

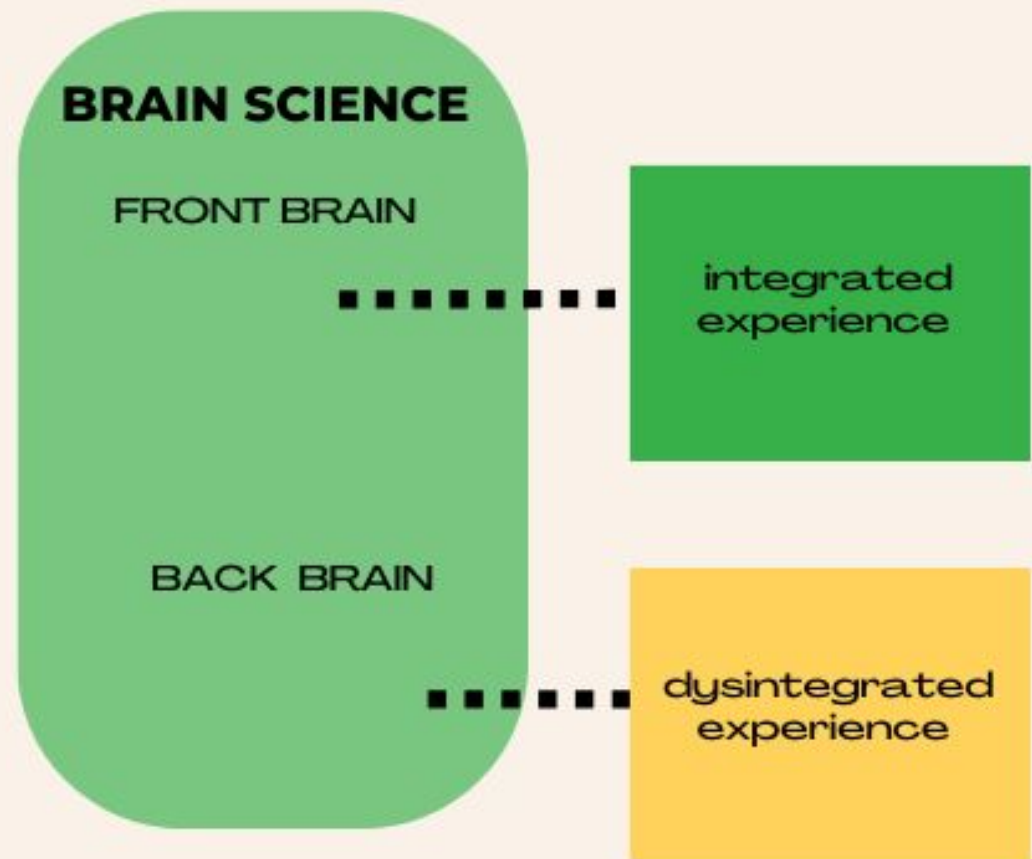
UNSTUCK

Tools to Help Move Through Unforgiveness and Shame



Purpose of Unforgiveness

- Flight/flight response communication tool
- Discover why something happened
- Process pain that has happened to us



Personal Challenges of Unforgiveness

- We Get Stuck:

1 John 2:11- But anyone who hates a brother or sister is in the darkness and walks around in the darkness. They do not know where they are going, because the darkness has blinded them.

- It Impacts Our Physical Bodies:

"Chronic anger puts you into a fight-or-flight mode, which results in numerous changes in heart rate, blood pressure and immune response. Those changes, then, increase the risk of depression, heart disease and diabetes, among other conditions. Forgiveness, however, calms stress levels, leading to improved health." Johns Hopkins Medicine, Forgiveness: Your Health Depends On It

Relational Challenge of Unforgiveness

- The Relationship Stays Stuck
- We get caught up in a pattern of blaming vs. relating

“Our attention is focused on classifying, analyzing, and determining levels of wrongness rather than on what we and others need and are not getting.” Marshall Rosenberg, *Nonviolent Communication*

Tool 1: Acknowledge

- Turn around time of forgiveness varies

As long as you keep secrets and suppress information, you are fundamentally at war with yourself...The critical issue is allowing yourself to know what you know. That takes an enormous amount of courage” (Van der Kolk, The Body Keeps the Score).

Psalm 23

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
Why are you so far from saving me,
so far from my cries of anguish?
2 My God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer,
by night, but I find no rest.^[b]
3 Yet you are enthroned as the Holy One;
you are the one Israel praises.^[c]
4 In you our ancestors put their trust;
they trusted and you delivered them.
5 To you they cried out and were saved;
in you they trusted and were not put to shame.
6 But I am a worm and not a man,
scorned by everyone, despised by the people.
7 All who see me mock me;
they hurl insults, shaking their heads.

8 “He trusts in the Lord,” they say,
“let the Lord rescue him.
Let him deliver him,
since he delights in him.”
9 Yet you brought me out of the
womb;
you made me trust in you, even
at my mother’s breast.
10 From birth I was cast on you;
from my mother’s womb you
have been my God.
11 Do not be far from me,
for trouble is near
and there is no one to help.

Tool 2: Compassionate Curiosity

- We assume the negative because of our negativity bias.
- There is a function for behavior.
- Compassionate Curiosity puts us in a perspective position, ready to observe and grow.

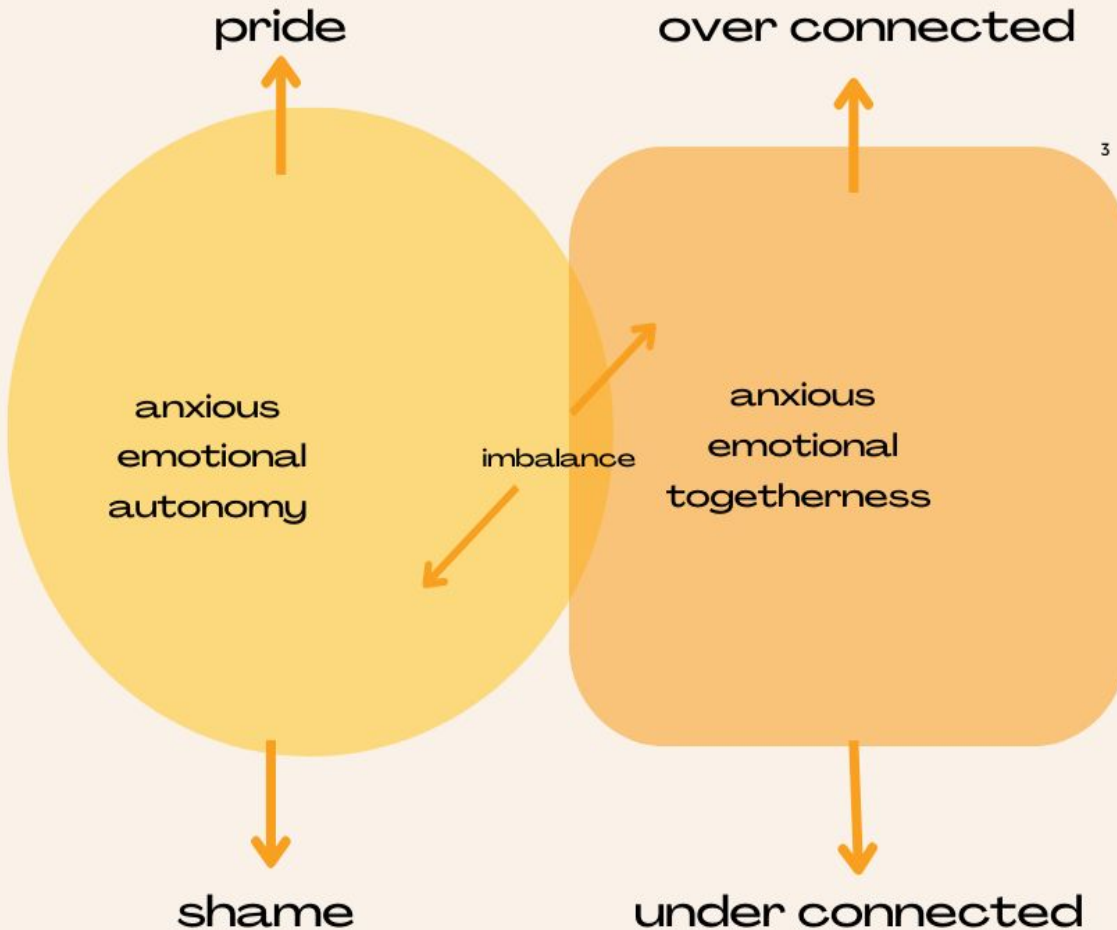
Self: "I wonder how that (name the situation) impacts me?"

Other: "I wonder what is going on in their lives that they are needing?"

Tool 3: Take Appropriate Responsibility

IMBALANCE

"For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other" (Galatians 5:14-15, NIV).



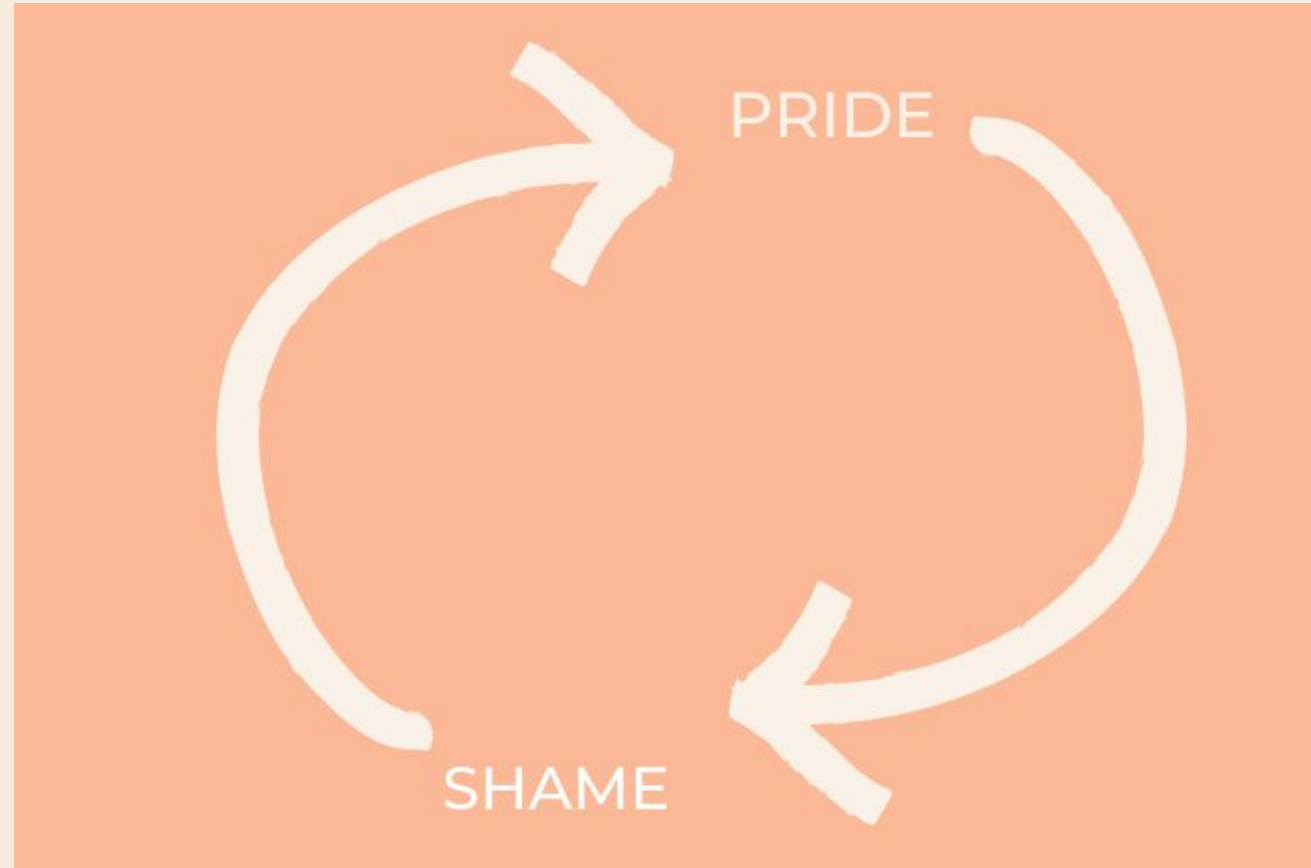
Pride and Shame

Self:

- What is for me to own in this situation?
- What can I learn from it?
- How can I grow?

Other:

- What is their responsibility?
What is theirs to own?



Tool 4: Make Meaning

“Certainly much harm can be done by telling people to simply buck up, count their blessings, and remember how much they still have to be grateful for. Processing a life experience through a grateful lens does not mean denying negativity. It is not a form of superficial happiology. It does mean realizing the power you have to transform a loss into a potential gain, recasting negativity into positive channels for gratitude” (Emmons, *Gratitude Works*).

Meaning Making Exercise

Application

1. Which tool was the most challenging for you?
2. Which tool was most helpful for you?
3. What is your next step to processing unforgiveness?
4. What is your next step to move from shame to balance?