

# Gaslighting 101 - Learning the Facts

Gaslighting is used by different personality types such as Narcissists, Borderlines, Sociopaths, Dependent types, and those with Passive Aggressive behavior issues. It is a malicious tactic to control, manipulate, tear down, silence, or abuse a person. Though it can take many forms of expression the outcome on a person's emotional state is the same. The individual being gaslighted is conditioned over time to question themselves.

Over the long term gaslighting can leave an individual:

- doubting themselves, their emotions, and their experiences
- feeling confused
- increased internal and external anxiety and depression
- having a poor sense of self worth and confidence
- unhappy, incredibly shy and timid
- unable to make even the simplest of decision
- feeling as if everything that happens is their fault

Internally it brings and imbalance to the Autonomic Nervous System and creates internal tensions there as well as in the hippocampus and amygdala. Long term exposure to gaslighting can decrease the size of the hippocampus and increase the size of the amygdala. This results in an individual seeing every situation as a perceived threat or problem and inability to remember one's good memories and only able to process the experience through the bad memories. Gaslighting is an ugly and vicious tactic used to destroy the heart and spirit of another.

The following is what it can look like in different settings.

## **In the Professional Setting**

Done to lead others to question your judgment and credibility

1. You find you are the subject of gossip
2. Your reputation is being questioned or tarnished
3. Things are being blamed on you that you are not aware of
4. One day it seems you have no credibility among co-workers and you are being passed over for functions and promotions you are more than qualified for.
5. The person doing the gaslighting makes a practice of constantly arguing with you, your decisions, and your way of doing things.
6. You notice you are being discredited in verbal and non-verbal ways
7. You start to question your own performance and capability
8. You seem to be expected to operate according to a standard that others aren't expected to uphold. Your behavior is questioned while co-workers get away with the same.
9. You become the office scapegoat

### **In a Romantic Relationship**

Done to cause you to question yourself so your partner can maintain control over you

1. You find you are lied to over and over again
2. Your memories and experiences are constantly minimized or discredited even when there is evidence to support your argument
3. Your partner plays on your sympathies to manipulate you into doing what they want or need you to do
4. You are made out to be crazy to be other people
5. Your partner is constantly unfaithful to you with affairs, flirting, social media, ect which they then give you a reasonable explanation for and accuse you of overeating And crazy
5. Your partner slowly leads you life into isolation from family and friends.
6. Your partner leads you to believe you are the problem and that they are the only one who could love you and stand by you in your mental state
7. Your partner criticizes your friends & family members or makes up stories about them
8. Your partner bullies or intimidates you. They could make threats against you, your pets, or your children. They can cyberstalk, stalk, send letters, contact people with lies about you. This behavior will increase as you grow in overcoming their abuse or if they are afraid you will talk about them.
9. They provoke you to react and then turn and blame the whole situation on you and that you were the one intentionally causing problems for them.

### **In the Family Setting**

Done to control and manipulate you with the context of family systems.

1. You are always being made to feel guilty for everything that happens even though you are innocent.
2. You are always accused of blowing things out of proportion, making things up, or intentionally starting trouble to attack the gaslight.
3. There is no such thing as negotiating, compromising, or fairly talking about a situation with a gaslight. Any attempt to talk about a situation with them will be met with defensive tactics and blame shifting.
4. You are blamed for the actions of others or find faults are being blame shifted to you. the gaslighter becomes a master of shaming.
5. When you begin to understand that you are not the problem or begin to seek help to understand and overcome the unhealthy behaviors you will suffer family retaliations for it. This is done to try to coerce you into not leaving the unhealthy family system or revealing the truth about what is really occurring.

## **Common Tactics and Phrases Gaslighters Use in Conversation**

1. "That didn't happen"
2. "Your remembering it wrong"
3. "I don't know what you are talking about"
4. "I am only being hard because I care about you"
5. "Everyone else thinks this"
6. "I only said (or did) ——— because you provoked me"
7. "Your putting words in my mouth"
8. "It was all your fault I did it"
9. "If you hadn't ———, I wouldn't have ———"
10. "Your exaggerating", "Your too sensitive", "Your crazy"
11. "Your being selfish" or "Only thinking about yourself"
12. "Everyone dislikes you" Everyone thinks your crazy"
13. "I can't believe you would accuse me of—— after all I've done for you"
14. "You are a disappointment to me"
15. "This is not what it looks like", "Things are not what they seem"
16. "No one will believe you"
17. "I am the only one who understands you"