

## OVERCOMING SHAME

### RECOGNIZING SHAME & TRIGGERS

“Recognizing our shame allows us to find the space we need to process the experience and gain some clarity before we act out or shut down”. - Brené Brown

**What do you feel physically when you experience shame?**

- *I physically feel shame in/on my \_\_\_\_\_.*
- *It feels like \_\_\_\_\_.*
- *I know I'm in shame when I feel \_\_\_\_\_.*
- *If I could taste shame, it would taste like \_\_\_\_\_.*
- *If I could smell shame, it would smell like \_\_\_\_\_.*
- *If I could touch shame, it would feel like \_\_\_\_\_.*

**What traits do you find undesirable and therefore feel ashamed over when they are associated with you?**

- *I want to be perceived as \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.*
- *I do **NOT** want to be perceived as \_\_\_\_\_.*

### PRACTICING CRITICAL AWARENESS

You are not alone in your feelings of shame. **What is driving your shame?**

To see the bigger picture, answer the following:

- *What are the social-community expectations?*
- *Why do these expectations exist?*
- *How do these expectations work?*
- *How is our society influenced by these expectations?*
- *Who benefits from those expectations*
  
- *How realistic are my expectations?*
- *Can I be all these things all the time?*
- *Am I describing who I want to be or what others want me to do?*

## REACHING OUT

“Regardless of who we are, how we were raised or what we believe, all of us fight hidden, silent battles against not being good enough, not having enough and not belonging enough. When we find the courage to share our experiences and the compassion to hear others tell their stories, we force shame out of hiding, and end the silence.” - Brené Brown

**Reaching out means recognizing shame in others and using your own stories to tell them they are not alone in their feelings.**

## SPEAKING SHAME

“Speaking shame allows us to tell others how we feel and to ask for what we need.” - Brené Brown

**Talk about your shame with others. Brené Brown believes the antidote to shame is empathy. When we discuss our shame with others the painful feeling simply cannot survive. So, shame cannot survive empathy.**

### IMAGE CIRCLE:

- Participants stand in a circle facing each other with their eyes closed
- Facilitator calls out a word and participants will use their bodies to create the image of that word
- Facilitator will tell participants to maintain their pose while opening their eyes to see other images
- Participants will close their eyes as facilitator calls out a new word
- Facilitator will start with easy, fun images and work into more challenging words/emotions

### DISCUSSION:

- What did you notice?
- How did it feel to see others images and to have your image be seen?
- What did you feel in your body?
- Were some words more intense to portray than others?

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Soul of Shame by Curt Thompson, MD
- I Thought It Was Just Me (But It Isn't) by Brené Brown, Ph. D. LMSW
- Understanding and Treating Chronic Shame by Patricia A DeYou