

SHAME

Naming it · Speaking it · Moving through it

grounded in the research of Brené Brown

WHAT SHAME IS

Shame is the intensely painful belief that we are flawed at our core — and therefore unworthy of connection and belonging. It speaks about who we *are*, not what we *did*. It is also nearly universal: Brown found that the only people who feel no shame are those without the capacity for empathy. Shame is not proof of a defect — it is proof that you are wired to belong.

GUILT

"I did something bad."

- Measures an **action** against my values
- Adaptive: it moves us toward repair
- Leaves the self intact — *I can do better*

SHAME

"I am bad."

- Measures the **whole self**, not the act
- Linked to addiction, depression, aggression
- Rarely produces change — it produces hiding

SECRECY · SILENCE · JUDGMENT

Shame needs all three to survive. Remove even one and it starts to lose its grip.

FOUR PRACTICES OF SHAME RESILIENCE

1 Recognize it & name your triggers

Learn the body's early signal — heat in the face, a tight throat, the urge to vanish.

3 Reach out

Tell it to the one or two people who can hear it without flinching.

2 Practice critical awareness

Whose voice is this? Is the expectation attainable? Who benefits if I believe it?

4 Speak shame

Say the word out loud, name the feeling, and ask plainly for what you need.

"Shame cannot survive being spoken."

BRENÉ BROWN

Empathy is the antidote — shame dissolves when someone answers: *me too*.

TO SIT WITH BETWEEN SESSIONS

- Where did I first learn that some part of me was unacceptable?
- What does shame feel like in my body — and what do I do to make that feeling stop?
- Who in my life has earned the right to hear my story?
- What would I say to a dear friend who told me what I just told myself?