

# Students with Shame



*Many Students who Disconnect from our Lessons do so  
Out of a Sense of Shame .*



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# Social Dependence



- As a species humans rely on belonging to a group
- Rejection from the group is a threat to their very survival and triggers a physical and emotional response.
- The fact that they are singled out for rejection makes them question their self worth.



# Shame

## The Dysfunctional Emotion



- The need to belong is a primary drive for all people.
- The underlying dynamic of shame is fear of rejection



# 'Normal' Early Parenting



- Up to the age of about 1 year a child experiences nothing but affection and positive attention.
- From the time they can crawl their natural curiosity gets them into dangerous situations.
- When this happens parents respond with **'NO'** – sharp and attention gathering outburst .
  - The aim is to keep child safe
  - The effect is to place the child in a state of 'freeze'.

**From a State of Excited Curiosity the Child  
Retreats to Withdrawal!**

# Shame

## Family of Origin



In the first instance the awareness of shame begins in early childhood through:

- Authoritarian and critical parents
- Childhood abuse and abandonment
- Treated as an equal during childhood
- Memories of ignoring and abandoning mothers
- Feeling less favored than siblings



# Parent Rejection

## Attachment Rupture



- The natural state for a young child is to be excited by the presence of their parent no matter what they have done. When greeted with disapproval or indifference it's because they are not worthy.
- Sensitive and anxious children can experience this with what appears to be supportive parenting.
- The core of shame occurs in early ego formation.
- Shame is a social emotive reflective sense of exclusion

**They are not Loveable Enough!**

# Healthy Shame....



- This is when we act in a way that is not true to our character.
- We all do it because we are flawed and imperfect
- This protects us in our group
- Promotes empathy, helps us understand others

***If we never experience shame we are either divine or totally corrupt***

# Toxic Shame:

- Is a feeling that is not based on reality
- Is a false message that creates a false sense of self
- Is put on us by others
- Is a chronic, permanent state
- Exaggerates our faults.

***Toxic shame is not a feeling of shame about what we have done, it is a feeling of shame about what we believe we are.***

# Shame Produces Stress

## Biological Effects



These are:

- Decreased immunological functioning
- Increased levels of cortisol
- Decreased neuroplasticity



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## Interpersonal Effects

- Conflict avoidance
- Reflexive apologizing
- Reduced interpersonal problem solving

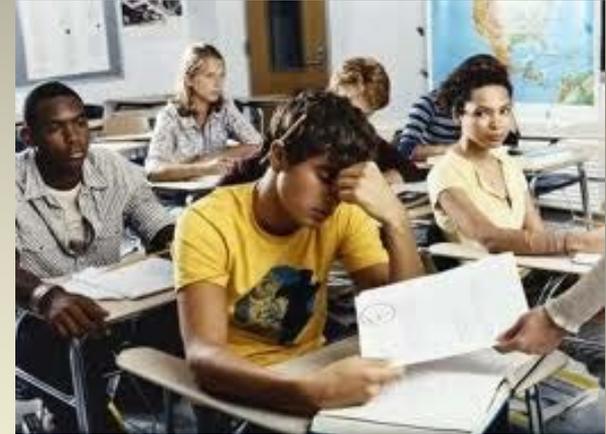


# Shame

## Psychological Effects

These are:

- Depression
- Inferiority, low self esteem
- Inappropriate self-blame
- Anger, hostility and externalizing problems
- Envy and blame of others



# How People Shame Themselves

- **Discount their positives**  
They don't listen to compliments, they only hear criticisms
- **Magnify their flaws**  
They look for confirmation about their beliefs and maybe it's all they have heard
- **Judge themselves against perfection**  
If they make a mistake they ARE a mistake.
- **Translate criticism for what they do into what they are**  
When they do something wrong it's because they are wrong
- **They read shame into other's minds**  
They know that you know they are bad



# Impact of Shame on:

## Emotions

(feelings)

- A fake
- Contemptible
- Inadequate
- Inferior
- Flawed
- Dirty
- Damaged

## Cognition (beliefs)

- To be good you must be perfect.
- They don't deserve anything.
- Never let anyone know them.
- Don't have feelings.
- Don't grow, it's safe where you are.



# Shame Based Inner dialogue



- ‘You don’t count’
- ‘You don’t deserve to do what you want to do.’
- ‘What you want isn’t important. Others wants are more important.’
- ‘Don’t make trouble. Don’t rock the boat.’
- ‘It doesn’t really matter. It’s not important anyway.’
- ‘Don’t hurt him/her; she won’t cope.’



# Shame Based Inner dialogue



- ‘Just give in it’s easier than getting into a fight.’
- ‘Just lie. It’s better than having him/her yelling at you.’
- ‘You can’t have what you want, so just go along.’
- ‘If you don’t give in you will end up with no friends.’



# Shame Based Inner dialogue



- ‘You have to do what he/she wants or there will be trouble’
- ‘You didn’t do it right again’
- ‘You should be ashamed of yourself’
- ‘Your selfish



# Shame Based Inner dialogue



- ‘Its OK to lose you but don’t lose him/her.’
- ‘Just do what’s expected of you.’
- ‘Who do you think you are?’
- ‘Work before play.’
- ‘You should’ ..... ‘You shouldn’t’ .....
- ‘You had better!’

# Summary –The Development of Shame



The fundamental questions (for all of us) are:

- Am I safe?
- Am I loved?

By age five shame is entrenched and is not ‘thought’ about **BUT** in difficult situations it is felt. The entrenched responses are ignited.

**At School Learning is Likely to Mean Failure**

**The Emotional Cost of Learning is too Great**



# Shame

## Impact on School Performance

- Reduced pride in response to success
- Maladaptive perfectionism
- Increased shame in the face of failure
- Fear of negative evaluation



# Un-Teachable to the Teachable



Children who have a shamed core can be recovered.

The teacher can 're-parent' the child by answering those fundamental questions by:

- Making them safe
- Making them loved

The Tribal Classroom

- The students become a 'family' all loved, all safe and all important.

**Recovery Occurs Through Bonding,  
Attachment and Compassion**