

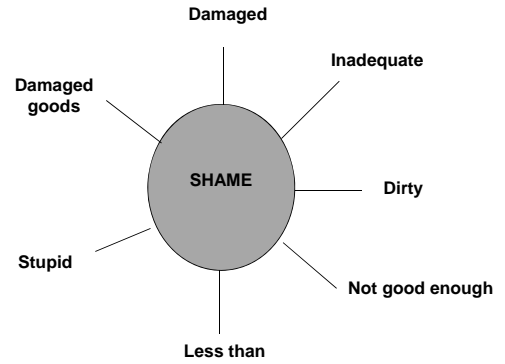
Getting to Emotional Sobriety

with

Claudia Black, Ph.D.

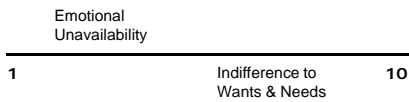
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Emotional Availability

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Emotional Abandonment

Abandonment

When you have to hide a part of who you are in order to be acceptable/ to protect self.

When you have to hide:

- Your mistakes/ vulnerabilities
- Your feelings
- Your needs
- Your accomplishments/ success

Emotional Abandonment

When you cannot live up to expectations of significant other due to expectations being unrealistic.

When someone is disappointed with you they attack your whole being, worth, and value versus what you did or did not do.

When another expects you to be an extension of themselves, fulfilling their dreams.

When another is not willing to take responsibility for their feelings, thoughts, and behaviors but expects you to take responsibility for them.

When parents' esteem is derived through child's behavior.

When children are treated as peers with no parent child distinction.

Characteristics of Adults Abandoned as Children

- Seek acceptance outside of self, taking care of others, forgetting own needs
- Under-regulated or over regulated emotions/difficulty with one's emotions
- Connecting to objects rather than people

Characteristics of Adults Abandoned as Children

- Miss social cues when relating to others
- Hypervigilant
- Don't see a problem until it is a crisis
- When they do recognize it is a crisis, can't ask for help

Characteristics of Adults Abandoned as Children

- Clinging while expecting rejection
- Become relationship nomads or stay in emotionally cut off relationships
- Put up barriers if people get too close – walled boundaries
- Lack of boundaries – enmeshment

Characteristics of Adults Abandoned as Children

- Difficulty trusting or flip side – give trust when unearned
- Inability to articulate needs and feelings
- Unrealistic expectations / impoverished expectations
- Cognitive distortions, faulty thinking

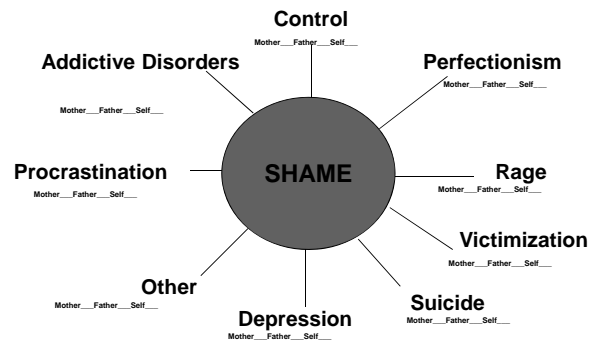
Characteristics of Adults Abandoned as Children

- Inability to engage in healthy self care
- Image management- making every thing on outside look good to the outside world, feeling greater despair internally
- Lack of self-worth – shame responses

We construct labyrinth defenses and a moat around our heart to allow some semblance of safety from our grief. Unattended sorrow gradually displaces the joy of youth and adds to the diminishment of trust and hope.

Stephen Levine, Unattended Sorrow

Shame Genogram



Addictions do to shame
what saltwater does to thirst.

*The defenses used in addictions tend to grow, providing ever **decreasing** amounts of **relief** while requiring ever **increasing** amounts of **indulgence**.*

Shame Screens

Power Over Pain →	→ Rage → Control → Perfectionism
Succumb To Pain →	→ Procrastination → Victim → Depression → Suicide
Erase The Pain →	→ Addiction

Physical Reaction to Shame

Recognizing shame is an important tool for regaining our power.

- I physically feel shame in/on my ...
- It feels like ...
- I know I'm in shame when I feel ...
- If I could taste shame it would taste like ...
- If I could smell shame, it would smell like ...
- If I could touch shame, it would feel like ...

Saying Goodbye to a Defense

Write Dear Defense...

**Thank the defense for what it has done.
Tell the defense how it is getting in the way.
Tell the defense that you need to let it go.**

Dear Perfectionism,

I want to thank you for the help you have given me over the years. I needed you when ... I needed you when I was a child. I was so scared and didn't want anyone to know. I had to do the right thing or teachers wouldn't have noticed me. I didn't want anyone to think there was anything wrong. Because of you, Perfectionism, I got some good attention. I learned to get a lot done. But now you are getting in my way. Because of you, I cannot get close to other people. I expect too much from them. I cannot share in projects. I don't have fun because everything has to be done right. You once protected me from my fear, now you are the source of my fear- I can't be good enough.

I need to let you go.

Saying Goodbye to a Defense

Dear Procrastination,

Thank you so much for the opportunity that you have given me — the time for introspection. Thank you for having me think seriously, in depth, cogently.

But now you are in my way. You cause me to stop in my tracks for naught but fear itself. This is not good enough — not anymore. I've thought as in depth as anyone who may wish to be so, so analytical. I need to move on now, to put these thoughts and fears into real action.

I have a dream to complete, a drive that needs to be followed. Release me, that I may be myself.

Shame Attacks

Steps to Shame Attack:

- Shame attack trigger – events that are reflective of old history
- Attack – strong feelings resulting in deep pain, child felt vulnerability, wanting to disappear, hide
- Cover up – raging, acting out, extreme withdrawal
- Increase of shame due to cover up – it gets stored

Ways to address Shame Attack

- Stop – take a deep breath
- Withdraw – develop observing self as a witness, look at over response to a situation
- Own over reaction
- Explore old history – who is this about?
- Recognizing what's occurring, stay in adult ego state
- Take risk, establish boundaries and ask for what is needed

May you believe in your specialness.