

Shame-resilience, Self-compassion and Self-care:

Tools for a Wholehearted Clinical Practice

Sarah Buino, LCSW, CADC, CDWF
Head/Heart Therapy, Inc.



Agenda for today

Introduction - Why are we here and what are we doing?

Part I - Wholehearted overview

Part II - Psychoeducation and experiential tools from The Daring Way™

Part III - Self-Compassion

Part IV - Choose Your Own Adventure!



Objectives

- Participants will demonstrate the differences between shame, guilt, humiliation, and embarrassment.
- Participants will describe aspects of shame that get in the way of being our authentic selves and practicing compassion (for self and clients).
- Participants will identify components of self-compassion and differentiate self-compassion from self-esteem, self-pity, and self-indulgence.
- Participants will practice concrete skills to navigate shame and practice self-compassion (for self and clients).



I am not an
expert!
...and other disclaimers.



THE DARING WAY™

SHOW UP | BE SEEN | LIVE BRAVE™  based on the research of Brené Brown

- Why did you choose to attend this training?
- What (if anything) are you nervous about regarding today's training?
- When you leave today how will you know this was a worthwhile training?
- Is there something your peers can do to make you feel more able to DARE GREATLY during this training?





PART I

WHOLEHEARTED OVERVIEW









Wholehearted Living - As therapists

- Change in culture of therapy – self-disclosure no longer taboo
 - Feminist Therapy Code of Ethics - Article II Power Differentials
 - How do we determine what's appropriate info to share with clients?
- Con: run greater risks at blurring lines with/for clients
 - Be clear on your boundaries!
- Pro: great way to practice and model authenticity with clients
 - Feedback from clients
 - Touch our own shame to touch shame in clients



Wholehearted Living - Our clients

Considerations for different populations...

- Socio-economic backgrounds
- Relativism versus good/bad
- Norms for race/ethnicity



Wholehearted Living - Barriers

- Denial
- Rigid belief systems
 - What are some examples of potentially rigid belief systems?
 - (NOTE: This is not a condemnation of these belief systems, but an examination of how these influence one's work with shame)
- Intellectualizing



Show up - Be seen Brave the Wilderness

What the *#%@ does that mean?

- Be present
 - Listen
 - Be engaged
 - Be connected
 - DARE GREATLY!



True Belonging

"True belonging is the spiritual practice of believing in and belonging to yourself so deeply that you can share your most authentic self with the world and find sacredness in both being a part of something and standing alone in the wilderness. True belonging doesn't require you to change who you are; it requires you to be who you are."

- Brené Brown, *Braving the Wilderness*



strong
back

soft front

wild heart



Permission Slips

What permission do you need to give yourself to be “all in” today?

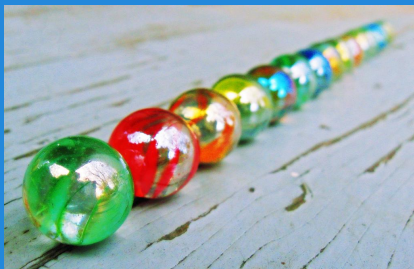
- ...to be uncool
- ...to be vulnerable
- ...to not know the answer
- ...to know the answer and speak up



PART II

PSYCHOEDUCATION and
TOOLS from
The Daring Way™





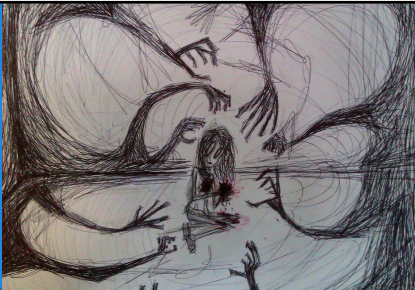
TRUST



Trust

- How do we attempt to build trust with clients?
 - Patience
 - Mirroring
 - Empathy
- Teaching about trust
 - Marble jar analogy





VULNERABILITY



Vulnerability - Psychoed for Clients

- Myths of vulnerability
 - Vulnerability is weakness
 - We can opt out of vulnerability
 - Vulnerability is over-sharing
 - We can practice vulnerability in isolation
- Vulnerability is uncertainty, risk, and emotional exposure
- "The difficult thing is that **vulnerability** is the first thing I look for in you and the last thing I'm willing to show you. **In you, it's courage and daring. In me, it's weakness.**" - Brené Brown
- Weakness is a quality/feature that prevents someone from being effective or useful; faulty or defective



Vulnerability - As Clinicians

- As clinicians, where are we vulnerable?
 - Money
 - Areas open to counter-transference
 - Ego
- Why is it important to note our vulnerabilities?



Vulnerability Light VS Dark

Positives

- Create awareness of common humanity of suffering
- Enhances therapeutic alliance
- Parallel process

Not-so-Positives

- Use client sessions to work out our own issues
- Project our issues and not see clients clearly





EMPATHY



Empathy

Components of Empathy

- Staying out of judgment
- Perspective-taking
- Recognizing emotion
- Communicating understanding of that emotion
- Mindfulness – awareness, not getting stuck in others' emotion



Barriers to Empathy



Barriers to Empathy continued

- Confusing sympathy with empathy
- Sympathy seeking
- Stacking the deck
- Failing to dig deep
- Thinking shame is a good way to control behavior



With what types of clients do we find it difficult to practice empathy?

- Borderline?
- Narcissistic?
- Martyr/victim?
- Substance addicted?
- Codependent?
- Adolescents?
- Parents?
- Stuck clients?
- Boring clients?

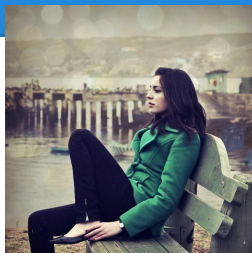


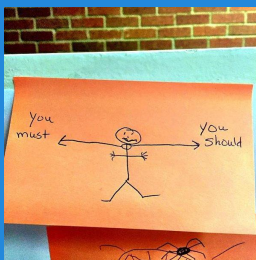
Empathy Exercise

1. Choose a partner
2. Partner A will think of a time they felt shame
3. Partner A will hold a pose that represents that experience while partner B witnesses.
4. Partner B will then take the pose of partner A while partner A witnesses.

SWITCH

1. Partner B will think of a time they felt shame
2. Partner B will hold a pose that represents that experience while partner A witnesses
3. Partner A will then take the pose of partner B while partner B witnesses





SHAME



How do you see shame?

- How do you define shame in your own words?
- List three words that describe shame
- If shame were _____ what would it be?
 - Color
 - Food
 - Piece of furniture
- Draw a picture of shame



Shame
is the intensely
painful feeling
that we are not worthy
of love and belonging.
-Brené Brown



HEAD/HEART



Defining shame

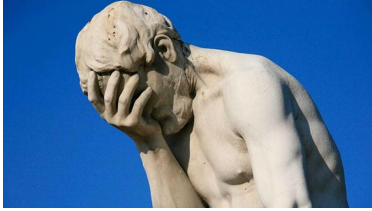
Differentiate shame from guilt, embarrassment, humiliation

- Shame = "I am bad"
- Guilt = "I did something bad"
- Humiliation – we feel we don't deserve
- Embarrassment – fleeting, often funny, we know we're not alone



Recognizing shame in clients

How do we identify when our clients are in shame?



Recognizing shame in ourselves

Have you experienced shame while working with a client?

- What did you do/say?
- How did you know it was shame?
- Did you do/say anything you regretted?



Origins of shame

Shame begins as a two-person experience and becomes a one-person experience.

Shame develops in our first known community - our family of origin

- Overt - "You good-for-nothing..."
- Covert
 - Rigid ideology
 - Parental attitudes (family rules)
 - Parent/sibling success



Shame - The armor we wear

- Perfectionism
- Foreboding joy
- Numbing

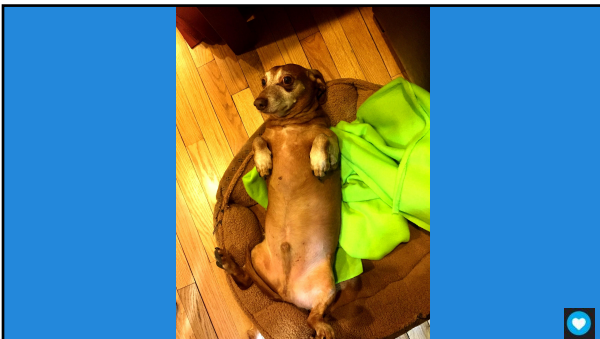


Shame - The shields we use

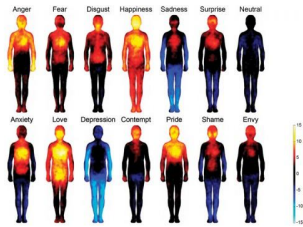
- | | |
|------------------|----------|
| • Moving away | • Flight |
| • Moving towards | • Fawn |
| • Moving against | • Fight |

Fight - Flight - Freeze - Fawn
http://www.pete-walker.com/fourFs_TraumaTypologyComplexPTSD.htm





Shame and the body



Shame = Trauma

Using body interventions to work with shame:

- Sensation - what does shame feel like in the body?
- Image - what images represent shame?
- Posture - how does a person "do" shame?

Can the client manipulate these sensations, postures and images to soften and regulate the system?



Shame - Identities and triggers

Whose measuring stick are we using?

How do we NOT want to be perceived.

- Identities we want to avoid help identify areas in which we're likely to experience shame

Common categories for shame:

* body image * money * parenting * work * identity * mental health/addiction * ability * trauma * sexuality



Shame - Identities and triggers cont...

As a therapist, how would you like to be perceived?

As a therapist, how would you NOT like to be perceived?





VALUES



How values light the way



It's hard to be authentic when we are unsure of what we believe in.

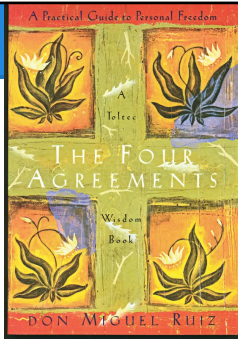
- What are our values?
- How do we practice (or avoid practicing) our values?
- How do we bridge the gap?



Getting clear on values to enhance authenticity

The Four Agreements
by Don Miguel Ruiz

1. Be impeccable with your word.
2. Don't take anything personally.
3. Don't make assumptions.
4. Always do your best.



Values exercise

From the list of values - choose the top 3 values that inform your clinical practice



ACCOUNTABILITY ♡ ACHIEVEMENT ♡ ADAPTABILITY ♡ ADVENTURE ♡ ALTRUISM ♡ AMBITION
♡ AUTHENTICITY ♡ BALANCE ♡ BEAUTY ♡ BEING THE BEST ♡ BELONGING ♡ CAREER ♡
CARING ♡ COLLABORATION ♡ COMMITMENT ♡ COMMUNITY ♡ COMPASSION ♡
COMPETENCE ♡ CONFIDENCE ♡ CONNECTION ♡ CONTENTMENT ♡ CONTRIBUTION ♡
COOPERATION ♡ COURAGE ♡ CREATIVITY ♡ DIGNITY ♡ DIVERSITY ♡ ENVIRONMENT ♡
EFFICIENCY ♡ EQUALITY ♡ ETHICS ♡ EXCELLENCE ♡ FAIRNESS ♡ FAITH ♡ FAMILY ♡
FINANCIAL STABILITY ♡ FORGIVENESS ♡ FREEDOM ♡ FRIENDSHIP ♡ FUN ♡ FUTURE
GENERATIONS ♡ GENEROSITY ♡ GIVING BACK ♡ GRACE ♡ GRATITUDE ♡ GROWTH ♡
HARMONY ♡ HEALTH ♡ HOME ♡ HONESTY ♡ HOPE ♡ HUMILITY ♡ HUMOR ♡ INCLUSION ♡
INDEPENDENCE ♡ INTEGRITY ♡ INITIATIVE ♡ INTUITION ♡ JOB SECURITY ♡ JOY ♡ JUSTICE
♡ KINDNESS ♡ KNOWLEDGE ♡ LEADERSHIP ♡ LEARNING ♡ LEGACY ♡ LEISURE ♡ LOVE ♡
LOYALTY ♡ MAKING A DIFFERENCE ♡ OPENNESS ♡ OPTIMISM ♡ ORDER ♡ NATURE ♡
PARENTING ♡ PATRIOTISM ♡ PATIENCE ♡ PEACE ♡ PERSEVERANCE ♡ PERSONAL
FULFILLMENT ♡ PRIDE ♡ RECOGNITION ♡ RELIABILITY ♡ RESPECT ♡ RESOURCEFULNESS ♡
RESPONSIBILITY ♡ RISK-TAKING ♡ SAFETY ♡ SECURITY ♡ SELF-DISCIPLINE ♡
SELF-EXPRESSION ♡ SELF-RESPECT ♡ SERENITY ♡ SERVICE ♡ SIMPLICITY ♡ SPIRITUALITY
♡ SPORTSMANSHIP ♡ STEWARDSHIP ♡ SUCCESS ♡ TIME ♡ TEAMWORK ♡ THRIFT ♡
TRADITION ♡ TRAVEL ♡ TRUST ♡ TRUTH ♡ UNDERSTANDING ♡ UNIQUENESS ♡
USEFULNESS ♡ VISION ♡ WEALTH ♡ WELL-BEING ♡ WHOLEHEARTEDNESS ♡ WISDOM ♡

How to align our professional selves

- What are the values you hold as a therapist/healer?
- What concrete ways are you living those values in daily life?
- What ways (if any) are you acting against your values?
- How can you bridge the gap?

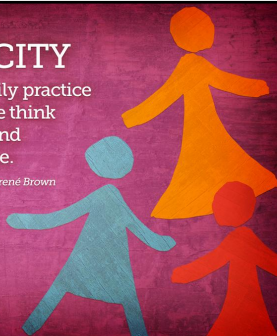


AUTHENTICITY

Authenticity is the daily practice of letting go of who we think we're supposed to be and embracing who we are.

- Brené Brown


LIFE CLASS
PRESENTS
BRENÉ BROWN
THE GIFTS OF IMPERFECTION
www.oprah.com/brenebrowncourse



Authenticity

**I'M NOT
PERFECT
BUT PARTS
OF ME ARE
AWESOME.**

JESSIEKAY.COM

- Be imperfect
- Willingness to be different
- Be vulnerable



Authenticity - As clinicians

- **Be imperfect**
 - Do we apologize to clients when we've messed up?
 - Rift/repair
 - "Share your errors and acknowledge it directly - admit mistakes - it is good model setting. "Therapist disclosure begets patient disclosure." (p. 29)." Yalom - *The Gift of Therapy - An Open Letter to a New Generation of Therapists and Their Patients*
- **Willingness to be different**
 - Allow clients to think differently than we do
 - Are we afraid of going outside the box in terms of therapeutic intervention?
 - Are we afraid of needing to be what a therapist is "supposed to be?"
- **Be vulnerable**
 - Do we need to feel like the expert or are we willing to share our failings with clients?





SHAME-RESILIENCE



The tools of shame-resilience

1. Recognizing shame and shame triggers
2. Practicing critical awareness
3. Reaching out (for empathy)
4. Speaking shame



PART III SELF-COMPASSION





Self-compassion is key because when we're able to be gentle with ourselves in the midst of shame, we're more likely to reach out, connect, and experience empathy.

— Brené Brown —

AZ QUOTES

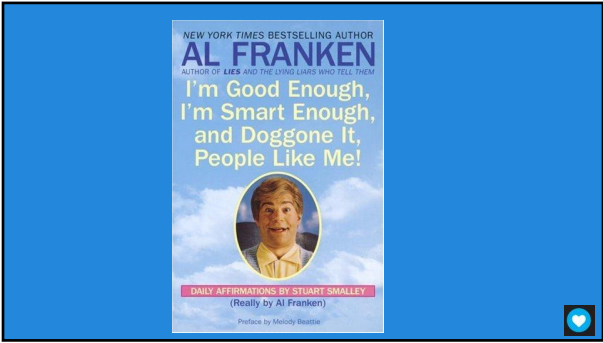
Why self-compassion?



What IS Self-Compassion?

- Compassion means “to suffer with”
- Recognition that you’re experiencing suffering and being kind to yourself in that moment
- Self-compassion is a practice of goodwill, not good feelings. We’re not trying to make bad feelings go away or pretend they aren’t there. Just holding loving space for ourselves when we do feel negative emotions.





What Self-Compassion Is NOT



- Self-pity emphasizes egoistic feelings of separation

VERSUS

- Self-compassion emphasizes connection to others through suffering




What Self-Compassion Is NOT

- Self-indulgence
 - We fear that self-compassion will be letting ourselves off the hook. And if we let ourselves off the hook, we'll never change or we'll get away with "bad" behavior.

VERSUS

- Self-compassion
 - People who practice kindness to themselves actually show MORE capacity for growth and change.



What Self-Compassion Is NOT

- Self-esteem
 - Self-esteem forces comparison to others
 - Requires us to be “better than” in order to feel good

Two major issues with attempting to raise our self-esteem

1. We'll never be better than everyone at everything
2. In areas where we do excel narcissism or



Self-esteem Versus Self-worth



Self-esteem Versus Self-worth

- Self-esteem is what we THINK
- Self-worth is how we FEEL



"The longest journey that a man must take in his lifetime is the 18 inches from his head to his heart."



What Self-Compassion Is NOT

- Weakness
 - Weakness is: faulty, flawed, defective, deficient
 - Vulnerability is uncertainty, risk and emotional exposure
- Self-compassion can enhance our feelings of self-worth by increasing our



Self-Compassion - Kristin Neff

- Self-kindness
- Common humanity
- Mindfulness



Self-compassion is a practice!

November 2012	April 2015	May 2017
● Self-Kindness: 1.8	● Self-Kindness: 4.00	● Self-Kindness: 3.60
● Self-Judgment: 4.6	● Self-Judgment: 2.00	● Self-Judgment: 3.00
● Common Humanity: 3.0	● Common Humanity: 4.50	● Common Humanity: 4.25
● Isolation: 4.25	● Isolation: 2.25	● Isolation: 2.00
● Mindfulness: 2.75	● Mindfulness: 4.00	● Mindfulness: 4.50
● Over-Identification: 4.5	● Over-Identification: 2.50	● Over-Identification: 1.75
● Overall score: 2.03	● Overall score: 3.96	● Overall score: 3.93

Average overall self-compassion scores tend to be around 3.0 on the 1-5 scale, so you can interpret your overall score accordingly. As a rough guide, a score of 1-2.5 for your overall self-compassion score indicates you are low in self-compassion, 2.5-3.5 indicates you are moderate, and 3.5-5.0 means you are high. Remember that higher scores for the Self-Judgment, Isolation, and Over-Identification subscales indicate less self-compassion, while lower scores on these dimensions are indicative of more self-compassion (these subscales are automatically reverse-coded when your overall self-compassion score is calculated.)



Mindfulness

- Mindfulness is the foundation upon which we can build self-compassion skills
- Mindfulness skills are improved by meditation



What gets in the way of cultivating your own meditation practice?



Mindfulness of the Body

- Observing strong emotions with openness and acceptance increases our capacity to tolerate these emotions and decreases emotional reactivity.
- Strong emotions have physical sensations and thoughts associated with them. (Remember slide 41?!)
- Goal is to help clients understand how acceptance leads to less stress and pain.





Mindfulness of Thought

- If we can't change the content of a thought, we can change the way we relate to that thought. (Steven Hayes-ACT)
- Instead of believing in a thought or trying to argue against it, we can notice it with curiosity.
- Emotions are made up of bodily sensations and thoughts/perceptions.
- Emotions are INFORMATION



Meditation Break



Self-Compassion in Therapy

Where do we start?

Unlocking client's capacity for compassion: loving-kindness meditation

1. Begin sending love and compassion to self
2. Shift love and compassion to a dear friend
3. Send compassion to a neutral person
4. Send compassion to someone who has harmed us
5. Send compassion to all beings



Utilizing Self-Compassion in Therapy

- Psychic circulation - the ability to simultaneously care for ourselves during times of suffering while cultivating our happiness (Tim Desmond)
- Must cultivate skills to tolerate suffering!!
 - When we bring attention to suffering:
 - We can embrace it in a way that heals
 - We can be overwhelmed and feel worse (backdraft)





Science and Self-Compassion

- Affective Neuroscience, Jaak Panksepp
 - Basic emotional circuitry shared by all mammals
 - Care Circuit: generates oxytocin and endogenous opioids to create calm and content feeling
 - From a neuroscience perspective - activating the Care Circuit while simultaneously activating a distressing memory actually **transforms that memory** -- through a process called memory reconsolidation -- so that it becomes less distressing.



Embracing Suffering with Compassion

- Step One
 - Turn attention towards suffering
- Step Two
 - Focus on bodily sensations, NOT THOUGHTS
 - We can't bring true compassion to our feelings unless we begin with acceptance of what is
- Step Three
 - Actively direct compassion towards suffering



Practicing Self-Compassion

- Bring to mind a recent memory where you experienced suffering or pain
(Try to make this memory fairly benign for the purposes of our exercise today. Not a traumatic memory.)
- Place your hand on your heart, or fold your hands and hold them in your lap.
- Think of this moment of pain and suffering, and actively give yourself love while you do so.
 - You can repeat the phrase "May you be happy, may you be healthy, may you be safe, may you be loved."
 - Or you can visualize the pain as a heavy stone and the self-compassion as a white or golden light. And as the light shines on the stone, imagine the stone shrinks in size and weight.



What came up for you?



What gets in the way?

- "It feels cheesy..."
- "I'm not worthy of self-compassion."
- "I'll be letting myself off the hook."

"The curious paradox is that when I accept myself just as I am, then I can change." - Carl Rogers



Next Steps in Self-Compassion

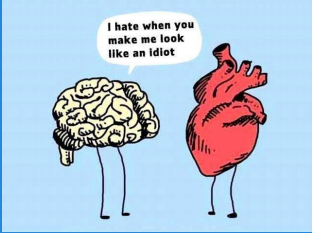
Modularity - the mind is made of different "parts"

- Notice different parts of self (often a critic and a victim)
- Acknowledge and give compassion to each part
 - What would you say to the critical part of you?
 - What would you say to the victim part of you?
- Inner critic is NOT the enemy - attend and befriend rather than fight



How often do we encourage self-care for our clients, but neglect our own self-care?





I hate when you
make me look
like an idiot

NOW WHAT?

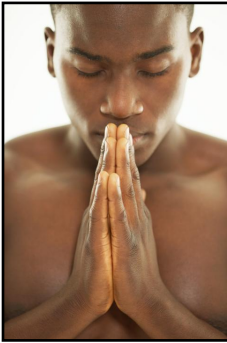
PART IV



choose your own
ADVENTURE!

Options...

- Case discussion
 - One of my cases
 - Your cases
- Practice tools
 - Leading clients in self-compassion
 - Shifting sensations, postures, images of shame
- Q&A



Take-aways

- What was the most meaningful experience for you today?
- What piece of information/tool can you use on your own or with your clients next week?



Recommended readings

Tara Brach: Radical Acceptance

Brené Brown: I Thought It Was Just Me, The Gifts of Imperfection, Daring Greatly, Rising Strong, Braving the Wilderness

Tim Desmond: Self-Compassion in Psychotherapy

Rick Hanson: Just One Thing

Jack Kornfield: The Wise Heart

Kristin Neff: Self-Compassion

Don Miguel Ruiz: The Four Agreements

Irvin Yalom: The Gift of Therapy





<https://headhearttherapy.com/podcast>



Presentation PDF

If you'd like to download a copy of this presentation visit:

<https://headhearttherapy.com/presentations>

Password: HeartlandCC2018



Let's Connect!

Email: sarah@headhearttherapy.com

FB: <https://www.facebook.com/HeadHeartTherapy/>

<https://www.facebook.com/WoundedHealr>

Twitter: @HeadHeart_Chi

@WoundedHealr

Instagram: @headhearttherapy