



# Welcome to Uncovering and Releasing Shame Workshop

West Great Lake ACA Conference, October 16, 2021

Connie J.

# Shame Free Zone

## **Zoom etiquette during exercises**

- PLEASE share your video
- Put your audio on mute when not sharing

## **Sharers**

- Share up to your level of comfort
- Sharing is not required
- Share the airtime – keep shares to 3 minute

## **Listeners**

- Listen like a loving parent
- Use neutral or supportive facial expressions/body language
- Shut off video if you need to walk away
- What you hear here stays here



# Shame Bound/Based

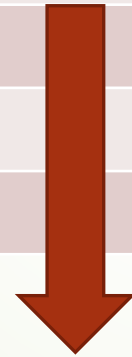
- ▶ When faced with shame, we can freeze.

# Childhood Shame

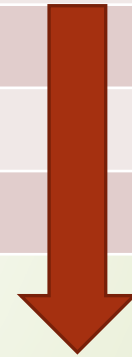
Event	Critical Parent	Loving Parent
Tommy wets bed	'I don't have time to do another load of laundry!'	'It's okay. Accidents happen.'
Suzy shoplifts	'You'll never amount to anything.'	'Why did you steal that? Stealing is wrong.'

# Childhood Shame

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Unhealthy/toxic  
shame



Healthy shame

# Healthy Shame

- ▶ 'healthy shame let's us know we are not God'\* p. 19
- ▶ 'our healthy shame is the psychological grounds of our humility'\* p. 19
- ▶ 'if a child can be protected' (by a loving parent when they make mistakes or misbehaves) 'then the child can develop a healthy sense of shame'\* p. 12
- ▶ 'being grounded in healthy shame is the permission to be human'\* p. 26

\* John Bradshaw, 'The Shame That Binds Us'

# Unhealthy/Toxic Shame

- ▶ We are not allowed to make mistakes
- ▶ We are not allowed to be human
- ▶ **We must be perfect and since it is impossible to be perfect, we must be worthless (bad) and we become shame-based**

# Exercise 1 - Childhood Shame

Event	Critical Parent	Loving Parent
Tommy wets bed	'I don't have time to do another load of laundry!'	'It's okay. Accidents happen.'
Suzy shoplifts	'You'll never amount to anything.'	'Why did you steal that? Stealing is wrong.'

- For 10 minutes you will write about your childhood shame
- You will be put into a group of 4 or 5
- Groups will be different for each exercise
  - Someone volunteer to be the timekeeper
  - Each person will have a 3-minute share
  - Timekeeper will give gentle wrap-up notice at 2 ½ minutes
  - If there is extra time, someone can take an extra share
- We will come back together in 18 minutes



# Adulthood Shame

Event	Critical/Loving/Neutral Person	What did I hear?
Brother said 'We didn't know if Connie was gay.'	Critical Person	It's not normal to not date. You're not normal. Society does not accept you.
Mother says 'Are you dating anyone?'	Loving Person	I don't value accomplishments. The only thing that matters is if you are married.
Manager said 'Connie needs to ask for help when she needs help'.	Neutral Person	The team could have accomplished more if you would have asked for help.

# Adulthood Shame

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Mother says 'Are you dating anyone?'	Loving Person	I don't value accomplishments. The only thing that matters is if you are married.
Manager said 'Connie needs to ask for help when she needs help'.	Neutral Person	The team could have accomplished more if you would have asked for help.

**Now that we are shame based, we feel shame even when it's not coming from a critical parent.**

# Exercise 2 - Adulthood Shame

Event	Critical/Loving/Neutral Person	What did I hear?
Brother said 'We didn't know if Connie was gay.'	Critical Person	It's not normal to not date. You're not normal. Society does not accept you.
Mother says 'Are you dating anyone?'	Loving Person	I don't value accomplishments. The only thing that matters is if you are married.
Manager said 'Connie needs to ask for help when she needs help'.	Neutral Person	The team could have accomplished more if you would have asked for help.

- For 10 minutes you will write about your adulthood shame
- You will be put into a group of 4 or 5
- Groups will be different for each exercise
  - Someone volunteer to be the timekeeper
  - Each person will have a 3-minute share
  - Timekeeper will give gentle wrap-up notice at 2 ½ minutes
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# Transferring Shame

Dad/Mom  
(critical parents)



Connie

(shame based)



# Transferring Shame

Dad/Mom  
(critical parents)

(shame based)



Connie

(shame based)



# Transferring Shame

Grandparents  
(critical parents)

(shame based)



Dad/Mom  
(critical parents)

(shame based)



Connie

(shame based)



# Transferring Shame

Grandparents  
(critical parents)

(shame based)



Dad/Mom  
(critical parents)

(shame based)



Connie  
(critical parent)


(shame based)



Alex  
(critical parent?)

(shame based?)

# How We Shame



We shame ...	Event	Unhealthy Shame	The Truth
Ourselves			
Others			



# How We Shame



We shame . . .	Event	Unhealthy Shame	The Truth
Ourselves	I am overweight.	It's not okay if you're not skinny.	Every size can be beautiful.
Others			

# How We Shame

We shame . . .	Event	Unhealthy Shame	The Truth
Ourselves	I am overweight.	It's not okay if you're not skinny.	Every size can be beautiful.
Others - Mom	'Can you at least stop eating while you are talking to me.'	You are fat and you eat all the time.	Now that I don't need her support I want to shame her like she used to shame me.

# Exercise 3 - How We Shame

We shame . . .	Event	Unhealthy Shame	The Truth
Ourselves	I am overweight.	It's not okay if you're not skinny.	Every size can be beautiful.
Others - Mom	'Can you at least stop eating while you are talking to me.'	You are fat and you eat all the time.	Now that I don't need her support I want to shame her like she used to shame me.

- For 10 minutes you will write about how you shame
- Time permitting you will be put into a group of 4 or 5
- Groups will be different for each exercise
  - Someone volunteer to be timekeeper
  - Each person will have a 3-minute share
  - Timekeeper will give gentle wrap-up notice at 2 ½ minutes
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# Releasing Shame

- Come out of isolation – call out the shame – talk about it
- Join a 12-step program
- Put your drug of choice down
- Work the 12 steps
  - Rename Step 5 to Shame Releasing Step
- Read/learn about shame
- Inner child/loving parent work



# Thank You!

- ▶ What are 3 take-aways?
- 