

What is tribal shaming?

by **Connie Brisson**

When I read Elizabeth Gilbert's Facebook message on 'Tribal Shaming' it was like discovering a lost, ancient treasure. There isn't enough room here to reprint it, but PLEASE go to Facebook and search "Elizabeth Gilbert, Tribal Shaming."

Every family is a tribe and is governed by its own rules. These rules are sacred to the tribe's existence and form a code of honor that the tribe's survival depends on. It doesn't matter whether the rules are honorable or not, or even make any sense at all. IF you want to be in *that* tribe, you follow *those* rules.

The shaming comes to anyone in that tribe who dares to do things differently, breaking the tribal rules by choosing another path, thereby leaving the tribe behind in one way or another.

Because of this, many of us will often sacrifice ourselves if we feel the people we love in our tribe are threatened by us (by our 'light' or gifts or our success... I call it SHINE). We would rather opt to be less, than be shamed, or not be loved, by our tribe for choosing to be different, or more, than them. These are my words to describe Tribal Shaming, but please read the article yourself because there is so much more to it than this small part that I'm writing about.

When I first read it, what I thought about was my family of origin. That family was my first tribe - a tribe I never actually felt a part of, even from the time I was small. It was like we were all separate planets in the same small universe, with everyone only concerned about their own survival/needs. Yet, I longed to belong, to be genuinely loved by them and I would often sacrifice who I was to get that love.

But this wasn't just something I experienced with my family of origin because they aren't/weren't my only tribe. I've experienced similar things with both old and newer friends, co-workers in previous jobs, both mine and my husband's extended families and even with some in the spiritual/metaphysical community.

Within each tribe, one of the things that reoccurred was how I felt I had to hide, minimize or change parts of myself in order to be accepted or loved. I learned not to

share good/happy things with certain people because I knew they would NOT be happy for me. I discovered that some people found it much easier to love and support me when my life was difficult or hard, BUT when my life was good, it triggered their jealousy, ("Why is she doing better than me?") and then they (likely unconsciously) would do something to hurt or shame me. No matter what the reason though, conscious or unconscious, any kind of shaming dims our light.

And this is why I thought about each of you who read this magazine... Because the people who read this magazine (and learn from all the articles and guides/mentors/practitioners in it) are people who are growing and progressing in life. And therefore, you might also have families, friends or colleagues that are jealous or envious of any improvements you make, who don't like to hear when good things happen to you and because of that, you may also experience Tribal Shaming.

We are ALL meant to excel - we are all meant to SHINE in our own way. Some people don't know that (if they grew up with an 'each man for himself' mentality) and therefore they naturally think by taking away another's 'shine' that they will shine brighter. But the truth is that when anyone tries to take away our shine, they kill even more of their own inherent light too.

Although I had already noticed that I often consciously would hide things or become less, so that some people in my life wouldn't be triggered, it wasn't until reading Elizabeth's article that I could put a 'name' to it, see it for what it really was and just that (halleluia!) changed how I now react to it.

The world would not evolve (and neither would we) if we all stayed fixed within our tribes forever. Our tribes were meant to provide us with safety/security, but what's safe isn't always concerned about what's good for our souls, or our truth, or integrity.

Lastly, remember this... Whenever you see something you want, instead of being jealous or shaming another for already being able to have it *before you*, remember Norman Vincent Peale's words of wisdom. He said to look at the thing(s) you want and simply say: "That's for me." Consciously put it 'out there' for the Universe to work on for you and then, wait to receive it.



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