

Abstract

The focus of this dissertation is an exploration of shame as a humanistic and integrative psychotherapist. The motivation for this study was born from my own experiences of shame. I was unable to or tell a cohesive story of my life, which accounted for my feelings of fear, shame, pain, and distress. I sought completion in drugs, friendships, and romantic relationships, all failed to give me any sense of security at my core. Unable to look up, I grew up in fear and felt shame for my vulnerability and dependence.

My interest in researching shame was to understand my own process and be more able to effectively help clients repair the wounding they had experienced. Whilst shame is a normal human emotion, I focus on the destructive aspect of shame that is frequently present within the psychotherapeutic encounter, a relational wounding which particularly impacts the therapeutic work. It can be a block to progression, notably affecting mine and the client's ability to identity and articulate our needs. It is part of the therapeutic task to acknowledge and offer a relational healing of these injuries.

I centre on the development of shame in our earliest relationships, its impacts and how it can be healed in the therapeutic relationship. I draw from relevant literature in the field of psychotherapy and explore the communication of shame

from an integrative perspective. Illustrated through a case study, offering right brain connection within a reparative therapeutic relationship, increased intrapsychic and interpersonal contact (Perls, Hefferline & Goodman, 1951), facilitating growth and expanded the client's capacity for experience. As we moved towards repairing the interpersonal bridge (Kaufman, 1989) and a release of shame in a regulated way, with me as a regulated other (Deyoung, 2015), my client was able to look up.