



# INTEGRATE TO LIVE

Restore Resilience. Cultivate Community. Impact your World

## Week 14 Transcript: Shame A Deeper Look

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Today, we continue our exploration of changing our relationship to unpleasant emotion with a deeper look at Shame.

Shame is the overwhelming feeling that there is something deeply, and inherently, wrong with me and if I expose this weakness to others I'll be rejected or abandoned.

This topic is certainly taboo in our culture. It's hard to talk about, but we all have it. We can't get rid of shame, yet we can become resilient to it. But, not if we keep it silent and in the shadows.

Acknowledging and talking about it cuts off its power. That's why we are going to learn how to move toward it with acceptance and curiosity.

Shame holds us in its vise grip of Never Enough and Always Too Much. On one side, it tells us that we'll never be enough, do enough, have enough, to be worthy of love and belonging.

On the other side, it tells us that if we speak up, express ourselves, take a risk, or put something out there we'll be too much and push away the possibilities of connection and empathy.

It's sometimes hard to name shame and recognize it in our lives. So, let's look at the distinctions between 4 Self-Conscious Affects: Shame, Guilt, Humiliation and Embarrassment, according to the research of shame resilience expert, Brené Brown.

Shame is a focus on self and guilt is a focus on behavior. Shame is the belief that "I am bad" and guilt is the belief that "I did something bad." Guilt is a powerfully positive emotion because it lets us know that we behaved in a way that is out of alignment with our core values and who we ultimately want to be.



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This empowers us to change our behaviors and make a different choice next time without tearing away at our self-worth. Shame does the opposite. It erodes our sense of worthiness and disempowers our choice to live more fully in our true identity.

The next distinction is between shame and humiliation. The variable between the two is whether or not we believe we deserve it.

If someone criticizes or calls me names in front of my classmates or colleagues and my self-talk is, "that person is a jerk and I don't deserve that" I am likely experiencing humiliation. If my self-talk is, "that person is right. I am stupid, annoying, a failure, etc. [fill in the blank]" I am likely experiencing shame.

They both feel really bad, but I will rebound from humiliation in a different way. I'll probably tell someone about it and experience connection and affirmation within the experience or just simply let it go because I don't believe I deserve to be treated that way.

In shame, I believe I deserve it. I hide it and keep it a secret, hoping no one ever finds me out because I believe what they've said about me is true. Back to the "I am" statements of shame, I internalize the message "I am stupid", "I am annoying", "I am a failure."

The last distinction is between shame and embarrassment. The hallmark of embarrassment is knowing I'm not alone. Even though in that moment I want to hide and can't believe this is happening to me, I know I'm not the only person to have gone through it. The moment passes and I can easily laugh about it later, which leads to connection and shared experience.

Approaching shame with acceptance and curiosity requires a lot of courage. The people who have the highest resilience to shame understand the distinctions between these emotions and are able to identify when they are in shame.



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Getting curious about shame is understanding our shame triggers. Shame triggers often happen relationally and categorically. They manifest as a stress response in our nervous system. So, we already have all the tools we need. Shame Resilience is practicing the Pause & Pivot method with shame messages and behaviors, and reaching for connection in the process.

It's helpful and empowering to know specifically what our shame triggers and responses are so we can recognize it more quickly. That's some of what we'll explore in the action guide this week. And, make sure you stay connected around what you're learning and experiencing.