

SHAME

DESCRIPTION:

A sense of being a failure as a person / never feeling as if you are quite "good enough" / feeling doubt about yourself (your strengths) at the very core / feeling exposed in a very painful manner / feeling humiliated, discouraged, and despairing much of the time/ an inner feeling of worthlessness / "I'm a mistake", "I am a bad person", "I'm wrong".

MAJOR SOURCES:

1. INHERITED GENERATIONAL SHAME - Family secrets from before birth.
2. EXTERNAL SHAME - Trauma that violates our boundaries ie. sexual.
3. CULTURAL SHAME - Failure to live up to expectations generated by male and female stereotypes in the society

SIGNALS THAT SHAME EXISTS:

1. Rage / extreme amounts of anger
2. Power struggles about who is right
3. "All or none" thinking
4. Blaming others for your problems
5. Continually striving for perfection
6. Striving for power and control
7. Verbal abuse of others
8. Physical abuse of others
9. Grandiosity / Self-righteousness
10. Withdrawal then loneliness
11. Low self-esteem
12. Feeling guilt-ridden most of time
13. Preoccupation with your image
14. Depression
15. Addictions-chemical or process
16. Defensiveness - denial etc.

JOURNEY OUT OF SHAME:

1. Face your shame directly and discover how you learned to be shameful.
2. Look at your attachment to your shame in the present (ie payoffs)
3. Translate your shame into emotional pain and express it to others in safe place
4. Learn new and more positive ways to nurture yourself.
5. Create new and self-affirming patterns and dialogues.
6. Actively re own discarded parts of your "small child".
7. Identify and attempt to stop using controlling / manipulative behaviors.
8. Actively choose to be vulnerable with trusted others.
9. Begin to assume that trusted others have good intentions toward you.
10. Be in tune with and trust your primary feelings. (and express them to others)
11. Learn to be in charge of how you react to and behave in everyday situations.
12. Consciously monitor your interactions and patterns with others, staying alert for situations that trigger old shaming scenes that create current shame.
13. Make conscious your patterns of responding / stop and observe your inner events with a friendly nature.
14. Learn from your "shame attacks"
15. Release the responsibility back to the person through whom the shame came and fully forgive them and release them from bitter judgments.
16. Accept God's grace and covering through Jesus Christ who bore our shame.

Taken primarily from Dr Patrick Carnes