

# [PDF] Healing The Shame That Binds You

**John Bradshaw, John Pruden - pdf download free book**

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## **Description:**

**About the Author** John Bradshaw has been at the forefront of the self-help and recovery field for more than twenty years. Born in Houston, Texas, he earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from St. Michael's College at the University of Toronto and continued his studies at Rice University and the University of Santa Monica. He has helped millions of people improve their lives through his ongoing lecture series, his four nationally broadcast public television series, and his bestselling books, which include Healing the Shame that Binds You, Homecoming, Creating Love, Family Secrets, and Reclaiming Virtue. In 1991, John was nominated for an Emmy Award for Outstanding Talk Show Host for his series Bradshaw On: Homecoming. A widely sought public speaker, he continues to tour the world giving lectures and workshops. John Pruden is a professional voice actor who records audiobooks, corporate and online training narrations, animation and video game characters, and radio and TV commercials. His exposure to many people, places, and experiences throughout his life—from his wide array of jobs early in life; to his Army service as a UH-60 Black

Hawk assault helicopter pilot; to his travels through forty-four U.S. states, South America, Europe, and Asia; to his experience in professional improv and competitive singing-provides a solid creative foundation from which to draw for his intelligent audiobook narrations and gritty but sensitive vocal characterizations. His audiobooks include *The Sisters Brothers* by Patrick deWitt, which was chosen by the *Washington Post* as the best audiobook of 2011.

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## PART I

### The Problem— Spiritual Bankruptcy

We have no imagination for Evil, but Evil has us in its grip.

—C. G. Jung

#### Introduction: Shame as Demonic (The Internalization Process)

As I've delved deeper into the destructive power of toxic shame, I've come to see that it directly touches the age-old theological and metaphysical discussion generally referred to as the problem of evil. The problem of evil may be more accurately described as the mystery of evil. No one has ever explained the existence of evil in the world. Centuries ago in the Judeo-Christian West, evil was considered the domain of the Devil, or Satan, the fallen angel. Biblical scholars tell us that the idea of a purely evil being like the Devil or Satan was a late development in the Bible. In the book of Job, Satan was the heavenly district attorney whose job it was to test the faith of those who, like Job, were specially blessed.

During the Persian conquest of the Israelites, the Satan of Job became fused with the Zoroastrian dualistic theology adopted by the Persians, where two opposing forces, one of good, Ahura Mazda, the Supreme Creator deity, was in a constant battle with Ahriman, the absolute god of evil. This polarized dualism was present in the theology of the Essenes and took hold in Christianity where God and his Son Jesus were in constant battle with the highest fallen angel, Satan, for human souls. This dualism persists today only in fundamentalist religions (Muslim terrorists, the Taliban, the extreme Christian Right and a major part of evangelical Christianity).

The figure of Satan and the fires of hell have been demythologized by modern Christian biblical scholars, theologians and philosophers.

The mystery of evil has not been dismissed by the demythologizing of the Devil. Rather, it has been intensified in the twentieth century by two world wars, Nazism, Stalinism, the genocidal regime of the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia, and the heinous and ruthless extermination of Tibetans and Tibetan Buddhism by Pol Pot. These reigns of evil form what has been called a collective shadow, and it has been shown how naïve and unconscious the people of the world have been in

relation to these evils.

The denial of evil seems to be a learned behavior. The idea of evil is always subject to denial as a coping mechanism.

Evil is real and is a permanent part of the human condition. 'To deny that evil is a permanent affliction of humankind,' says the philosopher Ernst Becker in his book *Escape from Evil*, 'is perhaps the most dangerous kind of thinking.' He goes on to suggest that in denying evil, humans have heaped evil on the world. Historically, great misfortunes have resulted from humans, blinded by the full reality of evil, thinking they were doing good but dispensing miseries far worse than the evil they thought to eradicate. The Crusades during the Middle Ages and the Vietnam War are examples that come to mind.

While demons, Satan and hellfire have been demythologized by any critically thinking person, the awesome collective power of evil remains. Many theologians and psychologists refer to evil as the demonic in human life. They call us to personal wholeness and self-awareness, especially in relation to our own toxic shame or shadow, which goes unconscious and in hiding because it is so painful to bear. These men warn against duality and polarization. 'We must beware of thinking of Good and Evil as absolute opposites,' writes Carl Jung. Good and evil are potentials in every human being; they are halves of a paradoxical whole. Each represents a judgment, and 'we cannot believe that we will always judge rightly.'

Nothing can spare us the torment of ethical decision. In the past, prior to the patriarchies of Hitler, Stalin and Pol Pot, it was believed that moral evaluation was built and founded on the certitude of a moral code that pretended to know exactly what is good and what is evil. But now we know how any patriarchy, even religious ones, can make cruel and violent decisions. Ethical decision is an uncertain and ultimately a creative act. My new book on moral intelligence calls these patriarchies 'cultures of obedience,' and presents an ethics of virtues as a way to avoid such moral totalism. The Jews who killed their Nazi guards or SS troopers coming to search their homes are now considered ethically good, no matter what the absolutist moral code says about killing. There is a structure of evil that transcends the malice of any single individual. The Augustinian priest Gregory Baum was the man I first heard call it 'the demonic.'

It can begin with the best of intentions, with a sincere belief that one is doing good and fighting to eradicate evil, as in the Vietnam War—but it ends with heinous evil. 'Life consists of achieving Good, not apart from Evil, but in spite of it,' says the psychologist Rollo May. There is no such thing as pure good in human affairs. Those who claim it are seriously deluded and will likely be the next perpetrators of evil.

As I pointed out in the preface to this revised edition, the affect shame has the potential for the depths of human evil or the heights of human good. In this regard shame is demonic. 'The daimonic,' says the psychologist Steven A. Diamond, 'is any natural function which has the power to take over the whole person.' Shame is a natural feeling that, when allowed to function well, monitors a person's sense of excitement or pleasure. But when the feeling of shame is violated by a coercive and perfectionistic religion and culture—especially by shame-based source figures who mediate religion and culture—it becomes an all-embracing identity. A person with internalized shame believes he is inherently flawed, inferior and defective. Such a feeling is so painful that defending scripts (or strategies) are developed to cover it up. These scripts are the roots of violence, criminality, war and all forms of addiction.

What I'll mainly describe in the first part of this book is how the affect shame can become the source of self-loathing, hatred of others, cruelty, violence, brutality, prejudice and all forms of

destructive addictions. As an internalized identity, toxic shame is one of the major sources of the demonic in human life.

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The Healthy Faces  
of Shame (HDL Shame)

Everyone needs a sense of shame,  
but no one needs to feel ashamed.

—Frederick Nietzsche

Because of its preverbal origins, shame is difficult to define. It is a healthy human feeling that can become a true sickness of the soul. Just as there are two kinds of cholesterol, HDL (healthy) and LDL (toxic), so also are there two forms of shame: innate shame and toxic/life-destroying shame. When shame is toxic, it is an excruciatingly internal experience of unexpected exposure. It is a deep cut felt primarily from the inside. It divides us from ourselves and from others. When our feeling of shame becomes toxic shame, we disown ourselves. And this disowning demands a cover-up. Toxic shame parades in many garbs and get-ups. It loves darkness and secretiveness. It is the dark, secret aspect of shame that has evaded our study.

Because toxic shame stays in hiding and covers itself up, we have to track it down by learning to recognize its many faces and its many distracting behavioral cover-ups.

SHAME AS A HEALTHY HUMAN FEELING

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