Emotional Alchemy
LAB
The Spell Breaker
Using Story & Imagination to Heal Shame
& Reclaim the Self
TJ Walsh, MA LPC

# Objectives

**Identify** at least one (1) internalized shame-based narrative and describe its impact on self-concept and relational functioning.

**Explain** the use of metaphor and narrative as clinical tools for conceptualizing developmental and attachment-based wounds.

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# Objectives

**Apply** expressive arts-informed interventions at a conceptual level to support the exploration of shame and the development of compassionate self-narratives.

**Describe** attunement-based facilitation and group-sharing strategies that enhance psychological safety and relational engagement in therapeutic or educational settings.

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# Objectives

**Construct** an individualized symbolic statement (or “spell-breaker”) to support ongoing reflection, self-compassion, and integration following the workshop.

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# Why Disney?

Story creates distance.

Distance creates safety.

Platt et al., 2019; Freyd et al., 2014

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# Shame as a Spell

“Don’t be too much."

“Don’t need.”

“Don’t be seen.”

Platt et al., 2019; Freyd et al., 2014

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# The Power of the Container

Nothing required.

Nothing performed.

Something softens.

Siegel, 2020; Cozolino, 2021

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# Shame is Relational

Attachment before truth.

Survival before coherence.

Platt et al., 2019; Freyd et al., 2014

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# Story Reorganizes Experience

No retelling.

Re-meaning.

Re-holding.

Angus & Korenblum, 2021; Goncalves et al., 2019; Siegel, 2020

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# When the Spell Works Too Well

Control as safety.

Competence as camouflage.

Malchiodi, 2020; Griffin & Graham, 2021

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# When the Spell Works Too Well

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# Why Bottom-Up Works

Shame lives in sensation.

Not just story.

Malchiodi, 2020; Griffin & Graham, 2021a

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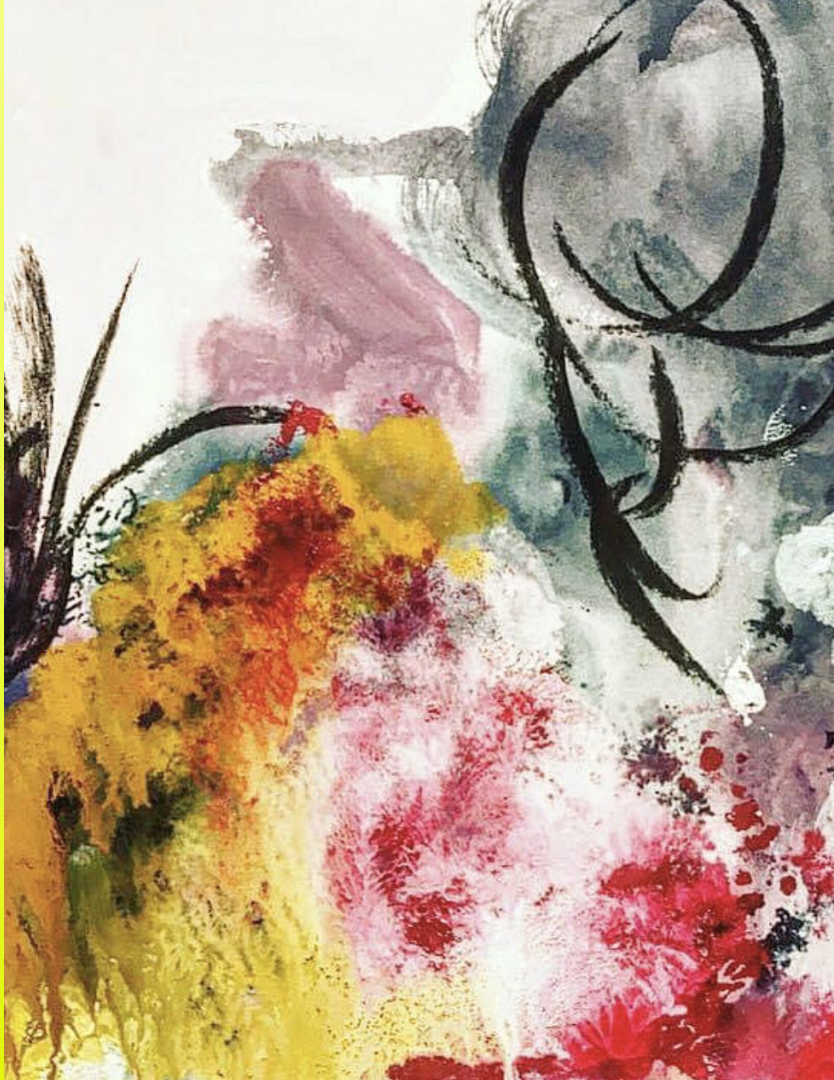

## Spell → Spell-Breaker

Name the rule.

Remember what’s true.

Cozolino, 2021; Siegel, 2020; Platt et al., 2019

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# How Shame Shows Up in the Body

Urgency.

Tightness.

Control.

Cozolino, 2021; Siegel, 2020; Platt et al., 2019

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# Stay With What's Here

No fixing.

Just noticing.

Dolezal, 2022; Siegel, 2020

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# Witnessing

No fixing.

Just noticing.

Dolezal, 2022; Siegel, 2020

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# Integration & Closing

Coherence.

Availability.

Connection.

Siegel, 2020; Cozolino, 2021; Dolezal, 2022

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# Exit Survey

https://forms.gle/L4wAJTbXzSf5pH8r8

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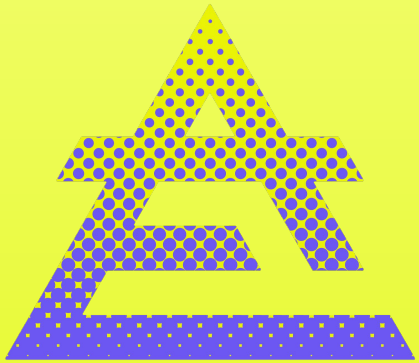

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