

Anxiety, Shame, and Inadequacy

Despite your many “successes in life, you still feel totally inadequate and like a complete piece of trash.

- No amount of accomplishment can ever make up for MY belief that deep down:
 - o I am a failed Human Being
 - o It’s all my fault
 - o I’m to blame
 - o I’m not a good person
 - o I’m not worthy of forgiveness
 - o Etc.
- If this is your story, you have problems with identity and shame about who you are.

Most of us experienced shame as a child:

- We wet the bed
- We were caught in a lie
- We stole a candy bar and were caught

If parent figures around you gave you adequate emotional support you probably overcame and outgrew the negative shaming messages you heard.

But sometimes we:

- Don’t get the emotional support we need (encouraging and positive emotional support)
- We “internalized” the embarrassment and made it “shameful.”
 - o We “internalized” shame and we become a “no good person.”
 - o We cannot “let go” of unfortunate situations and our mistakes.
 - We cannot “forgive” ourselves.

Shame, Guilt, and Anxiety Hang Out Together:

- Anxiety rises the more we are afraid of our secrets.
- Anxiety rises the more we are afraid of what other people think of us.
- Anxiety rises the more we “fail” to live up to our own expectations/ standards.
- Anxiety rises the more we “fail” to live up to others expectations/ standards.
- Anxiety rises the more we are afraid of looking like a “fool.”
- Anxiety rises the more we judge ourselves.
- Anxiety rises the more we are afraid to fail.
- Anxiety rises with the unresolved “shame” you feel.
- Anxiety rises the more you “blame” yourself.

There are different types of shame and guilt:

1. **Productive shame** – a healthy temporary feeling that tells me I did bad.
 - “What I have done is not socially acceptable.”
2. **Productive** – a temporary feeling in response to behavior that’s not in line with your values.
 - “You cheated on your partner.”
 - “You said something mean to someone you care about.”
3. **Unproductive Shame** – a chronic heavy feeling that says,
 - “I am bad.”
 - “I am unworthy.”
 - “I am unlovable.”
 - “I am not good enough.”
 - But NOTE: We are unable to explain to another person why these are true..
4. **Unproductive Guilt** – a chronic heavy feeling in response to not meeting unrealistic high expectations of myself or others.
 - Guilt for calling in sick when you’re really sick.
 - Guilt for saying “no” when you really don’t have the time to do something.

Ticket 1

Welcomed clients to Freedom group and opened session with the Serenity Prayer. Introduced new topic linking the origins of shame to the subconscious. Explained that guilt and regret are aligned with our conscious experience of the world and our behavior. Shame, anxiety, and a sense of inadequacy are located in the unconscious area of our mind. Because shame, anxiety, and inadequacy often begins in our very young lives, and is located in the subconscious, it is difficult to reveal it with words, art, or any other type of expression. Shame, anxiety, and inadequacy are often expressed in our current behaviors, and are often the roots of our perceived

Plan:

- Continue looking at the source of shame, anxiety, and inadequacy.

Very interested in today's topic and shared many questions with group.

Ticket 2

Welcomed Freedom group this morning and opened session with the Serenity Prayer. Continued group discussion and learning about guilt, shame, and feelings of inadequacy. Reviewed the Guilt/Shame cycle from the previous session. Discussed/processed how shame, guilt, and anxiety group together within us. Talked about the different types of shame and guilt:

- Productive shame
- Productive guilt
- Unproductive shame
- Unproductive guilt.

Good group sharing.

Plan:

- Discuss the differences between shame and guilt.
- Encourage peer interactions and sharing.

willing to share shame/guilt experiences with peers. Becoming less shy.

