

**Ep #206: Shame and Intersectionality
with Amanda Kingsley**

Full Episode Transcript



With Your Host

Simone Grace Seol

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Welcome to *Joyful Marketing*! I'm Simone Seol, and I teach you how to get your life coaching practice fully booked, without having to pay for ads, buy Instagram followers, or complicated sales funnels. It's not rocket science, and you can do it too. Listen on to find out how.

Simone Seol: Hey friends, this is not an episode I expected to publish this week. But here's what happened. My client, Amanda Kingsley, an incredible coach who supports and empowers women who've been through abortion, invited me to come on her podcast to talk about shame. Her podcast, by the way, is called, *Speaking Light into Abortion*. And so, if that sounds like something you'd be interested in, go check it out.

So, as you can imagine, shame is a topic that comes up frequently in women who have experienced abortion. I guess not just women; humans with uteruses who have experienced abortion. And as somebody who's a great fan of reproductive rights, and as someone who can't shut up about shame and the process of unshaming ourselves, I could not say no to her ask. And also, I just love Amanda.

And by the time we were done recording this conversation, I was like, holy crap, I need to share this with you, my people. So, I was like, can I publish this on my podcast, too? And she said, yes. Because here's the thing, we didn't actually talk that much about abortion. But we did talk a lot about shame.

I went on my rant, about how shame keeps us small, how it doesn't actually have to be part of a well-lived life. That's a common misconception, that you need shame to grow, and learn, and to be a good person, I say bullshit. And, I talk a lot about how a shame is hugely tied to the patterns of socialization and intersectional oppression that we are all under.

I talk about how to free yourself from all of it, too. Understanding all of this is critical, in my opinion, to having a healthy, whole and loving relationship with your humanity. Which in my book, is an absolute prerequisite to ethical

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marketing, you cannot skip it. You cannot market from constantly thinking; there's something wrong with me, there's something fundamentally broken and defective about me, or I did something wrong, and it makes me wrong, I did this thing, it's a bad thing, it means I'm bad.

You can't; you can't market from that place, and you can get freedom from it. You can learn how to think differently, and it's closer than you think. Listen to us as we break it all down for you. I'm excited for you to listen to this.

Amanda Kingsley: So, you don't know this, Simone. Well, you probably don't know this. I don't see why you would. But I have referenced you and *Joyful Marketing* on a podcast about abortion, I'm going to say, at least a dozen times. Like if you go to my website, it's like, link to *Joyful Marketing*.

Because a lot of the things I learn through you, through your wisdom and your willingness to talk about hard stuff, is so relevant, so relevant. And I've met the most amazing people through your community and your networks. And like, Yeah, you're good stuff, out there.

Simone: That means so much to me. Because to me, *Joyful Marketing*, it pretends to be about marketing, but it's really how to human, and how to love yourself while you're a humaning, and love others while they're humaning. And, I think good marketing comes out of that. And, you, in my opinion, you can't skip the whole, like, figure out how to be human stuff, because I think all of your business endeavors has to come out of that. Right?

So, that means the world to me, that you talk about my marketing program on your abortion podcast.

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Amanda: It's so random. I'm like; oh my gosh, I'm doing it again. Joyful marketing. So, it's fantastic. Anyway, even though this is your first time on the podcast, it feels like you've been on the podcast before.

Simone: Yay. I feel like I've energetically been here.

Amanda: You have. All right. I prefer when my guests introduce themselves, in the way that feels right for you today, for this audience. Whatever feels like it wants to be said, so why don't you just tell people who you are, what you do, and why you would say yes to coming on this show to talk.

Simone: Okay, I said yes, coming on the show, because I love Amanda and everything she does, and I think everyone in the world should know about it. And anything I can do to help in that direction, I am so happy. I am Simone. I am right now, I'm literally in my pajamas. Like, when I showed up for the Zoom™ recording with Amanda, I told her that I hadn't even had a chance to look in the mirror today, yet.

It's morning here, where I am. And, I have just been wrangling my one-year-old. And, I have no idea what's happening with my face or my hair. But here I am. I mention this because it's kind of how I approach everything in life, and how I teach my clients how to approach everything in life. Which is, that the most beautiful, powerful work that we can do comes from our humanity. And it comes from all the parts of ourselves that society tells us is imperfect, and less than, and flawed, and even defective.

Learning how to, at first, tolerate and learn how to be with, and then really delve into and celebrate all those parts of me, has been where all of my best contributions have come from. And it's also where my greatest joy, as a human being, has come from.

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So, I teach business and marketing through that lens, and I'm the host of the *Joyful Marketing* podcast. And I also have a program called *Joyful Marketing*, which Amanda just talked about. It's a marketing training program, but it's really a how to be human training program.

Amanda: Well, as you were talking, I muted myself, I stood up because I'm wrangling my dog as we podcast. Who's, for some reason, very anxious right now. I am in my pajamas...

Simone: Yay, pajama party.

Amanda: Yeah, but it's nighttime for me. I have recorded three podcasts today; I have had two coaching calls. I've been on a peer call, all in my pajamas. So, I'm right there with you. I for the pajama party all the time.

Simone: Love it. Same here.

Amanda: Okay, so we hit record, because we started talking about something really interesting. I love Simone. And of course, I want her on the podcast. But as soon as she introduced something she is co-hosting... Is it in September?

Simone: Yep. Yeah.

Amanda: She introduced, to all of us, the Shame Clinic, which is a five-week intensive. And I was like; oh, now's the time. We need to talk about shame on the podcast. So, right before we hit record, you started talking about something that I thought was very interesting and fascinating, and we needed to be recorded. Which is, shame as intersectional.

So, A, I want to hear, I'd love for you to introduce to my audience your thoughts on shame. Because, as imagined, in the abortion world, there's a

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lot of it. But then yeah, let's start with this idea that shame is intersectional. Let's kind of chat it out.

Simone: Okay, so I'm going to tell you everything at once. Which is, I have struggled so badly with shame my whole life. I would say my teenage years, my 20's, were driven pretty much entirely by shame. Everything I did, I did to either avoid shame, or because of my shame.

And shame kept me from going for... You know, I was like, oh, you know, gifted child, whatever. Like, I was good school. And everybody said, "Oh, you have so much potential to do..." And, I had a lot of creative passions. I lived what I knew to be a very, very small life. And nobody was keeping me small, except myself. Because I was so afraid to do anything and fail and feel shame. To do anything and be rejected and feel shame.

And so, my whole coaching journey, like the way I became a coach, and grew my business as a coach, it came out of me wrestling with my shame. Like, how do I stop fucking hating myself? How do I stop just living every waking second of my life, with this persistent heavy knot in my chest, like there's something's profoundly broken about me? Right?

So, I feel very emotional saying this right now, because while I, thank Goddesses, do not live there anymore, I did for so long. And it hurt so, so bad. And, I do what I do, to try to get as many people who are still there out of there. I feel like it's the project of our lives to learn that we are not broken. I know, I'm like making myself cry.

Amanda: Oh, it is the project of our lives, right? It's so wild, too, because we come in knowing that and then we learn that we're broken, and then we spend all this time and energy learning we're not broken.

Simone: So, let me go on the next part of my spiel, which is that... I don't know how, but you know, I was no stranger to like psychology and self-

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development, and healing and all these ideas, like even before I officially became a coach. Like, you better believe I have been consuming that shit my whole life. I've been like reading books, listening to things, like taking courses, like trying to figure out how do I not feel like shit? How do I deal with the shame that's at the root of me feeling like shit?

And what no one told me, until I kind of figured it out on my own... Well, I mean, with the help of some really great teachers. But let me just say this, the thing that I learned that made the greatest difference, is learning that shame it's not like a natural emotion that humans have. This is contrary to what a lot of people think.

We all have human emotions, and even unpleasant, painful emotions are part of being human. They're part of a well-lived life. Emotions like; anger, sadness, disappointment, frustration, rage, grief. You know, all of these are... You can't human well and not feel them. You can't go after big goals and big dreams, and get to avoid these feelings; you can't, right?

And if you dare to love, you will experience heartbreak. And if you dare to go for big dreams and goals, you will encounter the, you know, all the frustration and, you know, all those emotions. So, it's a very nice and true idea that “negative, painful emotions are part of life”. And we have to learn how to allow them, and how to process them, how to carry them.

That idea becomes toxic when it gets applied to shame. Because shame is not a natural human emotion that's good for us to have. And shame doesn't have to be part of a well-lived life. Like, shame doesn't belong anywhere in here. Because shame is not something that we are born knowing how to feel.

It's taught to us by a society that gets you to understand yourself, not by your own experiences, but by what other people say is wrong with you. For example, Amanda, you could tell me, “Simone, you're stupid,” right? And I

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could be like, wow, that hurts that Amanda would call me stupid. But I feel the hurt of that, but also, I don't think I'm stupid. So, whatever, right?

But if you said, "Simone, you're stupid," and somebody else who was sitting next to you said... Well, what am I trying to say? Or, let's say you said that and somebody who was very close to me said, "Yeah, I mean, you think you're not stupid, but you actually are. And, everybody thinks you're stupid." I mean, that's just an example, but if that got me to think...

The question isn't whether I'm stupid or not, it's whether can I trust my own experience of myself? Right? And, it's also very close to gaslighting. Because if I said, "Oh, this thing happened, and it hurt me," and you said, "Well, that didn't happen. You weren't really hurt. You were just overreacting." Then what happens, is on top of the original hurt I experienced, it's that layer of, I am not a reliable narrator of my own experience.

That is a head fuck. And that, is what creates the shame.

Amanda: Yeah, this is really in line with a theme of the week. And yeah, the way... I didn't write down the second way you said it, which was brilliant, of course, but you said, "Can I trust my own experience on myself?" And shoot, I forgot the second way you said it.

But the theme, in my coaching this week, was like, I could have had that baby, right? Like, I could have carried that pregnancy, I could have done it. And yeah, that's true. Like, I'm not going to argue with you. Like you probably could have, in most cases, you could have. But did you want to?

There were reasons, whether it was safety or lifestyle, or medical, like, there were reasons you didn't want to. And so, you made the choice, even though sometimes it was a trapped choice. And what happens is afterwards, we don't trust that want, like, we don't trust that experience we

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had. And so, we look back, and we're like, oh, I shouldn't have trusted myself.

But it's only in retrospect, with the influence of like media and religion and parents and like, junk, but in that moment, I truly believe a lot... There's a lot of abortion that self-preservation, but like, most people make that choice in a moment where they know what they need. They know what they want. They do trust themselves, even if it's for a hot second. And then so quickly, they forget that, in that experience they were in, trust said; this is not right for you. What's right for you, is saying no.

Simone: Because there are so few sources in our society that tell us, you can trust yourself. Like, your experience of yourself is valid. In fact, the whole society is set up in a way to invalidate that, right? It's like no, don't trust what you want and what you decide. Trust what the religion says. Trust what, you know, these politicians say. Trust what your friends say. Trust what your parents say. Trust what these other people say, right? The dominant social norms. Right?

And so, I think because there's so little awareness of like how to be sovereign in our society, like how to be in our own experience, and be in our own stories, and be the protagonist of our stories, and narrate our own stories to ourselves, and believe it. We get to internalizing all of our experiences, understanding our own experience through these narratives, of other people, that we picked up and absorbed. So, that's where shame comes from.

And I told Amanda right before we started recording, I have this new idea that, like, again, I don't know if somebody else had it and it's not actually new, but it's a new to me idea; that shame is intersectional. There are these layers, interweaving layers, of systematic oppression in the world, and whoever's at the top, whoever has the most privilege, they have the least, in terms of like, what society tells them, like is wrong with them.

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Or, they encounter the least friction, least resistance, in terms of just like being in the world. So, if you're like a rich white male, right, then I actually, I mean, I don't have the statistics on it, but I think those people feel the least shame, right? Because there's nobody around telling them you're doing it wrong, you are wrong.

If you're neurotypical, like straight, cis (cisgender), rich, white male, then you don't have as much of external voices, like challenging your own experience of yourself, right? Because straight, cis, rich, white males, also are whole human beings, just like the rest of us, and the entire world around them affirms them as whole human being. So, what is there to feel ashamed about, right?

But if you're a woman, ever since we're little, we are told to, we are taught how to understand ourselves through the eyes of others; like don't wear that, girls have to be like this, if you do this, if you say this, that means you're that kind of girl, and right? So, there's this incredibly complex, insistent, codified socialization that girls or, you know, kids socialized as girls go through, in order to disconnect ourselves from our own experience, and to see ourselves through others. And, that is where shame begins.

And so, if you're not a cis male, that's where the shame begins. And on top of that, if you're not white, in a white dominant society, in a white supremacist society, there's the double that. Of like, if you're of color, if you're Black, if you're Brown, if you're this or that, then here's all these other things you have to be aware of, which you weren't born thinking about. But now, you have to understand yourself as black, and black means this and other people think this about you. Right?

So, I posted this great quote on Instagram™ two days ago, or something by W.E.B. Du Bois, which is, I know, I'm paraphrasing it, it's not verbatim, but he said, "To be Black is to be seen as a problem," because of my blackness, right? Like, that's how racism works, is that the color of my

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skin... Like, I am understood as a human being, as a problem, because the color of my skin.

I could say, I mean, not that racism and sexism are this, obviously, they're different. But in terms of intersectionality, living in a sexist patriarchal world, to be a woman, to be a girl, is to understand ourselves as a problem. And this begins very early, and continues our whole lives, right?

If you're a young girl, here are 5 million ways something could be wrong with you, if you're a young woman, here's 5 million ways something could be wrong with you. If you're an aging woman, here's 5 million things... right?

So, that's why, and as somebody who was very outspoken about being ADHD and being neurodivergent, I would say neurodivergent is also a huge part of it. It's part of the intersectional oppression, because as an ADHD person, as a young person who was that, just the message is always like, what's wrong with you? Why can't you just...?

And when you know your own experience of yourself, and of the world, and the world says... Like, what I heard so often growing up is like, why are you being so difficult? Why can't you just XYZ? Why are you being so difficult? And, it all had to do with my ADHD.

And I remember, I still feel this way sometimes, I remember feeling so like, enraged and infuriated because I was never trying to be difficult, and in fact, I was fighting with everything I had in my little young body to not be difficult. Because I hated being told I'm difficult; who wants to be difficult, I want to be easy, right?

And so, there's that friction of like, how my experience of myself. I'm trying so hard not to be difficult, and you're telling me I'm trying to be difficult...

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So, that rupture, is where shame happens. I feel like I've driven that point home.

In terms of talking about abortion, and I told Amanda earlier that I have to come clean. I've never had one of myself, but as a woman, you know, you experience reproductive shit. It's what, in theory, gets me about it is that it takes more than one person to get pregnant. Right?

And it's just women, or people who have wombs, who carry all the shame. And so, this makes me like want to double down, triple down, on my message that stop fucking pretend that shame is like a necessary healthy emotion that you have to like learn how to process.

You don't have to learn how to process abuse and oppression. Right? We have to fight it, we have to name it, we have to dismantle it, not like learn how to make peace with the effects of oppression. Right? To me, telling people that like; oh, you just have to learn how to allow your shame. It's just an emotion. Learn how to feel it. Is like telling a black person like; oh, all the effects of racism, it's part of life. Life isn't perfect. Just live with it. Learn how to forgive and it's just going to be a part of life. You got to do your best.

No. Fix racism. Fix intersectional oppression that makes women, and people of color, and poor people, and... Just walk around with like, exponentially more shame than a cis, hetero, rich, white male. Like, that's not cool.

Amanda: I always wonder statistically, like, we hear this statistic, one in four women have an abortion, by the time, you know... Or, people who can carry a pregnancy by the time they're in their 40's... I've never heard this statistic about men. And my prediction, is that men have been a part of far more abortions than we have.

Like, what is their statistic? And, why have we never heard that?

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Simone: It's a woman's problem. Everything's a woman's problem.

Amanda: Yeah, yeah. So, I kept circling back in my head, to this project of our lives learning that we're not broken. And when you were talking, it's like, if you're difficult, you're broken. If you are of color, you're broken. If you are neurodiverse, you're broken.

Simone: If you are if you're fat, you're broken. If you're tired, you're broken. If you don't want a baby, you're broken. If you...

Amanda: Yeah. And then, the brokenness is your fault. It's like you, you know, you're the one that's the problem for being broken versus the system having broken you. And so, I don't know, circling back there felt like this is another reason, it's the project of our lives. Because it's coming from so many places. It's not like, let me fix it in this one place, and I'll be good to go. It's like, all over the place.

And so, it's more just like, stepping further and further into our worth. But it's not that we're likely ever going to feel not broken, as society stands these days. Like, it's a project.

Simone: It's a project of our lives; of all our lives. but you know, I know you will see eye-to-eye with me here, but like, you really can feel better. There really, actually is, liberation on the other side. Your experience of life really, truly can be of overwhelmingly like, the gladness of being alive, and the joy of connection, and thriving. Like that really, is available. Right?

Amanda: I feel like, too, I say to so many people, it's so much closer than you think. Like, it really is. It feels really far away, and it feels really hard. Especially when I'm talking about it, in that like, all these systems are telling you you're broken. But it really is closer than you think. It's so often, like, one compassionate understanding away. Like one widening of a perspective away.

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You were talking earlier about... Oh, shoot, I forgot what you were talking about. What I wrote down was, if you trust us, we will take care of you. Like, if you trust us, you can be in our community, and...

Simone: They won't take care of you. Spoiler alert.

Amanda: Of course, we want to do the things that make us fit in the community. It's like if you've trust us and do what we say, you can be in our community. That's like human survival, to want that. And what we are starting to build, like people like you, are places where it's like, come here, learn to trust yourself. And that's why you like, you belong in our community, because you trust yourself, not because you trust us.

And when we come into a place that's like, if I trust them, I belong. Anything that gets off kilter, we're going to feel shame.

Simone: Oh, that's so good.

Amanda: My dog is freaking out.

Simone: He's just very excited about de-shaming the world. That's so, so good. I think that's a beautiful, alternate way of saying what I said, right? Which is, I said, shame happens when you like, see yourself not through your own experience, but through somebody else's eyes. And what you said is, I'm sorry, what did you say? I don't want to say it wrong things.

Amanda: They're saying like...

Simone: Trust them, instead of trust me. Yeah, that's where shame happens. 100%. Yeah. And I think there are so many institutions and cultures and sort of, you know, systems and the status quo that are happy for you to outsource your trust to them, instead.

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And this even goes in, I'm sorry to say, in the coaching industry, right. Like, I think unless we're being very intentional and conscientious about it, we can easily sort of perpetuate this dynamic of like; don't trust me, trust this tool. Don't trust me, trust this coaching ideology. And, that's not good.

And, I think that we become capable of authentic coach-client love when the clients trust themselves more than me, right? Because otherwise, if you trust me, more than yourself, and you love me, that's not love. That's kind of like something else. Right?

Because love, I think, the whole love happens when I think one person is in their wholeness and another person is in their wholeness, and they're choosing to relate and love each other from their respective wholeness. Not when somebody is thinking; I am a half person, I am broken, I can't trust myself. So, I'm going to outsource that to you. That's like codependency, right? Not love.

So, that's something that I talk about a lot with my clients. Like, everything you try to do to get me to trust me, over your own self. I'm just going to like hand that power right back to you and say, "No, that power does not belong with me. It belongs with you." And sometimes it takes people a while. God, it took me all of my fucking life to know that I could trust myself. Right?

I think all of my life, I was just going around being like, can you save me? Can you make me whole? Can you make me feel not fucked up? Can you make me feel, okay? It was just, you know, getting coached. It was like; wait, no, no, you can't, you can't, it has to be me? Fuck, right.

Amanda: I first wrote down the question, like to ask ourselves the question when we feel shame, like, I first wrote it down as; who am I giving my power to? But I don't even think "giving" is the right word. It's like; who has my power? And, how can I get it back?

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Simone: Like, who took it?

Amanda: Yeah, exactly. Like, I wrote it down as “giving”, but I was like, no, that does not, no. It's like, who has my power? And, how do I get it back? That's how I release the shame.

Simone: What systematic structures are like built into this world, and built into my psyche, that got internalized in my psyche, in a way where it systematically robs me of my power? Like, you ask that question, that's how we fucking fight shame.

Amanda: Yes, yes. Okay. What happens when we fight shame? What happens when we start releasing shame, and like stepping out of its cage?

Simone: You might piss off a lot of people. I mean, you might not. Right. I mean, not everybody has this experience. For some people, it's just like; yeah, and then it was amazing. And, everybody celebrated me. But for some people, it's like, you know, it offends people when you stop feeling ashamed, sometimes. Like, well, how dare you just trust yourself? How dare you not walk around with your shoulders slouched all the time? Like, we felt very validated by you fulfilling that role in our little society. Right?

So that could happen, how dare you? And I think you could trigger a lot of people who are hiding themselves, and who are outsourcing their own trust, and they know that they want to get free, too. But seeing you get free reminds them that they're not free, and so they think they're just mad at you instead. But they're not really mad at you, they're mad at themselves.

Those are sort of like the external effects that may or may not happen, to various degrees. But oh, actually, let me tell you this. When I first was really actively working on my shame, and I came out as a life coach, because my shame kept me from ever saying I was a life coach out loud. I was way too ashamed about it. I had like my worst fears about it came true.

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Which is that my like, “friends” were kind of snickering about me, behind my back. Being like; she called herself a life coach, you serious? That's so cringe. Right? So, that was my worst fear. And the reason I didn't come out was because I didn't want people to do that; to snicker about me behind my back.

And then, when that actually did happen, I actually felt so liberated like; yes, make fun of me. Yes, mock me. Like, that fear, it's not that I enjoyed that, but that fear no longer controls me, That felt so powerful, right? So, when shame stops running your life, oh, man, I think that's when you, I don't know. That's when you really, I mean, this sounds like such a cliché, but that's when you meet who you are.

That's when you really begin to... if you're a creative person, and you have a lot of shame, you have no fucking idea what creativity you're capable of until you let go of the shame. Because it's literally like a veil. It's like a thick, like sludgy cloud, that's taking up space between you and your creativity. Anytime you try to create your it's like; no, shut it down. It's not good enough. Shame, shame, shame, right?

So, you genuinely come into your own creativity, and you can relate, you can open up and relate to others and genuinely, authentically love other people, as a whole human being. Rather than, like, use other people to like, patch up holes in yourself that you think you have, because you feel defective. And that's kind of what I was doing my all my life.

I feel like I wasn't able to... Like I'm very happily married to somebody that I'm so happy to be with. And I don't think I would have been able to achieve this quality of love, if I didn't know that there's nothing wrong with me, and that he doesn't need to save me, he doesn't complete me. I am whole, he is whole. And, we are just choosing to love each other.

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And this gives me such a profound peace of mind, because I had a marriage before when that wasn't the case, right? I think both of us probably had a ton of shame. And, we were trying to like fill the holes in our like brokenness with each other. And, I know how precarious that feels. And every day, I'm so grateful to myself from doing the work to be able to be whole in a relationship. Right?

Amanda: Okay, so here's some questions. How, when you processed, when you released some of the shame so that you could feel whole, as a human entering relationship, and then you bumped into shame again, were you like; wait a second, been here, done this? Why does it feel harder in business than it did in relationships?

Because I think in some sense, when we feel shame, recognize it and learn what to do with it, we can do that again, in a different situation. And again, in a different situation. But in your case, do you remember times that was like; okay, this is a different situation, same feeling, and I've no idea what to do with it?

Simone: 100%? Yeah. And it's, I think, it's because... First of all, I think it is possible to get like 98% free from shame, and to live in a place that is really genuinely, deeply, and sustainably shame-free. Right, I feel like I've achieved it, and I am so fired up to help other people achieve it.

However, like you said, when there's something new, when you are creating growth in a new realm, there's a whole different set of external triggers, that can sort of activate those old, withering neural pathways of those same shame stories, right? And it can feel in the body like they're back.

But what I want people to know, is to be able to, like, narrate what's happening to themselves, which it's not that shame is bad, it's that shame is a set of stories where I can't trust myself. And those old, withering neural

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pathways are being activated again. But every time, those neural pathways are less strong than before. And it's just a question of recognizing; oh, there are those neural pathways again.

Oh, there's that nervous system response that has been wired, probably for most of us, for decades, that is just like being lit up in my body. That's all that's happening. It's not like; oh, no, all my shame came back.

And if you've been practicing this a while, then you know, or at least if you achieve freedom from shame in one area of your life, like you said, you kind of copy and paste. It's going to be so much easier to re-rehearse those thoughts and beliefs about yourself, in a new ROM.

So, what I'm trying to say is, it's not a binary of like; oh, I experience shame and these triggers shame in me, versus I am completely free, I never feel shame again. It really is like a set of muscles, right? It's like working out, you get stronger. And it doesn't mean you never feel weak, but the muscles you build are never going away.

And so, it might feel very real and visceral in the moment; oh, my God, I have a shameful reaction. But that doesn't mean like, shame has taken over you, again. It's just like those old withering old, old, old neural pathways just got lit up again.

All you have to do is remind yourself of that, and know that you are not that reaction. And then nobody could blame you for having this be activated again, when we are living in a society with so much fucking entrenched intersectional oppression.

And we just like stay with the practice of like, you know, what is the truth that I'm telling myself? Like, how do I regulate my nervous system? Right? And really, each time, you do get stronger, those muscles do get more robust.

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Amanda: Yeah, yeah. I think a lot of people feel shame after abortion. Like, a lot of people struggle telling people they love or telling their story out loud. And so, that's an example where someone might work through and release shame when they're around their partner or their best friend. But then, they tell a new stranger and it's like all comes back. And they think; oh, no, I've regressed, like I'm feeling shame, again.

Simone: No, there's no regression.

Amanda: Exactly. Yeah. And what's really happening, I think, is they're expanding. Like, of course, I'm feeling shame, again. I'm growing. I'm reaching out further. I'm stretching. But I think it's so common for humans to be like; oh, no, I thought I figured it out, and I didn't.

Simone: And also, the other thing that really helps is that when those shame attacks happen, there's always what I call like, "clean pain" that is hiding underneath, which if you were able and willing to identify the clean pain that wants to be felt, and feel that instead, the shame will become, it'll like feel pointless.

So, for example, let's say you already told some people about your abortion, but you're about to tell a new person about your abortion, and you're feeling that shame all over again. Maybe it's not a shame that needs to be felt, but maybe it's just the fear, that is very natural to humans, of a new experience or the fear of uncertainty, right?

Like if we only ever did things where we knew that outcome was guaranteed, and we would never have new experiences. So hmm, I'm noticing that I am feeling the discomfort of uncertainty. That is something that is natural and normal, and I'm willing to feel it. Or, I am feeling the pain of rejection, or of potential rejection, that is also real. Or, if somebody

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criticized you for your abortion and you weren't expecting them to, that could be the pain of being misunderstood, pain of being rejected.

Those are emotions you want to feel, as long as you are a human being who cares about other human beings, and values connection when a connection has been ruptured. You want to feel pain about that. Right? So maybe it's those pains.

When you are really present for the clean pain of being a human, having new experiences, opening up for new connection, being available to tell the truth, right, all the normal healthy pain that comes with that. If you're fully feeling that then, there won't be room for the shadow pain of like, you're a bad person.

I mean, you might still feel it, but it won't be as strong if you're present for the clean pain. So, I always direct people, like if you feel ashamed, I talk about a lot with my clients, in terms of like business stuff. Like, oh, I didn't meet anywhere near my launch goal, right? And then, their brain goes straight to like; you're unworthy. You're bad. You're wrong. That's the the bullshit shame.

It doesn't mean you don't feel bad. I want you to feel bad, but the clean pain sort of bad, right? Disappointed, be disappointed. Be heartbroken. Be frustrated. Because that will happen if you have goals, if you're making stuff happen, if you're expanding. So, when they find that, just in the act of like finding the clean pain, I think a lot of the shame just dissolves.

Like oh, I didn't need that. I just need to feel the disappointment of not getting what I wanted, which is going to keep happening for as long as I'm going for big dreams and goals.

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Amanda: Yeah. Would you add anything to the list of what shame sounds like? Like, I'm bad. I'm broken. I'm damaged. I'm unworthy. Like what does it sound like in our head?

Simone: I would actually say that it doesn't, it rarely, actually says those sentences. I think it's very, very sneaky. I mean, sometimes it does. Sometimes it's a you're bad, you're broken. But it's a lot more sneaky. I think like, 90% of the time, it's more like, you should have... Or, you shouldn't have done that. Or, if only you hadn't done... If only you were more blah, blah, blah. If only you could change, fix, heal, improve XYZ about yourself, then you could...

So, it's these very subtle, it's the things that you take for granted that you need to fix about yourself. If only I were 10 pounds lighter. If only I could have a better money mindset. If only I could, you know, be more self-compassionate. Like these things sounds so legit. It sounds like very good self-improvement goals, right.

And that's why a lot of shame, like hides in the coaching industry, in this way. But when you peel back the layers, it's not actually an impulse towards self-improvement, whatever the fuck that means, but it's really like, but here's this one other thing that is wrong with you. And if you could achieve this, then you will be whole and good, right?

And so, I would say, just look for all the things that you try to, like heal about yourself, that you think need to be improved. All the "shoulds". Shoulds are like the best like red flag for where shame is hiding. All the shoulds.

Amanda: Absolutely. Ah, okay. I don't know, I feel like it could be a place of completion. Is there any tool, or reminder, or thing that you feel like, wants to be said on this podcast before we close?

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Simone: I mean, this could be very basic. But I think a very basic step that actually doesn't feel basic, a lot of times is to just, like cut out the people and the influences in your life, who... Sometimes the fix is very easy, like, block this person, stop talking to that person. Right?

Amanda: I think of you almost every time I block someone. I used to do it anyway, but I think now, I think of you I'm like, Heck yeah. Bye.

Simone: But there's a reason that certain family dynamics sort of trigger and perpetuate like, certain mental health issues. Because like who you surround yourself with matters. And sometimes when you think you have to do a fuck ton of work on yourself, on your brain, you have to do this healing and that healing.

All the need for that just instantly goes away when you just cut like three people out of your life. And we have this programming as like; oh, be a good girl, like, be nice to everybody, don't offend anybody. You have to, like, keep everybody in your life forever, even at the cost of your... And that's bullshit.

And so, in your personal life, yes. And also online, please like, do a scan. This is like a really good mental hygiene. Do a scan of everyone you're following, everyone who just kind of ended up on your Facebook® feed, on your TikTok® feed, or whatever. That you became friends with that you started following because of whatever the fuck reason, and ask yourself; is this presence in my life...

It has nothing to do with whether they're a good person, bad person, whether you like them, don't like them, love them, don't love them. You could love them and like them and think that they're a great person, and yet is their presence in my life helping me to trust myself and to be at ease with myself, as I am? Or, is it doing the opposite? Right?

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And you'll be amazed what happens when you just start kind of filtering and curating for that. Because doing that, that very act, is a revolutionary subversive act of self-advocacy, right? And you got to understand, that act is not against other people, it is for you.

When you block someone, it's not saying fuck them. It's saying, this is what I need space for in my life. This is what I'm choosing. You're choosing for yourself, not against them. Right. So very, "simple" act that can counteract so much shame in your life.

Amanda: Yeah. I wrote down the question; how am I unconsciously but voluntarily exposing myself to people and places where I feel consistent shame? Sometimes it's very unconscious, like we don't realize. And then maybe we realize, we're like; but I have to or...

Simone: Because, they, remember, it's not that you did it. It's, they did it to you, because they told you over and over, we are more worthy of your trust than you are. Like, you can't trust yourself to get XYZ that you want, through yourself. You have to get it through us. Right? It is deliberate and malicious. And it's not always like very, that malice, I don't think is always conscious. But it is built into this intersectional oppression, right?

Amanda: I think we just accept so much of it unconsciously. And so, almost asking yourself; how am I unconsciously...? It sounds ridiculous, because if it's unconscious, how can I pull it up? But I think even just asking the question makes you dig a little deeper like, to the places you're more subtly exposing yourself to shame. It's like; well, but it's my sister and I love her or, like that kind of stuff.

Simone: It's this person and I learned a lot from them. And it's like, yeah, both things could be true; your sister could love you and be a shaming influence in your life. That person could be really wise and you have a ton

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to learn from them that would benefit you, and also, they could be shaming influence in your life, right? Like, you got to allow for this complexity.

If somebody is shaming you, doesn't mean they're bad. It doesn't mean they don't love you. It doesn't mean anything. It just means that we're all part of this like intersectional oppressive matrix, and you got to choose you. Right?

When you feel safe in your body and in your own mind, and you trust yourself, and you fill up on that self-trust and the quality of being at ease with yourself, that is the most loving, kind, and generous you will ever be. You want to be a loving, kind, generous person? Fill up on self-trust first. If you haven't, you are nowhere near the full potential of generosity that you can be the kindness, the lovingness.

Amanda: Yeah, thank you so much. Well, that was very interesting episode. But I still don't know what was happening with my dog. Your baby's like, hello. It's so good. I love it. This is the reality. Thank you so much for being here.

Simone: Thank you.

Amanda: Well, it's morning for you, so have a great day. I'm going to go wind down.

Simone: Okay. Perfect. Talk to you later.

Amanda: I'll see you in the world out there. Bye.

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