

MISPLACING OF MY OWN VALUES AND BELIEFS	TRANSITION INTO ACKNOWLEDGING MY OWN VALUES AND BELIEFS	HONOURING OF MY OWN VALUES AND BELIEFS
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I don't know who I am?</li> <li>- I could of stopped it</li> <li>- Why didn't I tell anyone until now</li> <li>- Why did I keep going back to them</li> <li>- I was told that I brought it on myself</li> <li>- I was always seen as different</li> <li>- No one would of believed me</li> <li>- My physical reaction was repulsive</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>TAKING ON THE ACTS OF THE OPPRESSOR AS YOUR OWN</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recognising responses to the experiences of oppressive acts i.e. 'acts of resistance'</li> <li>- Talking about my values</li> <li>- Standing up for what's right</li> <li>- Being honest</li> <li>- Putting myself first</li> <li>- To trust others</li> <li>- Recognising that I am a forgiving person</li> <li>- Recognising that I have protected myself and my family</li> <li>- Talking about the power practices of the person that sexually abused me</li> <li>- Interviewing Shame: it's power practices and the social context to its influence</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>TRANSITIONING TO RECOGNISING MY VALUES AND BELIEFS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Deeper understanding of the effects that the experience of oppressive acts has had on me i.e. good and bad</li> <li>- Being honest with people without feeling guilty regarding talking about the oppressive acts</li> <li>- Feeling calm about the decisions I make</li> <li>- Thinking about what my values and beliefs are</li> <li>- Gaining strength in making a stand for what I believe in</li> <li>- Being true to myself i.e. respecting what I believe in</li> <li>- Understanding the confusion regarding the physical reactions to the sexual violence with open curiosity, without being defined by them</li> <li>- Understanding the effects of hurt from other peoples experiences of oppressive acts</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>HAVING THE LAST SAY ON MATTERS ABOUT MY IDENTITY</b></p>
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Dear Shame,

I have discovered who I am, and am letting Integrity step into the room more now. Even though the physical effects are still there, and the nightmares keep you alive in my life, Integrity has given me hope that you can now be silenced. I don't give a shit what you think anymore.

Now it is Integrity that gets me thinking ... I now remember who I am and what I have taught my family and my children. I am reminded of my daughter and a story of her determination to speak up, which I am sure she got from me.

Sharing this story makes me laugh and gets me thinking about when I first made a stand against you. But for now, I will share about my daughter. My daughter was only three at the time and I was washing her hair in the bath.

After I got soap in her eyes, she said to me that if this happens again, I am leaving. Well, it wasn't long before she leapt out of the bath, grabbed her case and left through the front door. By the time I got to her she was halfway down the street. Making a stand is important to her, and now that she is an adult ready to get married, I am sure she will make her voice known in that relationship. You can't silence me anymore, Shame, making a stand is very important to me. This has influenced my daughter. Together we stand up for what's right.

Speaking this out loud to you, and us writing this letter, I believe is a great start to freedom and moving out from under the darkness of shame and fear into the promised light of finally sharing the truth. It is a process but the truth does set you free. Shame, I've worked you out.

## OUTSIDER WITNESS ACTIVITY 1

**1. Identifying the expression:** As you listen to Dale, which expressions caught your attention or captured your imagination? Which one's struck a chord for you?

**2. Describing the image:** What images of Dale's life, of his identity and of the world more generally, did these expressions evoke? What did these expressions suggest to you about Dale's purposes, values, beliefs, hopes, dreams and commitments?

**3. Embodying responses:** What is it about your own life/work that accounts for why these expressions caught your attention or struck a chord for you? Do you have a sense of which aspects of your own experiences of life resonated with these expressions, and with the images evoked by these expressions?

**4. Acknowledging Transport:** How have you been moved on account of being present to witness these expressions of Dale's life? Where has this experience taken you to, that you would not otherwise have arrived at, if you hadn't been present as an audience to this conversation? In what way have you become other than who you were on account of witnessing these expressions, and on account of responding to these stories in the way that you have?

## OUTSIDER WITNESS ACTIVITY 2

**1. Identifying the expression:** As you listen to Brene Brown talk about listening to shame and what this means as far as being vulnerable, think about your own practice. Which expressions caught your attention or captured your imagination? Which one's struck a chord for you, if any?

**2. Describing the image:** What images of Brene Brown's life, of her identity and of the world more generally, did these expressions evoke? What did these expressions suggest to you about Brene Brown's purposes, values, beliefs, hopes, dreams and commitments?

**3. Embodying responses:** What is it about your own life/work that accounts for why these expressions caught your attention or struck a chord for you? Do you have a sense of which aspects of your own experiences of life resonated with these expressions, and with the images evoked by these expressions?

**4. Acknowledging Transport:** How have you been moved on account of being present to witness these expressions of Brene Brown? Where has this experience taken you to, that you would not otherwise have arrived at, if you hadn't been present as an audience to this conversation? In what way have you become other than who you were on account of witnessing these expressions, and on account of responding to these stories in the way that you have? How are these ideas getting you thinking about your own practice, can you relate to what is being said?

# Questioning normalising judgement

- The influence of poststructuralist ideas leads us to question normalising judgement and the measurement of people's lives against certain **uniform judgements**.
- It's important to draw attention to the **real effects** of normalising judgement. One of these effects in the health professions has been the development of various **norms** and ideas about what people's lives **should** look like in order to be **healthy**.
- Questioning normalising judgement allows us and others to be open to feedback i.e. transparency in practice - because people are the expert in their own lives.



The influence of poststructuralist ideas leads to questioning normalising judgement and the measurement of people's lives against certain uniform judgement i.e. rating scales.

Is it useful to judge yourself (harshly) in relation to where you believe you fit within the continuums of.....?

It doesn't suddenly vanish but new ways of noticing it and talking about it become possible.

Questioning of the real effects that our practice has on the lives of people we see. For instance, through questioning everything one does and thinks as a practitioner, does this allow us and others to be open to feedback i.e. transparency in our practice?

Structuralism thinks...	Poststructuralism thinks...	Poststructuralist thought invites us as therapists to...
The aim of therapy is to search for 'deep structures' or 'essential truths' about people.	It's important to draw attention to the <b>real effects</b> of the process of looking for 'deep structures' or 'essential truths'. One of these effects in the health professions has been the development of various <b>norms</b> and ideas about what people's lives <b>should</b> look like in order to be <b>healthy</b> .	Assist people (where relevant) to stop measuring their lives according to what certain <b>social norms</b> say life <b>should</b> be about.
This search for 'deep structures' or 'essential truths' can be <b>objective</b> .	What we are looking for, what we believe and where we come from will shape both how we look and what we'll find.	<b>Question therapist 'objectivity', 'expertise' and 'practices of interpretation'.</b>
It is 'deep structure' (eg. inner-self) that shapes life.	<b>Language</b> and the use of language plays a vital role in shaping life. What people say and do and how we relate to each other shapes life. The meanings that we give to the events in our lives, and how we organise these into stories about ourselves and others, shapes life.	Question taken-for-granted ideas and assumptions that might be sustained through the language we are using in therapy. Consider how stories and rituals and other performative aspects are relevant to understanding the process of therapy.
Our ideas, problems, qualities, are linked to some <b>internal self</b> .	Our ideas, problems, qualities are all <b>products of culture and history</b> . They have been created over time and in particular contexts.	<b>Externalise</b> ideas, problems and qualities in therapy conversations.
Our <b>identities are fixed</b> — to be found within our inner-selves.	Our <b>identities are constantly created in relationship with others</b> , with institutions and with broader relations of power.	Take seriously how <b>every therapy conversation will shape the identity (to some extent) of both the person consulting the therapist and the therapist</b> . Think through how we can involve appreciative witnesses to the work that is occurring in the therapy room. Develop accountability practices to check out the real effects of therapy conversations on those who consult with us.
Our <b>identities are always consistent</b> .	Our identities are made up, and <b>continually being made up</b> , of many (sometimes contradictory) stories.	Consider how the <b>stories of our lives</b> shape our lives and how therapy might enable the rich description of preferred stories of identity.

# The Tree of Life and Learning

Original Tree of Life narrative approach developed by Ncazelo Ncube (REPSSI) and David Denborough

**Please note that the different sections of the tree can be done in any order.**

## **The Roots (deep rooted survival skills): What keeps us strong?**

- What are your survival skills? If we asked your closest friends or family, what would they say was your greatest strength? What strengths/skills have you used in the past to get you through difficult times? What strengths do you bring to being a parent? A friend? A daughter/son?
- What keeps you going/helps lift you up? What is it that makes and keeps you strong during difficult times? When things get tough, when you feel down, what are the things you do that help support you to stay strong; to get back on track? It might be connecting to or thinking about people? places? family? country? culture? memories of places or people? Or it might be something you do, that makes you feel strong: art? music? talking? gardening? cooking? cleaning? exercise? something else? What is it that helps you get back up when the going gets tough?
- Who are the people in your life who have showed you how to survive?

**Generate collectively:** People work in groups to make a list. Bring lists back to the whole group. Each group talks through their list of survival skills/ strengths. Add to the collective tree. And then people record onto the roots of their individual trees, their survival skills / strengths / what helps to keep them strong / and who the people are who have showed them how to survive.

**Textual heritage of these survival skills:** Ask participants to tell a story to the whole group about one of the survival skills/strengths on their roots. They might tell about:

- A time when you have used this survival skill.
- How you learned this strength. Where you learned it.
- Who you learned it from/with. Who would be least surprised to know that you have this survival skill? Who recognised this skill/strength of yours?
- Are there others you know who might have that strength/skill also? Who are you joined with in this?
- Decide upon an image that represents this skill and its heritage and place this on the roots of the tree.

**Make connections:** Are there others in the group who also have this survival skill/strength on their roots? Or others who learned a strength from their ....?

(Adapted from the work of the *Solid families - Growing strong children program developed with Aboriginal mothers* Yaandina Family Centre - Safe Children Program with Roebourne's Healthy Yirrarmargadu Project and Mawarnkarra - Roebourne Safe House with Consultants: Roebourne Strong Women's group.)

**The Roots (textual heritage):** The roots of the tree are a prompt to speak about heritage: where you come from (i.e. village, town, country); family or community history (origins, family name, ancestry, extended family,

**The Ground (present/landscape of action):** The ground represents where you live at present; some of the activities that you choose to do each

**The Trunk (what is valued/skills):** The trunk represents what you give value to, care about, and skills and abilities. This may include skills in physical acts, skills of caring, kindness, honesty etc. **Include what you**

**The Branches (horizons):** Branches represent shared hopes, dreams and wishes: for others, for yourself, for wider community. **Include hopes for your own learning, hopes in relation to others' learning, and what you hope your learning might make possible for others.** It's then possible

**Leaves of the Tree (re-remembering lives):** The leaves of the tree represent people who are important to you (**and your learning**). These

**Fruits (legacies bequeathed to us):** The fruits represent gifts that have been passed on to you, or the contributions others have made to their life.

**Flowers / Seeds (legacies we wish to leave):** The flowers / seeds of the tree represent gifts that you wish to pass onto others. They can also represent the contributions you are making to others. **Include**

For more about the Tree of Life narrative methodology see:

[www.dulwichcentre.com.au/tree-of-life.html](http://www.dulwichcentre.com.au/tree-of-life.html) or

## EXTERNALISING THE PROBLEM EXERCISE

### **Naming of the problem from [Consultant]'s experiences**

The [named problem, potentially by someone else i.e. diagnosis, peers etc], is this what you would call it or do you have a more meaningful name for it i.e. the release, the being heard, the cry for help etc

- What would you call this kind of problem?
- How big/What colour/What shape/which gender is this problem?

### **Talking about the effects rather than an internalised judgement on self**

So, with 'the shame how is it affecting you?

- *Has the shame affected your friendships?*
- *Has the shame made a difference to your relationship with your friends, family?*
- *Has the shame been influencing your mood?*
- *How did the shame first get a grip on you? Did they team up with disappointment or resentment, for example?)*

### **Evaluating [Consultant]'s responses without a judgement**

So you have named 'the shame' is this a good or a bad thing, or a bit of both

- Who would you rather have in charge of your life – the shame or you?
- Does the shame have his/her/its own interests at heart or yours?
- What's it been like to share your life with the shame?

### **Why do you experience the problem in this kind of way? Why do you take this position on the problem?**

- Why is it you'd rather be in charge of your life than have the shame in charge of it?
- What kind of life are you interested in that's at odds with the life that the shame wants for you?