

## **A Wacko Primer: Nine Warning Signs That You're in the Presence of a Wacko**

Excerpted from *Winning Against the Wackos in Your Life: How to spot them and stop them in their tracks* (Larstan Publishing, May 2007, ISBN-10: 0-97768958-1, ISBN-13: 978-0-97768958-3, \$14.95) by Christina Eckert

We all know a Wacko or two. These unbalanced individuals make others miserable by bombarding their acquaintances with their own grief, self-pity, and even anger. Luckily, not every Wacko is equally offensive. Some people demonstrate only mildly offensive Wacko behavior, while others have passed the point of no return into full blown *Wacko-dom*. Christina Eckert presents nine characteristics of this unpleasant breed ... as well as some explanations to help demystify the Wacko code of *misbehavior*.

### **Wackos are Jekyll one minute, Hyde the next.**

Wackos are notoriously moody. They can be as sweet as sugar one moment but will bare their venomous fangs the next. The change is as disturbing as it is rapid. Seemingly insignificant disagreements can turn into a one-sided shouting match in a matter of seconds. Eckert recalls a similar situation during an ordinary talk with Deborah, a Wacko. During the conversation, Deborah stared, pointing a finger at Eckert, and snarled, "Wait a minute, what did you mean by that comment?" When Eckert calmly clarified the comment in question, Deborah's glare disappeared and she simply said, "Oh." Again, in these situations, it is best to remain calm and confident. Mr. Hyde loves confrontation, so the best thing you can do is not deliver!

### **Wackos are often narcissists.**

Wackos believe that they are the center of everyone's universe, which explains nearly all Wacko behavior. Wackos are selfish and genuinely feel that they are perfect in every way, which frees them up to not only criticize others but also talk about themselves day in and day out to anyone who will listen.

### **Wackos can do no wrong.**

A Wacko's image is everything, and therefore he or she can't admit to doing anything wrong, ever. Wackos will spend their lives preserving an image of themselves in which they are repeatedly victimized, but never actually make mistakes themselves.

### **They try to pry.**

Wackos make it their business to know as much as they can about their friends and enemies. So many of their problems come from a need to be in control. And what better way to control others than to pry into their business? If you can, try to limit all Wacko conversation to small talk. After all it is difficult for a Wacko to control you and make you vulnerable when you chat only about the weather!

**Wackos are tattletales.**

Not only do Wackos get a rush from pointing out another person's shortcomings, but they also need to tattle to make themselves feel secure and superior. Wackos really cannot do much damage by being tattletales, but it never hurts to keep your secrets to yourself if a Wacko crosses your path.

**They have sharp tongues.**

Wackos love to appear dominant even though they really have very little personal power or self-esteem. They know that the best way to compensate is by using their mouths as weapons of mass destruction. A Wacko will not hesitate to throw out a veiled insult or may even blatantly go for the kill. They are known for making snide comments that no sane person would ever utter simply out of social decency. A few curt words, like "*Someone* hasn't been dieting, I see" can cause such unexpected shock that the victim often can't even stammer a reply. They take advantage of the silent aftershock of their words.

**Wackos perfect the "look."**

Wackos have no problem being rude if it benefits them. They won't hesitate to deliver an icy glare to anyone they feel deserves it. It is common for a Wacko to express her own perceived superiority over another person by either looking down her nose at the person or looking the person in the eye and then rolling her own eyes to the ceiling. Such behavior is ridiculous and rude. Either ignore the Wacko or look her straight in the eye and ask what she's staring at.

**Wackos hold grudges ... forever.**

Wackos are like elephants; they remember everything. However, they admit to remembering only things they did not like. Anytime a disagreement ensues, watch out because a Wacko will (with impressive speed!) regurgitate any wrongdoing he feels you have committed. Don't try to stop a Wacko on a wrongdoing rant—you can't. Remain calm and walk away if you need to.

**They are greener than your Christmas tree.**

Wackos are very threatened by powerful people and their jealousy always shows through. "Wackos often focus in on tormenting people who have blessed lives that they wish for themselves," insists Eckert. "They perceive wealthy, attractive, intelligent, and lucky people as threats. This is why it is so easy for the nicest person in the world to quickly become target practice for a Wacko. All you can do is rise above their pettiness and do your best to avoid them in the future."

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