

The Healing of Shame

Dr Les Ackie

Created for Connection



"It is not good that man should be alone
Genesis 2:15

And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.
Genesis 2:25

Shame and the Biblical Narrative



"Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?'"

"You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."
Genesis 3:1-5

The Serpent lead Eve to doubt the nature of her relationship with God

Barriers to Connection



A lie believed as truth will affect our lives as if it were true

Barriers to Connection



"Eve believed the words of Satan, and the belief of that falsehood in regard to God's character, changed the condition and character of both herself and husband."

Review & Herald,
January 5, 1886

The Healing of Shame



Shame distorts the narrative we inhabit and seeks to destroy every relationship it targets

Shame and the Biblical Narrative



The serpent convinced Eve to strive for something she already had

“your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God” Genesis 3:4

Shame and the Biblical Narrative



Eve judged God from a distance

The Rupture of Sin



“And he said, I heard your voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.”
Genesis 3:10

The Healing of Shame



“... and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.”
Genesis 3:7

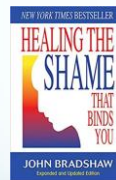
The Blame Game



When we feel shame, we often try to protect ourselves by blaming something or someone

Disconnection from pain

Can Shame Be Healthy?



“Healthy shame is an emotion that teaches us about our limits. Like all emotions, shame moves us to get our basic needs met.”

“In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety.”

1 Timothy 2:9

Healthy Shame v Toxic Shame



“Shame is the fear of disconnection – it’s the fear that something we’ve done or failed to do, an ideal that we’ve not lived up to, or a goal that we’ve not accomplished makes us unworthy of connection”

Healthy Shame v Toxic Shame



The key issue is not so much whether we experience shame, but what we do with shame when we experience it

Healthy Shame v Toxic Shame



Emotions have no moral value until they are acted upon by the will

Guilt v Shame



Guilt =
I did something bad

Shame =
I am bad

Shaming



We can control behaviour with shame, but we cannot build characters for the kingdom using shame

The Healing of Shame

**SHHH!
IT'S A
SECRET.**

Shame thrives on silence & secrecy

“We’re only as sick as the secrets we keep.”

Maria Nemeth

“There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you.”

Maya Angelou

The Healing of Shame



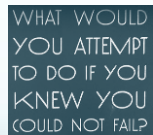
People who are shame-based live with the constant fear of being found out 'found out'

The Healing of Shame



Shame not only destroys relationships, it also stifles creativity due to fear of the vulnerability

The Healing of Shame



"I sometimes think that shame, mere awkward, senseless shame, does as much towards preventing good acts and straightforward happiness as any of our vices can do"

C. S. Lewis.

The Healing of Shame



Shame is not something we fix in private. The Enemy would have us to believe so

Healthy Responses to Shame



Exercising the courage to remain authentic, connected and true to our values

"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame."
Hebrews 12:2

Healthy Responses to Shame



"For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world - our faith."
1 John 5:4

Shame's Remedy - Vulnerability



Vulnerability involves uncertainty, risk, and emotional exposure

Shame's Remedy - Vulnerability



Ghandi

"A coward is incapable of exhibiting love: it is the prerogative of the brave"

Shame's Remedy - Vulnerability



We serve a God who chose to make Himself vulnerable in the sense that he was open to wounding, pain, rejection and death

"But if you will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride; and my eyes shall weep sore, and run down with tears."
Jeremiah 13:17

Strength Not Weakness



Our willingness to own and engage with our vulnerability determines the depth of our courage

"Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities . . . for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong."
2 Corinthians 12:10

Shame's Remedy - Vulnerability

The solution to shame lies, ironically, in doing the very thing that shame convinces us is the most dangerous, threatening act we could commit



The Healing of Shame

We are wounded in relationships, we are healed in relationships

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. ³⁵By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.
John 13:34-35

The Healing of Shame



“Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?”
Genesis 3:11

The Healing of Shame



Do you love me?

The Healing of Shame



The healing of shame involves rewriting the story we tell about ourselves to ourselves

The Healing of Shame



Owning our story and sharing it with another requires courage

The Healing of Shame



Only share your business with the people who have earned the right to hear it

The Healing of Shame

For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him.

Genesis 18:19

But now after you have known God, or rather are known by God, how is it that you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements, to which you desire again to be in bondage?

Galatians 4:6

But if anyone loves God, this one is known by Him.

1 Corinthians 8:3

The Healing of Shame



To be known by God is to receive his affirmation, feel understood, forgiven, encouraged and accepted

This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.
Matthew 3:17, 17:5

The Healing of Shame



To be known is necessarily to be vulnerable, to open ourselves to God's love and the love of others

The Healing of Shame

For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord
Romans 8:38-39