



NEWSLETTER-July 2022

Infinity Peer Support

Adverse Childhood Experiences That Manifest into Adulthood-

On the outside, I can be personable, charming, and “successful.” Inside, I can be deeply dissatisfied with myself, and can’t be reasoned out of my inner sense of worthlessness. Nothing on the surface accounts for my self-loathing and shame—but *my childhood experiences do!*

“Toxic shame imprinted in childhood causes untold emotional and physical suffering in adulthood. Toxic shame is common and understandable in those who have experienced adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). Fortunately, being stuck in painful shame need not be a life sentence.”

Let’s assume you have learned and applied the foundational skills for healing the inner wounds from the first eighteen years of life. These skills involve:

- Regulating dysregulated stress arousal and the strong emotions that maintain this arousal
- Strengthening and stabilizing the nervous system through imagery practices that simulate healthy attachment and coping experiences
- Optimizing brain health and functioning
- Rewiring old disturbing events compassionately

About Shame

Shame is feeling bad to the core, feeling bad about who you are. It is experiencing the self as damaged, defective, inadequate, worthless, unlovable, or disgusting. It amounts to self-dislike, low self-esteem, self-loathing, or self-contempt. Shame is emotionally painful. It also exacerbates and maintains the dysregulated stress caused by ACEs that causes so much physical damage in adulthood.

Shame Awareness

Is shame interfering with your life? Adults are often unaware of the depths to which unresolved shame from childhood is “running their show,” since it often plays out beneath conscious awareness. Awareness, then, is the first step in rewiring shame. Without judging, but with compassion and curious interest, notice if you experience any of shame’s many symptoms:

- Being highly sensitive to criticism
- Doubting yourself
- Being harshly self-critical
- Experiencing anxiety or depression
- Stooped posture (or sometimes rigid, aggressive posture)
- A feeling of heaviness
- Knotted gut; dry throat; tightness in the throat, chest, or muscles

- Feeling tense or uncomfortable around others; feeling the impulse to run or hide
- Nervous laughter; excessive need to please others
- High stress arousal (e.g., pounding heart, rapid breathing, sleep problems)
- Low stress arousal (e.g., feeling emotionally numb, flat, dead inside, exhausted, or collapsed)
- Lack of everyday joy or feeling at ease
- Self-loathing, self-contempt, low self-esteem, self-dislike
- Disgust with oneself or one's body
- Feeling inadequate, unlovable, bad, different, like you don't fit in
- Insecure, worried about others' judgments
- Seeking love and attention in unhealthy ways
- Keeping secrets; afraid to let people, even friends, in
- Difficulty loving and accepting yourself
- Putting up a false front to impress people (e.g., perfectionist or super-achiever)
- Attempting to numb inner pain (e.g., addictions, forgetting painful memories, self-harm)
- Afraid of the pain of failing; quit trying
- Trying to become invisible so as to avoid negative judgments of others
- Negativity (sarcasm, blaming, or aggression toward others to keep the focus away from self)
- Lack of self-care
- Thinking about suicide or using drugs or other addictions to escape the pain

The Healing Principles

Shame attacks the basic needs of each person to feel

- Worthwhile—literally, *worth the while*, worth the time to live fruitfully and with joy
- Lovable
- Capable of navigating life reasonably well and growing

However, shame does not reflect one's true core worth. One's infinitely worthwhile core survives and is capable of healing (*heal* has the same root as *health* and *whole*). Healing involves rewiring shame pathways in the brain and feeling whole again.

Shame can be viewed as a signal to love and accept the imperfect, but worthwhile core self. Love is the healing agent and strong countermeasure to shame's painful wiring. Love stimulates the release of oxytocin, which reduces cortisol and stress. Love also neutralizes shame and overwrites shame circuitry in the brain with self-liking and acceptance.

Summary

Shame from the early years is normal and understandable, but need not persist for decades unchallenged. Shame can be softened and its painful grip lessened. The next blog will explore how the shame from ACEs is rewired and transformed.

Glenn R. Schiraldi, Ph.D. *Psychology Today* blog post, June 27, 2022

Moving is One of the Most Stressful Events in Life

Whether one moves frequently or almost never, moving is an intensely emotional experience. The underlying psychological issues involved in real estate decisions are of great interest to therapists and psychologists, because housing and moving are filled with symbolism, the hope for new beginnings, crushing disappointments, loss, anxiety and fear.

The prospect of leaving the place that is the center of your universe or the one constant in your life can be frightening. Even finding a new dry cleaner, deli or coin laundry can stir up deep worries of impending isolation and loneliness.

Packing and sorting through a life's worth of belongings — especially, say, if the move is the unhappy result of a divorce or other trauma — can be gut-wrenching. Moving is more than just moving day. It's a series of complex decisions made over the course of weeks that culminate on moving day. Each decision can cause stress which may not alleviate until you're settled in your new home.

Below is a list of tips for managing both the emotional and tangible stressors around a big move.

Create a to-do list

A common approach to alleviate stress is to claim a bit of control over your situation and get organized. Make a list of all the tasks that need to be done for a successful move. This is a starting point to wrap your mind around the full picture, out of your head, on paper.

- **Forward your address:** Start with the post office and then your credit card company, loan servicers, health and car insurance providers, etc.
- **Set up electricity:** It can take a few days for electrical service to start.
- **Set up wifi (and cable):** You may need an appointment for a technician to come to the house.
- **Set up water/sewer/garbage:** Aim to have this running before you arrive.
- **Collect packing supplies:** Get more boxes than you think you need, and ask colleagues or neighborhood exchanges for free boxes.
- **Cancel your current utilities:** These are likely monthly bills, and you can plan for a cut-off day.
- **Cancel or update your services:** If you have a food delivery subscription or Amazon subscriptions, update your address or cancel them temporarily.

Create a timeline

Now that you've got a clear list of to-dos, start mapping them on a calendar. Can you pack the kitchen and dining room on Saturday? Be realistic to avoid an overload at the end. If you're feeling overwhelmed, start with the small things, like checking the drivetime between properties on

your GPS, or packing up a single cabinet. Don't procrastinate. Consider taking time off work to allow yourself the focus to pack purposefully.

Pack thoughtfully

If you can minimize your things as you pack, it'll feel much lighter to unpack in your new home. Label everything you pack by room or purpose. If you hire movers, they can move your boxes to the dedicated rooms. As you pack, take photos of your assembled electronics and keep all the screws and assembly pieces for furniture and wall mounts in individual baggies.

Think about moving day; you'll want a plate, water glass and utensils, a change of clothes, set of sheets, toothbrush, shower curtain, towel and a roll of toilet paper. Reserve a box or two with obvious labels for those immediate needs.

Create a budget

If money is one of your stressors, create a budget for the month of your move. Can you afford to eat out while your kitchen is all packed up? Do you have wiggle room for moving support? Should you host a garage sale for your give-away items?

Hire movers

Hire movers as soon as possible, but at least four weeks before the move during the summer months. If you're not hiring movers, enlist the help of friends before their schedules fill up. Regardless of who is helping, reflect on your timeline to ensure you're fully packed by the time your help arrives. It's very stressful to actively pack while directing movers.

Research the new area

Chances are, you're not moving too far away. In a recent survey, Zillow Consumer Housing Trends Report 2020, most homebuyers were making short-distance moves, either moving to a different neighborhood within the same city (36%) or moving to a new city within the same metropolitan area. Only 14% were moving to a different state. If you're feeling a bit scared to move, try researching your new neighborhood. Check maps or drive around the area. Pick a local grocery store you think you'll use. Check out the transit center if you commute. If you have a dog, select a park you might take them to. Or make plans to visit a local farmers market. Try to establish some routine activities to feel calmer about the relocation.

Stay positive

If you're feeling pessimistic, turn on some uplifting music to get your energy pumping and motivate you to pack. Or stream a comedian that makes you laugh. Drink a cup of coffee or tea for a little boost. Create a positive mantra to focus on and repeat instead of negative self-talk. "I'm excited for this new chapter in my life."

Step away for self-care

If you're feeling quick to anger or overwhelmed by the emotional stress of moving, take a step back. You might need fuel. Leave the house; get something to eat. Take a nap or go to bed early. Start refreshed tomorrow.

All my best,

Carole Otash

Program Coordinator



Member Spotlight

The July member of the month is Lisa Hawkins. Lisa has been coming to Infinity Peer Support for 3 years. She says she keeps on coming because it helps her to associate with people and be with people again. Her favorite groups are Trauma Survivors and Boundaries. She says, "boundaries lead me to believe there can be misleading conversations, and I learned how to handle certain conversations. It helped me know my limits on my time and what you should do with your time."

Lisa enjoys spending her free time listening to Christian music, looking at crafts, going on YouTube on my laptop.

When asked about something she thought no one knows about her she replied "nothing really, I am who I am." You can't believe everything everybody says. You have to love yourself.

One characteristic she admires most in people is courtesy.

Grief-by Sharon Reynolds

Grief is the response to loss, particularly to the loss of someone significant who has died. Although most people focus on the emotional response to loss, grief also has physical, cognitive, behavioral, social, cultural, spiritual and philosophical dimensions.

While the terms are often used interchangeably, bereavement refers to the state of loss while grief is the reaction to the loss.

While grief associated with death is familiar to most, individuals grieve for a variety of losses (e.g., unemployment, illness, end of a relationship, etc.).

(Wikipedia, 2022)

Grieving Process

Grief is a complex process of adapting to the loss of a significant person in your life.

The degree of closeness between the bereaved and deceased determines the severity of the mourning and grieving process. The strength of the relationship between the bereaved and the deceased also impacts the shock of the loss. (Wikipedia, 2022)

No two people grieve the same way or for the same length of time.

My Grief

My Dad died in 1991. I still mourn his loss, especially on his birthday and the anniversary of his death.

We picked out his casket on Thanksgiving 1991. Even as we looked through the selection, I thought: "Dad would appreciate the twisted humor of picking out his casket on Thanksgiving Day." Every Thanksgiving, I remember what I was doing on that day in 1991.

Sometimes, his death feels like it happened yesterday. Sometimes, it feels like it happened decades ago (which it did).

Whenever I smell motor oil or gas, I think of my Dad. He fixed up sports cars and motorcycles. He was always working on one vehicle or another. Many times, I was in the passenger seat as he "test drove" his 1973 'Cuda Barracuda down a nearby straightaway. I loved being on the back when he rode his 1964 Norton 750 Commando Motorcycle around our neighborhood.



JULY 2022

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
				1 CLOSED FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT
4 CLOSED FOURTH OF JULY	5 Question of the day 9:45 Meditation 10:15 Journaling 10:30 Creative Arts 12:30 TED Talks 7:00 NA Meeting	6 Question of the day 9:45 Meditation 10:15 Boundaries 11:15 Men's Group 1:00 Wellness Recovery Action Plan	7 Question of the day 9:45 Meditation 10:15 Wellness Group 11:00 Fun and Games 12:30 Budgeting 6:30 NA Meeting	8 Question of the day 9:45 Meditation 10:30 Adult children of Alcoholics/Dysfunctional families 12:00 Singing and Dancing
11 Question of the day 9:45 Meditation 10:15 Woman's Group 11:15 Calming Coloring 1:00 Trauma Survivors	12 Question of the day 9:45 Meditation 10:15 Journaling 10:30 Creative Arts 12:30 TED Talks 7:00 NA Meeting	13 Question of the day 9:45 Meditation 10:15 Boundaries 11:15 Men's Group 12:00 Community BBQ 12:30 Community Meeting/Waypoint Presentation	14 Question of the day 9:45 Meditation 10:15 Wellness Group 11:00 Trivia 12:30 Healthy Meals on a Budget 6:30 NA Meeting	15 Question of the day 9:45 Meditation 10:30 Adult children of Alcoholics/Dysfunctional families 12:00 Crafts
18 Question of the day 9:45 Meditation 10:15 Woman's Group 11:15 Calming Coloring 1:00 Trauma Survivors	19 Question of the day 9:45 Meditation 10:00 NH Mental Health Peer Alliance 10:00 Journaling 10:30 Miniature Golf - Hilltop Fun Center 12:30 TED Talks 7:00 NA Meeting	20 Question of the day 9:45 Meditation 10:15 Boundaries 11:15 Men's Group 1:00 Adverse Childhood Experiences	21 Question of the day 9:45 Meditation 10:15 Wellness Group 11:00 Bingo 12:30 Salad Making 6:30 NA Meeting	22 Question of the day 9:45 Meditation 10:30 Adult children of Alcoholics/Dysfunctional families 12:00 Singing and Dancing
25 Question of the day 9:45 Meditation 10:15 Woman's Group 11:15 Calming Coloring 1:00 Trauma Survivors	26 Question of the day 9:45 Meditation 10:15 Journaling 10:30 Creative Arts 12:30 TED Talks 7:00 NA Meeting	27 Question of the day 9:45 Meditation 10:15 Boundaries 11:15 Men's Group 1:00 Wellness Recovery Action Plan 5:00 Board Meeting via Zoom (Members Welcome!)	28 Question of the day 9:45 Meditation 10:15 Wellness Group 11:00 Fun and Games 12:30 Healthy Meals on a Budget 6:30 NA Meeting	29 Question of the day 9:45 Meditation 10:30 Adult children of Alcoholics/Dysfunctional families 12:00 Crafts

Infinity Peer Support

Location and Contact

55 Summer Street, Rochester, NH 03867 • **Phone:** 603-948-1036 or 603-948-1048

info@infinitypeersupport.org

www.infinitypeersupport.org

Limited Transportation in May and June: Call 603-948-1036

Business Hours: Monday—Friday (In-Person) 8 AM—5 PM, Tuesday, 8-4

Providing a non-medical approach to mental health wellness and recovery for adults 18 years of age and older who reside in Strafford County.

All services are free-of-charge.

To receive our calendar and newsletter, call (603) 948-1036 or email us at info@infinitypeersupport.org Visit our website at www.infinitypeersupport.org for more information.

Infinity Peer Support Mission Statement

Mission Statement: Our members are dedicated to building a community with an alternative, peer-oriented approach to mental health wellness and recovery.

Warmlines

Warmlines are located all over the State of NH. These telephone lines are staffed by peers and provide support to people who are struggling to cope. **You do not have to be in a crisis to contact warmlines.**

To be on a Warmlines Outreach Call List, call Infinity Peer Support at 603-948-1036.

Alternative Life Center, Conway, NH: 1-866-447-1765, Every Day: 5 PM—9 PM

Connections Peer Support Center, Portsmouth, NH: 603-427-6966, 1-800-809-6262, Every Day: 5 PM—10 PM

CornerBridge, Laconia, NH: 1-800-306-4334, Every Day: 5 PM—10 PM

Monadnock Peer Support, Keene, NH: 1-866-352-5093, Every Day: 5 PM—10 PM

Stepping Stone, Claremont, NH: 1-888-582-0920, Sun., Mon., Wed: 4 PM—9 PM, Tues., Thurs., Fri., Sat.: 4 PM—8 PM

Helpful Phone Numbers

Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK

Bipolar Support Group: (603) 431-6703 x 3167 (Diane Cyr)

Sexual Assault Hotline: 1-800-277-5570

Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-866-644-3574

Peer Respite

Due to COVID-19, some peer respites are operating at reduced capacity or are shut down.

H.E.A.R.T.S. Peer Support Center, Nashua, NH: (603) 864-8769 or (603) 882-8400

Monadnock Peer Support, Keene, NH: (603) 352-5093 or (866) 352-5093

Stepping Stone, Claremont, NH: (603) 543-1388 or (888) 582-0920

Vaccine Update

Visit vaccines.nh.gov for more information about vaccines: qualification and registration. You have to register before you can be scheduled for a vaccination date and time. If you do not have a medical provider, call 2-1-1 for more information.

Rochester Fixed Vaccination Site: No Appointment Needed. Walk-Ins Welcome.

Spaulding Commons, 306 North Main Street, Rochester, NH 03867. Open Monday through Friday 10 am to 7 pm and Saturdays 9 am to 2 pm.

COVID-19 Testing

If you would like to be tested for COVID-19, call your medical provider, call Convenient MD at 1-822-263-0131, register at https://prd.blogs.nh.gov/dos/hsem/?/page_id=8479 or call 603-271-5980.

Community Action Partnership of Strafford County – 603-435-2500 – Help with food, shelter, jobs, healthcare, fuel & electrical assistance.

Information Referral – **Call 2-1-1** or 866-444-4211 – 24 hours per day.

NH Legal Aid – The Centers for Disease Control extended the eviction ban until January 31, 2021. Visit nhlegalaid.org or call 800-639-5290 for more information.

Seacoast Street Outreach (ages 12 to 22) – 603-851-1320 or 603-716-6083

Shelter Referral via Coordinated Access – 603-435-2448

Call first and they will attempt to locate shelter in the area. May need to leave number and wait for call back.

Additional Services

Bureau of Elderly & Adult Services: If you suspect an elder or adult needs help, call 1-800-949-0470 or 603-271-7014.

Peer Substance Use Disorder Support: SOS Recovery Community, located at 4 Broadway in Dover, 603-841-2350, ext. 2 and are located at 14 Signal Street in Rochester, 603-841-2350, ext. 1.

Hand Up Syringe Exchange Service

- Mondays, 6 to 7:30 pm, Olde Farm Lane, Rochester, NH.
- Tuesdays, 5 to 6 pm, St. Thomas Church, Dover, NH.
- Wednesdays, 6 to 7 pm, Elm Street, Somersworth, NH.
- Fridays, 6 to 7:30 pm, Olde Farm Lane, Rochester, NH.

Transportation

COAST Bus (New Schedule): (603) 743-5777. If you need bus tickets for wellness appointments or court obligations, visit Infinity Peer Support.