

The diagram illustrates a cycle of wellness components. At the top, a white arrow contains the words "Worthiness", "Connection", and "Gratitude". A blue arrow below it contains "Resiliency", "Fun", and "Joy". A larger blue arrow at the bottom contains "Well-Being". At the bottom left of the diagram, it says "TRANSITION HOUSE Wellness Project" and includes a small butterfly logo.

WELCOME TO TRANSITION HOUSE

SO WHAT GETS IN THE WAY OF OUR WELLNESS

A Look at How Shame, Fear and Vulnerability Get in our Way



*TH Wellness Project's Vision:
to empower personal well-being, improve mental wellness and increase life joy.
www.thouse.org*



"Nothing has transformed my life more than realizing that it's a waste of time to evaluate my worthiness by weight the reaction of the people in the stands."

Brene Brown, PhD

"Shame is a soul eating emotion." C.G. Jung



*TH Wellness Project's Vision:
to empower personal well-being, improve mental wellness and increase life joy.
www.thouse.org*

SO WHAT GETS IN THE WAY OF OUR WELLNESS

A Look at How Shame, Fear and Vulnerability Get in our Way

“Shame is the most powerful master emotion. It’s the fear that we’re not good enough.” Brene Brown, PhD

Worthiness

- Life goes well when we believe we’re worthy.
- According to Brene Brown, PhD, this requires cultivating courage, compassion and connection.
 - Courage is the about speaking what is on your heart and mind (not being heroic).
 - Compassion has to start with self-compassion before we can share compassion with others.
 - Connection requires mutuality to be authentic connection.
- There are no simple paths to a sincere sense of worthiness – it does take work – often the type we prefer to avoid.
- Surface worthiness is not the same as the internalized sense of worthiness that allows us to truly accept that we strive each day to do our best – and it is good enough and we are good enough.

Shame

- That thing that makes us feel like no matter what – we’re not good enough.
- Even on our best days, when shame takes over – the slightest things remind us of our ‘less than’ status in the world.
- We all feel shame from time to time. The problem comes in when it is the dominate force in our lives.
- According to Brene Brown, PhD, the only people who don’t experience shame lack the capacity for empathy and human connection. Shame is all about fear. We’re afraid people won’t like us if they know the truth about who we are, where we came from, what we believe, how much we’re struggling or the path that got us here.
- Part of shames power is you feel that you are alone in your shame experience. The feeling that no one can understand.

Shame Resilience

- We can’t eliminate shame from our world, so the healthy alternative is learning resilience.
- This means recognizing shame as we courageously move through it – maintaining our sense of worthiness and self.
- Shame loses strength as we appropriately talk about it. Shame flourishes in secrecy, silence and judgment.
- Shame resilience is vital if we wish to further develop a sense of worthiness

Guilt vs. Shame

- It’s important to understand the difference between Guilt and Shame. Guilt = I Did Something Bad. Shame = I Am Bad. Guilt is about our behaviors – shame is about who we are.
- Both are powerful, however Guilt is about behaviors that can be changed. If we do something we feel guilty about - we can apologize, create new, healthier behaviors and grow. Shame diminishes our sense of self, worth, and makes us stop believing in ourselves.
- Shame often leads us to destructive behaviors. Shame is related to violence, aggression, depression, addiction, eating disorders, and bullying.



TH Wellness Project's Vision:

to empower personal well-being, improve mental wellness and increase life joy.

www.thouse.org

Fear

- The fear related to shame triggers a variety of behaviors.
 - Some people hide and keep secrets.
 - Some try to please.
 - Other try to gain power over others – using shaming others to fight internal shame.
- Shame is about fear, blame and disconnection.

Vulnerability

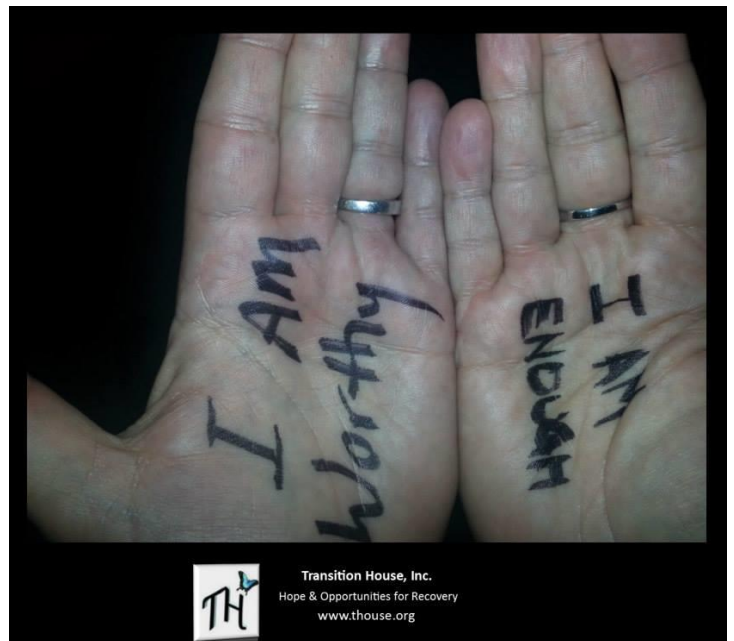
- It's important to be mindful of who you share your shame experiences with since not everyone is in a place to be respectful of your journey.
- The journey from shame to worthiness is not always pleasant and it does require that we open up and become vulnerable, while not setting ourselves up to be hurt. Trusted support is vital in this process.

I Am Worthy

- Sometimes we have to remind ourselves that we are worthy.

Some Challenging Thoughts and Questions

- It's easy to tell yourself to 'just get over it!' The reality is – shame is powerful and it hurts.
- Describe what you feel like, who you become when shame takes over.
- What defense mechanisms does shame trigger?
- Do you have trusted people who support you as you work through shame?
- What can you do for yourself when shames pushes you to feeling less than?
- To move forward in personal growth and wellness, it's important to slowly begin to answer these challenging questions. This is not an overnight process – it will take time! Be patient and kind to yourself in this journey.



Wrap Up

- Begin your routine of reminding yourself in different ways – I Am Worthy! I Am Enough!
- Write on your hands – I Am Worthy! I Am Enough! Repeat, repeat, repeat!

"Unlike guilt, which is the feeling of doing something wrong, shame is the feeling of being something wrong." Marilyn J. Sorensen

"If you find yourself constantly trying to prove your worth to someone, you have already forgotten your value." Unknown



Facilitator's Guide:

FOLLOW UP ON HOMEWORK:

Questionnaire that would provide yourself and facilitators with useful information to help make this a more meaningful learning experience.

BREAK UP INTO GROUPS OF 2-3:

1. **GENERATE A LIST OF THINGS THAT ENHANCE A PERSON'S SENSE OF WORTHINESS.**
2. **DESCRIBE THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SHAME & GUILT.**
3. **WHAT ARE TOOLS USEFUL IN DEVELOPING RESILIENCE?**
4. **HOW DOES FEAR IMPAIR MENTAL WELLBEING?**
5. **WHAT DOES VULNERABILITY LOOK LIKE/FEEL LIKE FOR YOU?**
6. **WHAT SUPPORT SYSTEMS ARE AVAILABLE FOR STUDENTS TO STAY WELL?**
7. **WRITE A MESSAGE THAT VALIDATES YOU / ENHANCES YOUR SENSE OF WORTHINESS ON BOTH OF YOUR HANDS.**

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT:

- Start developing your Worthiness List.

