

Compulsive Liars – Why Do They Do It?

Everyone lies – except for Jesus Christ and possibly George Washington if you believe the cherry tree story. It's normal for children to lie when facing possible punishment. Teens and adults typically twist the truth to avoid conflict or emotional upset or for some financial gain. Of course, lying is not healthy and nearly always makes the punishment, conflict, or emotional distress worse.

Compulsive liars are different. Yes, they lie to avoid punishment, conflict, and upset, and they lie for money. But they also lie *because it's fun!* Compulsive liars enjoy causing confusion, chaos, and stress in the people around them. Only the liar knows what the truth is. And it is so entertaining to watch others struggle to understand why things don't make sense. It is particularly hilarious when the victims then accuse their friends, family, and co-workers of lying to them. To the compulsive liar, other people are like rats in a maze. It's fun to watch them scramble around, frustrated, lost, and confused.

But there's more! Compulsive liars *enjoy the challenge* of using their wits to weave and maintain a huge web of lies. Since each lie requires supporting lies, and different lies are told to different people, the compulsive liar must have a sharp memory to keep it all straight. But the real challenge is keeping the "suckers" off balance when they start figuring out the truth by networking with other people in the rat maze. New roadblocks, smoke screens, and false detours must be invented on the fly.

To the compulsive liar "all the world's a stage," and they consider themselves to be *truly great actors*. They practice and refine their lying techniques to tell bald-faced, flat-faced, straight-faced lies. The compulsive liar also knows that *any lie told with emotion is much more believable*. Any strong emotion will do: anger, indignation, grief, devastation, or joyous excitement are all equally effective – if you're a talented, well-rehearsed liar.

The final enjoyment for the compulsive fibber is *defending themselves with denial, misdirection, and projection* when they are found out by their victims. Compulsive liars *never, ever admit* to a lie, a deception, a con, or any responsibility for all the chaos and pain they cause. They never said anything that wasn't the absolute truth – even if multiple people heard them, or they were recorded spewing a lie (think politicians). With pious indignation the compulsive liar will protest, "That wasn't me! You're the liar! That's all fake! You made that up!" Of course, everyone just misunderstood them or misquoted them or jumped to their own conclusions.

In the end, compulsive liars are recognized for what they are – sociopaths without a conscience or any empathy for other people. As a result, they move around a lot. They must constantly find a new pasture with fresh sheep to shear. Therefore, beware the compulsive liar, a.k.a. the king or queen of chaos and fraud. Hopefully, you can now better understand them. But they will never deserve your pity.