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## Was the myth of Narcissus misinterpreted by Freud? Narcissus, a model for schizoid-histrionic, not narcissistic, personality disorder

(Review)

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## Abstract

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Gods and heroes of Greek myths have been of interest to psychoanalysts, who find them as symbols of human intrapsychic life, evolution, and conflicts. Many of these gods and heroes, like Oedipus, Electra, Eros, and Narcissus, have had their names given to psychological situations, conflicts, and diseases. Freud picked the myth of Narcissus as a symbol of a self-absorbed person whose libido is invested in the ego itself, rather than in other people. The term narcissistic personality disorder, also taken from the myth, describes a self-loving character with grandiose feelings of uniqueness. In this article, I reevaluate the myth of Narcissus and present a different psychoanalytic concept for this story. I view Narcissus as a symbol of a youth who seeks the image of anima or a feminine mental image in interpersonal love relationships, an image that can never be found in the real external world. This misguided quest for an imaginary love object only results in solitude. © 2006 Association for the Advancement of Psychoanalysis.

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