

Overcoming Guilt and Shame

Overcoming guilt and shame does not necessarily mean letting yourself off the hook if you believe you have done something wrong. It does mean taking an appropriate amount of responsibility and coming to terms with whatever led you to feel this way.

There are five aspects to overcoming guilt and shame:

1. Assessing the seriousness of your actions
2. Weighing personal responsibility
3. Making reparations for any harm you caused
4. Breaking the silence surrounding shame
5. Self-forgiveness.

Overcoming guilt may require only working only a few of the above, whereas overcoming shame may require working on all five aspects.

First of all we need to track your triggers and automatic thoughts using at least the first three columns of a [Thought Record](#):

1. Situation	2. Moods	3. Automatic Thoughts (Images)
Who? What? When? Where?	a) What did you feel? b) Rate each Mood? (0 – 100%)	a) What was going through your mind just before you started to feel this way? Any other thoughts? Images? b) Circle or mark the hot thought.
Driving home from a restaurant having had dinner with Julie. She was talking about her father's recent visit.	Shame 100%	Image/memory of my father crawling into bed with me. I tried to pretend that I was asleep, but that didn't stop him. Visual and physical memories of the sexual abuse. I must be an awful person for this to have happened to me. I'm a despicable person. I could never tell Julie this happened. If she know, she would know how terrible I am and would never want to be around me again.
Who were you with? What were you doing? When was it? Where were you?	Describe each mood in one word. Circle or mark the mood you want to examine.	Some Extra questions to ask yourself: - Did I break rules, hurt others, or not do something I should have done? What do I think about myself that I did this or believe I did this? - What does this mean about how the other persons(s) feel(s)/think(s) about me?