need to give to everyone, everywhere, at every moment, and that's just not going to work.

I'm a psychiatrist, I'm also an empath. And if I didn't learn to set boundaries, or take care of my own energy, or know when enough is enough, and I have to go and have my alone time. I would never have had the longevity in my career that I have had, and the joy that I have treating patients and doing workshops.

The joy I have in part comes from my ability to set boundaries on taking on other people's energy, and knowing what I can give, and knowing what I'm not able to give, at any point in time. And I'd like everyone to be very compassionate with themselves as we're talking about this tender topic of toxic relationships, and where empathy for the self comes in. And where this might sound strange, empathy for the abuser, or the predator comes in. And I don't mean forgiveness, I mean just getting a sense of where someone is coming from, so you don't get hooked into the dynamic for 20 years after the interaction. So we'll talk more about it.

But it's a tender subject, and you don't have to do that, you don't have to do empathy. I just want to tell everyone that empathy is something you have to want, and you have to want to experiment with it. You have to want to see if whatever I'm saying has some truth. If you don't want it, don't do it.

It's not that sort of thing, it really isn't. But I know so many people contact me all the time. How do I develop this? I feel so limited because I want to do it, but I'm so drained. How do I cope with it? How do I cope with all these draining people around me? How do I stop being attracted to narcissists, sociopaths, and psychopaths? How do I do it? What's the secret? And these are all the right questions, and that's what we'll talk about today.

Alex Howard

One of the things that I think I've said to you before in interviews, that I really appreciate about your body of work, is that those of us that are empaths, the narrative can become about the difficulty of being an empath, and in a way it can be seen as a weakness or vulnerability. And I've always appreciated your framing it as the gifts, and the genius, and the potential of being an empath. But the point that you just made there, is that of course to really bring those to life in a sustainable way, we also have to be able to have those boundaries in relationship.

One of the things that you talk about in your upcoming book is around narcissists, sociopaths and so on. And maybe before we come into that in some more detail, maybe you can say a few words around how empaths can tend to find themselves, particularly in dynamics, with those sorts of characters

[00:06:09] Dr Judith Orloff

All the time, it happens all the time, because empaths, as you pointed out, there's so many gifts to being an empath. There's the ability to connect, to open your heart. You want to understand somebody, you want to feel with them, you want to help them, you want to share your own feelings with them. And the connection to nature, and connection to spirituality in whatever form you relate to, it's the ability to tap into the unknown. We have all this going on, and so it's hard to realize that other people may not.

So if you meet a narcissist, or a sociopath, or a psychopath, they could come off really charming and really understanding, and know exactly what to say to make you feel needed and wanted. And they're experts at knowing how to read you. And it isn't with good intent. And this is where empaths have such a hard time with this, they can't get how come? Why isn't it with good intent? Because not everybody has good intentions towards you. And part of your path as an empath and sensitive person, and even somebody who isn't, even somebody who just wants to develop empathy, is learning how to identify those who are not healthy for you.

Even though they're charming, and they're seductive, and they present themselves as your savior, and I'll take care of you, and all your buttons, whatever. If you have a fear of abandonment, don't worry, I'll never leave you. They'll say everything, don't worry you're beautiful. I know you don't think very much of how you look, but you're beautiful. I think you're the most beautiful man, or woman, or any person, in the world. And so you'll go, oh really? And you get caught up in that. But the thing is it's a faux connection.

It's a false connection. It's a manipulation that narcissists, psychopaths, and sociopaths use to reel you in. And why would anyone do this? Empaths always ask me this. Why in the world would they do that? I'm such a nice person. I love them, I appreciate them. I know they've been wounded, and I'm willing to stay with them and help them heal. All the pitfalls of being an empath and wanting to help people, of course you want to help people, but you want to help the right people. And these are not the right people to help, I hate to tell you. You have to recognize how people with, quote, empathy deficient disorder present themselves in a false way.

And why do they do that? For power. They're mainly interested in power and control. They get off on having power over you. And I know it's hard for empaths to get that because empaths are not really power oriented like that, that's not the primary. They want love, they want connection, they want bonding. That's what empaths want.

Alex Howard

I was going to say also that I think what often can happen is that empaths think that if that person that's being narcissistic, or sociopathic, in their tendencies, that if I just love that person enough, or if I give them enough of what they can see that is deficient, then they're going to change, right? In a way that they can cure them of those qualities by showing up to them in the way that they think that is needed. So maybe you can speak to that because I think that's a dangerous trap that people can get caught in.

Dr Judith Orloff

Well, that's the rabbit hole that empaths go down all the time. Over the years, I've had so many conversations with my empathic. It's caring, you don't have to be an empath, you can just be a

caring person who has empathy for somebody, and they see the potential quote the potential, beware of potential, by the way, if it's not actualized, don't think, oh, well, I'll help them to learn how to make a living. I'll help them to eat better food and be healthy. I'll be the one, I'm the one who's going to heal this person. The minute you start getting into the potential of someone, you're off track.

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And then they say, oh, but it's my soulmate. I feel it. I know this is the one. I can't tell you how many times people have come to me and said that, and I said, well, have you looked at these signs? Have you looked at these other areas that might be red flags? It doesn't matter. All I know is we have this connection that could have gone on for eons and we're meant to be together. And I said, well, then they want to play that out.

So sometimes there's nothing I can do to prevent my patients, who I'd love to save from this but I can't, from going down this path. They have to learn the hard way, and it's a hard way. I'm telling everybody it's a hard path. You could do it and you could learn from it, and hopefully never repeat it, but I'm telling you that path is a hard path. With one of these people.

They don't have empathy, they're not like you. But isn't everyone like me? No, everyone isn't like you. You have a specific temperament. You need to honor your own needs. I know you're loving. I know you want to help everybody. Now that you feel a connection with this person, you especially want to help them, but you can't. And when somebody has an empathy deficient disorder, and I'm talking about malignant narcissism, just sociopathy, and psychopathy, psychopaths, they have empathy deficient disorder. And everyone is listening, you have to really get this, they don't have empathy as we know it. They're not wired neurologically to respond in the way that you need, even though at first, and this is what's so confusing in these kinds of toxic relationships, is that even if at first they're wonderful and especially charming. I'm very wary of super charming people.

My red flags go up right away. But some people are naturally very charming, so you have to wait and see over a period of time if they're truly people of their integrity or not.

Alex Howard

I was going to say almost, in a way, I guess the more perfect someone appears on the surface, the more that becomes suspicious. Right? Like, the more they want to be seen as being so interested, and so charming, and so this, and so that. It's like the amount of effort that's going into that is almost like an effort trying to hide, or cover something else.

Dr Judith Orloff

So it's interesting Alex, I don't think they put effort in. I think this is a slick part of themselves that just operates on its own. I don't think they're sitting there thinking, I'm going to manipulate this empathy by doing this, that, they just do it naturally. It's something to behold. I mean, just to observe a narcissist doing their thing. But it's important, it's crucial for everyone who's listening, who doesn't want to be in a toxic relationship to begin to believe me when I say that they will not have empathy for you. I don't care how great they look at first.

And one way to burst the bubble is just to create a little conflict. Don't do something their way. Just say, I'm sorry, I can't do it. I'm not available all week. But next week I can see you. What, you're

not available? And then they become cold, withholding, punishing, hurtful. And you have to look for those signs. But you do have to do a test. You have to test the situation to see how they handle conflict, or how they handle when you don't do something, or if you don't do something their way twice. See how they are. You observe, you be the judge.

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And you've got to keep your eyes open. And I know so many people have been yearning for love, it's a natural yearning for love. Empaths, it's a beautiful thing. I think loving is the epitome of the human act of human consciousness. The ability if you ever get a chance to love somebody, but not toxic people, not these people. These people aren't capable of it. And that's why it's an exception really, to most human beings.

It's a very specific topic. So I'm glad you're doing this summit on it, but it's a very specific topic. And even though I revere love, these are not the people to love. Because when you love, you want reciprocation, you want dependability, you want trust over time. You don't want somebody who uses intermittent reinforcement and throws you crumbs. So you scurry around and get the crumbs and then they disappear, and they're totally unreliable and just leave you. If you have a fear of abandonment, your fear of abandonment is totally triggered. So you just want the longing, you want them even more. Where are they? And so with all these people, it's always a call to action to look back on your childhood and see, honestly ask yourself, why am I attracted to these people?

For one thing, was I raised by a narcissistic parent, or alcoholic parent, or neglectful parent, or a sociopath? Because sociopaths sometimes put on a family front, and then go out and do their criminal activities. But they like having the family there. They like having, but then it's a very unhealthy situation. But you have to ask yourself, did I have any of this? Or was my ex a narcissist? And he beat down my self esteem, so I don't believe in myself anymore and I'm not deserving of love. So I'll take whatever crumbs I could get.

Now you have to go back and evaluate why am I so attracted to this type of person? As not everyone is, not everyone is. I mean, they'll see this and they'll go, not interested. You have to decide what you want in your life and in your relationships. And if you want love, if you want connection, as most empaths do, this is not the way to get there. You won't get there. And I know I'm belaboring this because I know with my patients it's so hard. It's as if they don't believe me. And I can understand that. I can understand why you wouldn't believe me, but it's true.

But if you go down the path, and it's called narcissistic supply, what they get from you, your love, your caring, your obedience to them that fills them, it's called narcissistic supply. And so when you I've worked with so many couples where they break up with a narcissist, let's say they have children, this can go on, and on. This isn't just a short term relationship, often it can have children, and schools, and all kinds of complications.

But when they finally feel in themselves, I'm beaten down by this narcissist. I cannot stand it anymore. I'm getting out. The way to do it is to cut off the narcissist supply as much as you can, and go cold turkey as much as you can. If you have children, of course you have to figure out a mediator, or a way to have short and sweet texts with the person, but not get too involved with them.

Just begin to cut off the supply, face another direction and move towards it, and not think about them, not look on their social media, don't check who they're going out with, what they're doing, all

of that. So there are rules that are very wise with regard to this type of situation. And so they're tried and true strategies that have worked to get out.

[00:19:14] Alex Howard

Yes. Is there a helpful distinction to be made between someone that, for example, has narcissistic personality disorder, and someone that can be a bit narcissistic from time to time? Do you see that as a continuum? And if so, at what point do you decide that someone is too far towards that immovable place? Because I'm sort of wondering, I guess there are people it's so obvious. And then there's some gray area here, right? And I guess that's where people can find themselves getting particularly lost.

Dr Judith Orloff

That's right, and there's the full blown malignant narcissist, and that's what I've been talking about so far today. There are other lesser forms of narcissism, where people just have narcissistic traits. And I've seen this in my practice where somebody brings in their mate, and they don't have empathy deficient disorder, but they're very self absorbed, very hard to think about the other person.

However, because they do have some capability for love, they're able to make some changes, and I've seen that, and so that's an improvement. It's not the best possibility of a mate, but if you're with them and you want to be with them, people with certain traits, such as self absorption, or obsession with the self, or inability to give to others, or being inconsiderate, those kinds of things can be worked out in a therapeutic situation.

Whereas with the malignant narcissist, if somebody brings in their malignant narcissist mate, I could guarantee you I'm going to be sitting there listening to, it's her fault, it's his fault, it's not my fault, I didn't do anything, they're the one that's causing this. So they can't be accountable for anything, which makes it impossible to have therapy.

Although I met some psychoanalysts who feel that narcissists can benefit for years, and years, and years of psychotherapy, if it's five days a week and they get into the psychodynamics of what's going on with this person, that they feel they've had some success. But who can afford years and years of psychoanalysis, or the time anymore? Unfortunately, it's sort of an outmoded therapeutic treatment, though an interesting one, Freud... Anyways, that's a subject I'm interested in... Freud's house is in London. I visited it when I was there. Beautiful house. He has huge feet, his shoes were in the house, giant feet, that interested me.

But in any case, the narcissist will not be able to be accountable for anything. So I'm telling you, it's an impossible situation. They'll deflect, they'll blame you. You'll walk out feeling terrible and thinking, oh, the therapist is beating up on me. And that's not true. It's just what the narcissist is going to do in every kind of therapeutic situation there is, they do not and will not say, I see what I did and I really want to change. I'm so sorry I hurt you, I'm so sorry I hurt you. I just want to make it better. They won't usually say that.

Alex Howard

Do you want to say a little bit about the differences between how you would identify a full blown narcissist versus, for example, I know in the book you talk about three personality types, a

narcissist, sociopath, and a bully. And so do you want to help us sort of place and make sense of those different behaviors?

[00:23:08] Dr Judith Orloff

Yes, the narcissist, the sociopath, and the psychopath are related. But the psychopath, of course, is the extreme version of narcissism, or sociopathy. These are the Jeffrey Dahmers of the world, or Charles Manson was a psychopath, and he had this incredible charismatic ability to get people to do what he wanted them to do, through his charm, through his music, through his intellect. Everyone knows, he's notorious.

But the psychopaths are cult leaders where they can have the capacity to form a cult if they want to, and people do what they say because of the connection they feel with the person. And the psychopath, if you ever meet a psychopath, and they're wanting to entice you into their mansion somewhere, and talk about, indoctrinate you into a form of thought, don't do it, don't even go there, don't even experiment with it.

If you've had narcissistic parents, or you've had trauma growing up, you might be susceptible to what they're doing. I see a lot of people have susceptibility to this, to brainwashing, more than I ever thought, they have susceptibility to brainwashing, and you just don't want to put yourself in that situation. But these psychopaths who are mass murderers are typically so nice, and like the boy next door and so charming, so they come into your house, they're a repair person and you are in the house, and they're so nice and you like them so much and then bam, it's all over.

But it's not that they're mean, if you dislike them there probably wouldn't be that attraction, but just be very aware. I mean there's less psychopaths than sociopaths, or narcissists, but it's a thing, I mean it's not gone, and you have to watch out because I've seen the nicest people get involved with psychopathic partners because they get hooked in, and the hook comes from trauma and wounding. That's what the hook is.

Alex Howard

You were saying earlier that if we find ourselves in a relationship like this then we need to just get out, right? In a way people sometimes think they need to ease their way out of that process. And there's something about the recognition of truth that one needs to move forwards, but that particularly if one's in that sort of relationship because, as you just said, of that trauma and that history. What helps someone get free, what helps someone move away from those dynamics?

Dr Judith Orloff

Well, dealing with the narcissist and the sociopath is a lot easier than dealing with the psychopath, as that's a much more serious life and death issue. You can have a psychopath who's a narcissist and sociopath.

But just briefly, the difference between a narcissist and a sociopath is that sociopaths, although they have all the self absorption and the charm, they get involved with criminal activity, and they don't really care what other people think as much as narcissists. narcissists are very concerned with how the world thinks about them. But the sociopath doesn't care as much.

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And so they'll try and get you into the Ponzi schemes, or say, oh, you can make money doing this. Or they'll try and take you to a bad part of town. Or they'll try and convince you of something you wouldn't ordinarily do. And it's a scheme. And you're thinking I'm not sure I feel comfortable with this, but maybe we'll give it a try. And that's the downfall with a sociopath who has these criminal schemes. You never want to go along with them, you always want to say no thank you. But see, the susceptibility is there if you have the trauma, it stops you from being able to think straight, because you're love bombed basically by the sociopath, the psychopath, and the narcissist.

They know how to love bomb you, and love bombing to me feels like a heart chakra energy just being poured all over you, and it seems so unfair that they know how to do that. It seems so unfair, but they do, and they'll shower you with all this love at the same time asking you to do these activities that you're not comfortable with, with the sociopath.

And so always if anyone asks you to do something, invest your money, invest your love, invest your time with a scheme, and you have to use your intuition with these people. Intuition is really key. The still small voice inside that will tell you the truth about things. You have to listen to that. There's a part of you that might want to go along with all this. It sounds exciting, it sounds dangerous. If you like danger, if you get turned around by danger, then the sociopath is the one for you, in a negative way. But with the sociopath, you have to say no to it. And you have to say, as much as I'm attracted, as much as I have a dark side. Everyone, when you're dealing with these types of people, you have to realize everyone has a dark side, and it can be seduced out.

And you want to deal with your dark side, but you don't want to let it rule you like these three types of people do. It's honest to be able to say, I have a dark side, and yes, I'm a little attracted to danger so that makes me susceptible to sociopaths. You have to know that about yourself and that's fine, but you also have to be able to say, no.

But saying no comes from hearing conversations like this, once we put it in a certain context, so you could begin to think about these people from a certain point of view. You're more aware of it, as most people are oblivious to it. More and more there's information on the internet, which is good, if it's accurate, but if you're aware of it then you know what to do.

I mean there's certain traits that a narcissist has such as, if you confront them, or you don't do what they say they're going to do, and then you confront them about it and they have a withdrawal, or cold, or punishing response, then you know I will be dealing with this narcissistic person. But if the person says, oh, thank you for sharing your needs with me, I really love it when you tell me what you need.

A narcissist would never say that, unless they're trying to manipulate you, which makes it a bit complex, but they usually won't say it, and they certainly won't have behavior that backs up their words. They'll reel you in. The good behavior will last, I don't know, a week, a month, and then it will return again to the same old, same old.

Alex Howard

So we're in a relationship with someone that we recognize that these dynamics are playing out. We need to find a way to take back our power. Because in a way, the heart of what's happening here is that we're stuck in this dynamic because we're disempowered. And often the longer we're in a

dynamic like that, the more that person gets skilled at taking that power away. So what helps us to reclaim that power, and to give us the strength to then push back, and to reclaim ourselves?

[00:31:44] Dr Judith Orloff

That's such a good question because it involves reclaiming your own self esteem, as what happens in these kinds of relationships, is that your self esteem gets beaten down by their insinuations that you're not enough, oh, you're a terrible mother. Or, if only you listen to me more, your life would be different, your life would be better. How can you go out with friends like that? You need to just stay home with me. Don't you care about me? There are all kinds of horrible, toxic manipulations that make you feel afraid, and make you feel alarmed, because it makes you, oh, no, I love you. Of course I won't see that friend again.

So when you notice these dynamics of control, and manipulation, and lack of empathy, then you can wake up a little bit from your trance. You could wake up and ask yourself, is this person a narcissist? And go through the signs, is this person throwing me crumbs, and giving me intermittent reinforcement like the slot machines in Vegas to keep me hooked in? Is this person doing that? Are they not showing any empathy? Are they love bombing me all the time to try and get me to come back in?

Are they gaslighting me by making me feel like I'm crazy and that my reality isn't worth anything? Do they have these qualities? You have to honestly ask yourself that. And once you're in the consciousness where you're asking yourself these questions, you've made a big step forward, because most people who are subject to the charms of a narcissist get sucked up into a zone where they're hypnotized, they're in a trance, or they're too afraid to express themselves.

And so once that trance is broken and you're able to say, is this person, could they possibly be a narcissist, a malignant narcissist, or maybe just somebody with narcissistic traits? Could it be they're just amazingly self absorbed, but they're willing to work on it? So you have to be the one to make this shift of assessing the situation, as opposed to just being in a trance and being in the midst of it. And so once you can assess the situation, then it's a little scary for people to do this, because they feel how much they've sacrificed, how much they've given up in this relationship. And it's painful.

However, it's the truth, and you can get out of it, especially if you don't have any ties with the person. It's much easier on a physical level to get out of it. On an energetic heart level, it's much harder, much harder, but it's possible.

And I want to say that I've worked with so many people over the years who have gotten out, and worked on themselves, and healed their trauma, and keep working with their trauma. And work with self empathy, which I feel so strongly about and work with, I'm enough and I deserve more than this. I deserve more than this, and I'm willing to risk it. I'm willing to make my exit. And I just got a chill when I said that, when you get to the point, if I'm willing to go day at a time, deal with my healing path when I leave, that's really something, that's really a huge step that people make when they're ready.

And it usually comes when they've just hit their bottom over and over. They're depressed, they're unhappy, they have an eating disorder, they can't get out of bed, they have all kinds of symptoms, or they might have full blown disease of some sort. And so they just get to the point of, no, I want something more.

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And the way to have something more is to strategize how to get out. And if you have children in common, if you have property in common, you'll have to work all that through and figure out a way. Sometimes people have mediators at first so they don't have to deal with a person directly, or else begin to set limits and boundaries.

If you're involved with one of these people, you probably haven't been setting limits and boundaries. It's my good guess. And that's all right, all this is all right. Don't come down on yourself for any of this, I believe everything is a lesson.

And people, including narcissists, sociopaths, and psychopaths are teachers. And you want to understand the dynamic between you and them so you could put an end to it forever. And that is generationally in your family, or who knows what the future will bring. But to put an end to it, you want to put an end to it. And that's the person who has the magic of breaking the generational patterns because they just can't take it anymore.

They're like, I'm done. I'm dying. I need help, and I can help myself. And other people can help you. You're not alone with this. So it's a magic state, but it's a challenge. It's a challenge, and it's worthwhile, as long as you don't keep repeating the pattern. That's the painful part.

Alex Howard

I guess one of the things that happens is when we're in a relationship like this, as we said, a bit earlier, we become more and more drained and depleted and we think, how am I ever going to cope without this person? But of course, when you leave relatively quickly, all that energy that was being drained starts to come back and be available. And so the narrative that people can have of how they're going to feel on the other side is not necessarily how it's going to feel on the other side.

Dr Judith Orloff

That's right. And it's the kind of healing process that this is the genius of empathy. It's how you show yourself empathy and set clear boundaries and get out. And maybe you don't know how it's all going to unfold, but you can take it a day at a time once you get out. And you could learn each day how this can unfold, so you can get some distance and space for yourself, so you can come together again.

If you have been fragmented, this person has done damage to you over the years. If it's been a really long relationship, even a short relationship, people suffer so much from this. But you have to get yourself back together. And what I've seen with my patients is they have the desire to do this. They want to find themselves again, and they want to have empathy for themselves, and they want to not be in this relationship, even though they feel the tidal pull of going back. And the narcissist, or the sociopath, or psychopath will send you texts late at night saying, oh, I'm thinking of you. I really think I made a mistake. I wasn't sensitive enough to you in all of this.

And you go, oh, maybe they really do love me. No, they don't. See, this is the hook. That's why you need support. I'm a big believer in having support when you get to those weak points to say to your friend, oh, but she sent me a text and it's so sweet. No and no. So you need support,

otherwise you're vulnerable. People are vulnerable. They're lonely. And here's this, I'm sure the narcissist has plenty of fine traits, because they're usually smart, and charming, and high functioning, usually. And they have a lot going on for them intellectually, and they're good superficial friends, as long as you don't ask anything from them. They're very good superficial friends, if you like that, if you just want to go out and enjoy that part of them. But intimacy, no, not capable of it.

[00:40:37] Alex Howard

Well, talking of support and talking of moving forwards, I'd love you to say a few words about your upcoming book, and also where people can find out more about what you have to offer.

Dr Judith Orloff

Thank you. Yes. I'm really excited about this book coming out, and it's on Amazon now, pre-order. *The Genius of Empathy: Practical Skills to Heal Your Sensitive Self, Your Relationships and The World*. And so it's kind of a guide to how do you use empathy in your life in all kinds of circumstances. What are the blocks? What are the difficulties? And how can I really embrace this, to empower myself, as opposed to giving up on it and saying, the world is just too damaged? I don't know, I'm just going to go withdraw, because sometimes empaths do that.

They just, I want to just be with my animals, and that's a choice. But I will never, ever give up on trying to make this world a better place. I don't care what's going on, or all the drama, the theater. I don't care. Because what I do care about is what I believe in, and what I know to be true, in terms of healing. And so this book will help you heal, and not get you so distracted by everything going on outside that you discombobulated and you lose your center. This is about how to have empathy for yourself, empathy with other people, find your strength, learn how to set boundaries, not absorb the energy of the world, or of stressful people.

It's a skill set. And this book offers a skill set for you to deal with your relationships, to deal with your beloved when you're not getting along. How do you do that? How do you have empathy when you're so mad at them? How do you do that? It's a very practical book with practical examples of why empathy would help you. If your goal is wanting to be a loving person and to be loved. And that's what your goal is, this is one path there and it will get you there.

And for me, it's a life path because I love it so much. But in *The Genius of Empathy*, I share it with you. And you could find more information on drjudithorloff.com, my website. It's on Amazon, Barnes and Noble, online booksellers at this point to pre-order.

And I'm so glad to engage you in this conversation. And it's a very important conversation for everybody who wants to heal trauma, and change the kinds of toxic relationships they might have. I love that change point. I love this summit because it allows people to find the ahas where that makes sense to me.

I'm going to go in that direction. I'm going to take better care of myself and empathize with my whole situation instead of beating myself up all the time. So it's a wonderful summit and it's an incredible topic. I'm really happy that you put it forth Alex.

[00:43:59] Alex Howard

Well, thank you, Judith. And thank you also for your many years of work and exploration in this area, because I think it brings a clarity to something where, in a way, part of what makes it so difficult is the murkiness and the manipulation, and stuff that goes on. And so it needs that real clarity to separate all of that and to tease that out. So thank you and to encourage people to order your new book, *The Genius of Empathy*, and thank you for being with us.

Dr Judith Orloff

Thank you.