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"Shame corrodes the very part of us that believes we are capable of change."

-Brene Brown



Compass of Shame

What is shame?

Shame is an interruption of positive affect.

How do we experience shame?

We show one of the 4 responses:

1. Attack other
2. Attack self
3. Avoidance
4. Withdrawal

The Compass of Shame

Adapted from D.L. Nathanson, Shame and Pride, 1992

Withdrawal:

- isolating oneself
- running and hiding



Attack Other:

- 'turning the tables'
- blaming the victim
- lashing out verbally or physically

Attack Self:

- self put-down
- masochism

Avoidance:

- denial
- abusing drugs and alcohol
- distraction through thrill seeking

Different ways to respond to shame:

- Listening to what they have to say
- Being present with them without trying to problem solve
- Reflecting on what has caused the shame feeling
- Acknowledging their feelings
- Encouraging them to talk about their experience
- Separate the deed from the doer

Individuals are healthiest and at their best when:

- Maximize positive affect
- Minimize negative affect
- Minimize inhibition of affect
- Do as much of the above three as possible