

Module 2: Builder Identity Work

👤 Owner	A Ashley Zeck
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Why Builder Identity Drives Lasting Change

Sustained transformation grows where dignity is protected, psychological safety is present, and identity is actively built—not where shame is used. A builder identity supports cycle-breaking by inviting agency, learning, and repair.

Research-informed foundation: Dignity-First Identity. Safety supports regulation and engagement (Porges). Autonomy and relatedness fuel motivation (Deci & Ryan). Compassionate understanding reduces defensive collapse (Maté). Shame impedes courage and integration (Brown).

Theoretical Foundation: Dignity-First Identity

Module Objective

Shift participants' self-concept from "broken" or "at risk" to "builder" and "cycle-breaker." Replace shame with agency and pride—*because* the way you see yourself dictates how you act.

This is the reconstruction module. Module 1 was about grieving and releasing the old self. Module 2 is about intentionally building the new one.

Tribe Role: Language Enforcers & Mirrors

Module 1.5 addition: Tribe as Normalizers (Type Clustering)

Module 2 addition: Tribe as Culture Holders (Builder Language Spotting)

The cohort shifts from silent witnesses to active protectors of builder identity.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this module, participants will:

- Recognize how shame and labels have shaped their self-concept and behaviors
 - Practice using dignity-first, strength-based language about themselves
 - Create a personal "builder identity" narrative and vision
 - Claim their new identity publicly (within the safety of the cohort)
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Time: ~120 minutes (flexible by group)

OpenEdX Course Structure

▼ **Unit 1: The Power of Language—Words That Build and Break** (20 min)

Video (5-7 min): How language shapes identity

- Script: "The words we use to describe ourselves become the stories we live. In Module 1, you released the old self. Now we rebuild—with intention, dignity, and pride."
- Examples of how labels impact behavior and choices
- The neuroscience of self-talk

Reading: Language Audit—Shame Words vs. Builder Words

- Research on identity formation and self-concept
- How shame-based language blocks growth
- How strength-based language activates possibility

Written Assignment: Language Inventory

Answer these questions:

- What words have you used-or heard others use-to describe you at your lowest?

- What words describe you at your best?
- How have these words impacted your choices and behaviors?
- What's one "shame word" you're ready to retire?
- What's one "builder word" you want to claim?

Create two lists:

1. **Shame words** (words that diminish you)
2. **Builder words** (words that activate your power)

Submission: 300+ word reflection with both lists

Discussion Forum Prompt:

"Share one builder word you're claiming for yourself. Why does this word matter to you? Respond to at least 2 others with affirmation."

Unit 2: Shame Scripts & Narrative Rewrite (30 min)

Video (5 min): Breaking the shame loop

- How shame scripts become self-fulfilling prophecies
- The power of narrative reframing
- Alumni examples of script rewrites

Reading: From Shame to Strength—The Rewrite Process

- Understanding where shame scripts come from
- Techniques for cognitive reframing
- The difference between toxic positivity and authentic reframing

Written Assignment: Rewrite Your Story

Step 1: List three "shame scripts" you've carried

- Examples: "I'm a screw-up," "I always quit," "I'm just an addict," "I can't be trusted," "I ruin everything"

Step 2: Rewrite each one into a builder script

- Example rewrites: "I'm resourceful as hell," "I get back up," "I know how to survive," "I'm learning to trust myself," "I'm building something new."

Step 3: For each rewrite, provide evidence

- What real experiences prove your builder script is true?
- When have you demonstrated this strength?

Step 4: Record yourself (video or audio) saying your three builder scripts out loud. Notice how it feels in your body.

Submission: Written reflection (400+ words) + audio/video recording (1-2 min)

Optional Discussion Forum:

"Share one shame script → builder script transformation. What's it like to say the new script out loud?"

▼ **Unit 3: Builder's Code Workshop - Creating Our Community Agreement (25 min)**

Video (5 min): The power of shared values

- Why communities need codes
- Examples from other builder communities
- How accountability strengthens (not shames)

Reading: Sample Builder's Codes from Past Cohorts

- See what other cohorts have created
- Common themes: respect, honesty, accountability, lifting each other up

Collaborative Activity: Co-Create the Builder's Code

Using the discussion forum, propose values and agreements for our cohort.

Starter prompts:

- How do we treat each other when someone struggles?
- What does accountability look like without shame?
- How do we celebrate wins?
- What language do we commit to using?

- What behaviors are off-limits?

Sample statements from past cohorts:

- "Builders help builders up"
- "We speak with dignity, even when calling out bullshit"
- "Progress over perfection"
- "We show up, even when it's hard"

Discussion Forum:

"Propose 1-3 values or statements for our cohort's Builder's Code. Comment on others' proposals-what resonates? What would you add or refine?"

Facilitator will compile the top-voted statements into the official cohort Builder's Code (posted as course banner/reference doc)

Builder's Code Enforcement Ladder

Without enforcement, the Builder's Code becomes a cute poster. Here's how we make it real:

The 3-Step Ladder (for peer-to-peer enforcement):

Step 1: Spot + Name

- Call it out directly, no euphemisms
- **Examples:**
 - "That's shame language."
 - "That's hustle culture talk."
 - "That sounds borrowed, not built."

Step 2: Rewrite Request

- Offer to help reframe it
- **Script:** "Want help rewriting that?"
- Then co-create builder language together

Step 3: Boundary

- If the pattern continues, hold the line
- **Script:** "We're staying in builder language here."
- No debate, just redirect

Consequences for Repeated Violations (Gentle but Real):

If someone repeatedly violates the Builder's Code after multiple peer redirects:

1. **First pattern:** Peers use the 3-step ladder (as above)
2. **Continued pattern:** Facilitator private check-in (not public shame)
 - "I'm noticing a pattern with [specific language/behavior]. What's going on?"
 - "What support do you need to stay in builder language?"
 - This is care, not punishment
3. **Persistent pattern:** Facilitator may recommend:
 - 1-on-1 coaching before returning to group discussions
 - Temporary move to observer mode (can read, can't post)
 - Referral to additional support if dysregulation is the issue

Key principle: We enforce to protect the culture, not to shame individuals. The goal is always to bring people back into alignment, not to kick them out.

Facilitator Note: Make it clear in Unit 3 that this ladder will be used throughout the program. This is not optional—it's infrastructure.

Assignment: Review the finalized Builder's Code and post your personal commitment to it

Additional Assignment: Practice using the 3-step enforcement ladder

- Review the discussion forum
 - If you spot shame/hustle/borrowed language (even mild), practice Step 1: Spot + Name
 - This is skill-building, not policing
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▼ Unit 4: Identity MVP - Designing Your Builder Self as a Product (40 min)

Video (5-7 min): Your identity as a minimum viable product

- Why we're treating your new self like a startup launch
- The power of "product thinking" applied to identity
- How business artifacts create commitment and clarity
- Examples of powerful Identity MVPs from past cohorts

Reading: Creating Your Identity MVP

- How identity drives behavior
- Why structured frameworks accelerate transformation
- The psychology of "launch dates" and public commitments
- Treating yourself as a product in beta

Business Assignment: Create Your Identity MVP One-Pager

This is a standard startup document—but for YOU. You're launching a new version of yourself, and this one-pager is your business plan.

Create a one-page document (digital or physical) with the following sections:

Required Sections:

1. THE MISSION: Who is the new Builder self?

- Write your "value proposition" as a builder
- What problem does this version of you solve?
- What makes you different from your old self?
- Who benefits from this new you?
- **Example:** "I'm a cycle-breaker who turns lived experience into scalable solutions for recovery communities. I solve problems through lived expertise, not theory."

2. THE KPIs: How will you measure success?

- List 5-7 specific, measurable behaviors or milestones

- These should be **observable actions**, not feelings
- Think: What would success *look like* to an outside observer?
- **Examples:**
 - "I spoke up in a meeting with my idea"
 - "I launched the blog and published 3 posts"
 - "I set a boundary without apologizing"
 - "I finished the business plan draft"
 - "I asked for help when I needed it"
 - "I showed up to 4 networking events"
 - "I completed Module 4 and built my MVP"

3. THE LAUNCH DATE: When does this version of you go live?

- Set a specific date (30-90 days recommended)
- What will be *different* on that date?
- What will you have done by then?
- What identity will you be *publicly* claiming?
- **Example:** "Launch Date: March 15, 2026. On this date, I will have: (1) Registered my business name, (2) Published my origin story on LinkedIn, (3) Completed the Legacy Rising curriculum, (4) Launched my first service offering."

Format guidelines:

- Keep it to ONE PAGE (this is a startup discipline)
- Make it look professional (use Notion, Google Docs, Canva, or hand-drawn with clean layout)
- Use clear headers for each section
- Be specific, not vague
- Treat this like a business document you'd show an investor

Tools you can use:

- Notion page (template provided)
- Google Docs
- Canva (free one-pager templates)
- Microsoft Word
- Hand-drawn with clear structure

Why this format?

This creates "usage evidence"—a business artifact that demonstrates you're actively using builder identity as a framework for transformation. It's also how real startups operate: clear mission, measurable outcomes, and a launch deadline.

Reflection questions:

- How does treating yourself like a "product launch" change how you think about your transformation?
- Which KPI feels most challenging? Most exciting?
- What will have to change in your daily life to hit your launch date?
- How is this different from setting New Year's resolutions?

Submission: Upload your Identity MVP One-Pager (PDF, image, or link) + 300+ word reflection

Discussion Forum:

"Share your Identity MVP (if comfortable) or post your Mission statement and top 3 KPIs. What launch date did you choose and why? Celebrate and support at least 2 others' launches."

▼ Unit 5: Builder Affirmations - Claiming Your Identity (20 min)

Video (3-5 min): The practice of affirmation

- How affirmations rewire the brain
- The difference between fake positivity and grounded truth
- How to make affirmations feel real

Activity: Create Your Builder Affirmations

Write 5 builder affirmations based on your work in this module. Use present tense, first person.

Examples:

- "I am resourceful and resilient"
- "I build businesses that matter"
- "I am breaking cycles and creating legacy"
- "I show up for myself and my community"
- "I am worthy of dignity and success"

Record yourself (audio or video) saying all 5 affirmations out loud with conviction.

Daily Practice Commitment:

- When will you say these daily? (Morning? Before bed? During a walk?)
- Where will you post them as reminders? (Phone background, mirror, journal?)

Submission: Written affirmations + audio/video recording + daily practice plan

Discussion Forum: Peer Affirmations

"Review at least 2 cohort members' vision boards or reflections from previous units. Share one builder trait you see in them. Give specific examples of when they demonstrated this strength."

▼ Unit 5.5: Type Clustering Moment — TRIBE AS NORMALIZER (10 min)

Purpose: Make difference feel safe. Remove hierarchy between Builder Types.

Activity: Builder Type Clustering (In-Person or Breakout Rooms)

Instructions:

1. Participants group by their primary Builder Type from Module 1.5 BPEP assessment
2. Facilitator names strengths + risks for each type OUT LOUD

3. Each group discusses (5 minutes):

- "What have we been shamed for?"
- "What do we need protected?"

4. Groups share ONE key insight with full cohort

Key teaching lines:

- "Fast does not equal better."
- "Your Builder Type is your wiring, not your worth."
- "Different types need different support — that's why we're a tribe."

This establishes:

- Removes hierarchy between types
- Makes difference safe
- Tribe as mirrors, not judges

Submission: Post one insight from your type group discussion

Tribe role: *Mirrors, not judges*

▼ Unit 6: Module 2 Assessment & Integration

Quiz: Module 2 Knowledge Check (10 questions)

- Multiple choice and short answer
- Questions on shame scripts, identity formation, language impact, builder mindset
- Must score 80% to pass (unlimited attempts)

Final Assignment: Identity Integration Plan

Create a 1-week action plan for practicing your new builder identity:

Answer these questions:

1. What's one "builder word" you'll use this week when talking about yourself?
2. When will you practice your affirmations daily?

3. What situation this week might trigger old shame scripts? How will you respond differently?
4. Who can support your new identity? (Accountability partner, cohort member, friend)
5. How will you celebrate small wins?

Post to discussion forum:

- Share your commitment
- Offer to be an accountability partner for at least 1 other person
- Check in mid-week with updates

▼ Unit 7: Builder Language Spotting — TRIBE AS CULTURE HOLDER (20 min)

Purpose: Give the Builder's Code teeth. Make the tribe protective through skill, not emotional labor.

Video (5 min): Why language enforcement matters

- Shame language kills momentum
- Hustle language triggers dysregulation
- Borrowed identities block authenticity
- How to call it out with dignity

Reading: Language Red Flags

- **Shame language:** "I'm such a mess," "I always screw up," "I'm just an addict"
- **Hustle language:** "Sleep is for the weak," "Grind or die," "No excuses"
- **Borrowed identities:** "I should be like...," "Real entrepreneurs would..."

Practice: Builder Language Spotting (Small Groups of 3-4)

Activity:

1. Each person shares a current struggle or goal (2 min)
2. Group listens for shame/hustle/borrowed identity language

3. When caught, group gently interrupts:

Script: "That sounds like an old script — want help rewriting it?"

4. Person rewrites the statement in builder language

5. Group affirms the rewrite

Example:

- **Old script:** "I'm such a mess, I can't even get my business idea together."
- **Interrupt:** "That sounds like an old script — want help rewriting it?"
- **Rewrite:** "I'm in the messy middle of figuring out my business idea."
- **Affirm:** "That's builder language. Keep going."

This makes tribe:

- Protective (catching shame before it roots)
- Skill-based (not emotional labor)
- Culture holders (enforcing the Builder's Code)

Submission: Reflection (200+ words)

- What language pattern did your group catch in you?
- How did it feel to be gently called out?
- What pattern did you spot in others?
- How will you use this skill moving forward?

Discussion Forum:

"What old script are you catching yourself saying? Post it here and let the tribe help you rewrite it."

Tribe role: *Culture holders*

▼ **Unit 7.6: Builder Receipts Log - Identity Proof Tracking** *(Daily, 7 days)*

Purpose: Turn identity from affirmations to evidence. Identity changes by behavioral receipts, not vibes.

Video (3-5 min): Why Micro-Evidence Beats Motivation

- Script: "Affirmations are great, but they're not enough. Identity shifts when you have proof. Not big wins—micro-evidence. Daily receipts that your builder word is real."
- The psychology of behavioral proof vs. aspirational thinking
- How small actions compound into identity transformation
- Examples: What counts as a "receipt"

Reading: From Affirmations to Evidence

- Why "fake it till you make it" fails without action
- The neuroscience of identity consolidation through behavior
- How daily tracking creates pattern recognition
- The difference between motivation (feeling) and proof (action)

Daily Assignment: Builder Receipts Log (7 consecutive days)

Each day for one week, record:

"One thing I did today that proves my builder word is real."

Rules:

- Takes 60 seconds per day (no essays)
- Must be a specific action, not a feeling
- Must connect to your builder word from Unit 1
- Can be tiny (spoke up in a meeting, kept a boundary, finished a task, asked for help)

Examples:

- **Builder word: Resourceful** → "I found a free co-working space instead of paying for one."
- **Builder word: Consistent** → "I showed up to my regulation practice even though I didn't want to."
- **Builder word: Bold** → "I posted my business idea publicly for the first time."

- **Builder word: Trustworthy** → "I did what I said I would do, on time, with no excuses."

Format options:

- Text log (Notion, Notes app, journal)
- Voice memos (60 seconds each)
- Video diary (60 seconds each)
- Discussion forum daily check-ins

Submission: Upload your 7-day Builder Receipts Log at the end of the week

Discussion Forum: Weekly Receipts Celebration

"Share your favorite receipt from this week—one action that proved your builder word. Celebrate at least 2 others' receipts."

Why this works:

- **Evidence-based identity:** You're not hoping to become a builder, you're proving it daily
- **Micro-wins:** Builds momentum without requiring huge transformations
- **Pattern recognition:** After 7 days, you'll see your builder identity in action
- **Funder-friendly:** Creates trackable behavioral data (daily receipts streak = measurable engagement)

Key teaching line:

"Your builder word isn't real because you said it. It's real because you have receipts."

▼ **Unit 7.5: Builder Feedback Framework — STANDING PRACTICE (15 min)**

Purpose: Make feedback a required skill, not a nice-to-have. Establish shared language for all future group work.

Video (5 min): Feedback as Infrastructure

- Script: "Builder identity is something we *enforce for each other*. Not through shame. Through skilled feedback."

- Why feedback framework prevents dominance and advice-dumping
- How this protects psychological safety
- This becomes the default for ALL group interactions moving forward

Reading: Builder Feedback Framework

 [Builder Feedback Framework One-Pager](#)

The Framework (required for all group interactions):

1. **I notice...** (observation, not judgment)
 - "I notice you used 'should' three times"
 - "I notice your energy shifted when you talked about that"
2. **I wonder...** (curiosity, not interrogation)
 - "I wonder what would happen if you tried X"
 - "I wonder what you're protecting by not launching yet"
3. **Have you tried...** (suggestion, not command)
 - "Have you tried breaking this into smaller steps?"
 - "Have you tried asking your regulation buddy first?"
4. **What you did well...** (specific affirmation, not generic praise)
 - "You caught your own shame language mid-sentence — that's huge"
 - "You showed up even when you said you wouldn't — builder move"

Key rule: No "hot takes." No advice dumping. Use the framework or stay silent.

This creates:

- Shared language across all modules
- Psychological safety in peer feedback
- Peer accountability without dominance

Practice: Feedback Round (Small Groups of 3-4)

Activity:

1. Each person shares one current struggle or goal (2 min)
2. Group gives feedback using the framework ONLY
3. Person receiving feedback names what landed, what didn't
4. Rotate

Submission: Reflection (200+ words)

- What was it like to give feedback using the framework?
- What was it like to receive it?
- How is this different from advice or criticism?
- How will you use this in Module 4 (MVP work)?

Discussion Forum:

"What surprised you about the Builder Feedback Framework? What was hardest? What felt most helpful?"

Facilitator note: This framework becomes MANDATORY for all Module 4 MVP feedback and Module 5 peer mentorship.

Module Completion

Certificate of Completion: Unlocked when all Unit 6 assignments submitted and quiz passed

Module Reflection

Final Reflection Prompt (optional but encouraged):

"How has your self-concept shifted during this module? What builder word or identity feels most true right now? What surprised you about the rewrite process?"

Post in the discussion forum or submit privately.

Module 2 Outcomes & Measurable Shifts

For grant reporting and program evaluation, Module 2 tracks three key metrics:

1. Shame-Script Rewrite Completion

- **Metric:** % of participants who complete at least 3 shame-to-builder script transformations
- **Target:** 80%+ completion rate
- **Data source:** Unit 2 rewrite assignment submission
- **Why it matters:** Demonstrates active narrative transformation from deficit-based to strength-based self-concept

2. Builder Word Claimed

- **Metric:** % of participants who publicly claim a specific builder word/identity
- **Measurement:** Completion of Unit 1 language inventory and Unit 4 Identity MVP
- **Target:** 90%+ claim a builder word and articulate it in their Identity MVP
- **Data source:** Unit 1 assignment + Unit 4 Identity MVP submission
- **Why it matters:** Shows shift from shame-based labels to dignity-first, strength-based identity

3. Daily Receipts Streak

- **Metric:** Average streak length for Builder Receipts Log (consecutive days)
- **Measurement:** 7-day tracking period (Unit 7.6)
- **Target:** 70%+ complete 5+ days of receipts; 50%+ complete all 7 days
- **Data source:** Builder Receipts Log submissions
- **Why it matters:** Proves identity transformation through behavioral evidence, not just affirmations—creates measurable engagement and demonstrates behavior change

Impact statement for funders:

"By the end of Module 2, participants demonstrate measurable identity transformation—replacing shame scripts with builder narratives, publicly claiming new identities, and generating daily behavioral proof of their builder words through consistent action tracking."

OpenEdX Implementation Notes (For Course Designers)

Video Production:

- Unit 1: How Language Shapes Identity (5-7 min)
- Unit 2: Breaking the Shame Loop (5 min)
- Unit 3: The Power of Shared Values (5 min)
- Unit 4: Your Identity as a Minimum Viable Product (5-7 min)
- Unit 5: The Practice of Affirmation (3-5 min)
- **Total:** ~25-35 min of video content

Discussion Moderation:

- Actively model builder language in all forum responses
- Create compiled Builder's Code document after Unit 3 and post as course resource
- Seed peer affirmation forum (Unit 5) with examples if needed
- Watch for shame spirals-intervene with reframing

Technical Setup:

- Identity MVP submissions: Accept multiple file formats (PDFs, images, Notion links, Google Docs links)
- Audio/video recordings: Use OpenEdX file upload or integrate Flipgrid/Loom/voice memo uploads
- Builder's Code voting: Use forum upvotes or external poll (Google Forms, Strawpoll)

Additional Resources to Create:

- Downloadable affirmation card templates
- Identity MVP One-Pager template (Notion, Google Docs, PDF)
- Sample SMART goals worksheet

- Builder language cheat sheet
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Add-Ons / Extras for OpenEdX Engagement

1. Pre/Post Module Survey

- **Pre-Module Survey** (optional anonymous baseline):
 - "How would you describe yourself in 5 words right now?"
 - "What labels have held you back?"
 - "What word do you want to be known by?"
- **Post-Module Survey** (measure shift):
 - "How would you describe yourself in 5 words now?"
 - "What builder identity are you claiming?"
 - "What changed for you?"

2. "My Builder Story" Audio Series

- Invite participants to record 2-3 min audio: "Here's how I'm rewriting my story"
- Create optional shared playlist for cohort inspiration
- Alumni can record "where I am now" updates

3. Peer Builder Badges

- Gamification: Award badges for giving peer affirmations, completing Identity MVPs, daily affirmation streaks
- Display on learner profiles

4. Alumni Guest Videos

- Record 3-5 alumni sharing their label-to-builder transformations
- Include as bonus content throughout module
- Show real outcomes and timeline

5. Weekly "Builder Wins" Forum

- Standing weekly thread: "What builder move did you make this week?"
 - Celebrate micro-wins, not just major milestones
 - Build culture of recognition
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Citations (For Grants/Slides/Docs)

Porges, S. W. (2011). *The Polyvagal Theory*

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). *Self-Determination Theory*



Maté, G. (2008). *In the Realm of Hungry Ghosts*

Brown, B. (2012). *Daring Greatly*

  Exercise: Shame Scripts & Narrative Rewrite

  Exercise: Builder's Code Workshop

Why This Matters for Module 2: Builder Identity Work

  Affirmation Card Templates

  Vision Board Prompt Worksheet

  SMART Goals Worksheet

  Builder Language Cheat Sheet