

## 13. Stop Hiding Behind Shame



### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Dara Tomasson**

## 13. Stop Hiding Behind Shame

Are you convinced that if you really looked at your life you'd want to run away and hide? Not totally loving how your life looks right now? Stay listening, I'll show you how you won't have to spend a dime to make real change in your life. I'm Dara Tomasson, and this is *Weight Loss For Quilters*.

Did you know you could lose weight and keep it off for good? After 25 years of hiding behind my quilts, I have finally cracked the code for permanent weight loss and I've lost 50 pounds without exercise or counting calories. I'm Dara Tomasson, professional quilter turned weight and life coach, where I help quilters just like you create a life they love by losing weight and keeping it off for good. Let's jump into today's episode.

As you listen to this episode, I'll be finishing up my day three of my Love Yourself Thin process, where I'm teaching my Love Yourself Thin members how to lose weight and keep it off. So fun to connect with fellow quilters. I have been waiting for a year and a half to meet with my quilters. I even have packed my first wool applique project and I'm really excited to learn a new skill.

Talking about new skills, I want to share this review from Jane about how my podcast has really helped her with her anxiety. She said, "The podcast on anxiety really grabbed me because I have been experiencing a lot of anxiety and snacking."

Then she continued to say, "I'm making changes right now and have stopped snacking. Thanks, Dara." You are so welcome, Jane. So I would love you all to comment, rate, and review the show as it helps so many other people see this amazing podcast.

So I have five kids. And so cleaning the house for the last 20 years has been quite an interesting experience. Picture this, I ask my kids, my youngest is now nine, "Have you cleaned your room?" Oh yes. I have, mom. He nods his head with a big smile and his big blue eyes. I said, "Okay, show me your room."

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And then he gets a little squeamish as I bend down to look under his bed and I start opening the closet, and I look behind the door. Because what do you think I find? You got it. He just shoved a bunch of stuff under the bed, behind the closet, and behind the door because if you don't see it, there's no problem, right?

Well, if I look in my closet, I used to see a lot of cardigans, tunic shirts, and stretchy pants. Out of sight out of mind. So the other way to hide is, maybe your day goes really fast, and you don't even know where the time went.

Today's episode, I'm going to be talking about why we have this problem of hiding things under our couches, behind closed doors and wearing lots of layers, i.e. cardigans. Because we're spending a lot of time hiding from shame.

So today's episode is all about shame. And I'm going to teach you a tool of how you can recognize shame and how you can solve for shame. Now, one of the biggest problems I find myself and my clients have is that we have this phrase, "I'm not good enough." I want you to think about where that came from.

So if you have some version of, I'm not good enough, or what's wrong with me, I can never get it right, I have a whole bunch here. When am I ever going to learn? This is hopeless. I'm a mess. What's the point of trying? I should just quit while I'm ahead.

So today's episode is all about shame. Now, here's the definition and if we're going to learn about shame, I highly recommend you check out Brene Brown, who really is the shame researcher. And this is how she defined shame. It's a painful feeling or experience of believing that we are flawed and therefore unworthy of love and belonging.

Now, there are three things that we do for shame to grow. Now, I like to talk about shame like a mushroom. And how do mushrooms grow? They grow through, you guessed it, being in the dark and being fed a lot of poop. So, the three things that shame needs to grow are secrecy, silence, and

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judgment. So Let's just explore a little bit more about where your shame triggers are.

So I've written down a few case scenarios. The first one is you heard someone say something, and then you judge yourself. So let's say when you're growing up your family said, "Oh, our family doesn't go into debt." How did you interpret that?

So if you wanted to go to school and get a student loan, or if you wanted to buy a car, or a house, and you have this thought, "Our family doesn't go into debt," there is a shame trigger. There's something inside you that you have a painful feeling or experience or believing that you are flawed and therefore unworthy of love and belonging. Because in order to buy a house, in order to buy a car, or in order to go to school, you need to have some debt.

Here's another trigger, does this sound familiar? You think you don't look how you should, so you have an expectation of what your body should look like. And if you're not meeting your own expectation, then you're going to have a lot of judgment.

And you walk around with this thinking that people around you are looking at you and judging you saying, "Wow, she's really let herself go." Or "She must not have a lot of self-control." Or "She didn't spend a lot of time paying attention to health class, because she's put on a lot of extra weight. She's probably really lazy. She probably doesn't do a lot."

So if we have a thought that our bodies should be a certain way and it's not, then we are triggered. And again, we're having a painful feeling or experience of believing that we are flawed and therefore unworthy of love and belonging.

Here's another one. So the trigger is that you're concerned more about what others think of you than what you think of yourself. So you go to a quilt guild meeting and you're really excited about a quilt that you've finished.

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And as you're watching other people share their quilts. You remember, "Oh, but I didn't quite get that one point totally right. And when I was stitching in the ditch I kind of wobbled a few times where are the seams met."

And so you start feeling hot and red, and you start feeling very flawed, and very unworthy of love and belonging. And so you feel very vulnerable that if you share and it's not quite right, you will be rejected. So what do you do? You don't share your project. And if you do, the whole time you're feeling extremely uncomfortable because you're so worried that people will judge you.

So we all have shame triggers, it's super normal. Another one, you feel someone's judging you, this one's one of my favorites. So you're at a basketball game and you're walking up the bleachers, or you need to use the ladies' room, or you need to stretch your legs, or you forgot something in the car and you need to grab something.

And you don't want to get off your seat because you're so worried that other people will judge you. Or you're shopping at the store, you ask for a certain size and you feel like the store attendant is judging you. So I'd love to hear your triggers. what triggers you in feeling shame?

So I want to get curious with you. Why do you think we're hiding? Why do you think we hide behind the cardigans or the layers of clothes? Why do we hide behind our quilts when we're taking pictures? Or when we sit on a couch and we put a cushion over top of us? Why do you think that happens?

So let's go to the three reasons why or how shame grows. Shame grows in secrecy. So there's something that you believe about yourself that you don't want to share with anyone else. So you want to keep that a secret. You don't want to share it with anybody.

Shame grows in silence. You don't want to talk about your problems. You don't want to divulge that things are happening. I just had this thought, it's

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October and we live on a mountain and this is the time where rodents come into people's homes. And we unfortunately are experiencing a little bit of that.

And I was speaking to my mom on Sunday, as I usually do. And I shared, "Oh, we have some rat problems. But my husband is doing such a good job at getting rid of them. But they are so sneaky. It just blows my mind." And it was so interesting because we could be embarrassed about having rodents in our house and so we keep silent or we try to keep it a secret.

And the third one is judgment. We are worried that people are going to judge us because we have rats in our house, or because we have extra fat on our stomach, or because our quilts aren't perfect, or our house is messy. I mean, how many times do we worry about someone coming to the door, and the house is a mess? And you run around and rush around, and you feel so embarrassed, and your face is all hot and red.

So I want you to think about, and of course, this is a weight loss for quilters podcast so we're going to be talking about wait for the next little bit. So hiding behind cardigans. I want you to think about why are you hiding? Is it because you think your body is flawed or unacceptable, so you're embarrassed and you feel really deficient?

Weight loss is very visible. You can only hide so much of your body. Spans will only do so much, a girdle will only do so much. So why? Why should you ever feel bad about your body?

Think about babies, so when babies are born, and I would say that most people love chubby babies. And in fact, they get really excited about all the baby rolls and how much chub they have in their cheeks and they just want to pinch them. And they're so delighted about a chubby baby.

So, what happened that we've gone from celebrating a chubby baby, to now our society saying that there's something wrong with you if you have a muffin top, or if you have extra large hips? Or it's all relative, right?

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So again, the definition of shame is a painful feeling or experience of believing that you are flawed and therefore unworthy of love and belonging. Of course, the most obvious is that we're bombarded with media. And not only are we bombarded with media for what our bodies should look like, but they go into how many wrinkles we have. How flawless our skin should be. How we shouldn't have any sort of pimples, or acne, or blemishes, or any of that.

And then I want you to think about as a child, what were the comments, maybe that your mother might have made? Maybe she said, "In our family we wear this size of pants." Or "We have this kind of body." Maybe she was serving a dessert to you when you were 10 or 12 and just said, "You know, maybe you shouldn't have this dessert."

I really want you to think about where the story came from of feeling shame about yourself. Feeling shame about maybe your intelligence, other things in your life, but as you know we're focusing on shame of your weight loss. But I want you to just kind of explore even the concept of shame and where it's coming up in your life.

I know for me, I was so numb about shame that I didn't even realize it was happening, it was very much autopilot. And it wasn't until I was actually talking to another coach and asking her for some support in something I was pursuing. And she said, "Oh, it sounds like you're experiencing a lot of shame." And I said, "No, oh no, I never feel shame."

And it wasn't until I realized what shame was, and it really is not good enough story. That opens the door to exploring what's really going on in our thinking and in our life. And how it really has been such a detriment to who we are and how we look at ourselves.

And remember, 95% of our thoughts are unconscious. And so we're only operating with the 5%. So so many of those habits of thinking, like when I talked about those triggers, those are just habit thinking that we just go to. We don't even think about it, it just happens.

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So just like now, when you're rotary cutting you don't have to think about it really. You know where to put your hands, you know how much pressure to put on the ruler, you know how much pressure to put on the rotary cutter, you're very aware of if the blade is sharp or not, because you've had so much experience with using a rotary cutter.

And so now it's just automatic habits of having safe practices. You don't even probably think about it anymore, you just always put the cover on when you're not using it.

So we have the same thing with these adverse thoughts that we're having about ourselves, these triggers, and then we automatically go to shame. So yeah, we're bombarded with media, we maybe have comments from our mother, and comments that other people have said. And those comments will trigger us and we'll go into a shame spiral.

And one of the things that I do with my clients and what I've really discovered has been so helpful, and this is going back even to ancient Ayurvedic medicine. But our bodies have different emotions in certain parts of our body.

So anything from our hip and below is a level of fear. So if we're having knee problems, or hip problems, bursitis or something, anything our hip and below there's some form of fear. And it lives there and is stored there.

If we are feeling a lot of guilt, we have a lot of lower belly fat. And that lower belly fat, because the lower part of our belly is in between our hips. And that is our birthplace of creativity. And so if we are feeling a lot of guilt, we will have extra fat there.

And for shame, shame is our higher belly and it's just below our rib cage and our belly button. And there's nothing really to protect it so it's very vulnerable in that area.

And so if you have a lot of extra fat in that area, it's literally just a way for your body to be safe. Because if you're feeling a lot of shame, a lot of,



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going back to the definition, a painful feeling or experience believing that you are flawed, and therefore unworthy of love and belonging, it's trying to protect you.

So I invite you to put your hand on your belly right now, on your higher belly just below your rib cage. If there is a lot of extra fat, it's where the shame is located, and it's trying to help you. So one of the things I would invite you to do is just put your hand there, just take some breaths, and just allow yourself to just be with your body and just see what thoughts are coming to you.

I find that working with clients who have been sexually molested or abused, they will have a lot of thoughts and feelings that will come to them from there. And so I don't want you to be alarmed or afraid or scared, but that is one of the areas where your body will hold shame. And if you don't allow yourself to access it, it will just stay there.

Another place where you will find shame, it's similar to grief in our heart area. And quite often, it will feel like you're, I describe it as an elephant is stepping on my chest. So it's just like a really strong, heavy pressure that is there.

And so if you're not sure about this dialog of I'm not good enough and where that might be in your body, take some breaths, just kind of focus in on your body. And if you can allow yourself to just get curious, I wouldn't be surprised if you would find it within just a few minutes of allowing yourself that opportunity.

So let's go back to just one of the principles of life coaching in general, is that we focus on your future. Whereas therapy focuses on the past. When I'm talking about something, especially something like shame that is so pervasive in our life that even a lot of ladies don't even realize it's happening.

And when you start thinking about losing weight or approaching your body, it's so uncomfortable that you just want to go numb again. You just want to

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put food in your mouth, you want to go on social media, you want to do some shopping. And so I'm thinking of you, I'm thinking of preparing yourself to embrace this because shame really does feed in secrecy, silence, and judgment.

And what I'm inviting you to do in this podcast, the tool that I'm teaching you is to actually put some light on the situation. I'm putting some focus on there. It's like I have a spotlight and I'm saying, "Okay, we're looking at shame, and we're seeing how that's happening." And when you put light on it, I want you to know that you are safe in your body.

Like we've talked about, feelings are just vibrations in our body. And there are places in our body where we store these things and it's totally okay and fine. If you're feeling uncomfortable, if you're feeling uneasy, it's totally fine. That's really normal.

And I want to just invite you to go to that future place where when you know, just like a rotary cutter, when you know, you're like, "Oh, I'm so scared. I'm going to cut myself." and you might, and you probably have, but you know that in the future because you've mastered that skill, you're going to be so much more proficient, you're going to get things done so much more quickly as a quilter. It is the same thing with your life.

So if you can just allow yourself the discomfort right now. And just exploring where shame is in your body. What is the story you tell about shame, of the I'm not good enough, then you know this will be such a helpful skill as you move forward in having more success in your life?

So one of the things that happens to us when we feel like we've done something wrong, when we feel flawed and we feel not good enough is it usually leads to some form of self-punishment. So maybe a lot of negative self-talk like, "What's wrong with you? Come on, get this together." And then you feel defeated.

And when you feel defeated, it's like you're in a battle, and you're just so exhausted, you can't do any more. So then quite often it goes into

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overwhelm. And then we go into a feeling of apathy. And we just kind of give up. And that's where I meet a lot of my clients, they're at 249 pounds, or 299 pounds, they're just like, "Oh my goodness, I don't know what happened to me." And then they get into that real urgency of this is a real problem. And so this is the cycle that I see so often.

Now, I want to just go to the reality of weight. Because sure, I talked about we're bombarded with media about what we should look like. But let's just have a real talk about weight. And I know there's a lot of talk about fat shaming and all of that. And that's not what I'm interested in talking about. But what I really want to focus on is what is the reality of your life when you have less weight to carry around on you?

So when I say I'm not interested about the fat shaming, that's not the conversation we're having. The conversation we're having is what happens to your body if you are carrying an extra 50 pounds? When you're carrying that extra weight, all you're doing is you're carrying around extra energy, that's what you're doing.

So, so many of my ladies say, "I want to lose weight because I want to be healthy." So if you went to medical books, if you did a Google search, if you spoke to a doctor, they would say that when you have less weight, you will have less risk for diabetes, your blood pressure will reduce, you'll have less aches and pains. They will tell you that it is healthier for you not to carry any extra weight.

So I want you to think about if we know that, and then we're just talking black and white, very factual, it is more beneficial for your body to have less weight on it. So why is it so hard for you to limit how much food you put in your mouth?

This is a very sensitive podcast and I put a lot of thought and effort into it. Because so many of the clients that I work with, that is one of their running stories of I'm not good enough. And so when you have that belief about yourself, that you aren't good enough, then everything you do in life, just

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like I talked about earlier in the podcast about the red tinted glasses, that filter will show up everywhere.

You will start looking for evidence that you are not good enough. So if you work on a quilting project, or if you made a weight loss goal and you went up point five pounds, then it feeds the story. Because remember, I say whatever you feed will grow.

So if you are feeding the story of, I'm not good enough, and things are not going well, you just keep piling, it's like remember I talk about the lawyer, you're building your case that you aren't good enough. So that's what your brain will look for all the evidence for.

Now, I have the best news ever, I really do. It's that we can resolve for shame, we totally can. And going back to the wise Brene Brown who's done so much research on shame, the first thing we need to do, well actually, the very first thing we need to do is recognize it.

So that was my problem. I didn't even recognize it. I was so far down the hole of convinced that I wasn't good enough, that it was just the way I operated. It's like, "Yeah, of course I'm not good enough. So why should I try?" Or all of those really apathetic, really difficult, negative emotions that I didn't want to feel so of course I turned to food, or over shopping, or overworking, or over people pleasing, or over perfectionism.

So that's my take, is first thing you have to recognize it. And then Brene says the first thing you need to do is you need to talk to yourself how you would talk to someone you love. So if you are not talking to yourself the way you would talk to your wonderful grandchild, you need to stop. That negative self-talk is so detrimental.

People have so many more mental health problems these days because of all the battles that are going on in people's heads and people are so exhausted. That is a contributing factor to the mental health issues that we're having. So we need to curb the negative have self-talk, we need to stop it.

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I was coaching a client this morning and we had talked about being a bouncer. I don't know how I got that analogy, but it was like, when you go to a bar, not like I go to bars. But they have these bouncers and they say, "Oh, let me check your ID. You're not old enough, you're not allowed in here." And so she said, she loves it, she uses that all the time. She's like, "Nope, not allowed." And she's really learning to monitor the way that she is speaking to herself.

The second thing you need to do to resolve shame is you need to talk to someone that you trust. Because we know that shame only can thrive in secrecy, silence, and judgment. So when you can speak to someone you trust about the feelings you're having, then you now are putting all of those thoughts in the light. And mushrooms don't grow well in the light, flowers grow well in the light. That's what we want to be growing. We want to be growing flowers, not mushrooms.

And then, my third to add to what I would recommend for you to do to help you overcome shame is that we need to acknowledge the experiences that we're having. We need to be aware that these things are happening in our life.

And I like to describe it as we're on a highway. And if we're getting really focused on what other people are thinking and really focusing on trying to be secret or silent, it's like we're driving in a car and there's an accident or something. And we're focused so much on that accident that our head is craning and we are losing focus on where we're driving. And that's when we get in a crash.

So I want to recommend to you that when you're experiencing that, "I'm not good enough," and really starting to go down that road, to pull off on the side of the road. Just pull off immediately and recognize what you're doing. And ask yourself, "Is this the direction I want my life to go in?" And that way you can now focus on yourself.

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It's none of your business what other people think. It's none of your business, any of that. What's most important is what you think about you. And I want you to focus on you. And I want to promise you that when you focus on you and your thoughts, this is the least selfish thing you can do.

Because when you work on you, and you are kind to yourself, and you are nice to yourself, and you do such nice things for you, then everyone around you benefits. So I want you to reverse the evidence from finding that I'm not good enough to— And one of the very first things I've told you is that our worth is already set. We can't make ourselves any better than we are. We already are amazing, the day we were born.

And so if it's hard for you to believe that you are good enough, I want to offer something to you. And we call it ladder thoughts, just like stepping up the rungs of a ladder. But we can't quite jump all the way up to the top of the house, we need to go one step at a time. We need to go on the ladder.

So we have these ladder thoughts. So one of them could be I'm just in the process of feeling better about myself. Or I haven't figured out how to accept myself for how I am yet. So when we can put those in the process of and haven't figured things out yet, that is allowing us to just get a little bit closer to our desired results.

And what that does is it helps us to accept ourselves from where we are. And I wanted to read just a little quote from James Clear, he wrote a book called Atomic Habits. And I really love what he said because when people ask me how I've lost 50 pounds without exercising or counting calories, I tell them that curiosity was probably my very best tool.

And so when I found this quote from Atomic Habits, I really, really resonated with it. He said, “Being curious is better than being smart. Being motivated and curious counts for more than being smart because it leads to action. Being smart will never deliver results on its own because it doesn't get you to act. It is desire, not intelligence that prompts behavior.” And then

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he quoted Naval Ravikant who said, “The trick to doing anything is first cultivating a desire for it.”

So I hope that through this episode, you have created the desire to really allow yourself to explore how shame is showing up in your life. And I just wanted to remind you that you can stop hiding. As you stop hiding and start living your life, you’re going to have so much more fun.

So thank you so much for joining me on this episode. I love spending this time with you, I love imagining you pressing, or chain piecing, or standing at your long arm as you're doing this. Or maybe even running errands and every once in a while, writing notes down. That just warms my heart. So I love sharing these things with you.

If you want to continue doing this work and you want to lose some weight, I recommend that you go over to my website, and I have a five day training that is amazing. It's so wonderful. It tells you all the foods that you should eat, it gives you recipes. And even though I don't really do that very often with my clients, but this is a great way to start. And I give you tips and tricks. And I help you start at creating your very own eating protocol that's going to work for your life.

So I encourage you to go and register for my email list. You get lots of other bonuses as you join. So thanks for listening to Weight Loss For Quilters. If you want more info, please visit me at [daratomasson.com](http://daratomasson.com). See you next week.

If you've been enjoying these tools that I've been sharing in my podcast, I have a surprise for you. I have a five day training that tells you all the foods you should eat, why you should eat them. I tell you about the weight loss science. And there are women who have lost 20, 30 pounds just from my free training. And so if you go over to my website, [daratomasson.com](http://daratomasson.com), and sign up for my email list you will get that training every day for the next five days.

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And not only do you get the free training but being on my email list helps you get all of the first dibs on all the exciting things happening in the Love Yourself Thin community. There will be special bonuses that aren't available otherwise.

So if you want to learn how to continue getting success, I invite you to hop over to [daratomasson.com](http://daratomasson.com) and register for my email list where you will get that free training. And I can't wait to see how it's going to help you as you continue to learn how to love yourself thin.

Thanks for listening to *Weight Loss for Quilters*. If you want more info, please visit [daratomasson.com](http://daratomasson.com). See you next week.