



## Shame Deconstruction Worksheet

**Introduction:** Identifying and challenging the sources of internalized shame, encouraging self-acceptance and empowerment. By bringing awareness of the sources and effects of shame, clients can develop tools to challenge and reframe negative beliefs, build self-compassion, and improve emotional and relational health. This can help facilitate an understanding of the origins of their shame, its impact on emotional and relational well-being, and how to positively reframe.

### Step 1: Identify the Shame

- How do you identify shame?
- How do you experience and notice shame? Emotionally or physically?
- What feelings do you notice in yourself? Do you know what is making you feel this way? (e.g., during interactions with family, at work, in relationships)

### Step 2: Explore the Source

If you could take a moment to reflect on a memory when you experienced feeling shame. If you could narrate this feeling, how would you share the experience?

- Take some time to reflect on below as you develop your narrative to express your experience of shame.
  - How would you describe feeling shame?
  - Where do you notice the feeling in your body?
  - What do I feel are the roots of this emotion?
  - How do I cope with this feeling?
  - How do respond to feeling of shame?
  - How do I experience this feeling in relationships?
  - Do I notice any cultural or societal expectations?
  - How did I experience this in family upbringing?
  - Any other areas of life, such as work, relationships, or personal identities?

Reflect on messages you received about this topic. For example:

- What were you told, directly or indirectly, about this issue?
- What shared these messages with you?
- How did others in your life react to it?

### Step 3: Understand the Impact

- How has this shame affected your:
  - Self-esteem and self-perception?
  - Emotional well-being?
  - Relationships with others?
  - What are some behaviors or decisions you've made because of this shame?

### Step 4: Challenge and Reframe

- Write down any evidence that challenges these shame-based beliefs. For example:



- Are these beliefs universally true, or are they shaped by specific contexts or people?
- Do these beliefs affect your relationships? With self? With others?
- What strengths or positive qualities do you have that contradict this shame?
- Reframe the narrative:
  - “Instead of thinking [insert shame-based belief], I choose to believe [insert self-affirming belief].”
  - Example: “Instead of thinking I am weak for needing help, I choose to believe I am strong for seeking support.”

#### **Step 5: Develop Self-Acceptance**

- List three affirmations or positive statements about yourself that counteract this shame.
  - Example: “I am worthy of love and respect as I am.”
- Write down one small step you can take to embrace self-acceptance and empowerment.

#### **Step 6: Reflect and Plan**

- What have you learned about yourself through this exercise?
- What ongoing practices can help you continue to release this shame?