

Ep #207: Defrosting the Wild Animal Inside You with David Bedrick

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With Your Host

Simone Grace Seol

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Simone: Hello. So, I am sitting here today, with my co-conspirator in this upcoming class that I'm offering for the first time, that we are offering for the first time, it's called The Shame Clinic. By the time you're listening to this, it's going to start on the week after the 19th of September. And if you are listening after this, just know that it already happened; it started on the 19th of September. And so, I'm here with David Bedrick, my co-teacher for the course, and just my actual teacher, in real life. Hi, David.

David: Hey, Simone, good to sit with you. I got this big... If you're just audio, I have this big grin on my face, because it's a pleasure to sit with you and to think about these ideas and teachings together.

Simone: Ditto. You know, I have been busy introducing you to my people. And how I normally introduce you is, you know, David is a therapist. He is an ex-attorney, and an author, and a researcher who has researched and written extensively on shame. And, who calls himself a psychological activist. And, I want to ask more about that later.

But, you know, I started learning from reading David's books, and learning from and taking courses with him a good while ago, I can't remember exactly when. And, I did individual work with him. And his has been the most radically different and life changing work on shame that I have ever encountered.

Ever since I was, I think probably my early 20's, I had the acute awareness that shame was something that I struggled with, and that it was something that was holding me back. Ever since I was sort of conscious enough to

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have a sense of the magnitude of the work I wanted to do in the world, and saw myself keep tripping up over and over and over again, in my attempt to, you know, express that inside me. It was the same thing over and over again, shame, shame, shame. I kept running up against shame.

And I've been trying to solve shame for a decade and a half, well actually, probably longer. But I'm talking about the time since I knew that it was shame, right? I've been trying.

I'm a coach. I've been trained by some of the best programs. I learned the best tools working with the mind and the body, and this and this and that. I've studied all the psychology things. I've studied all the healing things. And nothing even came close to really taking shame at its roots, and uprooting it.

And the way I described it to David is, imagine shame was like a big scary tiger or something. Nothing came to actually defanging the beast, as David's work has for me. Like, when you have a tiger without fangs, it's just a big animal. And so, since I've been so radically transformed by David's work, and since my life, the quality of my life, the texture of my life, the colors of my life, have become radically different, as a result of doing the unshaming work with David.

I could not stop thinking about how the fuck do I bring this to my people? Because I want everybody who follows me to learn from David. And, I want this transformation to be made available to everybody. And so, after much contemplation, I successfully talked David into doing a collaboration.

David: Hands still pinned behind my back.

Simone: Exactly. ...to co-create a course. Because, you know, David, you're more, I mean, you're a therapist. And you're sort of more

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therapeutically focused normally, and I was like; you know what? My people are entrepreneurs. I'm a business coach.

Not all of them are entrepreneurs, actually. Many of them are creators, and artists, and teachers of all stripes, and practitioners, and I want to gather all of my people and present this to them in a way that's going to give them the most profound transformation and healing of their lives, in five weeks.

And so, we endeavor to create that together. David as the, you know, the creator of this body of incredible work on shame. And me, as a dedicated student who has had a lot of time to learn this, and integrate this into my life, and is living the result in many ways. We have teamed up together to create this five-week intensive course, just called, The Shame Clinic.

And that is my introduction to David, and how I wanted to introduce him because that's the effect he's had on me. I'll turn over the mic to you.

David: Should I introduce myself? Is that what my...

Simone: I don't know. Don't you have words to say?

David: I always have words to say, yeah. If I were to introduce myself, I would say: I am the founder of an institute called, The Santa Fe Institute For Shame-Based Studies©. And you said some of my other credentially kinds of things; I've written three books. But my deepest credential is not out of those things, although those things are really important to me. And, I've worked hard at those.

My deepest credential, Simone and everyone, is I grew up in a violent home. With somebody who, with a violent father, it could have been somebody else. And, a mother who is too disempowered to witness it. That means to say; oh, my gosh, this is bad. Father, stop it. David, are you okay? Let's act like this is happening.

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And because she didn't do that, I internalized a dismissal of myself. That makes sense? Nobody said, "David, that's really bad. Are you okay? Don't you touch that person. Don't you hurt my son." No one acted that way, so I took in that treatment towards myself. And that led me to want to study shame internally, in my own personal life. Connected me to wanting to say; other people experienced this. Something's happened to you, but the world acts like, or somebody acts like, it's your fault. Or, you don't really matter. What's happening to you. Yeah.

Simone: I have to read how you define psychological activist, because I think from that heart, you have become, you've declared yourself a psychological activist. And you just, this is now your Facebook® profile intro, which is how I read it. And I was like; that is amazing. Here's what it says.

Here's how David describes what it means to be a psychological activist: "He is being an ally to the marginalized voices inside individuals, and the culture at large." I haven't heard of anyone putting it in this way, in terms, in the context of psychology, in the context of therapy, even in the context of coaching. Hey, I'm an ally to the marginalized voice inside you.

And then I was thinking, about how many of us, you know, we talk a lot about, for example, racial marginalization, economic marginalization, political marginalization, gender marginalization, etc. But not so much about psychological marginalization. Right? Can you tell us a little about that? I just made that up, psychological emergency marginalization.

David: No, that's exactly right. It's an internalization, we have an inner government. And that inner government says, David, act confident and secure, and things like that. And the way to teach is to look like this, and act like this. And then, other [cross talk]. Right. And you're so brilliant at that, seriously. You bring all these different aspects of you to bear. And I think that's part of the charisma that you're bringing.

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And then, that inner government says; this is how to handle that. Oh, you feel insecure? Okay, take some deep breaths, go for a run, do some positive affirmations, and get a good night's sleep. So, you can not act insecure. So then, what happens to what we're calling insecurity? Marginalize it, etc? Or, all the other things. What happens to all the kinds of... You using the word "fuck"? Well, maybe that's no good. You shouldn't do that. But then, what happens to that passionate, intense breaking the rules woman? Should we put her aside?

Simone: We marginalize her. And, you know, you saw, I just wrote about this, someone came to me saying; you know, I don't feel lit up anymore. And I used to think about how if somebody came to me saying; I don't feel lit up, what I used to try to do is to, hey, let's help you get lit up again. Right? And, how do we get you to get lit up? What if you did this? What if you try this? I'm going to coach you in this way to see if you can feel lit up.

And in our society, that's considered the right thing to do. Because oh my gosh, like of course, you should always feel lit up. And then, what happens to the part of you, or the way of being, the kind of experiences where it's not lit up, there is no light? And what's there is darkness, instead. And we run furiously away from darkness because we have marginalized both darkness and being in the dark.

So, if you're in the dark, let us try to pull you out of there as soon as possible. Let's find a lamp. Let's find some matches. Let's find a flashlight. Let's add some light. And then, because we're so busy trying to add light, we don't let ourselves sit in the darkness. And when we don't let ourselves sit in the darkness, our eyes never adjust to darkness enough to see the stars in the night sky.

David: That is beautiful. I love that you wrote about that.

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Simone: And I also talked about how; hey, you're so eager to feel lit up. Guess what, some people travel miles and miles and miles to go out into the wilderness where there is no light at night, and it's just pitch dark. And, people seek that out on purpose. They go camp out just to be able to be in the dark. What if we did that? So, darkness is what's been marginalized. Right?

So, like the example you said, insecurity is what's been marginalized; timidness, lack of energy, depression, feeling low, feeling angry, feeling, you know, rebellious, all these things.

David: Let me tell you... I'm sorry, I cut you off. I'm a New Yorker, I kind of go back... I'm used to calling [crosstalk] And we say, break you off, can you break me off? That means take it for whatever.

But those are qualities that people might associate with more negative qualities, right? The insecurities and things like this. But not too long ago, I was invited to teach a group of women on, it was called like, The Feminine in the Shadow, or something like that, I think was the title. And the person the first interview they made, as part of this teaching, they said; what's in the shadow of the feminine? What's in the shadow for women?

“In the shadow” means marginalized psychologically, right? I push it away; psychology would call what you're calling, what you're talking about, “shadow”. Shadow means I'm not identified with that. I wish I weren't like that. I'm going to try not to be that way. So, I'm introducing that idea.

And this woman said, “What's in the shadow? Are all these interesting qualities that are nuanced and difficult to get a grasp on, can you help?” And I said, “Let me tell you the main things are in the shadow for a woman; intelligence.” “What do you mean?” Because many women don't feel free to be fucking brilliant. Brilliant in their way, I'm not saying it has to be an IQ, brilliant.

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And they don't even know that they are that way. Because the intelligence that that person has been offered; you should be more quiet, you should listen, other people know better. That happens.

Beauty. What I mean by beauty is, knowing oneself as beautiful. I experienced myself as a beautiful person. That is rare. I'm not saying that somebody else would say that's a good pretty picture. I'm saying, do you, inside, when you check yourself, feel like; I'm a beautiful person? Beauty is marginalized.

If I felt like I'm a beautiful person, huge things happen. They did a study around experiences of beauty. If a person feels beautiful, particularly young girls, they speak up more, they share their intelligence more, their hand-eye coordination changes, like the way they move their body, just because they feel beautiful or not.

Simone: But David, if all the girls and women felt beautiful, who would buy all the makeup, and the plastic surgery, and the diets, and the pills, and the...?

David: Yeah, that's right. Those companies bank. They bank on shame, they bank on you not feeling beautiful, and believing it. And not thinking; that's gross. That's an insult. If they were shameless, they would say, "That's an insult, treating me like that." If they have shame inside, they'll think, they'll just believe they're not beautiful. They won't feel offended or hurt. They'll just think; what should I do to get beautiful? Isn't that incredible? Such fundamental qualities.

Simone: Intelligence, beauty. I think also, size. And here's what I mean, by that. I don't just mean physical size, like you should be small and thin and skinny, although obviously that, too, hugely. I also mean, by size, I mean, how much you take up space in the world, right.

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And the message is be as small as possible. Don't be intrusive. Don't make yourself known. Don't step on other people's toes. So much so, that over and over, I coach people on teaching their bodies that it's safe to take up as much space as is required, for their bodies to actually fucking relax. And that is some of the hardest work, most challenging work, that most people ever do; learning how to take up space.

David: It's so internalized, people are so used to it, and women are so used to it. Not all, some have resisted that, or conditioned... they're loved in a way to say; be as big as a person you are. But it's so common.

I worked with a woman once, I tell her story in my book, and she was in the military. And she could do all the stuff the guys could do; lift these... There were special tires that go on these huge military trucks, she could move those and flip those, and run and do all these exercises that she was supposed to do.

And then they did something, Simone, called "tape testing". She said, "They put this measuring tape, so they put it around my hips and my butt," she would say, "And then they said," sorry, nobody should take this in. "And they said, 'You're too fat. You have to go to fat camp, in the military. And then at night," check this out, at night her and other women did this.

They would take... Some people know what this thing called Preparation H is. It's an ointment that shrinks hemorrhoids. She would wrap her... This is gross. But this is not just one person. This is a psychology. She'd wrap her hips and thighs in this stuff, and then wrap it in cellophane, and sleep like that at night.

Simone: I have done that, when I was a teenager.

David: Wow. Did you really?

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Simone: Yeah. No, it was very normal. Like, oh, here's... Apparently it does something to your legs and they get smaller. And then you'll be skinnier if you do this, wrap your legs in cellophane. I've done that. I've met many people.

David: And if you're doing it that to yourself physically... Now we're at the psychological level; then your size issue. How do I make myself small? How do I [crosstalk]? How do I not act too strong? How do I not act confident? Like, I know what I'm doing.

All those qualities then get wrapped in that shame area. And the person starts acting to demure and sweet, which is lovely, but other qualities. So, she came to me saying, "I'm thinking I want to go become a fire person. Do you think that's too much for me?" Can you feel her mentality? And then, we worked on this, her being as big as she was.

And she ended up becoming a fire person and a medical technician, for emergency vehicles, both. Why? Because she was a big person, and she could take on unique things. And there was no reason for her to keep wrapping her personality and her powers in appreciation cellophane, right?

Simone: What a metaphor. Right?

David: Yeah. That's the metaphor. Yeah.

Simone: So, we are now talking about, we're talking about shame. And all the ways that we wrap ourselves in shame, and don't let ourselves take up space as we want to. I have specific questions I want to ask David.

But let's first begin with, here. Listen, we are offering a five-week course on unshaming you. Breaking you out of the jail of shame. Releasing you from the grip of shame, we can put it all kinds of ways. Why, David, is shame...

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Actually, this... You've never said this, I said this, at least you've never said it in these words.

David: When you say it, I'm going to listen in, you know.

Simone: If you're interested, in self-development, healing, growth, spiritual growth, whatever, why is shame the most cost-effective thing you can work on? Meaning, you get the biggest growth, healing, whatever, bang for your buck. You just work with shame, and then everything else... And this is not David's words, it's my words, everything else sorts itself out. Why is that?

David: Working on shame, what I call 'unshaming', flips the script on what almost everybody's doing to develop themselves. Let me say what I mean, by flips the script. And we're already implying that, instead of how can I be more beautiful, how can I be more confident? Let me try this. Let me try that. Unshaming says; let's get to know you, as you are, who you are. And let's believe in your direction. Let's believe in what's happening inside of you, and nourish that.

And if you nourish that, then people start connecting with themselves, and deeper than all the other things. I'm not learning how to do the right or wrong thing; I'm learning how to do David. And that, sticks in a person. And it has such a core foundation of; that's what I'm about. I'm about me. I'm not right or wrong. Is that a good answer, David? It's David's answer. Is that a good way to be? It's the way David is. You think that's okay? I like that person.

That essential shift, which sounds simple, but it's very rare for people to tell me anything about themselves, I don't want to be too general, that's deeply true about themselves when it comes to a difficulty. People don't know themselves. No one has said, you mentioned this in one of our talks, nobody has said; what's it like being you, in the dark? What's it like being you, 50 pounds more than you think you should be? Or, if someone told

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you; what's it like being you, a queer person? A woman of color in the world? "Well..."

What's it like experientially? Because then you meet incredible things about people. So, once people start walking into that doorway, and learning some skills and approaches to do that. But mostly to change their paradigm. So, they're saying, oh, my gosh. And people say to me all the time, "I've never, not only been treated that way..."

I just did a three-hour teaching for another group. People wrote to me, watching me work with other people, they said, "I've never seen anybody be treated that way." And Simone, I'm not doing magic. I mean, it is magic. But it's not me doing magic. All I'm doing is saying, "I want to know you." "But I know I shouldn't be this way, and I should be more open. I should be more trusting in it." "I know. I know. But I want to know you as you are."

And the person eventually says, "I don't even know how to answer that question. No one's asked me to do an inquiry into who I am. Even though I've been doing this my whole life." Whatever that strategy is, I don't really know. But it's not that hard. Within 10-15 minutes, I can help almost any single person make contact with something they didn't know, and it's an essential thing. It's not a minor thing. It's a central part of their being. Yeah.

Simone: It's like meeting yourself for the first time, because up until now, maybe nobody's has ever tried to meet you. Not just the version of you that you perform, and that you're trying to be, but the real you. Nobody has asked you, with truly loving, genuine curiosity.

What is your experience of yourself in the world? What's it like? And you said, somebody said, I've never seen anyone be treated that way, right. And so, treated that way, meaning, that, kind of, you know, loving curiosity about you.

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And when you see someone be treated that way for the first time, and when you are treated that way for the first time, and you are in the presence of an energy of treating people that way, for the first time. And you experience that again, and again, I think what happens is that you develop a vocabulary and a grammar for relating yourself in a completely new way.

David: That's beautiful.

Simone: And that is, I think of, as our aim for the five weeks of The Shame Clinic. I want you to have a whole new language, frame of reference, a whole new emotional vocabulary for talking to yourself. Not even actually... Before you talk to yourself, seeing yourself, and knowing yourself.

And, you know what it feels like to me? It feels like a thawing. You might have been frozen. That's what freezes people when you're told; don't take up so much space, don't be like this, don't be like this, be a little bit more like this, a little bit less like that.

What happens is that you, as you naturally want to be... So, for example, think of an animal who is in the wild. And now it has been roaming everywhere, a cheetah's been roaming everywhere, and now is in a little cage, in a zoo, right?

And what that cage does is it freezes the animal, because the animal can't naturally exercise its natural range of motion, its natural range of instinct. So, what it does is that all of those get frozen. And when that animal gets back in the wild, what needs to happen is a kind of unfreezing of like the nervous system. Unfreezing of its sense of self, in relation to its environment. Unfreezing of its instincts.

David: That's right, the essential instinct of the animal...

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Simone: That's what we're going for, in The Shame Clinic.

David: It's amazing. As you're talking, I have all these stories that this is [inaudible] laid into my head or in my heart, but I'm thinking about a woman who came to me, who stuttered. Right? So, I'm not going to mimic her, right. But it's not a mimic, this is just how she would be. So, she would say, "D-D-D-D-David," like that, right? I'm not mimicking her; I'm just describing her.

And she wanted help with that, because she wanted to be able to be... She wrote poetry and she wanted to be able to speak poetry in public. But now, when she stutters, she doesn't want to stutter. She's nervous about it. She thinks she shouldn't stutter. I can see why, right, in our culture.

Let's just think about it as diversity, not as a problem, for a second. But she thinks; I shouldn't do that. And I understand that, it's makes her more nervous, then she stutters more, and the whole thing. So, I said, "What have you done about it?" "Well, I've been to the speech pathologist, and they helped me breathe and calm down. And then, the stuttering gets a little bit better."

Now, nothing wrong with that. That's great. And now I'm thinking; what happens if we unshame? What happens if we defrost the instinct, the animals? Then I say to her, "Let's do something different." She says, "Why?" I said, "Let's stutter together." She's already looking at me like, no one's... I can cry even saying this. "No one's ever asked me to stutter with them." No one's ever experienced her.

So, she starts doing it. I said, "I'm going to do, too." I don't know, I'm making up a name, Jane. I don't remember what her name is, right. I'm not going to use it anyway. So, she says, "D-D-D-David." And I say, "J-J-J-Jane." "D-D-D-David." "J-J-J-Jane," and we're going back and forth, right? And then, listen now, I'm going to exaggerate a piece of it so everyone can

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hear. Then she goes, “D.D.D.David,” I’m exaggerating, that’s happening in a lower volume, right?

“D.D.D.David,” can you hear the force at the end of it, that something’s pushing its way out? It’s like something stopping me, Sis. Mon. Right? So, that’s such an interesting burst out thing. Let’s try bursting out more. And now, we’re doing the opposite of calming down and all that stuff. How come?

Because I think that why, is about stuttering. I don’t have any idea. I just think that’s what she does. I want to know her. It’s not a theory anymore. It’s a person who’s doing something. I say, “Let’s do that.” And she starts going, “D-David! D-David!”

And I said, “Let’s use all kinds of other words. You pick a word that comes out of your mouth, that you would want to burst out with.” Guess what word she uses? Fuck. So, she starts going, “Fu-Fu-Fu-Fuck,” and I go, “Fu-Fu-Fu-Fuck.” And pretty soon, Simone, she’s going like this... I hope everybody’s ears... If you’re hurt by cursing close your ears.

Simone: Yeah, nobody who listens to this is hurt by cursing.

David: When she starts going like this, listen to this, “Fuuck! Fuuck! Fuuck!” No stuttering. She’s going, “Fuuck! Fuuck!” And she’s like yelling out. She’s ecstatic. Like, you know, she’s like, having the best time of her life. She’s having a great time.

And I’m like, looking at her, and I’m like, “What’s going on?” She goes, “Oh my gosh, I’m so upset with the world. And I have all this...” she’s just yelling and screaming, and there’s no stuttering. What’s happening? We defrosted the animal, and her animal has a lot of fuck and explication, exclamation, and passion in her. And her poetry has a lot of passion and she’s trying to be more reasonable.

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So now, she has to go to her poetry readings, and belt out all this passion and stuff. She can't quiet herself down. Then she's in cellophane, right, then she's shrinking. And, I've got to tell you the last cool detail. The last time we worked together, she started making hip-hop, rap poetry out of stutters. She would say, "T-T-To-Ni-Ni-Night, I'm going to give, deliver a Po-Po-Po-Poetry reading," right?

Now, she's loving her creative spirit. And people are fascinated by her voice. What did we do? We loved her. We said, what are you like, as a stutterer? Not as a person getting over the stuttering, not as the embarrassment. We know, it's embarrassing. I can imagine that. I tried to get over pimples and whatever it is, so people don't see them on my nose.

So, I understand why she doesn't want to be seen in a way that the world doesn't love so much. But now she's out. And now, she has a life. What's the life? She's got to be willing to be more herself, not less herself. And then, her creativity blossoms. Yeah.

Simone: Wow, I don't even have the words to describe how beautiful that is.

David: I know, it's profound. Yeah.

Simone: Here's what I want, for this Shame clinic. Before you go and try to fix yourself, to heal yourself, to improve yourself, to try to be more confident, to believe in yourself more, to go out there and do more of whatever, to achieve your goals. Let's take you out of the cellophane and thaw the wild animal that you are, and get to know them.

And to learn about what their instincts are, learn how they walk, learn where they want to go. Learn how they want to hunt. Learn how they want to be nourished and cared for. Learn when they want to be with others. Learn how they want to be alone.

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I want to know how that defrosted, thawed animal moves, and speaks, and roars, and sleeps. I want to know what that animal is like in the summer. I want to know what that animals like in the winter. I want to know what that animal is like in the darkness. And I want to know what the animal is like in the light.

When it's young, and when it's old. When it's excited, and when it's sad. I want to get to know that animal first. Let's do that. Let's do that. And then let's talk about what you want to achieve, and what you want to be more of, and how you want to grow. Right. Like that is what we're going to do.

David: Yeah, it's gorgeous. And how that, I love that you did that, in that way. That inquiry, and then we have skills that we're going to teach to make that inquiry powerful. That inquiry, how does, like, what led you David to even ask such a question, when no one ever asks? And then, how did you help her learn that there are words and stuff? That's the kind of thing, that defrosting.

And then, to your ending questions: How are the people who are going to attend? Make their outer life better? By living more into those qualities. Not by erasing them, getting rid of them, marginalizing them, shaming them. But by saying; oh boy, now I'm really scared. What? Of being more. Whatever that is. More in the dark, more super sensitive to every detail, more loud, whatever that is. Uncellophane that. I like the way you've you took that metaphor.

Simone: Uncellophane and defrost.

David: Uncellophaneded. I just said, uncellophaneded. Yeah.

Simone: Now, having said all this, in the context of shame, I want to ask you one more thing that a lot of people assume. Which is, that the sense of

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shame, the sense of something's not right with you, the sense a part of you needs to be cellophaned, a part of you needs to be, you know...

That a lot of people believe, and I certainly used to believe, that you need that. So, that you can be a better version of... So that you can do the right thing in society, so that you have a moral center, so that you can be accountable to others, so that you are a good member of society. That you need a little bit of that that sort of controlling mechanism.

And so, you know, little bit of healthy shame never hurt anybody. Right? That's actually, I think, a prevailing wisdom in a lot of places. And I know that you have a different perspective. Tell us about that. Yeah. Like it's all sounds good, David, to be myself. But what about when I need to get a job? What about if I need to find a suitable partner? And then if I'm just like, out there going fuck, fuck, fuck? Just, don't I legitimately need to have that check of shame? Like, oh, maybe that's not appropriate.

David: Yeah. Simone, I have so many thoughts, and I've written so much about that question. But I have to say, the first thing that happens to me, when you were saying, maybe you need a little bit of that healthy shame. I was imagining, you weren't telling me that, right.

But I was imagining someone, inside or outside, saying that, and I felt my spirit start to get foggy, or not going into the dark, but I felt myself starting to disappear. I was letting it in, like; David, let that in. See what happens to you. And, oh, my shoulders went down. I started like collapsing inside.

Almost like I'm being hypnotized. Oh, I do? Okay. I'm exaggerating, but I start believing it. And pretty soon, I'm listening to almost anything you'll say. What else should I do? What else should I be? Because I'm losing contact with myself. These are natural instincts that are coming out of me.

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And you're saying, don't trust myself, essentially. Not just, don't trust sometimes it's wrong to say the word fuck in certain places. But to tell me that there's something good about that shaming quality, the sense that something's wrong with me quality, my spirit starts to shrink.

And I think; what can I trust? Do I just give myself up totally, and find some ways of being? Give me the rules, then, so I can do it right. Give me the line, so I can get on stage and produce them.

So, one thing I'm thinking about, which I hadn't thought about before, is that loss of inner connection and inner authority, when one believes such a thing, is so profound. One can still make a decision without any shame. I'm talking, I'm going to go into a business where people are not going to want to curse. I think I'm not going to do it, then. That doesn't mean I have something wrong with me for having that big screaming fuck in me. That's just a good decision in certain situations.

So, there's nothing... That's just fine. I can decide not to show you anything that's in me, because I think you're not worthy, or you're not somebody I want to even be intimate enough to show who I am. So, you get to decide. I'm not going to take this big part of me in front of you. I can say, oh, great, Simone, thanks. Great hearing from you. Even if you say something gross and I can walk on.

But if I, let's imagine, I'm a Jewish person, I am. Let's imagine you say something grossly antisemitic. I could decide I'm not going to say you're damned. I'm not going to confront you at all. I think it's a waste of time. I don't think you're going to learn anything. That's an intimate conversation for me to even confront you. You're not worth it. And I can go ha-ha-ha, and I could walk away.

Now, if I walk away thinking; something's wrong with me for wanting to confront you. Why am I angry? Why am I hostile? I will damage myself. I

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will be up at night. I will get cramps. I'll get physical symptoms. I'll ask people why I can't hold myself back. How come I get so upset? I'll go to therapy to stop being upset, and stop being angry, and stop being depressed. All of that will happen.

But if I make a decision, because I'm just like; I don't feel like telling you who I really am. I know what's in me. I'm going to bark in your face. I feel it. I know it's in me. I have a yes, to me. That's a totally different decision-making moment. And, am I losing the thread of where you wanted to go?

Simone: No, not at all. Not at all. I think what has happened is that people are so used to shame, and the shaming stories, and shaming paradigms, based on the norms of the society. Norms of goodness and worthiness, dictate their decisions and actions, that they don't trust themselves to make decisions without it.

It's like, like when we say, oh, we need shame, to... We need a little bit of healthy shame to... So that we can XYZ. Like, we've never, most of us have never known a world, a life, in which we are making decisions without shame. And so, if you don't know what that's like, how can you trust yourself with it? Like, how can you trust that you have the faculty and the capacity?

And in fact, the more you trust yourself, and the more you trust your instincts, and the more you listen to yourself, and take directions from the inside. Maybe the more coherent your decisions will be with your own values, right? Instead of less, instead of, if you want to be accountable to others, if you want to be a good member of your community, if you want to love other people, if you want to, you know, exist in a certain way in the fellowship of others. What if being free of shame, you will discover that your decision-making apparatus is more reliable than anything that you could take dictation from? From the outside?

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David: That's beautifully said. Yeah, when shame enters, that whole apparatus gets dismantled, distorted, that person's genuine experience of other people. Genuine empathy doesn't come from being shamed. You will lose touch with yourself, your own humanity, and therefore your humanity is also invisible to me. So, it doesn't really get people there.

And then, so much of what people are managing with shame; I'm going to have to manage myself, I have to manage my anger management, or whatever it's going to do, I have to make sure I'm managing certain aspects of myself through shame.

It also has many bad side effects. Because if I try to manage my assertiveness, people are going to start saying; you seem really judgmental and aggressive, David. How come they're calling me that? As opposed to assertive, because I'm holding the energy back? And then it shoots out, leaks out.

It leaks out, and you kind of go; oh, that was an interesting elbow you just gave me, in that sarcastic shot. Or, it leaks out inside. If I can't be assertive enough to use my power, I will use it against myself, then I'll go home. And I'll beat myself up about whatever qualities. So, it's not like I didn't do that, and it's done.

If you've split off your sensitivity, as a human being; I'm not going to be so sensitive. So, people can give me painful messages and feedback, and I'm not going to get hurt. That person is going to get injured, they're going to get cuts, they're going to get bruises, they're going to be awake at night feeling hurt, they're going to get pains that they think they shouldn't have.

It doesn't go away. It's a suppressive mechanism. We're talking about this, the kind of shame that people are thinking of as healthy. It's a suppressive mechanism. And when a thing is suppressed, it doesn't come out good, it comes out really bad. People become...

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Anyway, all those things express themselves in ways, and then they don't know what to do about it. Then the person gets drunk, and they also make it free to be themselves. And then they go way, way wild, because there's nobody at home, right? So, they're so drunk.

And then, they don't come to me saying; I have an alcohol... I have a problem because I hold myself back too much. And then I loosen up. They come and they say, I have an alcohol problem. I think; you don't have an alcohol problem, you have a suppression problem, and you use alcohol to get yourself free. Let's do that in another way. You don't have to use alcohol to get out a little bit.

So, people come with the wrong problems. They come with these other things; alcohol and this and that, and I get into rages, and I have self-talk, and I have... All these other things that are the result of having shame suppress their system. That's maybe too complicated, for me to say it better, but the example...

Simone: No, no, that's... Hey, my people are really smart. They love your [cross talk].

David: You're right. Right, thank you. Smack me for that.

Simone: It's like, you know, I keep going back to the animals in a zoo metaphor, because I'm fascinated by that, for some reason. And, you know, animals who are encaged develop physical problems and behavioral problems, right, that they don't observe from animals in the wild.

And it's like; oh, this tiger is really depressed. It's really acting out in strange ways. Let's fix its behavioral problems. It's like; no, it doesn't have behavioral problems. It's in a cage, where it's not supposed to be, that's what's happening, right.

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So today, I introduce David, and we talked about what shame is and how it operates. And really what the antidote to it is, which is something that we so rarely, if ever, encounter. Which is a truly loving, genuine inquiry into who you are, when you've been defrosted and unwrapped from the cellophane.

And when your instincts are returned to the wild, the question of, what's it like to be you? Yeah, you wish you were this or that, I get it. But what's it like to be you? Tell me about your experience, so I can know you. Let's get to know you. That is the antidote.

And that is what we want to deliver to you, and also to teach you how to self-facilitate.

Now, that's part one of the conversation, tune into part two. It's going to be published tomorrow. For the second part of our conversation, on the actual shamanic process of getting unshamed.

Hey, if you want a shot of fresh inspiration and actionable tips to improve your marketing every single week in your inbox, you better get on my email list. Sign up to receive my free e-book called, *20 Unsolicited Copy Tips*. It's been known to get people to come out of the woodwork and ask to work with you. So, get on that link in the show notes, and I'll see you in your inbox next time.