

# HOLISTICALLY HEALING FROM TOXIC SHAME

FEBRUARY 23, 2020 BY JESSICA DIMAS  
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Toxic shame is a big topic that has little understanding among the general public. It runs deep within a person and most often, they don't even know that toxic shame is the reason behind their way of relating to themselves and the world around them.

In this article, I'm going to share

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what toxic shame is, signs that toxic shame is present and how to begin gently healing and releasing this trapped energy within a person.



## How do you begin to deal with toxic shame?

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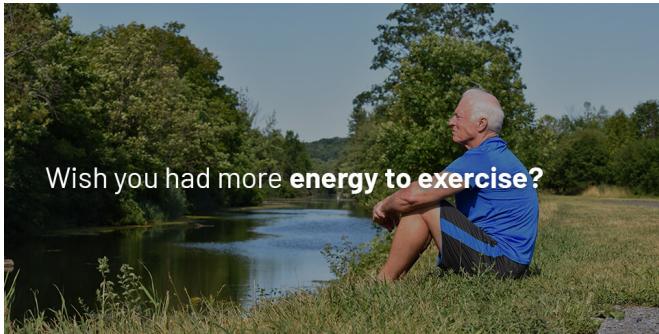
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The best thing to begin practicing in order to deal with toxic shame, for me, has been through **holistic self-care**.

What is that? Holistic self-care is tending to all parts of yourself. It's getting to know yourself, reparenting yourself, loving yourself.

**Toxic shame thrives in the dark.** It wants to be left alone and untampered with. It doesn't want you shining any lights of consciousness on it because when you do, the toxic shame starts to dissipate since *it was never based on any foundation of truth to begin with.*

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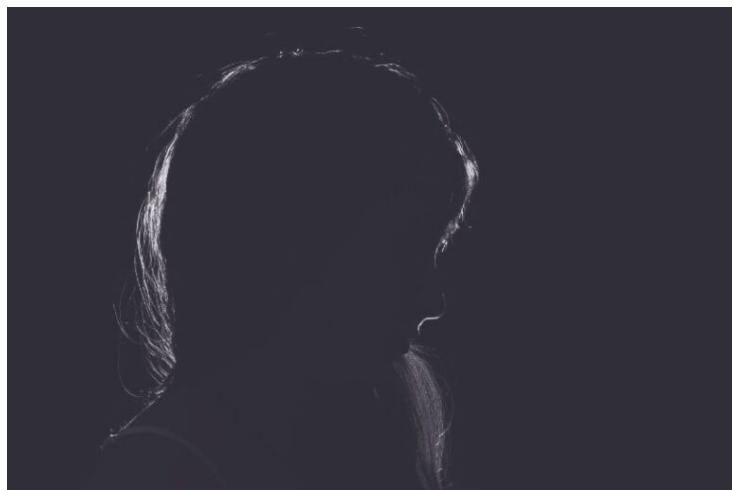
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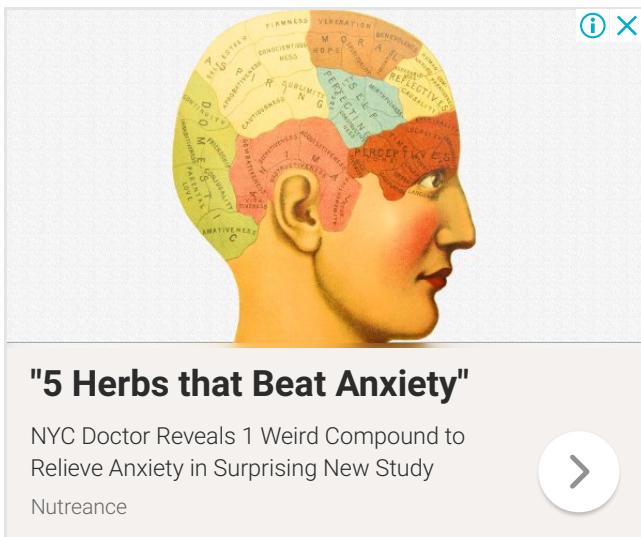
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# Where toxic shame comes from



Toxic shame is false shame. It's shame that has no basis in reality but the person who carries it feels defined by it.

Toxic shame normally develops in childhood from adults that are around you. These could be parents, caregivers, grandparents, teachers-any adults that have access to a child on a frequent basis.



It begins when an adult transfers false beliefs or accusations to the child that the child then **subconsciously internalizes** as truth about themselves in some way.

Toxic shame became apart of my reality as a young child when a caregiver, during bath time, would tell me how dirty my vagina was. It was an extremely humiliating experience because I was forced to stand up in front of another child so that the soap could really “clean” me, and I’d beg to sit back down in the water

because it would burn so bad.



I frequently had urinary tract infections that my mother and doctor couldn't figure out, and of course all of this only further cemented my belief that my caregiver was right about me.

This can also happen as an adult if you're in an abusive relationship or spending time around a toxic person who berates or insults you frequently.

If you believe what they say, this is like an open back door where toxic shame enters and settles in. Your perspective about yourself has now shifted to something that isn't true.

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## What are the signs of shame?



Everyone experiences shame differently and there are varying levels of toxic shame as well, but overall toxic shame of any kind causes common symptoms and dysfunction within a person.



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Here are some possible signs  
that you are carrying toxic  
shame:

- **people pleasing**; trying to control other's perceptions of you
- the “appearance” of **depression**; in reality, it's the presence of toxic shame eating away at a person
- **perfectionism**; if you're not perfect or don't do everything perfectly, you're a complete failure
- disgust with self
- high feelings of guilt
- easily humiliated
- **addiction** (sexual, substance,

etc...anything that further feeds the shame)

- feels the need to be **secretive**; if others “find out” about you, they won’t love you
- **codependency**; feeling responsible for everyone’s problems, feelings and experiences
- **anxiety** (this can manifest as seemingly unrelated physical symptoms like IBS)
- **self-sabotaging**; never letting yourself get too successful or happy because on deep levels, you don’t believe you deserve it
- **defensiveness**; always feeling the need to protect the image you want others to see
- **destructive habits** (sexual, physical, emotional) that cause the person to re-live the toxic shame over and over again

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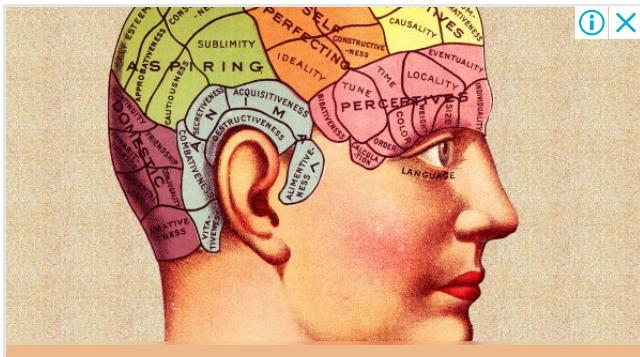
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## What toxic shame does to a person



In my personal experience, toxic shame clouds a person's entire perspective not only about themselves, but about the world around them and how others are perceiving them.



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I believe most people don't even realize they have toxic shame, so they aren't aware that so many of their beliefs and perspectives are the result of the shame they internalized long ago.

It essentially creates a feeling of deep pain that is stuffed away, and yet, the pain is relived in many ways for the person on an ongoing basis.

Even though the person usually avoids thinking about the shame, it envelops everything they think, do and believe. It colors the

lenses that they use to see the world.



It's like a shadow that's right over their shoulder, always present in the dark recesses, triggering them in different ways throughout the day.

It creates a vulnerable, shaky foundation within a person. They don't ever fully relax or let their guard down. They might believe they're being authentic, but there is always a veil that is hiding the shame and keeping it safe from view.

## How to heal toxic shame

Healing toxic shame is a *journey* to understanding and awareness.

Each person comes into it when they are ready and open. If you're reading this post and you've gotten this far, it's likely that some part of you is leading you to heal this aspect of yourself.

It's time to begin to release what was given to you that was never yours to carry. This can be done gently, **with love** and without further toxic shaming, blaming or any kind of negativity in general.

*Go back to where it hurts*



The very first step in healing toxic

shame is shining the light on it,  
and in order to do that, you need  
to know what corner it's hiding in.

And here's a clue: you *know*  
where it is. Maybe not concretely  
or with certainty, but your gut  
points you in the right direction  
right away, so don't doubt  
yourself.

- What's the first memory you have of feeling shame?
- What's the thing that you don't tell others?
- What memory do you immediately turn away from?

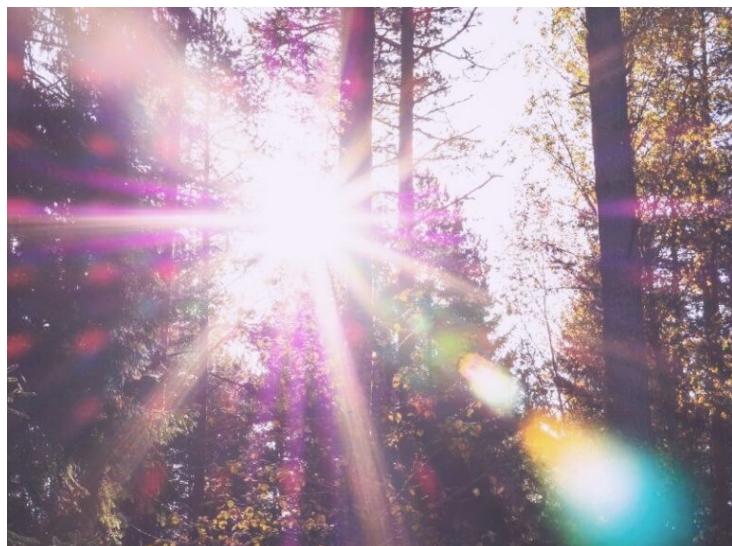
Even if it's been repressed, you have a sense of when and where the toxic shame was handed to you. It doesn't need to be completely dug up with all the worms, but shining the light in the general direction is actually

extremely healing.

The goal is not to go back and re-live the shame, but to make the connection that the shame has caused an incorrect perspective into everything that you are.

Connect it to the painful behavior.

*Shine the light on painful behavior*



The painful behavior is the way in which you subconsciously re-live

the toxic shame over and over again. Why would you do this?

Because toxic shame actually becomes similar to a safety blanket. When a vibration is activated, it attracts similar situations, people and events that make the person feel that feeling over and over again, until it's changed.

Shame is a vibration. When you've had this vibration running on low levels in the background of your being for most of your life, it's a familiar feeling that makes you feel safe.

It's why we see people going from one toxic relationship to the next, because for as long as the vibration is active within them, they will continue to attract it back into their lives on many

different levels.

I developed some very humiliating behavior in childhood that stayed with me into adulthood. The feelings of shame would pulse through me and crumple me.

It was a vibrational pattern that repeated itself over and over again. When I began to get stressed, these behaviors that induced shame would actually comfort me. Once the behavior was acted on, the feelings of stress would go away until the next time.

All you need to do is simply make the connection between these behaviors and the toxic shame.

**This is so powerful because the behavior has you believing that the lie that the**

**toxic shame tells you on a  
daily basis is *real*.**



Really think about what you were  
told, or what you felt when   
toxic shame was handed over to  
you.

When I *really* went back and  
thought about what that  
caregiver had told me for years—  
that my vagina was dirty—I

realized a few things. Namely...  
what adult even says this to a  
three year old child?

An adult who has issues of their own. An adult who probably was told the same as a child. An adult who meets all the signs for toxic shame themselves.

What lie were you told? Really consider the source and credibility as to what they said or did.

What happens most often is that our **inner child** holds onto these lies and beliefs, and as an adult, we don't even realize how absurd these beliefs of ours even sound now that we have the ability to comprehend the situation from an adult perspective.

Questioning the lie begins a

gradual and progressive process  
of eroding away and even  
transmuting the toxic shame.

*Begin shifting your  
perspective*



What if what they told you, did to  
you or the way they made you  
feel wasn't reality?

Not reality as in “it didn’t happen”  
but as in “it’s not real”.

The beliefs and perspectives that  
you walked away with after being  
handed the toxic shame aren’t  
real. As with any belief or

perspective we have that doesn't come from a place of love, **which is your true nature**, it means it can only be an *illusion*.

The lie that the toxic shame tells you is an illusion. It's **not** real. Sit with that for a moment.

What comes up for question?  
What might this mean if the lie is an illusion?

For me, it meant:

- maybe there is nothing wrong or abnormal with my body
- maybe the behavior that followed in the years afterwards wasn't really me
- maybe the little girl inside of me and all her beliefs have been operating for a really long time
- maybe I'm not broken
- maybe I'm worth something
- maybe there's nothing to hide

- maybe I can see myself in a new, loving light

What are your maybe's now that the lie is being called into the light?

## *Forgive and release*



Forgiving and releasing is for *you*. It really has nothing to do with the other person, although it can if you want it to.

My situation was never spoken of or acknowledged except when I finally told my mother a few years ago. But I don't need it to

be acknowledged by the caregiver because I'm healing regardless.

I realized that this caregiver of mine was and still is a very "pinched off" person, as **Abraham Hicks** would describe them.

Someone who is pinched off from Source, their soul, the Universe and not acting from their true place of love and awareness.

I also truly believe that our souls are very big and they bring us to the very people who handed us this toxic shame for the flowers that would grow later.

We did not come here for a perfect experience. If you consider that your soul has likely lived many lifetimes and is made of God-energy...it's easier to understand that your soul is here

to see *itself*. And how can it see itself if everything is always rosy?

Every vibration has a polar opposite. In order to experience the end of one vibration, the law of polarity means you will experience the other end as well.

A bigger perspective that brings you out of a victim mentality is so extremely healing and liberating.

See if there's another, higher way to view the source of your toxic shame. What did it teach you? How did it evolve you? In what ways does it actually enrich your life now? Maybe you're helping others, or you understand things on a deeper level that you couldn't have otherwise.

*Begin reparenting yourself*



One of the most healing ways to begin healing toxic shame is to heal the inner child through **reparenting yourself.**

Reparenting is the idea of giving to yourself now what you weren't given as a child.

Essentially, this looks like asking yourself throughout the day: **what do I need in this moment?** And then following through to the best of your ability.

When you feel shame, ask yourself what you need in that

moment? When you're feeling those old feelings, what do you need? When you're feeling insecure, scared, anxious or bad, what in that moment would help you to feel a little better?

By giving to yourself—time, love, understanding, forgiveness, nourishment, space—you begin to heal your inner child, and as you do this, you begin to release the toxic shame.

## Books about toxic shame

Here are some books for further reading that I recommend.

- *Healing the Shame That Binds You*
- *I Thought It Was Just Me*
- *The Body Keeps the Score*

I also recommend checking out

the chakra bundle. It has very healing worksheets that helped me work through my own toxic shame, which translated to energy being stuck in a few of my chakras.

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Thank you for reading, I hope you enjoyed this article and found something to take away with you.

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If you'd like more real life examples of daily self-care, you can [connect with me on Instagram](#).

And if you'd like more direct support and community with like-minded people, come join the [Dwell in Magic Facebook](#)

group.

With love,

Jessica

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*Jessica Dimas is the author of  
Sacred Self-Care for Your  
Chakras.*



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*Jessica Dimas*

I'm an advocate for self-love, discovery, and looking up at the stars to remember how vast it all is. I believe in the power of your mind, the power of self-care and the power of believing in the unseen. There is so much more to the story that we are just beginning to understand.

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