

Abstract

This dissertation focuses on a humanistic and integrative exploration of working with shame. During my training as a humanistic and integrative psychotherapist, I have begun to recognise the devastating and debilitating impact shame has had throughout my life. How it affects the internal contact I have with my body, feelings, sensations, and thoughts. How it limits my external contact and affects who I am in relationship. How it impacts my clinical practice and the therapeutic relationship.

My motivation for this study is to further understand the nature of shame, its origins, and how it manifests in clients, therapists, and the therapeutic relationship. Specifically, my focus will be on how to 'work with shame', its ubiquitous nature in therapy, and how it can be given a voice to break the secrecy that fuels it.

In my literature review, I discuss the development of shame in early relationships, its effects, and how it can be worked with. Through a case study, I demonstrate how right-brain connection within a reparative therapeutic relationship provided the safety necessary for my client's expression of disowned archaic emotions bound in shame, leading him to build connections with unaware, unresolved, and disowned aspects of self, that had manifested in a debilitating medical condition.