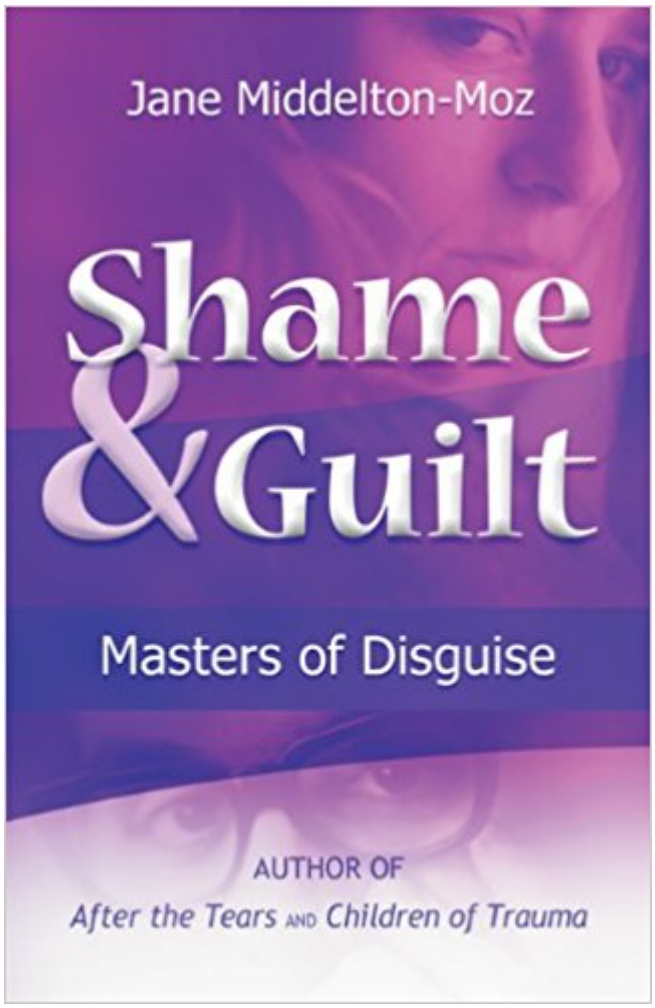
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Shame & Guilt: Masters Of Disguise



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Synopsis

"It is my feeling that debilitating shame and guilt are at the root of all dysfunctions in families," says Jane Middelton-Moz. A few common characteristics of adults shamed in childhood: You may suffer extreme shyness, embarrassment and feelings of being inferior to others. You don’t believe you make mistakes, you believe you are a mistake. You feel controlled from the outside and from within. You feel that normal spontaneous expression is blocked. You may suffer from debilitating guilt; you apologize constantly. You have little sense of emotional boundaries; you feel constantly violated by others; you frequently build false boundaries. If you see yourself in any of these characteristics, you can learn how shame keeps you from being the person you were born to be and how to change that. Shame And Guilt describes how debilitating shame is created and fostered in childhood and how it manifests itself in adulthood and in intimate relationships. Through the use of myths and fairytales to portray different shaming environments, Dr. Middelton-Moz allows you to reach the shamed child within you and to add clarity to what could be difficult concepts. Read Shame and Guilt - you’re worth it.

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Customer Reviews

Jane Middelton-Moz, M.S. speaks internationally and has appeared on national radio and television, including: Oprah, Montel and PBS.

Introduction The impact of growing up in a shaming environment affects an individual’s life.

Debilitating shame affects our ability to form loving relationships, honor ourselves adequately and may impact our future generations. Yet it has only been in the last ten years that the dynamics of shame have received attention in the field of psychology. Helen Block Lewis (1987) in her book, The Role of Shame in Symptom Formation, refers to shame as the "sleeper." Earlier attention was focused on guilt and frequently the two emotions were confused. Shame was ignored entirely. It makes sense that shame would be ignored in that it is one of the most difficult feelings to communicate. We are ashamed of our shame. Books on shame are now being published. This is an important step in bringing it out of hiding. It is my feeling that debilitating shame and guilt are at the root of all dysfunctions in families. Our understanding of these masters of disguise will enhance our understanding of all adult children of dysfunctional families and/or communities. It will help explain why many adult children of depressed parents, abuse, religious fanaticism, war, cultural oppression and parental and sibling death (to name a few) identify so readily with the characteristics of adult children of alcoholics. All these adult children have one thing in common . . . they grew up in shaming environments where the grief of the past was not resolved in the past and their parents in delayed grief could not healthily bond to children. Some of the difficulties that we have faced in understanding the concepts of debilitating shame and guilt are that the concepts have been confused historically in the literature and that the theoretical information has been difficult to understand. When I was asked to write a clear easy-to-understand book on shame and guilt, I was excited by the challenge. I found that using fairy tales to portray shaming environments allowed readers to reach the shamed child in themselves and added clarity to sometimes difficult concepts. Throughout my research I found that there were definable characteristics of shaming environments recounted by adult children who experienced debilitating shame in childhood In this book characteristics of shame-based behavior in relationships are explored and defined I have listed these characteristics in several sections and have given examples that I believe will aid in the understanding of each characteristic on an emotional as well as cognitive level. As an introduction to the chapters that follow, I list and describe common characteristics of adults shamed as children and shame-based adults in relationships. Characteristics Of Adults Shamed In Childhood Adults shamed as children are afraid of vulnerability and fear exposure of self. Adults shamed as children may suffer extreme shyness, embarrassment and feelings of being inferior to others. They don’t believe they make mistakes. Instead they believe they are mistakes. Adults shamed as children fear intimacy and tend to avoid real commitment in relationships. These adults frequently express the feeling that one foot is out of the door, prepared to run. Adults shamed as children may appear either grandiose and self-centered or seem selfless. Adults shamed as children feel that, "No matter

what I do, it won't make a difference; I am and always will be worthless and unlovable." Adults shamed as children frequently feel defensive when even minor negative feedback is given. They suffer feelings of severe humiliation if forced to look at mistakes or imperfections. Adults shamed as children frequently blame others before they can be blamed. Adults shamed as children may suffer from debilitating guilt. These individuals apologize constantly. They assume responsibility for the behavior of those around them. Adults shamed as children feel like outsiders. They feel a pervasive sense of loneliness throughout their lives, even when surrounded with those who love and care. Adults shamed as children project their beliefs about themselves onto others. They engage in mind-reading that is not in their favor, consistently feeling judged by others. Adults shamed as children often feel angry and judgmental towards the qualities in others that they feel ashamed of in themselves. This can lead to shaming others. Adults shamed as children often feel ugly, flawed and imperfect. These feelings regarding self may lead to focus on clothing and makeup in an attempt to hide flaws in personal appearance and self. Adults shamed as children often feel controlled from the outside as well as from within. Normal spontaneous expression is blocked. Adults shamed as children feel they must do things perfectly or not at all. This internalized belief frequently leads to performance anxiety and procrastination. Adults shamed as children experience depression. Adults shamed as children lie to themselves and others. Adults shamed as children block their feelings of shame through compulsive behaviors like workaholism, eating disorders, shopping, substance abuse, list-making or gambling. Adults shamed as children often have caseloads rather than friendships. Adults shamed as children often involve themselves in compulsive processing of past interactions and events and intellectualization as a defense against pain. Adults shamed as children are stuck in dependency or counter-dependency. Adults shamed as children have little sense of emotional boundaries. They feel constantly violated by others. They frequently build false boundaries through walls, rage, pleasing or isolation. Characteristics Of Shame-Based Adults In Relationships: We lose ourselves in love. When we argue, we fight for our lives. We expend a great deal of energy in mind-reading. We frequently talk to ourselves about what our partners are feeling and needing more than to our partners. We pay a high price for those few good times. We often sign two contracts upon commitment, one conscious and another which is unconscious. We blame and are blamed. We want them gone, then fight to get them back. We know it will be different but expect it to be the same. We often feel that our partners are controlling our behavior. We are frequently attracted to the emotional qualities in another that we have disowned in ourselves. We often create triangles in relationships. We seek the unconditional love from our partners that we didn't receive adequately in a shaming childhood. Throughout the remainder of this book, these characteristics will

be fully explored. Ã Â¬1990 Jane Middelton-Moz. All rights reserved. Reprinted from Shame and Guilt by Jane Middelton-Moz, Ph.D. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, without the written permission of the publisher. Publisher: Health Communications, Inc., 3201 SW 15th Street, Deerfield Beach, FL 33442.

I'm still reading this book, and I'll probably have to read it a few more times, but this has my life written in this book! You may not even realize that you were shamed or guilt ridden, because I didn't look at my youth like that. My parents still think this is the correct way to teach children, and they've even wanted me to raise my children under these incorrect ways. I've refused to raise my children like I was raised, and it actually makes my parents really angry with me. My counselor recommended this book to me, and I am so glad that I'm reading it! It is sure changing the way I feel about myself as a human being. I am learning that I don't have to be or do everything perfectly to be accepted into society. That issue all by itself has made continued to haunt and stress me out. I highly recommend this book if you have any of the issues listed above regarding how this book can help yourself, your siblings, or your friends. It will open a whole new world for anyone who, like me, doesn't feel like they fit in, have self esteem issues from childhood, or isolate themselves from the outside world. I'm not claiming it will be an immediate quick fix, but with patience and following through will make it so worth it!

I just finished reading a 130 page book written by Jane Middelton-Moz titled "Shame & Guilt - Masters of Disguise", this book opened up my mind and heart to consider the possibilities of why some people cannot follow through with their words. I found myself relieved after finishing this book because for once someone finally put into words what goes on in reality in our inner worlds in practical, concise and work-able terms. I highly recommend this book to every one so you may discover the signs of how we sometimes decide to not face, feel or free shame and guilt. If we do not grasp the masters of disguise that influence us to behave on the surface to fulfill other agendas; our lives will continue to unconsciously spin out of control and we will not know where or why we were lead astray.What personally struck me was remembering how I suffered for a long time extreme shyness, embarrassment and feelings of being inferior to others. There was a time in my life that it was most desirable for my circle of influence for me to stand by with a smile on my face and say nothing. There was a time in my life that I was isolated for articulating how disconnected my perception was from the larger crowd. This isolation served as means for others to punish me with

shame and guilt or hide from their own shame and guilt.

You have to get through the first chapter and the book is good. The only problem I had with it is that there is really no solution to the shame and guilt that you have been through. It explains how these feelings got there in the first place. Good read. Will definitely help me to not raise my children with shame and guilt.

This book is pretty great if you have any history of being shamed and resulting guilt problems. Think if you ever had parents or a significant partner in your life who constantly put you down, expected you to live up to unrealistic expectations, and made you feel like you had no value. Particularly if this happened in childhood when you had little in the way of skills for dealing with that sort of treatment.It is written in a fairly easy to read format with "fairy tale" examples that are pretty clear on all of the concepts, so it’s not a super dry read either.The only complaint is that parts of it are a little repetitive.Still, it has helped me to see how my childhood effected the way i relate to people today and made some of my least healthy behaviors much more evident but also something I can understand instead of feel ashamed of.Great therapeutic book.

There are a vast number of books on shame currently and their number increases daily. Shame is the new problem for human beings; where before there was other evaluations. However, this book is clear, easy to read and does a marvelous example of illuminating this debilitating problem. It is short, to the point, and invaluable.

I read this book cover to cover and I plan reading it again. The author does and excellent job of explaining how shame and guilt are transmitted across generations and how shame effects people. I especially like the fable she use in chapter one to illustrate the giant chameleon and perfect personalities and how they interact in a family. The illustration of Giant and Chameleon on oposite ends of the spectrum and the human being in the healthy middle was very insightful. I also liked the example she gave of how a shaming family handled a dispute between there sons and how a nonshaming healthy family does it.

A great read!

Not a perfectly written book but there were so many profound revelations in this for me, I have to

recommend it!

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