

"Mom Guilt"

In conversations with new parents there is always a point in time when there's a collective sigh and everyone talks about their own experience of "Mom Guilt". Mom guilt is everywhere. When trying to define mom guilt it's tough to find a better language than Brene Brown uses in her book "I Thought it was Just Me (But it Wasn't)". For more tips and information check the book out. Here are a few highlights .

When it comes to "Mom Guilt" you have to wonder if we're really talking about guilt or if we're talking about shame. My guess is that we're actually talking about shame. Take a look at the descriptions below... what would you say your experience is?

Guilt

- I made a mistake.
- I can take action to fix the mistake or apologize.
- Sharp, fast and painful.
- Feel connected.
- Can remain with feeling value, worth, acceptance.
- Focusing on what I've done.

Shame

- I am a mistake.
- There's something wrong with me that can't be fixed.
- Fear, blame, disconnection, desperate, crazy, lash out, lie.
- Left feeling diminished, not belonging, rejected, unworthy or reduced.
- Focusing on who I am.



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SHAME...

- Tells us who we should be, what we should be and how we should be.
- Is rooted in culture: "should bes" are learned from comparisons, our families, advertising, professionals, social media and more.
- Thrives in silence, secrecy and isolation.

Examples of shame statements:

I don't sing enough to my baby.

I should be home with my baby instead of working.

I should want to be around my baby.

I should be able to handle this.

I should be feeling joy, love and gratitude instead I feel resentment, loss, anger and pain.

I should be able to do it all...other moms do.

What is wrong with me.

I'm a terrible mother.

BRENE BROWN'S FOUR ELEMENTS TO SHAME RESILIENCY

- 1) Recognize shame and name it. Understand your triggers.
- 2) Practice critical awareness. What are the expectations in our culture for mothers? Why? How do they work? If we all complied with the expectations, who would benefit?
- 3) Be willing to reach out to others.
- 4) Speak about your experiences of shame with people you trust.



Food for thought...Shaming behaviour such as comparing, judging and demeaning create disconnection instead of connection. Be curious about your own use of these behaviours.



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