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Narcissistic Force Meets Systemic Resistance: The Energy Clash Model

Constantine Sedikides[1] and W. Keith Campbell[2]
[1]University of Southampton, United Kingdom; and [2]University of Georgia

Abstract
This article focuses on the interplay between narcissistic leaders and organizations. It attempts to capture the gist of this interplay with a model outlining the narcissistic organizational trajectory. The Energy Clash Model borrows and adapts a phase/state physics metaphor to conceptualize narcissism as a force that enters or emerges in a stable system (i.e., organization) as a leader, destabilizes it, and stabilizes it at a different state or is expelled. The model consists of three time-contingent phases: *perturbation, conflict,* and *resolution*. Narcissists create instability through waves of excitement, proposed reforms, and an inspiring vision for organization's future (*perturbation*). With the passage of time, though, systemic awareness and alertness intensify, as organizational costs—in terms of human resources and monetary losses—accrue. Narcissistic energy clashes directly with the organization (*conflict*), a clash likely to restabilize the system eventually. The conflict may provoke the exit of the narcissistic leader or his or her accommodation, that is, steps or controls negotiated between the system and the leader (*resolution*). Although narcissism is subject to organizational liability, narcissistic energy, when managed and directed properly, may contribute to organizational innovation and evolution. Thus, several interventions for working with narcissistic leaders are discussed.

Keywords
narcissism, narcissists, energy, organizations, culture

Grandiose narcissism (hereafter narcissism) refers to a self-absorbed, self-aggrandizing, vanity-prone, arrogant, dominant, and manipulative interpersonal orientation. Narcissists are preoccupied with their own sense of specialness and importance, and with fantasies of power, beauty, and acclaim. They manifest low levels of empathy, shame, or guilt, while boasting about their ability, thinking of themselves as exceptional or unique, demanding adulation, lashing out at rivals, and not shying away from interpersonal, business, or political brawls.

For the most part, the literature on narcissism has been concerned with issues of construct validity (J. D. Miller et al., 2011), intrapersonal models (e.g., how narcissistic features relate dynamically to one another; Krizan & Herlache, in press), self-regulatory models involving self-protection (Bushman & Baumeister, 1998) or self-enhancement (Campbell & Green, 2007; Chatterjee & Pollock, 2016; Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001), and, in some cases, temporally linked models (contextual reinforcement model; Campbell & Campbell, 2009). In this article, we propose a higher-level process model, the Energy Clash Model (ECM), that tracks narcissistic leadership across time and in organizational space. We formulated the ECM at the organization or system level rather than at the individual level (i.e., perspective of the leader or follower). The existing models address narcissistic motivation (e.g., self-enhancement, reward-seeking) or narcissistic action across time. The ECM is linked to these models to the extent it focuses on narcissistic motivation or behavior across time, but it is not designed to compete with or replace these models. Instead, it is designed to describe narcissism in leadership and the organizational level response to it.

Narcissism is a personality trait varying on a continuum (Campbell & Miller, 2011; Foster & Campbell, 2007; Thomaes, Brummelman, & Sedikides, in press);[1] that is, narcissism is a trait-like proclivity toward (or away from) a set of cognitions, emotions, or actions (Endler, Parker, Bagby, & Cox, 1991; Fleeson, 2001; Lenton, Bruder, Slabu,

Corresponding Author:
Constantine Sedikides, Centre for Research on Self and Identity, Psychology Department, University of Southampton, Southampton SO17 1BJ, UK
E-mail: cs2@soton.ac.uk

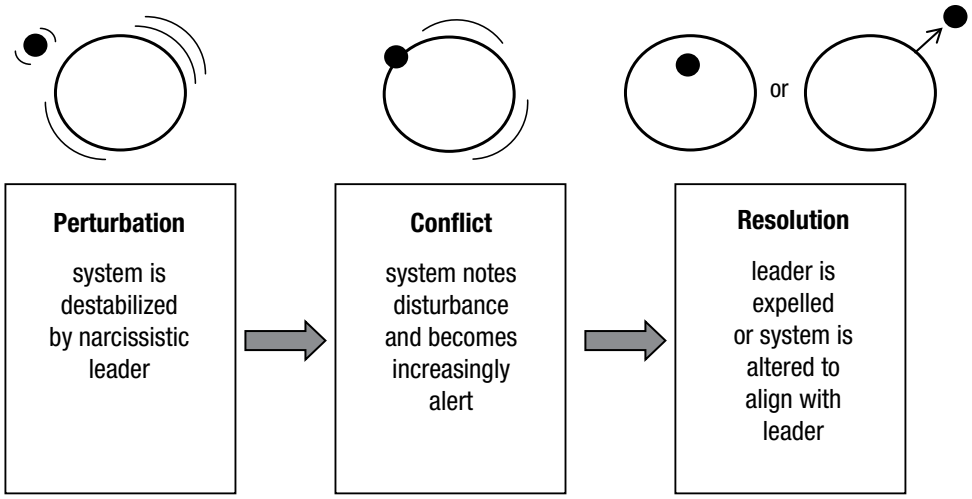

Fig. 1. The Energy Clash Model of narcissism and organizational change.

& Sedikides, 2013). However, narcissism can also be conceptualized as a dynamic state, that is, the actual set of cognitions, emotions, or actions (Fleeson, 2001; Lenton et al., 2013; Nezlek, 2007). Put otherwise, narcissism has a state-like, context-dependent property that varies as a function of positive (Giacomin & Jordan, 2016) or negative (Rhodewalt, Madrian, & Cheney, 1998) outcomes, use of social media (Halpern, Valenzuela, & Katz, 2016; Horton, Reid, Barber, Miracle, & Green, 2014), everyday negative emotions (Cheng, Tracy, & Miller, 2013), or time (Twenge & Campbell, 2009; Wilson & Sibley, 2011). This property is depicted in various self-regulatory models (Campbell & Campbell, 2009; Campbell & Foster, 2007; Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001). We assume an interactive and mutually reinforcing relation between trait and state narcissism (i.e., states can magnify or reduce narcissism), although our focus is on the vagaries of trait narcissism.

Our theoretical model, the ECM, borrows loosely and adapts a phase/state metaphor from physics (Jaeger, 1998; Nolte, 2010) to conceptualize narcissism as a force that enters a stable system (i.e., organizations; Boyd & Richerson, 2008), destabilizes it, and restabilizes it at a different state or is expelled. Our model thus focuses not just on the internal dynamics of narcissism—and the use of contexts to shape those dynamics—but on the broader organizational system with which narcissism interacts. The model consists of three time-contingent phases that purport to capture the narcissistic leader's impact on the organization, the accompanying systemic reactions, and the resulting negotiations between the system and her or, more typically (Grijalva et al., 2014), him. The phases are *perturbation, conflict*, and *resolution*. In essence, capitalizing on a physics metaphor, the ECM is concerned with how organizations, and society at large, can harness the energy of narcissistic leaders while minimizing the harmful emissions.

We schematically diagram the model in Figure 1, and we outline the main tenets of it—both from the narcissistic leader's and the organization's perspective—in Table 1. In addition, we highlight cases of narcissistic leaders from business and politics whose organizational trajectory exemplifies the model (see Appendix). Below, we articulate the three ECM phases drawing from relevant literature and offering speculation, when needed, that awaits empirical verification.

Perturbation

According to the ECM, narcissists destabilize the system (i.e., generate perturbation) upon assuming organizational leadership and in the following temporal period. Perturbation does not necessarily involve a direct clash, but it sows the seeds for it. Narcissistic leaders can emerge internally in the organization or be recruited from the outside. We discuss perceptions of narcissists as leaders and their emergence as leaders, before we consider systemic perturbation.

Narcissists are seen and elected as leaders

Narcissists have attributes that make them noticeable and likely set them apart from their peers. Narcissists are high on extraversion, vitality, and self-esteem (Paulhus & John, 1998; Raskin & Terry, 1988; Sedikides, Rudich, Gregg, Kumashiro, & Rusbult, 2004). They are approach-oriented, glamorous, optimistic, and happy (Foster & Trimm, 2008; Hickman, Watson, & Morris, 1996; Vazire, Naumann, Rentfrow, & Gosling, 2008; Zuckerman & O'Loughun, 2009). They are "loud" in that they seem to be proud of their positive (i.e., agentic) qualities and eager to tell others

Table 1. The Energy Clash Model Phases and Examples of Leader/Organization Actions

	Perturbation	Conflict	Resolution
Narcissistic leader	–leader emerges and takes organization by storm –leaders using charm, charisma, and vision –leader makes decisions about, and begins to implement, bold organizational reform	–deeper implementation of reform –excessive risk-taking –financially and ethically questionable decisions	–leader exits by force or choice, blames external factors for failure –leader stays and pursues his/her vision, but has to face organizational steps or controls
Organization	–welcoming of leader –excitement, enthusiasm, and optimism about reform –initial realignment of structure/personnel due to early success of reform (honeymoon period)	–alertness about speed and nature of reform –concern spreads about financial and ethical risks to organization –elements of organization begin to challenge or resist reform (fizzling out and ending of honeymoon period)	–organizational defenses strengthen, leader is expelled or leaves by choice –organizational defenses weaken or are re-thought, organization accommodates to match leader's vision

about them (Buss & Chiodo, 1991; Carlson, 2013; Grijalva & Zhang, 2016). They want to be leaders and dislike being followers (Benson, Jordan, & Christie, 2016), unless they are confident that they can rise through the ranks (Zitek & Jordan, 2016). And they have visionary communication skills (Galvin, Waldman, & Balthazard, 2010). In all, they are engaging, energetic, and seemingly well-adjusted. How can they not be liked and attracted to (Back, Schmukle, & Egloff, 2010; Oltmanns, Friedman, Fiedler, & Turkheimer, 2004; Paulhus, 1998)? They are what one would call "leader material."

Narcissists are indeed seen as having many of the prototypical features of leaders (e.g., confidence, energy, dominance, charisma; Grijalva, Harms, Newman, Gaddis, & Fraley, 2015; Hoffman, Woehr, Magdalen-Youngjohn, & Lyons, 2011; Smith & Foti, 1998). In educational settings they are rated as leaders (Judge, LePine, & Rich, 2006), and in organizational settings they are evaluated favorably for managerial positions by interviewers who are experienced in personnel selection (Schnure, 2010). Critically, narcissists are elected as leaders. Brunell et al. (2008; see also Nevicka, De Hoogh, Van Vianen, & Beersma, 2011) studied leaderless groups in the laboratory. All groups consisted of four unacquainted individuals—either undergraduates (Studies 1–2) or practicing managers (Study 3)—who engaged in a discussion. Narcissism predicted leader emergence, regardless of whether it was self-reported, reported by group members, or assessed by expert observers in assessment centers. Apparently, narcissists took charge of the group discussion exuding power, authority, and conviction (Brunell et al., Study 2; see also Paulhus, Westlake, Calvez, & Harms, 2013; Vangelisti, Knapp, & Daly, 1990).

Given their power-seeking and status-seeking proclivities (Bradlee & Emmons, 1992; Carroll, 1987; Chatterjee & Pollock, 2016; Gebauer, Sedikides, Verplanken, & Maio, 2012; Horton & Sedikides, 2009; Kanske, Sharifi, Smallwood, Dziobek, & Singer, 2016), narcissists are prone to finding overtures to positions of leadership highly agreeable. Narcissistic characteristics indeed abound among contenders for leadership positions (e.g., business students; Sautter, Brown, Littvay, Sautter, & Bearnes, 2008; Westerman, Bergman, Bergman, & Daly, 2012), among leaders such as business executives and politicians (Deluga, 1997; Peterson, Galvin, & Lange, 2012; Rosenthal & Pittinsky, 2006; Watts et al., 2013), and among popular culture leaders such as actors, musicians, and especially reality TV show contestants (Rubinstein, 2016; Young & Pinsky, 2006).

Narcissistic energy perturbs the organizational system

After becoming leaders, narcissists duly proceed to perturb the organizational system by launching a variety of reforms. Narcissistic leaders often do not merely aim to improve on the status quo in an incremental manner. Rather, they are likely to pursue actions that are distinctive, bold, and even dramatic.

Narcissists regard their narcissism as a personal asset and are cognizant of its significance in their attempts for social recognition (Carlson, 2013; Carlson, Naumann, & Vazire, 2011). As such, they use charm and charisma to generate a buzz, form relationships (as they are capable of shifting to a communal orientation; Jordan, Giacomin, & Kopp, 2014), elicit approval, get organizational members on board (Conger, 1989; Deluga, 1997; House & Howell, 1992), and use their formidable political skill (Thompson, Glasø, & Campbell, 2016).

Given their unexpectedly high level of self-insight (Carlson, 2013; Konrath, Meier, & Bushman, 2014), narcissists grasp that social acclaim comes from effectively wielded leadership initiatives and concrete contributions. An example of leadership initiative pertains to narcissists' central position in their social networks, as indicated both by social network analyses (Clifton, Turkheimer, & Oltmanns, 2009; Lamkin, Clifton, Campbell, & Miller, 2014) and social medial use (for a meta-analytic review, see McCain & Campbell, 2016). For instance, narcissists (compared to their less narcissistic counterparts) have a higher number of social contacts and "friends" (Buffardi & Campbell, 2008; Mehdizadeh, 2010), and post flattering photographs of themselves (Carpenter, 2012; Nadkarni & Hofman, 2012), on Facebook. Furthermore, narcissists have more friends and display greater self-promotion on Twitter (McKinney, Kelly, & Duran, 2012; Panek, Nardis, & Konrath, 2013) or MySpace (Gentile, Twenge, Freeman, & Campbell, 2012), and tweet more often (McCain & Campbell, 2016). More generally, narcissism is positively related to a variety of online social networking activities both in Western cultures (La Barbera, La Paglia, & Valsavoia, 2009; Ryan & Xebos, 2011) and in Eastern (i.e., Chinese, Pakistani) cultures (Malik & Khan, 2015; Wang, Ho, Chan, & Tse, 2015); is positively associated with profile updating regarding accomplishments, exercise, or diet (Marshall, Lefringshausen, & Ferenczi, 2015); and is positively linked to addictive use of social media (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat; Andreassen, Pallesen, & Griffiths, 2016). Indeed, narcissistic individuals not only post more selfies, but also enjoy more doing so (McCain et al., 2016). Due to their social network centrality and penchant for social media use, narcissistic leaders amass social capital (Liu, Ainsworth, & Baumeister, 2016) and may be well suited for the creation and expansion of social network opportunities that are likely to benefit the organization (e.g., linking organizational interests to those of other organizations, introducing key staff to peers from other organizations). Their networking ability may help revitalize the organization and set the stage for showcasing transformational leadership.

Transformational leadership involves, besides charisma, formulating and sharing a vision as well as enabling intellectual engagement (Bass, 1990; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, & Fetter, 1990). In particular, transformational leadership is thought to have four components (Bass, 1985):[2] (a) idealized influence (i.e., being a role model that instils pride and gains trust or respect), (b) inspirational motivation (i.e., conveying an appealing vision), (c) intellectual stimulation (i.e., challenging assumptions, inciting creativity, supporting problem-solving), and (d) individualized consideration (i.e., attending to members' needs, being a mentor). Narcissists may project a bold and clear vision of the organizational future, inspire subordinates to alter perceptions, expectations, and motivations in working toward common goals, and advocate immediate change, even disruption, to the organization, while appearing to be capable of managing a successful changeover (Campbell, Hoffman, Campbell, & Marchisio, 2011; Maccoby, 2000, 2003). There is some empirical support for these proposals. Judge et al. (2006) found a positive relation between narcissism and self-ratings of global transformational leadership, although Khoo and Burch (2008) did not replicate this general pattern. Yet, a more fine-grained analysis of Khoo and Burch's data uncovered a positive association between narcissism and the charismatic component of "idealized influence" (i.e., instilling pride in subordinates and earning their respect and trust). Also, content analyses of presidential speeches revealed that the higher on narcissism former U.S. presidents were, the more they were perceived as charismatic (Deluga, 1997). Finally, Judge et al. (2006) reported that high narcissists were seen as transformational leaders by their peers.

Narcissists match their leadership initiatives with illustrations of concrete contributions to the organization. Although narcissism does not generally predict actual task performance (Campbell, Goodie, & Foster, 2004; Farwell & Wohlwend-Lloyd, 1998; Gabriel, Critelli, & Ee, 1994; Goncalo, Flynn, & Kim, 2010), it does so when an opportunity for self-enhancement (i.e., admiration, competition; Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001) presents itself. Wallace and Baumeister (2002; see also Abeyta, Routledge, & Sedikides, 2017; Morf, Weir, & Davidov, 2000; Woodman, Roberts, Hardy, Callow, & Rogers, 2011) tested this idea. They reasoned that high self-enhancing (i.e., glory hunting) opportunities are afforded when working under pressure toward a particularly challenging task goal, or when in the presence of an evaluative audience. Indeed, under such conditions, narcissists surpassed their low narcissistic counterparts. Mathieu and St-Jean (2013) reported conceptually similar findings with narcissistic leaders, whereas Gerstner, König, Enders, and Hambrick (2013) did so with narcissistic chief executive officers (CEOs). Being a leader means performing routinely under self-enhancement opportunities. In that way, narcissistic leaders are likely to do well, as shown in a commons dilemma study by Campbell, Bush, Brunell, and Shelton (2005). Participants assumed the role of a forestry company CEO, competing for forest harvesting against three other companies (i.e., three other participants in the room). The narcissistic student-CEOs were particularly successful, as they harvested more timber compared to the other student-CEOs with whom they were competing (although at the cost of more rapid deforestation).

Another illustration of concrete organizational contributions entails audacious, brazen decisions. In general, narcissists are prone to risk-taking (Campbell et al., 2004;

Lakey, Rose, Campbell, & Goodie, 2008; Macenczak, Campbell, Henley, & Campbell, 2016), and so are narcissistic leaders (Chatterjee & Hambrick, 2007). Foster and colleagues examined narcissistic risk-proneness in the context of investment decisions. In particular, Foster, Misra, and Reidy (2009, Study 2) presented participants with four investment scenarios involving mutual fund investment, company investment, investment options, and stock and bond. Investment strategy varied in each scenario from conservative to aggressive. Narcissists expressed preferences for a more aggressive investment strategy, and this was due to their high approach orientation. Furthermore, in a simulated investment paradigm, Foster, Reidy, Misra, and Goff (2011, Study 1) showed that narcissists manifested preferences for more volatile stocks (i.e., those with more severe price fluctuations) and, over a 5-week period, selected more volatile stocks from a hypothetical investment portfolio that included actual stock values. Such a selection was also accounted for by their heightened approach orientation. The boldness of narcissistic leaders is not expressed solely in the context of investment decisions. Narcissism among 42 U.S. presidents (based on scrutiny of their pre-presidential biographical information) was positively related to agenda setting, legislation initiation, and crisis management (Watts et al., 2013).

Finally, narcissists are not necessarily hampered by the need or desire to maintain closeness. Close relationships often serve as a buffer against taking risks (J. D. Miller et al., 2009) or pursuing glory (Campbell, Reeder, Sedikides, & Elliot, 2000; Sedikides, Campbell, Reeder, & Elliot, 1998), but do not hold much sway with narcissists. In an organizational context, change often means harming some individuals for the greater good (or at least for the great glory of the leader). Narcissists, because of their low levels of agreeableness and high levels of callousness (J. D. Miller et al., 2009; J. D. Miller et al., 2011), are able to make choices that place significant burdens on employees (e.g., lay-offs, relocations) without being unduly weighed down by guilt or ethical quandaries.

Summary

Narcissistic leaders seem to take the organization by storm. Due to their charm, charisma, energy, approach-orientation, and willingness to step on others, they delve immediately into the deep, make speedy decisions, and take risks. They discount negative feedback (Campbell et al., 2000; Kernis & Sun, 1994), disengage self-protectively from threats to their self-image (Thomaes & Sedikides, 2016), are mentally tough (i.e., high on confidence, control, challenge, and commitment; Sabouri et al., 2016),[3] and are resilient declaring intentions to persist on challenging tasks even when they have encountered self-threat (e.g., negative feedback, disputation of their uniqueness; Nevicka, Baas, & Ten Velden, 2016) or persisting on impossible tasks provided these tasks are diagnostic of intelligence and no alternative routes to self-enhancement are available (Wallace, Ready, & Weitenhagen, 2009). Narcissistic leaders are not afraid to break barriers, dismantle prior structures, and build new ones all the while infusing the organization with excitement, enthusiasm, optimism, and purpose. Their narcissism is fueled by the momentum of their early successes and favorable, for the most part, organizational reception. Signs of clash, if any, are far and away. In the perturbation phase, narcissistic leaders enjoy a honeymoon period.

Conflict

Narcissistic leaders may be guided by self-motives (e.g., power, status), but their motives are not easy to discern during the process of leadership emergence (Judge, Bono, Ilies, & Werner, 2002), due to the fuzz and buzz of organizational momentum. As such, narcissists are initially given the benefit of the doubt. With the passage of time, however, organizational members become increasingly aware of these motives, as members begin to appraise narcissistic leaders on the dimension of effectiveness (Judge et al., 2002). Awareness, and accompanying alertness, involves antipathy toward narcissistic leaders and concern with the financial as well as ethical implications of their decisions. In the conflict phase, the organization system begins to recover from the shock of perturbation and takes the first, preliminary steps toward restabilizing. The system is generating counterforce or opposition to the narcissistic leader. The clash between the narcissist leader and the organization is in full swing.

Antipathy toward narcissistic leaders

Narcissists may value agentic characteristics (e.g., ambition, intelligence, competence), but they are indifferent to communal characteristics (e.g., warmth, nurturance, cooperativeness; Campbell, 1999; Campbell, Rudich, & Sedikides, 2002; Krizan & Bushman, 2011). To borrow Hogan's (1983) terms, narcissists are concerned with getting ahead, not getting along. This social value discrepancy begins to show.

Narcissists' relentless engagement in self-presentational pomposity (Sedikides, Hoorens, & Dufner, 2015), even in situations that call for modesty (D. R. Collins & Stukas, 2008), is bound to be seen as exclusive and alienating. Their self-lionization is reflected in their low levels of communality: Narcissists perceive their social environment negatively (Lamkin et al., 2014; Sedikides, Campbell, Reeder, Elliot, & Gregg, 2002). They are high on a particular form of perfectionism, other-oriented perfectionism (Hewitt & Flett, 1991), expecting others to strive

for perfection and be perfect, and being highly critical of others (but not of themselves; Stoeber, Sherry, & Nealis, 2015). They neither empathize with others (Boeckler, Sharifi, Kanske, Dziobek, & Singer, 2017; Hepper, Hart, Meek, Cisek, & Sedikides, 2014; Hepper, Hart, & Sedikides, 2014) nor show emotional contagion (i.e., "catch" others' emotions; Czarna, Wrobel, Dufner, & Zeigler-Hill, 2015). In organizational settings, they are poor mentors, with protégés opting for shorter-term relationships with them and reporting less psychosocial or career support as well as more negative mentoring experiences (Allen et al., 2009). Furthermore, narcissists derogate others and may react with rage when insulted or threatened (Boeckler et al., 2017; Bushman & Baumeister, 1998; Krizan & Johar, 2015), while also lashing out at innocent others (i.e., displaced aggression) when rejected (Twenge & Campbell, 2003, Study 4). Remarkably, narcissists disparage others even in the absence of self-threat. In two studies, Park and Colvin (2015) had judges high or low on narcissism rate on the California Adult Q-Sort (CAQ; Block, 2008) the personality of the average student in their university, the personality of a friend, and the personality of each interactant across four videotaped dyadic exchanges. The researchers compared the ratings with the CAQ prototype of optimal adjustment. Judges' narcissism predicted positively derogation of target (average peer, friend, interactant), controlling for self-esteem. Indeed, self-esteem predicted negatively target derogation (i.e., high self-esteem judges liked the targets), thus illustrating an important difference between narcissism and self-esteem (Brummelman, Thomaes, & Sedikides, 2016).

Narcissists' rancor comes across in other ways. Park, Ferrero, Colvin, and Carney (2013) instructed MBA students to engage in a negotiation simulation and subsequently evaluate each other. Although narcissists walked away with higher personal financial gain, they suffered interpersonal losses: They formed less accurate opinions of their partners and, as a result, were less trusting of them. Also, Adams, Florell, Burton, and Hart (2014) showed that narcissists disregard social etiquette or polite social conduct. They overuse, for example, offensive language, and they do so for two reasons: They find profanity less offensive than low narcissists do, and they apply it for attention grabbing purposes. Regardless, the putative frequent use of profanity on the part of narcissistic leaders may be perceived as distancing, intimidating, or abusive by organizational members, and may coerce members to feign praise and self-criticism in ostensible support of the leader's overbearing behavior (Kaiser, Hogan, & Craig, 2008). Leader mistreatment has been linked to employee feelings of humiliation or hopelessness (Herschcovis & Barling, 2010), stress or job dissatisfaction (Tepper, 2000), job burnout (Fox & Stallworth, 2010), and turnover intentions (Tepper et al., 2009). Are narcissistic leaders willing to say sorry for the misery they may inflict on others? Leunissen, Sedikides, and Wildschut (2017) examined the relation between narcissism and apologizing. Apology is an admittance of wronging that is contrary to narcissists' highly agentic opinion of themselves. Narcissism was inversely related to apologizing, and this was due to low levels of empathy and guilt. If narcissistic leaders are reluctant to apologize, their behavior might incur organizational costs, such as failing to restore social bonds or improve the organizational environment, and may plant the seeds of distrust.

Organizational members, then, will acquire first-hand knowledge of the narcissistic leader's lack of social graces. They will also become alert to the narcissistic leader's disparagement of their colleagues through others' testimonies (i.e., gossip; Dunbar, Marriott, & Dunbar, 1997; Emler, 1994). A backlash may ensue. The narcissistic leader will be met with skepticism, suspicion, and disapproval (Back et al., 2010; Czarna, Dufner, & Clifton, 2014; Paulhus, 1998), because of attributed antagonism, rivalry, or superiority and thus contempt for employees (Leckelt, Küfner, Nestler, & Back, 2015). Of note, although narcissists will be evaluated unfavorably across the board, they will likely be evaluated less so by members who are high (than low) on narcissism (Wallace, Grotzinger, Howard, & Parkhill, 2015). That is, narcissistic (compared to less narcissistic) members may be more lenient in their judgments of narcissistic leaders.

Ong, Roberts, Arthur, Woodman, and Akehurst (2016) tested directly changing perceptions of narcissistic leaders. In two studies, they assessed perceived qualities of narcissistic leaders (within a transformational leadership framework), as these were formulated over a 12-week period among both unacquainted and acquainted group members. Unacquainted members rated narcissists as (transformational) leaders in the earlier, but not later, stages of group formation. However, acquainted members did not rate narcissists as (transformational) leaders in the earlier stages, and they rated them as having low transformational leadership potential in the later stages. These findings concur with research showing that people form increasingly unfavorable impressions of narcissists as they get to know them (Back et al., 2010; Paulhus, 1998). The findings are also consistent with those of Khoo and Burch (2008), who reported a negative relation between narcissism and the other-oriented component of individual consideration, namely, attending to subordinates' individual needs and being a mentor or coach. Finally, the findings are consistent with those of Judge and colleagues (2006), who reported that narcissists were not seen as transformational leaders by their supervisors. Related to this, not only their subordinates but also their superiors perceive narcissistic managers unfavorably: Blair, Hoffman, and Helland (2008) found that narcissists

were judged by their superiors as poor at the interpersonal side of management.

In all, the organizational pendulum has now swung toward disapproval of the narcissistic leader. However, this antipathy is not likely to spread evenly across the organization: The more communal and less narcissistic employees will be affected particularly strongly.

Concern with the financial and ethical implications of narcissistic leaders' decisions

This disapproval is intensified due to financial decisions that narcissistic leaders may make and the ethical implications of these decisions.

Financial decisions. Narcissists are high on certain forms of impulsivity (J. D. Miller et al., 2009; Rose, 2007; Vazire & Funder, 2006). They are not high on classic impulsivity, as defined by low conscientiousness (classic impulsivity is negatively associated with organizational performance; Barrick & Mount, 1991). Instead, narcissists are high on impulsivity pertaining to extraversion, approach orientation, or sensation seeking (J. D. Miller et al., 2009; Whiteside & Lynam, 2001; Zuckerman, 1979).

Campbell et al. (2004) illustrated narcissistic risk-taking and its relation to overconfidence in decision-making. In Study 1, participants provided answers, as well as confidence ratings, to a series of general knowledge questions. Narcissists (compared to their less narcissistic counterparts) were more confident, but not more accurate, in their answers. In Study 2, participants placed fair bets on answers to a series of questions and made confidence ratings. Narcissists were more confident in their bets, but also did worse (i.e., accrued lower point totals) due to their higher risk-taking. In Study 3, participants engaged in the same betting task as before, but also indicated how well they thought they would do, how well they thought they did, and how well they thought they would do in similar future tasks. Narcissists underachieved. However, they believed that they would surpass others both in the current task and in similar future tasks. Recent research also suggests that narcissism and overconfidence work together with power in an additive and, at the extremes, interactive way, such that narcissism combined with high levels of perceived power will result in the most elevated levels of overconfidence (Macenczak et al., 2016).

Narcissistic risk-taking is likewise observed in the context of business decision-making. Foster et al. (2011, Study 2) asked participants to form a collection of investments (i.e., hypothetical investment portfolios) on the basis of real stocks. Foster et al. tracked stock values over a 5-week period, which coincided with the collapse of the US stock market in September-October of 2008. Fortuitously, then, these researchers were able to observe narcissists' performance during an economic downturn (bear market conditions). Notably, the researchers awarded participants multiple monetary prizes (from $20 to $100) for achieving profitable portfolios at the end of the tracking period in an effort to discourage extreme risk. Despite that practice, narcissists purchased more volatile stocks, thus losing more money. In sum, narcissists' risky investments underperform in bear markets. But might they overperform in bull markets?

A study on decision-making among narcissistic leaders, and in particular CEOs, addressed this question in the highly dynamic (i.e., bull market) sector of computer hardware and software companies. Although CEOs, as business leaders, are likely to be more narcissistic than the average person (Peterson et al., 2012; Rosenthal & Pittinsky, 2006), they will vary on the trait of narcissism as they do on other personality traits (Gupta & Govindarajan, 1984; D. Miller & Toulouse, 1986). Chatterjee and Hambrick (2007) relied on unobtrusive measures of 111 CEOs over a 12-year period (1992–2004). These measures included the centrality of CEO coverage in press releases, the prominence of CEO photographs in annual reports, and the compensation of CEOs compared to that of the second in command. (Use of first-person singular pronouns in interviews was also included as a measure, but there is little evidence that it reflects narcissism in most contexts: Carey et al., 2015.) Chatterjee and Hambrick linked these measures to company strategy and performance. CEO narcissism was positively related to dynamism (consistent with the perturbation phase) and to number or size of acquisitions (consistent with the ECM's proposals of bold decision-making and early successes). However, CEO narcissism was also positively related to irregular company performance (i.e., big wins, big losses) in accounting and shareholder returns, and tended to be positively related to big annual swings in accounting returns. Overall, companies under narcissistic CEOs did not do better than companies under less narcissistic CEOs. Qualitative analyses of narcissistic managers are consistent with these findings (Kets de Vries, 1994; Lubit, 2002), and similarly laboratory or self-report findings suggest that narcissism is unrelated to group or team performance (Brunell et al., 2008; Resick, Whitman, Weingarden, & Hiles, 2009).

Other research is more damning on narcissistic leaders' effectiveness. In a field study, Engelen, Neumann, and Schmidt (2013; see also Stein, 2013) examined the shareholder value of 41 S&P 500 firms over a 3-year period (2005–2007). They found that narcissistic CEOs were responsible for the weakening of the positive relation

between shareholder value and entrepreneurial orientation of an organization (i.e., innovativeness, proactiveness, risk-taking). In a laboratory experiment, Nevicka, Ten Velden, De Hoogh, and Van Vianen (2011) found that although narcissistic leaders, due to their authority displays, were seen as more effective by group members, group performance actually suffered. The groups performed under par, because the narcissistic leaders obstructed the exchange of relevant information among members (see also Tost, Gino, & Larrick, 2013). Also in the laboratory and referring to the Campbell et al. (2005) timber harvesting simulation, narcissistic groups of student-CEOs harvested less timber, and destroyed the forest more rapidly, than their less narcissistic counterparts, demonstrating that narcissistic leadership can have long-term pernicious consequences for the group and also for society. Finally, in a meta-analysis, Grijalva and colleagues (2015) found a no linear relationship between narcissism and leadership effectiveness (i.e., supervisor-report, subordinate-report, peer-report), but they also detected a curvilinear trend according to which leaders with moderate levels of narcissism were more effective than those with high or low levels of narcissism. Note also that gender differences may play a role: De Hoogh, Den Hartog, and Nevicka (2015) reported that female managers were rated as less effective than male managers, but by their male subordinates only. Taken together, these lines of research suggest that narcissists offer no clear benefits, or offer uneven benefits, to their organization, despite thinking highly of themselves as leaders (i.e., narcissism is positively associated to self-reported leadership effectiveness; Grijalva et al., 2015). To make matters worse, they may blame the organizational turmoil on others (Campbell et al., 2000; McMahon & Rosen, 2009).

There is an additional way in which narcissistic leaders may be harmful to their organizations, and it refers to salary and compensation packages. By exercising social influence, ingratiating themselves with board members, and rewarding strategically board members (Lorsch & MacIver, 1989; Tosi, Misangyi, Fanelli, Waldman, & Yammarino, 2004), narcissists manage to secure higher compensation (salary, stock options, bonus) and more money in their shareholdings than their less narcissistic peers (O'Reilly, Doerr, Caldwell, & Chatman, 2013; O'Reilly & Main, 2010). This practice would not only put a dent in the organization's finances, but, perhaps more importantly, would also be liable to creating disharmony and friction due to a sense of inequality and unfairness.

Nevertheless, it is still possible that narcissistic leaders are effective in some types of industries, but ineffective in others. For example, they may be effective in such dynamic, high-discretion industries as fashion, media, or entertainment, but may be ineffective in such stable, low-discretion industries as basic metals, insurance, or utilities (Chatterjee & Hambrick, 2007; Jonason, Wee, Li, & Jackson, 2014). Or, they may be effective in domains where extraversion and self-absorption are highly relevant (sales and academia, respectively), but ineffective in domains that require relationship building and trust (e.g., community leadership, nursing; Rosenthal & Pittinsky, 2006). Finally, they may be effective in domains that reward self-promotion and manipulativeness (e.g., politics; Watts et al., 2013).

Ethical decisions. Not only narcissists' financial, but also their ethical, decisions are controversial. Ethical leadership involves "demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision making" (Brown, Treviño, & Harrison, 2005, p. 120). Given narcissistic leaders' preoccupation with the self, attention-seeking, lack of empathy, guilt, or shame, and tendency to exploit others (DeWall, Buffardi, Bonser, & Campbell, 2011; Gramzow & Tangney, 1992; Leunissen et al., 2017; J. Roberts, 2007), deficits in moral sensibilities would likely not come as a surprise (see Campbell & Siedor, 2016, for a review).

Narcissism may get in the way of ethical standards such as, instead of working for the organization, narcissistic leaders may work for themselves (Hornett & Fredericks, 2005). Indeed, supervisors judge narcissists as lacking in integrity (Blair et al., 2008) and attribute to them lower organizational citizenship as well as higher levels of counterproductive work behaviors (Judge et al., 2006; Penny & Spector, 2002). When narcissists exhibit good organizational citizenship, they may do so for impression management reasons (Bourdage, Lee, Lee, & Shin, 2012), and, when they volunteer, they do so for self-interest (Brunell, Tumblin, & Buelow, 2014). In sales contexts, narcissists report greater willingness to endorse unethical practices (Soyer, Rovenpor, & Kopelman, 1999). Also, narcissism predicts business white collar crime (Blickle, Schlegel, Fassbender, & Klein, 2006), destructive acts (J. D. Miller et al., 2009), sexual harassment (Zeigler-Hill, Besser, Morag, & Campbell, 2016), and time in prison (Bushman & Baumeister, 2002). Even narcissistic U.S. presidents are more often the subject of congressional impeachment resolutions and behave more unethically than their less narcissistic peers (Watts et al., 2013). More generally, the influence of the narcissistic leader can be so powerful that the organization as a whole may adopt narcissistic tendencies (i.e., collective narcissism; De Zavala, Cichocka, Eidelson, & Jayawickreme, 2009), thus undermining the organization's moral fabric (Duchon & Drake, 2009). Viewed from another angle, in the case of already unethical organization, narcissistic leaders are more likely to thrive (Hoffman et al., 2013).

Summary

The conflict phase witnesses the fizzling out of the narcissistic leaders' honeymoon period and its subsequent ending. The organizational problems have become acute. Questionable financial and ethical decisions exacerbate the antipathy, suspicion, and second-guessing of narcissistic leaders. The system (i.e., organization) copes with the shock of the perturbation phase by articulating and crystalizing its unfavorable impressions of narcissistic leaders—at least in certain quarters of organizational members—and its disapproval of their contentious financial or ethical decisions. The system generates energy that counters that of the narcissistic leader, leading to a direct conflict.

Resolution

In the resolution phase, the conflict between the leader and the organization reaches a point where the system is forced to restabilize in a different state. The organization has changed, although the exact form the change might have taken is unclear. This form will depend on whether the resolution involves the exit of the narcissistic leader or his or her accommodation by the system (Hirschman, 1970; Rusbult, Verette, Whitney, Slovik, & Lipkus, 1991).

Reasons for exit

A direct option for the system to restabilize is for it to let the narcissistic leader go. In fact, it is plausible that the leader himself or herself will opt to go anyway in realization of lack of organizational backing or in pursuit of more self-profitable (i.e., lucrative, prestigious) job opportunities. Regardless of whether the leader is forced to resign or chooses to do so, the leader is likely to blame external factors (e.g., close associates, organizational culture, economic climate) for failure (Campbell et al., 2000; McMahon & Rosen, 2009).

Leader exit has some obvious advantages for the organization. If the narcissistic leader is expelled early on from the organization, the organization may largely be able to revert to its pre-perturbation state. However, this early and swift expulsion is unlikely given the (a) typical leader honeymoon period and (b) justification of effort involved in recruiting the narcissistic leader. Leader exit also has some organizational disadvantages. For example, separation is likely to be interpersonally or organizationally acrimonious, the leader will require an inordinate severance payment, there is no guarantee that the next leader will prove to be ideal, and the organization may have changed to the point of no easy return to the pre-perturbation phase. No easy return is more likely if the narcissistic leader swept aside in-house competition for the leader role, thereby leaving the company rudderless without him or her at the helm. Given how problematic it may be to expel the narcissistic leader, an alternative is for the organization to develop ways to accommodate (i.e., respond constructively to) him or her.

Reasons for accommodation

Why would the system want to accommodate the narcissistic leader? Narcissists, after all, can be oversensitive and reactive to criticism as well as be demanding, callous, manipulative, and even bullying toward their subordinates, resulting in poor employee relations and perhaps causing employee distress and turnover; they may engage in financial risk-taking harming organizational interests; and they may bend the rules to achieve what they think they deserve, thus tarnishing the ethical profile of the organization. Yet, a case can be made for accommodating them.

First, narcissism arguably is and will continue to be a trait of emerging leaders, so accommodation will often be unavoidable. Evidence indicates that the pipeline to modern organizations perpetuates the emergence of narcissistic leaders. As mentioned previously, levels of narcissism are higher among business university majors than other majors (Sautter et al., 2008), and narcissists seek out leadership positions (Campbell & Campbell, 2009). Also, levels of narcissism are rising not only in Western culture (Twenge & Campbell, 2009; Wilson & Sibley, 2011; see Donnellan & Trzesniewski, 2009, for a counterpoint), but also in Eastern culture (Cai, Kwan, & Sedikides, 2012; Lee, Benavides, Heo, & Park, 2014). To qualify our claim, this trend may be attenuated, at least in the West, in the aftermath of the Great Recession. Individuals who come of age during an economic recession (as opposed to economic prosperity) are less likely to be narcissistic later in life, and this applies to narcissistic leaders as well: CEOs who enter adulthood in harsh (vs. prosperous) financial times reward themselves with lower monetary compensation compared to other top executives in the organization (Bianchi, 2014, 2015).

Second, narcissistic leaders can be potent change agents. This is part of the narcissistic risk-taking that we described earlier. If an organization is stuck or even failing because of an entrenched bureaucratic structure, recruiting a bold narcissistic leader might be a useful strategy for shaking up the status quo—an insight that goes back to Max Weber (Cell, 1974). This strategy is, by definition, risky—it may well make the organization worse in the same way that a risky medical treatment might hasten the demise of a dying patient—but in certain contexts this risk might be considered worth taking. Along these lines, narcissistic leaders can be creative. The relevant findings are inconsistent, albeit suggestive. Some

studies find a positive association between narcissism and creativity (Nevicka et al., 2016; Raskin, 1980), especially under conditions of high audience engagement or acclaim (Gerstner et al., 2013), whereas other studies find no such association (Goncalo et al., 2010). At the group level, however, narcissism is positively related to creativity, with the trend being curvilinear. Having more narcissists in a group, or perhaps an organization, facilitates creativity (i.e., the generation of original and useful solutions to problems), but having too many narcissists is associated with diminishing returns (Goncalo et al., 2010).

Finally, narcissistic leaders are well-suited for enforcing changes in the face of opposition. They may manifest tenacity and persistence in the midst of criticism (Nevicka et al., 2016; see also R. Roberts, Woodman, Lofthouse, & Williams, 2015; Wallace et al., 2009) and have been praised for their enthusiasm, charisma, vision, boldness, and innovation (Humphreys, Duan, Ingram, Gladstone, & Basham, 2010; Maccoby, 2003; Rosenthal & Pittinsky, 2006). Indeed, through their self-promotion, dominance, and social networking, narcissists may exert higher-than-average impact on organizations and, more generally, on society. If so, harvesting properly this impact may be a more constructive solution than annulling it. In that respect, it is more practical to heed Hogan and Kaiser's (2005) framework of "bright" or good side and "dark" or destructive side of narcissistic leadership. Accommodation involves managing the two sides, in search of maximizing the bright and minimizing the dark.

Accommodation tactics

We discuss six accommodation tactics. Some can be at the structural or systemic level, such as implementing systemic checks and balances via accountability, instituting synergistic leadership, and increasing leader-organization identification. Other tactics can be at the individual or interpersonal level. These are introducing micro-interventions, initiating personal development through coaching, and strengthening the leader-employee fit.

Accommodation tactics at the structural or systemic level

Introducing systemic checks and balances. This tactic calls for systematic organizational controls based on accountability (McMahon & Rosen, 2009; Ouimet, 2010). Here, the actions of the narcissistic leader will be systematically evaluated by the board, an appointed committee, or all organizational members. Accountability may invite introspection, clarity of one's decision-making process, increased concern with the ethical side of one's decisions, and decreased self-enhancement (Sedikides & Herbst, 2002; Sedikides, Herbst, Hardin, & Dardis, 2002; Tetlock, 1999).

It is questionable, however, whether the narcissistic leader would be willing to comply with the rules, be monitored, and accept behavioral transparency. Furthermore, there is the distinct possibility that the narcissistic leader will adopt different self-regulatory strategies with the board and with employees (Chatterjee & Pollock, 2016). The leader may use charm and charisma to win the support of the board. This strategy may work, because the narcissistic leader may have his or her own needs for status and self-esteem affirmed by associating with high-status board members. At the same time, the narcissistic leader may use harsher control or dominance tactics with subordinates. The board will thus have a hard time getting an accurate view of the narcissistic leader's abilities and interpersonal style, because the interpersonal style they are experiencing (e.g., charming, engaging) is different from what the employees are experiencing (e.g., domineering, callous). Perhaps an independent auditing or consulting body could be recruited to amend the situation.

Instituting synergistic leadership. In a laboratory investigation, Nevicka, De Hoogh, Van Vianen, and Ten Velden (2013) found that narcissists were deemed more suitable as leaders, and were chosen more often as leaders, in a context of organizational uncertainty (i.e., company instability, lost market share, unpredictable work environment, employee stress) than organizational certainty, and this was the case even when the leaders' personality liabilities (e.g., conceit, exploitativeness) were apparent to group members (Study 1). Narcissists were also chosen as leaders under conditions of member personal uncertainty, that is, when group members received feedback inconsistent with the flow on an ongoing negotiation (Study 3). Finally, narcissists were elected as leaders, because they were seen capable of reducing organizational uncertainty (Study 2). Perhaps a reason that group or organizational members elect narcissists at times of uncertainty is because they expect narcissists to demonstrate mental toughness (Sabouri et al., 2016) or resilience (Nevicka et al., 2016), and thus be able to rise to the challenge. Consistent with this possibility, Rosenthal and Pittinsky (2006; see also Godkin & Allcorn, 2011; Maccoby, 2007) suggested that, in uncertain times, narcissists' charisma, boldness, and risk-taking (even lack of empathy) may outweigh their liabilities, allowing them to pursue new ideas or solutions to recurring problems.

Given the above, it might be to the organization's advantage to consider a model of power-sharing or synergistic leadership. According to this model, the weight of decision-making will shift between a more conservative (i.e., low narcissism) and a more risky (i.e., high narcissism) leader, depending on the financial environment. The narcissistic leader, for example, would exert disproportionate input on

decision-making in times of highly concentrated markets (i.e., with few players) or very dynamic markets (i.e., ever-changing customer preferences and behaviors), whereas the less narcissistic leader will take the reins in times of more stable markets (i.e., bear markets). A challenge is to persuade, perhaps through coaching (McMahon & Rosen, 2009) or the conscription of a close friend (McMahon & Rosen, 2009), the narcissistic leaders to work together for their common benefit.

Increasing leader-organization identification. Another possibility for enriching the leadership of narcissistic CEOs is to increase identification of the leader with the company. If a narcissistic leader identifies with an organization, his or her self-enhancement needs should be aligned with organizational success (Galvin, Lange, & Ashforth, 2015; Reina, Zhang, & Peterson, 2014). This possibility has not been tested in organizational settings, so the question is whether it would have the intended beneficial outcomes. In many organizations, the CEO is also the founder, and thus making salient the direct tie between the two is relatively easy. This practice can be accomplished most directly by naming the organization after the founder, such as Walmart, Ford, Hewlett-Packard, or any number of legal or accounting firms. Beyond the organizational name, organizational identification with the CEO can be enhanced externally, through marketing materials or advertising with CEO as spokesperson, and internally, through coaching efforts designed to align the success of the organization with the CEO's reputation and status.

Such efforts are not without challenges. For example, encouraging CEO and organizational identification may unwittingly promote unethical aspects of ownership, such as using a public company as a personal "piggy bank." In addition, encouraging CEO and organizational identification may backfire, producing resistance to positive change.

Accommodation tactics at the individual or interpersonal level

Introducing micro-interventions. This tactic will be based on interventions shown to dampen narcissism. Such micro-interventions can have cumulative and long-lasting effects (Cohen & Sherman, 2014), although more work in this area is needed (see, for example, Ikizer & Blanton, 2016, for a caveat).

One class of interventions fall under the umbrella of *communal shift*, namely, nudging the narcissistic leader in the direction of great caring, agreeableness, or prosocial behavior. Examples include interdependent primes (e.g., thinking about similarities to friends or families; Finkel, Campbell, Buffardi, Kumashiro, & Rusbult, 2009; Giacomin & Jordan, 2014), unit relations (e.g., having the same birthday as another; Konrath, Bushman, & Campbell, 2006), social memories (e.g., a time when one was caring toward others; Kopp & Jordan, 2013), or empathy (i.e., perspective-taking; Hepper, Hart, & Sedikides, 2014). Yet, it is difficult to tell how deep-seated a psychological change those interventions can effect. The communal shift may be genuine, increasing agreeableness, caring, and empathy (a tough proposition, admittedly) or may be strategic aiming to reap self-enhancement benefits such as being regarded as a more effective leader when appearing agreeable, caring, or empathic.

Another class of intervention involves buttressing or stabilizing self-esteem (Thomaes, Bushman, Orobio de Castro, Cohen, & Denissen, 2009), and, somewhat paradoxically, delivering self-serving flattery (e.g., portraying the narcissists as central to the organization or as the organizational savior; Galvin et al., 2015). The caveat with agentic shifts is that they can backfire, especially when they grant the narcissist more power. For example, in the case of romantic relationships, if a narcissistic partner is given information that his or her partner is strongly committed to the relationship, the narcissist is more likely to report wanting to cheat (Foster & Campbell, 2005; see also the interplay between power and narcissism in predicting risk-taking; Macenczak et al., 2016).

Of the two intervention classes, the communal ones can be conveniently simplified in terms of slogans. Agentic slogans (e.g., "innovation, "inspiration," "creativity") are omnipresent in organizational setting, and they could be complemented with communal slogans ("empathy," "concern for others," "fairness"), perhaps precipitating change in organizational culture. Some versions of this practice are implemented in certain organizations when the focus is on team work, such as "there is no 'I' in team" or, as is the case in the U.S. Air Force, "service before self." Similarly, in the U.S. Navy SEALs creed mention is made of operating with humility and not seeking fame or acclaim for one's action.

A stronger communal focus may conduce not only to a healthier organizational culture, but also to greater leadership effectiveness. Grant (2013) argued that leaders who share their know-how, their contacts, or their time with no expectations for reciprocity enjoy greater organizational success. In line with these claims, giving something that represents the essence of one's self (e.g., personal possessions, name such as signature, or body such as blood donations) increases subjective perceptions of generosity and commitment as well as long-term support for relevant causes (Koo & Fishbach, 2016). J. Collins (2001) made a similar point in his discussion of the "humble CEO." Finally, a relevant literature has highlighted and documented the organizational benefits of "servant leadership" in CEOs (Peterson et al., 2012), a

style of leadership that encompasses the needs of subordinates (Patterson, 2003), personal integrity (Erhart, 2004), and a strong moral compass (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). In these examples, the CEO is not seen as weak or lacking in assertiveness, but instead as resolute and achievement focused without the high level of ego needs characterizing more narcissistic leaders.

It is, of course, difficult and perhaps unrealistic to propose, let alone institute, micro-interventions, as the organizational climate has already been shaped or is in the process of being shaped by a narcissistic leader, who may not welcome the news; indeed, narcissistic leadership and organizations with loose ethical standards seem to work well together (Hoffman et al., 2013). However, such interventions are likely to be feasible and sustainable in the context of an employee or board initiative. Alternatively, proper interventional programs can be planned during a leadership vacuum, as part of a concerted effort to revamp the organizational culture.

Initiating personal development through coaching. This tactic will address the undesirable aspects of narcissistic leadership via coaching (Gallos, 2006; McMahon & Rosen, 2009), a trusted partnership with the leader aiming to improve his or her performance and effectiveness. Coaching could endeavor to instill greater insight into the ins and outs of narcissistic leaders' financial and ethical decisions. It could also aim to foster a sense of responsibility, which may reduce the appeal of self-love and self-interest (Anderson & Galinsky, 2006; Sassenberg, Ellemers, & Scheepers, 2012). In addition, coaching could aim to foster generativity, defined as "establishing and guiding the next generation" (Erikson, 1950, p. 231) or "concern and commitment to the next generation" (de St. Aubin, McAdams, & Kim, 2004, p. 4). Generativity could be directed toward mentorship, an area where narcissistic leaders fare poorly (Allen et al., 2009), with the emphasis being placed on leaving a positive personal legacy.

Coaching will need to overcome bigger challenges than micro-interventions. These challenges include the narcissistic leader's impulsivity or poor listening skills, sensitivity to criticism, competitive drive, low empathy, and dislike of being mentored. A way to overcome some of these challenges (e.g., dislike of being mentored) involves enlisting the help of business allies who are on friendly terms with the narcissist (McMahon & Rosen, 2009).

Strengthening the leader-employee fit. Leadership and followership are interdependent (Hollander, 1992; Yukl, 2006). Not only leaders can contribute to organizational malaise, but employee substandard performance or organizational deviance can influence the emergence of abusive leadership (Liam, Ferris, Morrison, & Brown, 2014; Tepper, Moss, & Duffy, 2011; Walter, Lam, Van der Vegt, Huang, & Miao, 2015). This interdependence highlights the relevance of an optimal fit between leaders and followers.

An optimal leader-employee fit can take several forms. One possibility entails an equilibrium between "innovators" (or individual learners) and "conformists" (or social learners; Boyd & Richerson, 1985). Here, narcissistic leaders are the innovators, and employees are the conformists. Perhaps, then, narcissistic leaders can bring to the table something useful for the organization by shaking up existing structures and pushing new ideas. Even so, an organization full of narcissists may not do well, as organizations likely tolerate well only small numbers of innovators. Narcissists are more accepting of others' narcissistic traits, rating them more positively (Hart & Adams, 2014). In addition, narcissistic business students perform better (i.e., achieve higher grades) when taught by narcissistic business faculty, especially in difficult classes and when they perceive the faculty as high in status (Westerman, Whitaker, Bergman, Bergman, & Daly, 2016). Needless to say, though, conflict may arise between the narcissistic leader and narcissistic subordinates under the pressing demands of decision-making and executive control; in addition, in the case of classroom settings, leader-follower fit benefits some followers (i.e., students) but not others.

An optimal fit may also involve the interplay between a controlling and an autonomous orientation. Narcissistic leaders (i.e., sport coaches) are characterized by a controlling rather than autonomy-supportive orientation (Matosic et al., 2017; Matosic, Ntoumanis, Boardley, Stenling, & Sedikides, 2016). Will employees high or low on autonomy fare better under a narcissistic leader? Clues can be found in a recent investigation that capitalized on employee enactment, a construct similar to autonomy. Employee enactment is defined as proactive action designed to abolish, restructure, or create one's occupational environment (Weick, 1996). It refers to employees' purposeful behavior toward readjusting to working conditions that are unhealthy and stressful (Nicholson, 1995). In that regard, Hochwarter and Thompson (2012) demonstrated that narcissistic leaders have an adverse effect on tension, frustration, resource availability, and job performance on employees low on enactment, but not high on enactment. It follows that narcissistic leaders and subordinates low on enactment constitute a poor fit. From an employee perspective, the implication is that organizations surround the narcissistic leader with high enactment or high-autonomy employees. This may prove to be a challenging proposition, however, given that narcissistic leaders may prefer to surround themselves with uncritical, loyal subordinates (Yukl, 2006).

Summary

Despite the obvious drawbacks of narcissistic leadership, as explicated in the conflict phase, accommodating the narcissistic leader in the resolution phase may be a realistic and timely modus operandi, given the rise of narcissism in business schools and society in general. It may also be advantageous, given the boldness, vision, and innovation that narcissistic leaders may bring into the decision-making process, especially at times of organizational uncertainty. Accommodation involves trade-offs between narcissistic and organizational energy. It can take the form of six tactics. Three of them (implementing systemic checks and balances via accountability, instituting synergistic leadership, increasing leader-organization identification) are at the structural or systemic level, whereas another three (introducing micro-interventions, initiating personal development through coaching, strengthening the leader-employee fit) are at the individual or interpersonal level.

Concluding Remarks

We have proposed a process model of narcissism, the Energy Clash Model. It purports to account for the narcissistic leader's journey into the organization. The model makes use of a broad phase/state metaphor from physics to conceptualize this journey alongside three time-contingent phases, namely, perturbation, conflict, and resolution. According to this metaphor, the narcissistic leader enters the organization as a force, causing instability (*perturbation*). Armed with boldness and resilience, the leader smashes barriers, strips down old structures and erects new ones, thus infusing the organization with excitement, optimism, and purpose, albeit some initial doubt as well. Organizational awareness and alertness ensue, culminating in falling out (*conflict*). Antipathy and dissatisfaction with the leader grow due to three domains of organizational life. First, leader's social performance leaves a lot to be desired: His or her antagonism, contempt, and mistreatment of employees blemish the organizational climate, thus breeding mistrust, suspicion, and disrespect. Second, the leader's financial decisions are risk-prone, engendering few, if any, organizational benefits. Third, his or her ethical decisions are substandard, creating organizational embarrassment. Next, narcissistic energy clashes with organizational energy, eventually restabilizing the system (i.e., organization) at a different state, either through the exit of the narcissistic leader or the accommodation of the leader by the organization (*resolution*). Much depends on how successful the specific accommodation tactics (i.e., introducing micro-interventions, initiating personal development through coaching, strengthening the leader-employee fit, implementing systemic checks and balances via accountability, instituting synergistic leadership, increasing leader-organization identification) are. We hope these ideas are tested at the organizational level, with organization as a unit of analysis. Many of these ideas may also be applicable not only in the case of high-level leadership (the focus of this article), but also at other leadership levels depending on decisional freedom or authority granted to the leader.

Our objective was not to rehabilitate narcissism or the narcissistic leader. Rather, our objective was to contextualize narcissism as part of a complex web of organizational benefits and costs, looking to see how organizations (or societies) can harness narcissistic leaders' energy while minimizing the harmful fallout. The grand sum of this benefit/costs analysis is probably negative for the individual narcissist, especially given the likely social exclusion or ostracism he or she will incur (Back et al., 2010; Ong et al., 2016; Paulhus, 1998) and the long-term health maladjustment with which he or she will be faced (Edelstein, Yim, & Quas, 2010; Friedman & Kern, 2014; Orth & Luciano, 2015). The grand sum of benefits/costs may be even more negative for others and society (Campbell & Campbell, 2009; Schoel, Stahlberg, & Sedikides, 2015; Sedikides, Gregg, & Hart, 2007). Nevertheless, in certain circumstances the risk associated with narcissistic leadership may be outweighed by the benefits. Narcissists can battle organizational inertia and be potent contributors to organization change, as they likely exert higher-than-average impact due to their positioning (e.g., center of networks, self-promotion, dominance, boldness). Indeed, narcissists may have the potential to be drivers of organizational modernization or technological discontinuities. If narcissism as a force remains directionless, it may end up being self-serving or nihilistic; however, if it is directed properly and constructively, it may confer favorable organizational (and perhaps societal) change in the long run.

Appendix

Leadership cases from business and politics that exemplify the Energy Clash Model

Examples from businessn. In the world of business, we are not informed by objective personality assessments of chief executive officers (CEOs), and so we are obliged to refrain from using the label "narcissist." We do, however, have many examples of CEOs with reputations for aggressive and transformational leadership that—congruent with the ECM—comes at the cost of employees and the organization. "Chainsaw" Al Dunlop and "Neutron"

Jack Welch come readily to mind. Both earned their nicknames in light of their willingness to enact massive personnel cuts for the sake of corporate profits. A more recent example involves one of Jack Welch's protégés at General Electric, Robert Nardelli. Nardelli was recruited to take over as CEO of Home Depot. This company had a culture of strong store-based management and of skilled, full time employees, along with a minimal emphasis on cost-cutting. When Nardelli took over, he made rapid changes to the system, including centralizing management and purchasing (*perturbation*). He faced considerable pushback but won the internal battle. Indeed, he drove out much of the existing management: "Resistance to the changes was fierce, particularly from managers: Much of the top executive team left during Nardelli's first year" (Charan, 2006). The changes Nardelli made were so extensive that they were described as a heart transplant: "The restructuring was a bold and risky business move, the equivalent of a heart transplant for a big retail company, and it had to be done without missing a beat" (Charan, 2006). Nardelli also cut down on full time employees, replacing them with part-time workers. This bold movement made the numbers look good for several years, but, as the in-store experience dropped because of the smaller and less committed sales force, competitors like Lowes took over market share (*conflict*). At Nardelli's last shareholders meeting, he reportedly did not respond to questions about the company's slipping performance or his own enormous salary and bonuses. Nardelli was eventually pushed out of the company after a little more than 6 years (from December 2000 to January 2007) in power, with a $210 million parachute (Jones & Krantz, 2007; Waters, 2007; *resolution*). A new CEO was put in place with the goal of bringing back much of the original organizational culture (Jacobs, 2007).

Examples from politics. In the world of politics, we are informed by historians' ratings of U.S. presidents in terms of a narcissistic personality style (Watts et al., 2013). Richard Nixon and Theodore "Teddy" Roosevelt are estimated to be high on narcissism, but Lyndon B. Johnson has received the highest ratings of any U.S. president. Johnson's rise to power exemplifies several aspects of the ECM, but also illustrates how complex this process can be. He aspired to become president, but lost the primary to John F. Kennedy. Kennedy, however, made Johnson his vice president and won the 1960 election. Johnson then became president upon Kennedy's assassination. As commander-in-chief, Johnson was a strong, controlling, and crude, if not vulgar, force. He was able to shift the country dramatically through the passage of the Great Society programs of Medicare and Medicaid, as well as the Civil Rights Act. He also pushed the United States into the Vietnam War (*perturbation*). When interrogated at one meeting why he continued the war, Johnson unzipped his pants, pulled out his genitalia (aka "Jumbo"; Caro, 2002), and exclaimed: "This is why!" (Dallek, 1998, p. 491). Johnson's popularity declined with the war, taxes, and spending. When asked about his decreasing popularity, he responded, "I am a dominating personality, and when I get things done I don't always please all the people" (Dallek, 1998, p. 396). He also blamed his decreasing popularity on being labelled a politician "and a good [deal] of my own impatience" (Dallek, 1998, p. 396; *conflict*). Eventually the tide turned so much that Nixon was elected after the end of Johnson's second term (in 1968; *resolution*). Johnson's legacy is mixed. On the one hand, his presidential mannerisms were less than graceful, and he is discredited by a disastrous war. On the other hand, his oversized ego and immense ambition may have helped his national initiatives, emboldening major political and social changes.

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The authors declared that they had no conflicts of interest with respect to their authorship or the publication of this article.

Notes

1. Grandiose narcissism has been assessed via self-reports (J. D. Miller et al., 2011), informant reports (Vazire et al., 2008), unobtrusive measures (e.g., CEO compensation and press release prominence; Chatterjee & Hambrick, 2007), and objective (i.e., historians') ratings of biographies (Watts et al., 2013). Of the self-report measures, the most common one is the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI; Emmons, 1987; Raskin & Terry, 1988). The NPI has had its critics, due to its forced-choice format and its somewhat varied factor structure (Brown, Budzek, & Tamborski, 2009). And yet it features demonstrably good construct validity (J. D. Miller et al., 2014; J. D. Miller, Price, & Campbell, 2012; Sleep, Sellbom, Campbell, & Miller, in press). Measurement of narcissism in high level leaders (e.g., CEOs, presidents) is typically carried out with unobtrusive measures, because self-report data are difficult, if not impossible, to obtain. Regardless of measure used, we refer in all cases to trait grandiose narcissism, and not to narcissistic personality disorder or vulnerable narcissism. Also, we use the term *narcissists* throughout to refer to individuals with relatively high scores on trait grandiose narcissism as measured in one of the aforementioned ways, and not to individuals with narcissistic personality disorder.
2. The Bass (1985) model of transformation leadership is not without its critics. Hardy and colleagues (Arthur & Hardy, 2014; Callow, Smith, Hardy, Arthur, & Hardy, 2009; Hardy et al., 2010) conceptualized transformational leadership as a series of behaviors distilled into three higher-order factors: vision, support, and challenge. Our discussion would not change considerably (in fact, it would lead to the same conclusions), had we reframed it in terms of the Hardy et al. model.
3. For an alternative definition of mental toughness as a set of informant-rated behaviors—a definition derived from reinforcement sensitivity theory—see Bell, Hardy, and Beattie (2013) as well as Hardy, Bell, and Beattie (2014).

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