

## Davis County Ex-Mormon meetup Sunday Dec 07, 2025, 2:30 pM

[All links from Invitations.](#)

**How to Find us:** Sunday Dec 07, 2025 meetup is 2:30 PM at Smiths Marketplace, 1370 W 200 N, Kaysville, UT 84037. Entering Smith's turn right, take the up staircase on the right side of Starbucks, turn right on the 2nd floor at the top of the stairs, take 10 strides passing the lockers to the conference room entrance on the right. **Contact:** Francis 'Nelson' Henderson, 858-668-6943, [francisnh12@gmail.com](mailto:francisnh12@gmail.com)

**Our purposes:** First, when leaving Mormonism, people often find that they no longer have community or support. Our goal is to provide support for each other and to build community. So, whether you are a member, or left the church recently, or have been out for years, or were never Mormon but are looking for community, come and socialize with us and share your story.

Secondly, we uncover the fallacies, deception, and misinformation employed by the LDS Church to gain control over our lives.

**Invitation: [Joseph Smith: Narcissistic, Authoritarian, Antisocial, with Charismatic Dominance](#)**

Before proceeding, I should make clear that I am not a clinician, psychologist, or licensed counselor. I speak here not from professional authority but from observation, historical evidence, and moral reasoning—the same tools any informed reader is entitled to use when examining the character of a man who claimed divine kingship over the lives and choices of others. What follows, then, represents my considered opinion: not a diagnosis, but an interpretation of behavior patterns so strikingly consistent with narcissistic self-perception that one need not be a professional to recognize their shape.

Those who still revere Joseph Smith as a spiritual leader may find this reframing uncomfortable, but discomfort is hardly a rebuttal. Smith's conduct—his self-exemption from moral rules, the habitual lying, the authoritarian machinery built around his person, his exploitation of others' trust, and his remarkable ability to recast personal desire as divine mandate—reveals not the humility of a prophet, but the grandiosity of a man who assumed himself the axis of the cosmos. When the story of one's own greatness becomes indistinguishable from the story of God Himself, we are no longer dealing with spirituality; we are dealing with narcissistic architecture on a heroic scale.



It falls to the reader—not to me—to rescue themselves from toxic teachings that excuse, sanctify, or romanticize such behavior. Every system built upon a narcissist's self-image inevitably inherits that distortion. Mormonism is no exception. What I offer here is simply an argument: that Joseph Smith behaved less like a moral shepherd and more like a man convinced that the ordinary rules of empathy, honesty, and accountability applied to everyone but him. The evidence I provide in my "[Full Exit Statement](#)" speaks loudly enough.

If my tone is occasionally sharp, it is because the harm inflicted by such a personality is both real and measurable. And if my conclusions feel direct, it is only because the historical record is far too blunt to permit euphemism. The question before the reader is not whether Joseph Smith *felt* called by God, but whether his repeated patterns of deception, coercion, and entitlement reflect the character of a spiritual leader—or of a narcissist who discovered that religious language provided the perfect camouflaging cloak for personal ambition.

The key to de-mythologizing Joseph Smith is to show that his behavior fits recognizable human patterns, not behavior God would endorse. The correct frame is psychological rather than theological.

At one time I held the hypothesis that all people were innately good and wanted what's best for other people. However, Dr Peter Salerno says that it's a dangerous belief to hold because now we have research. It's irrefutable, it's undeniable there are certain brains that are wired in ways that cause harm intentionally because these people perceive that they will have personal advantage or gain if they go about life in a harmful way to others. It feels natural to them. He writes that the trait is inherited, not the result of childhood trauma or parenting.

It is a diagnosable personality style known as Narcissistic Personality Disorder (NPD) characterized by **an inflated sense of self-importance (Grandiosity), a deep need for excessive admiration, a lack of empathy for others, and often, a fragile self-image that is easily threatened by criticism.** Donald Trump is a modern example. While everyone may exhibit some narcissistic traits occasionally, true narcissism involves these traits being **severe, long-lasting, and negatively impacting relationships,** work, and overall functioning.

Salerno emphasizes that the Narcissistic Personality Disorder emerges over time as genetically predisposed traits that solidify. Narcissists' patterns of thinking and behaving feel natural, not painful to them. Their thoughts, behaviors, and feelings are in harmony with, or acceptable to a person's fundamental self-image, values, and beliefs. The individual perceives these aspects of their personality as normal, appropriate, or even desirable, rather than problematic.



In other words, Narcissistic Personalities are in harmony with their fundamental self-image, values, and beliefs. The individual perceives these disorders in their personality as normal, appropriate, or even desirable, rather than problematic. They typically see themselves as superior and justified in their actions.

When you examine the history of Joseph Smith's own life, you find a striking match where Smith exhibits **nearly every major behavioral marker** that clinical psychology associates with Antisocial Narcissistic Personality Disorder (NPD). These individuals combine a grandiose sense of self-importance with a callous disregard for others and a lack of remorse.

By antisocial is meant that his actions consistently violate social norms, causes harm to others, employs deception, and his personal gains are elevated above the rights and autonomy of his victims. Below are the main ways this **Narcissistic antisocial pattern** appears in Smith's actions.

### **Joseph Smith: Seen Through His Own Footprints**

Church members know Joseph Smith through stories told in Sunday School and what is uncovered on the internet, and from many truth telling documents such as this. The young treasure-seeking farm boy, the seer stone in the hat, the visions, eloping with Emma, dozens of secret "wives," Emma, the first wife's pain, propositioning the wives and daughters of associates, the Kirtland bank, the prophecies, the translations, Lieutenant General of the Nauvoo Legion, the Danites, Tar and Feathering, Liberty Jail, guardian of wealthy orphaned sisters inheritance, burning the Nauvoo Expositor, the martyrdom.

When these same stories are placed in psychological language — the kind used by Peter Salerno, and in modern clinical research — a different Joseph Smith emerges. Not the persecuted prophet, but the *classic narcissistic antisocial manipulator* whose behaviors match a well-known, scientifically documented pattern.

This isn't speculation. This is Smith's own behavior, interpreted with the same tools we use to understand modern authoritarian figures. Here are **Six Behavioral Markers** of Narcissistic Personality Disorder, each revealed in a scene every Mormon already knows.

### 1. GRANDIOSITY: "I have more to boast of than any man"

Every member has heard the quote. They used to praise it.

*"I have more to boast of than any man had... I am the only man that has been able to keep a whole church together since the days of Adam." — Joseph Smith, History of the Church 6:408*

This isn't humility. This is **textbook pathological grandiosity** — the narcissist's conviction that he is chosen, irreplaceable, above all others. Smith didn't merely claim prophetic authority; he claimed cosmic indispensability. He spoke of himself as:

- the sole vessel of God on earth
- a king (literally, in the Council of Fifty)
- future ruler of nations
- the final judge of all humanity

This is not the rhetoric of a servant leader. It is the psychological signature of a narcissistic ruler.

### 2. ENTITLEMENT: The Rules Apply to You, Never to Him

Every Mormon grew up hearing that "God's prophets live higher laws." But in Smith's case, "higher law" meant **no law at all**. He dictated:

- the Law of Chastity<sup>1</sup>
- the Law of Obedience<sup>2</sup>
- the Law of Consecration

— and violated each of them privately. Most revealing is the way he exempted himself from morality through revelation: "God commands me to take more wives." "An angel with a sword forced me." "Emma shall be destroyed if she resists." This is not divine authority. This is **narcissistic exceptionalism** — the belief that one's impulses are sacred and one's critics damnable.

### 3. PATHOLOGICAL LYING: A Double Life in Holy Clothing

Latter-day Saints know these stories intimately:

- denying polygamy publicly<sup>3</sup>
- practicing it privately
- sending men on missions while marrying their wife<sup>4</sup>
- destroying the *Nauvoo Expositor* for telling the truth<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Book of Mormon, **Jacob 2:27**: "Wherefore, my brethren, hear me, and hearken to the word of the Lord: For there shall not any man among you have save it be one wife; and concubines he shall have none"

Doctrine and Covenants, Section 42:22 "Thou shalt love thy wife with all thy heart, and shalt cleave unto her and none else".

<sup>2</sup> His defiance of Missouri authorities, including actions leading to his arrest for treason and sedition (like organizing the [Nauvoo Legion](#)), was disobedience in which Smith claimed his God placed him above civil law.

<sup>3</sup> May 26, 1844 Sermon: Joseph Smith publicly responded to accusations of having multiple wives, stating he had only one. At this time, historians estimate he had taken at least 25 plural wives privately

<sup>4</sup> Joseph Smith married Marinda Nancy Johnson Hyde, who was the wife of Apostle Orson Hyde, while Orson was serving a mission in Palestine.

<sup>5</sup> The Nauvoo Expositor newspaper revealed Joseph Smith's secret practice of polygamy, criticized his political power grabs, and his fusion of church/state were true. Smith ordered the newspaper be destroyed.

- creating new revelations to retroactively justify his behavior<sup>6</sup>

This is **not** the lying of fear. It is the lying of utility. The narcissistic liar lies because it works. It keeps the empire intact, the followers loyal, the critics confused, and the inner circle dependent. Smith did not simply lie. He industrialized deception.

#### 4. EXPLOITATION: “God requires your daughter. God requires your wife.”

Even believing members know the stories — they just never learned the psychological label.

Smith:

- pressured teenagers using threats of divine destruction<sup>7</sup>
- told married women their salvation depended on yielding to him
- secretly married girls living in his home
- performed fake wedding ceremonies to deceive Emma<sup>8</sup>
- used revelation as a coercive tool: “God commands you to obey *me*.”



These are not religious marriages. They are **acts of narcissistic sexual predation** camouflaged as doctrine. In psychology, this is called: **instrumental exploitation** — using people as tools for validation, pleasure, or power.

#### 5. AGGRESSION TOWARD THREATS: Punish, Silence, Destroy

When confronted, Smith responded not with reflection but retaliation.

- Oliver Cowdery questioned polygamy → excommunicated.<sup>9</sup>
- William Law exposed Smith’s behavior → printing press destroyed.<sup>10</sup>
- Judges issued warrants → Smith ran Nauvoo as a sanctuary city.
- Critics spoke up → he formed secret police (Danites) to silence dissent.

This “attack when threatened” response is the **exact neuropsychological profile** of a malignant narcissist. The pattern is always: **challenge** → **retaliate** → **escalate** → **sanctify the retaliation**.

#### 6. LACK OF EMPATHY: Emma’s Pain, Members’ Ruin, Expendable Lives

A narcissist’s empathy is shallow or absent. Joseph Smith’s life is full of empathy’s absence:

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<sup>6</sup> The formal "revelation" on plural marriage (now Doctrine and Covenants Section 132) was not recorded until 1843, long after the practice began in the 1830s

D&C 132:54 (LDS edition): Emma is being told to obey Joseph’s practice of plural marriage. The phrase “she shall be destroyed” is an explicit threat of divine punishment if she refuses. This verse is an example of coercion cloaked in religious authority, with serious implications about power and consent in Joseph Smith’s relationship with his wife. To make that threat as if it’s coming from God is blasphemy. Out of his ignorance, but relying on his narcissistic instincts, Joseph stumbles into violating the ethical limitations God’s Nature imposes.

<sup>7</sup> [Marriage to Orphaned Lucy Walker \(16\)](#)

<sup>8</sup> [A Moral Critique](#) of Joseph Smith’s Secret Marriages to the Partridge Sisters

<sup>9</sup> [Oliver Cowdery’s moral condemnation](#) is telling: he did not describe the Fanny Alger affair as a “marriage” but as adultery.

<sup>10</sup> [Smith unlawfully ordered the printing press destroyed](#)

- Emma’s anguish dismissed<sup>11</sup>
- financial ruination from the Kirtland Safety Society minimized
- followers’ loyalty exploited
- dissenters threatened with eternity
- women’s emotional autonomy overwritten by “revelation”

He caused enormous human suffering. He rarely paused. This is not the behavior of a prophet. It is the clinical signature of a **narcissistic, antisocial, authoritarian personality**.

### **CLOSING: When You Change the Lens, You Change the Story**

The beauty of this reinterpretation is its simplicity: you don’t need new facts. You only need new language — *scientific psychological language* — to see Joseph Smith exactly as he was. When you recognize the pattern, you cannot unsee it:

- Grandiosity
- Entitlement
- Pathological lying
- Exploitation
- Aggression toward threats
- Lack of empathy

This is not divine leadership. It is **narcissism wearing a prophet’s clothing**. And once you see it in Joseph, you begin to see it in the system he built — and in the men who inherited his throne. **Authoritarian leaders attract authoritarian followers. The narcissistic founder creates the authoritarian church. And the authoritarian church manufactures obedience by the same tools the founder used.**

[Appendix K Psychological Profile of Joseph Smith: The Narcissistic Authoritarian Charmer](#)  
[Joseph Smith: Narcissistic, Authoritarian, Antisocial, with Charismatic Dominance](#)

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<sup>11</sup> New threats attacking Emma’s wellbeing were dictate by Joseph and recorded by William Clayton on July 12, 1843. Hyrum Smith recommended Joseph produce a revelation because it might convince Emma Smith to accept the principle of plural marriage.

Joseph threatened by directing Emma Smith, using the voice of God (D&C 132:52), to accept his additional wives, under penalty of "destruction". In verse 4 he threatens damnation for those who reject the new and everlasting covenant, which is understood in this context to include plural marriage. These verses are Narcissistic threats to Emma: they are self-serving, lack empathy, excuse himself for violating God’s command (BofM Jacob 2:23–30, and D&C Section 42:22). The new revelation (D&C 132:52) is unethical, abusive, anti-social, narcissistic.

After the dictation was presented to her, specifically to convince her to accept plural marriage, Emma did not believe a word of it. She demanded the manuscript be burned.

Smith’s attempt to alter his marriage agreement is characteristic of his many secret narcissistic, authoritarian, antisocial claims of divine revelation that he used to manipulate many other women into a relationship in the name of God behind Emma’s back. He demonstrates how it feels natural and right to a person with Narcissistic Personality Disorder when dominating or deceiving his wife because he sees it as correctly serving himself first. He lacks empathy for Emma because things are as they should be. He sees himself as consistent with the law because he is above the law. For example, "*Thou shalt love thy wife with all thy heart, and shalt cleave unto her and none else*".D&C 42:22. The narcissist thinks that obviously, such rules do not apply to him.

The Happiness Letter to 19-year-old Nancy Rigdon ([Sunstone video](#) [△](#) (46:17)) - A Study in Religious Manipulation.