

a study of hundreds of women, she constructs a method for overcoming it. Brown defines shame as "the intensely painful feeling or experience of believing we are flawed and therefore unworthy of acceptance and belonging" and believes its spread has been created by conflicting and competing expectations about who women should be. Women feel shame about their appearance, about motherhood, family, money/work, health, stereotypes and trauma. Brown quotes liberally from the women she has studied and, most enlighteningly, gives examples from her own experiences juggling motherhood, career and her social life. These revelations underscore her belief in the importance of exposing shame and, through empathy, helping oneself and others move past it. She underscores the need to practice critical awareness, i.e., understanding the social forces that create shame in us can help us fight the sense of shame. Thus, Brown presents a spirited attack on the media and the beauty industry for presenting unrealistic images of women. Directing readers to focus on personal growth as opposed to unattainable perfection, Brown urges them to practice shame-resilience skills and teach them to their children. (*Feb.*)

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From Interviewing hundreds of women over six years, Brown was constantly faced with the shame just talking about shame induced. She explores how and why this universal human emotion is particularly present in women and how it affects behavior and relationships. She relates women's stories of shame about everything from obsession over appearance to sexual abuse, abuse of alcohol and drugs, and inadequacies as mothers, wives, and lovers. Brown offers insights and strategies for understanding shame and overcoming its power over women. She begins by defining shame and differentiating it from other emotions, and explores how shame is used and induced in the broader culture. She then identifies four elements of resilience: recognizing shame triggers, critical awareness, reaching out for help and connection with others, and speaking out about shame. She advises women on practicing courage, compassion, and connection to overcome cultures of fear, blame, and disconnection. An interesting look at a debilitating emotion that stunts the potential of too many women. *Vanessa Bush*

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