

Web INFLUENCERS are really just PROSTITUTES and NARCISSISTS

Influencer Jacob Skidmore will be the first to tell you that he's a narcissist. Skidmore's online persona is built around him being diagnosed with narcissistic personality disorder. He uses his platform to share insights about the disorder, often through the lens of his own experiences and thoughts.

Those casually familiar with [narcissism](#) might expect someone with the disorder like Skidmore ([@thenamelessnarcissist](#)) to come across as self-aggrandizing and histrionic, every post designed to impress his audience with how exceptional he is. Instead he shares raw and at times embarrassing details about the things he's done and how his mind works with the apparent goal of educating people about the disorder.

In a recent [post](#), Skidmore revealed "the most narcissistic thing he ever did": paid for a neuropsychological evaluation with the sole purpose of proving he has a high IQ "so I could brag about it." Then he says he joined the high-IQ society Mensa International, again so he could boast about it. Skidmore never attended any Mensa events or meetings, however, because his IQ places him right at the cutoff of being eligible for membership—meaning some members would have higher IQs than his, which would make him "feel bad."

"This entire process of me trying to prove that I am statistically smarter than people cost me over \$500, and that's with insurance," Skidmore says in the clip, shaking his head and laughing softly.

"All of that for me to then proceed to bash the concept of IQ as unreliable just because there's people that exist with a higher IQ than mine."

Skidmore's openness about having narcissistic personality disorder (NPD) has built him a sizable online following and positioned him as something of an expert in the field. He's got a quarter-million followers on his verified [TikTok](#), another 40,000 on [YouTube](#), and last year penned a [memoir](#), *The Regrets of a Narcissist: A Decade of Self-Reflection*. One of his pinned [posts](#) is from a virtual talk about narcissism he gave at Northeastern University.

Skidmore is part of a thriving internet subculture of people who share their experience with diagnoses like narcissistic personality disorder, borderline personality disorder, and others. It makes sense that people with these disorders—or experiences with those who

have them—would come together to create online communities built upon their shared experiences.

But in the case of self-described diagnosed narcissists like Skidmore, are they enlightening others and atoning for their actions? Or are they purely using their platforms to inflate their egos, one of the most notorious behaviors of narcissists? Mayo Clinic [defines](#) the disorder as “a mental health condition in which people have an unreasonably high sense of their own importance. They need and seek too much attention and want people to admire them.”

“NPD is primarily defined in terms of grandiosity, right? So they may present with a lot of self importance,” Chelsea Cohen, executive director for Austin DBT Associates, recently told the Daily Dot.

One man’s journey to a diagnosis

Skidmore says the path to the diagnosis that led him to internet fame began when he was a teen.

“I noticed that I wasn’t feeling empathy and stuff. Up until around early high school, I basically only really showed vulnerable, narcissistic traits,” Skidmore said in a recent phone conversation.

He told me he was diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder ([ADHD](#)) as a child, but says no one mentioned NPD until years later. Medical professionals say that it’s common for people with personality disorders to be diagnosed with something else, like ADHD, that has approved pharmaceutical treatments, as the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) [hasn’t approved](#) any medications to treat personality disorders.

Shana Alexander, a licensed professional counselor supervisor and psychiatric nurse practitioner with Austin DBT Associates, says that in spite of the FDA’s reticence to greenlight them, “personality disorders absolutely do respond to medications.”

“If I truly believe that the medication is effective, and it’s FDA approved for depression, and this patient is meeting criteria for it, absolutely, I’ll use it,” Alexander said. She said they also use off-label medications to treat personality disorders.

Talk therapy is the primary treatment for NPD. This form of treatment is also how many people get diagnosed with the disorder.

Skidmore shared that a “violent incident” at home in his mid-teens launched his journey to being diagnosed with NPD.

“I ended up in court ordered therapy. And around this time is when narcissistic traits were, like, first brought up to me, right?” he said.

Initially he brushed it off. When he looked into it further, he says he realized that he probably is a narcissist, but that in his mind’s eye, it wasn’t necessarily a bad thing. He figured it just meant he lacks empathy and is better than most at manipulating people. “So I kind of turned it around into a positive,” Skidmore said.

The condition started having negative effects on other areas of his life as he aged, Skidmore said.

“I was in a relationship with this woman, and I ended up having, like, one of the only times in my life that I cheated. I ended up cheating on her with another woman who I’ll just say that me and her had a very toxic relationship,” he shared.

The love triangle led him to open up more to his therapist.

Skidmore recalled telling his therapist during a session that his friends aren’t like him and that they don’t understand him. “Then as I wrap up my tirade, I just, like, look at the ground. I kind of chuckle. And I just, I’m like, ‘I can’t blame them, though. I mean, they’re all so f***ing stupid.’”

“And she’s like, ‘I’m sorry?’ And I’m like, ‘I mean, look at them. They complain that I think that I’m better than them. I mean, I’m smarter, more attractive, well, more charismatic. I am better.’ She’s just like, looking at me, and she’s like, ‘And these are your friends.’ And I’m like, ‘Well, yeah, just because [they’re] my friends doesn’t mean I can’t recognize I am better than them.’”

Skidmore ultimately accepted that he has narcissistic personality disorder. The realization began a journey of deeper self-discovery that eventually led to him becoming an influencer. He’s one of the biggest influencers in the space.

Famous for being a narcissist

Narcissists are well-known for having an inflated sense of self-importance, a preoccupation with self-image, and constant need for attention. The narcissism [Subreddit](#) cheekily describes itself as having “the most beautiful and intelligent people in the world” and “the really special ones.”

Most posts in the narcissism Subreddit seek advice on dealing with the symptoms of NPD and harms caused by the same, either for themselves or a loved one. There’s a real

sense of despair many, though not all, of the self-described narcissists exude that some may find surprising.

Last month, one lamented with apparent exasperation that half the planet belongs in the therapy Subreddit. "Personally I couldn't care less about validation and LOVE being a narcissist. Why do so many want a babysitter? It's like they don't have any confidence or control whatsoever," they [wrote](#).

One could argue that being an influencer feeds, and potentially encourages, the darker side of some narcissistic traits.

So what is this doing for Skidmore's narcissism? Are the clicks, likes, praise, hate, whatever comes with influencing harming him? Is it feeding into his narcissism?

"The trend that I've noticed, and this might surprise you, the bigger I've gotten, the less it's fed my narcissism, the more inadequate I feel, the more it's grown, the more it's not good enough, the more like I get fixated on, you know, needing it like, it's like, maybe once I hit this milestone, I'll feel better, right? But it has a lot of diminishing returns," said Skidmore.

Although he says social media hasn't impacted his feelings of grandiosity as much, it does at times affect his self esteem overall. He says how he performs on social media can deeply affect his feelings of self worth for better and worse.

"Since my self esteem is already externally based, and I feel like anybody's social media is going to have their self esteem impacted by how they're performing. It's very extreme for me on social media," said Skidmore.

Skidmore believes his lack of empathy actually makes him a better sounding board when it comes to hearing people out and being a neutral voice for those asking for help. However, he acknowledges that this could have adverse effects, such as validating his thoughts of being the smartest in the room.

"If I can make them feel better, oh, they praise me and say I'm wise and smart, and then I feel good. It's a f***ing, you know, win win scenario, right? Because I know in my life a lot of times when I do try to open up to people, because of how intense I can get, that can be overwhelming to people, and that kind of caused some risk in my relationships in the past," said Skidmore.

While Skidmore feels he has a pretty good grasp on how to handle social media praise, he says that is not necessarily true for everyone in his community.

“When you get into this space, you get some notoriety, and then you meet other influencers who also have personality disorders, and you find and you finally feel like, oh, there’s other people who understand me. I’m not alone, ” said Skidmore. “But then you find yourself with a bunch of friends like this, and then you’re like, and then it kind of can lead to a lot of enabling.”

He says it’s been a blessing to find others who are having similar experiences. Yet Skidmore acknowledges that sometimes the grind of being an influencer weighs him down.

“If one video blows up, I’m all grandiose and all about myself and how these, all these plans, and just the degree of attention that it gets makes my self esteem just jump back and forth like a metronome,” he said, adding, “I think that, like, the amount of stress that does put on me sometimes has impacted negatively some of my personal relationships.”

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The Internet Is a Narcissist's Paradise | Psychology Today

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