Handout on Impact of Empathy & Shame on Professional Identity Development

By: Dr. Angie O’Gieblyn
Ashley Kaufman
Jonathon Roy, M.A.

Definitions:

- **Shame**
  - “Shame is a feeling of unworthiness, not being enough, wanting to cover up, hide, or feeling exposed” (Baldwin, Baldwin, & Ewald, 2006; Bond, 2009)
  - The self-behavior theory of shame and guilt views guilt as the feeling of “I have done something bad” whereas, shame is “I am a bad” (Crocker, Haller, Norman, & Angkaw, 2016; Dyer, et al., 2017; Johnson, & Connelly, 2016; Niedenthal et al., 1994; Roos, Hodges, & Salmivalli, 2014; Tangney, 1990; Tangney et al., 1996: Tangney et al., 1998).

- **Empathy**
  - Rogers (1975) defined empathy as “entering the private perceptual world of the other and becoming thoroughly at home in it. It involves being sensitive, moment to moment, to the changing felt meanings which flow in this other person” (p. 4).

- **Professional Development**
  - Counselor development is a complex process comprised of the acquisition of theoretical knowledge, skill development, and growth of a professional identity (Greggo & Becker, 2010; Spurgeon, 2012; Yager & Tovar-Blank, 2007).
  - Impact of perfectionism: “At its core, perfectionism is likely a personality characteristic centered on personal adequacy, in that negative or positive self-views portend varying degrees of relationship comfort and engagement ” (Rice, Leever, Christopher, & Porter, 2006, p. 525)

Assessments:

- **Interpersonal Reactivity Index**

- **Guilt & Shame Proneness Scale**

- **Almost Perfect Scale**

Websites/Tools:

- Perfectionism Workbooks & Resources (would be useful for students/supervisees wrestling with shame stemming from perfectionism: http://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/Resources/Looking-After-Yourself/Perfectionism


- Brene Brown Ted Talk- Listening to Shame
  https://www.ted.com/talks/brene_brown_listening_to_shame
**Recommended Reading:**
- Brown, B. (2010). *The gifts of imperfection: Let go of who you think you're supposed to be and embrace who you are.* Hazelden Publishing.

**References:**


