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CHAPTER SEVEN

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**LIBERATED  
LOVE**

*Salon*





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# CHAPTER SEVEN

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Use this playsheet to follow along, fill out and take notes during our Love Stories Revisited; Chapter 7:  
**Liberated Love**

This salon focuses on discovering your true self beyond the narratives of sexuality and identity. It encourages you to grant yourself the freedom to explore your self-expression without being limited by societal conditioning and outdated narratives.

## **LIBERATED LOVE 4-PART PROCESS:**

### **Salon: (in the boardroom)**

Part 1: \_\_\_\_\_

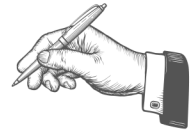
Part 2: \_\_\_\_\_

### **EPIC: (in the bedroom)**

Part 3: \_\_\_\_\_

Part 4: \_\_\_\_\_

# REWRITING YOUR LOVE STORY:



**Growing up, what, if anything, did you learn about the “birds & the bees?”**

**What was helpful or unhelpful about what you learned early on?**

# EXPLORING THE COMPLEX EMOTION OF SHAME

Shame is a powerful and complex emotion that comes from feeling like there's something deeply wrong with who you are as a person. It's not just about making a mistake; it's about believing that you, as a whole, are a mistake. It can make you feel small, embarrassed, and like you want to hide. Unlike guilt, which is about feeling bad for something you did, shame is about feeling bad for who you are. It often comes from how we think others see us or judge us, and it can have a big impact on our self-esteem and how we view ourselves.

## **Here are some of the common characteristics of shame:**

- Feeling worthless or inferior
- Feeling exposed or vulnerable
- Wanting to hide or disappear
- Feeling like you don't deserve love or acceptance
- Avoiding social situations
- Having low self-esteem
- Difficulty trusting others
- Feeling like you can't measure up to others

## **There are three main types of shame:**

- **Internalized shame:** This is when you believe that you are fundamentally flawed or bad. You may feel like you don't deserve love or happiness.
- **Social shame:** This is when you feel ashamed of your actions or behaviors because you believe that they will be judged negatively by others.
- **Covert shame:** This is when you feel ashamed of your thoughts, feelings, or desires, even if you don't act on them. You may feel like you have to keep them hidden from others.

# SHAME IS A HELL OF A GAME

*Play along with us today. We also encourage you to do this later with your partner or in your Couples Council.*



## ROUND 1: PARTS OF YOURSELF THAT YOU HAVE LEFT BEHIND

- What is something that you once loved or cared about doing, but that you no longer do?
- Is there something that you were told you weren't good at or that you shouldn't do anymore, and you listened to that advice?

## ROUND 2: PARTS YOU ARE HIDING

- Is there something about yourself that you're afraid to share with others?
- Are there any parts of your personality that you keep hidden from your partner, friends, or family?
- What are the things that you're afraid to let other people see?

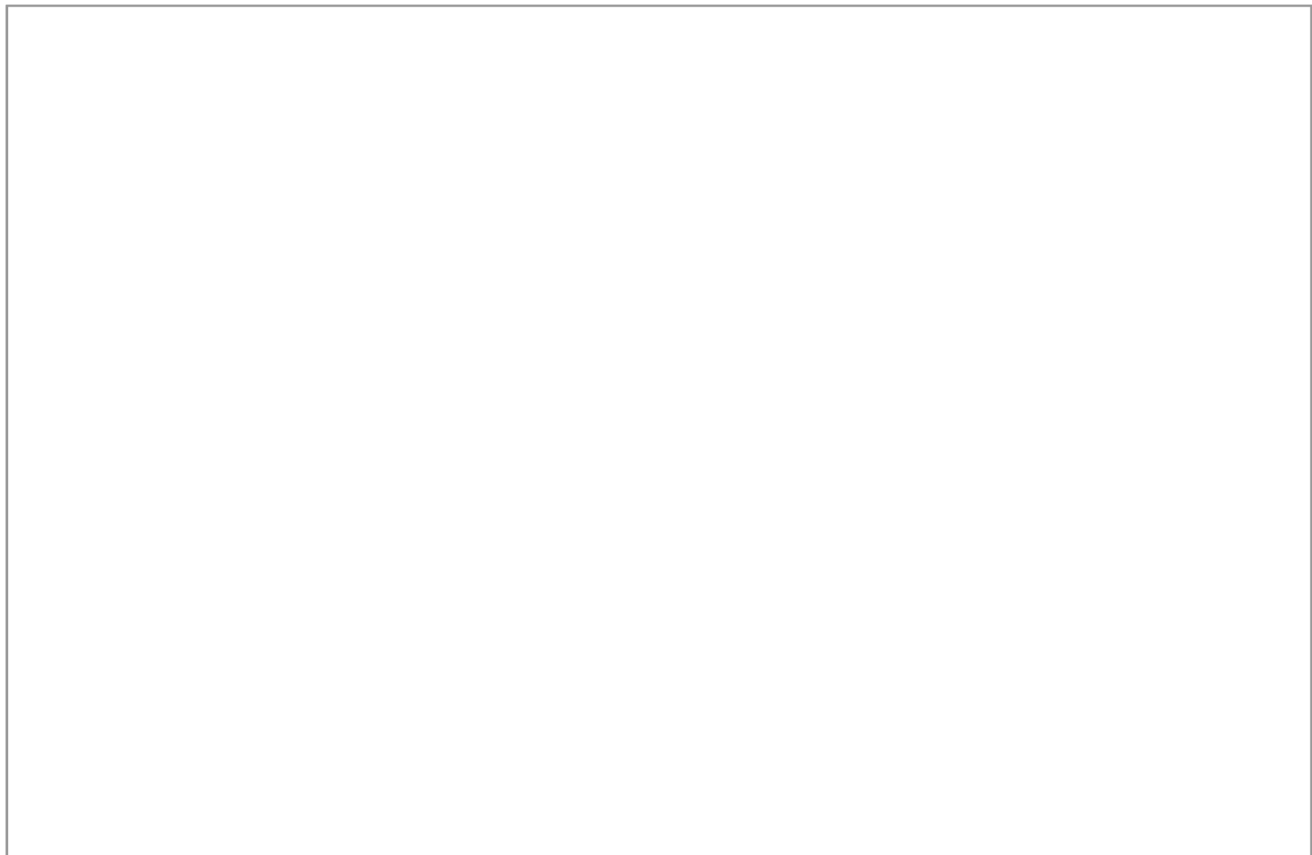
## **ROUND 3: JUDGEMENTS OF SELF OR OTHERS**

### **Judgements of Self**

- What are the things that you judge yourself most harshly for?
- Are there any parts of your sexuality or personal expression that you're constantly criticizing?
- What are things that you think you're not good enough at that impact you day to day?

### **Judgements of Others**

- Are there any people in your life that you judge harshly?
- What are the things that you find most annoying or irritating about other people?
- What are the things that you think other people are doing wrong?



# SHAME BINGO

Instructions for this will be given to you during the Salon.

B					I					N					G					O				
REJECTION	LONELINESS	DISAPPOINTMENT	INFERIORITY	ENVY	GUILT	INADEQUACY	ABANDONMENT	SELF-CONSCIOUS	HELPLESSNESS	EMBARRASSMENT	HUMILIATION	VULNERABILITY	DISGRACE	UNWORTHINESS	BETRAYAL	REGRET	DISAPPROVAL	WORTHLESSNESS	NEGLIGENCE	JUDGMENT	BLAME	ALIENATION	ISOLATION	FAILURE

# THE MANY FACES OF SHAME



**Failure:** Feeling ashamed of not achieving a goal or falling short of expectations.

**Rejection:** The shame that comes from being excluded or dismissed by others.

**Guilt:** The feeling of shame that arises from believing you have done something wrong or harmful.

**Embarrassment:** A form of shame that arises from feeling self-conscious or humiliated by others.

**Betrayal:** The shame associated with being deceived or let down by someone you trust.

**Judgment:** Feeling ashamed due to criticism or negative evaluations from others.

**Loneliness:** The shame related to feeling isolated or disconnected from others.

**Inadequacy:** A sense of shame caused by feeling insufficient or not good enough.

**Humiliation:** Extreme shame experienced when being degraded or demeaned.

**Regret:** The shame that arises from feeling remorseful about past actions or decisions.

**Blame:** The shame associated with being held responsible for a negative outcome.

**Disappointment:** Feeling ashamed when not meeting your or others' expectations.



**Abandonment:** The shame experienced when feeling deserted or abandoned by someone.

**Vulnerability:** The shame linked to exposing one's weaknesses or being emotionally exposed.

**Disapproval:** The shame resulting from being disapproved or rejected by others.

**Alienation:** Feeling ashamed due to being estranged or separated from a group or society.

**Inferiority:** The shame that arises from feeling less capable or valuable than others.

**Self-consciousness:** Feeling ashamed due to excessive awareness of oneself in social situations.

**Disgrace:** The shame associated with a loss of honor or respect in the eyes of others.

**Worthlessness:** A deep sense of shame related to feeling completely devoid of value or worth.

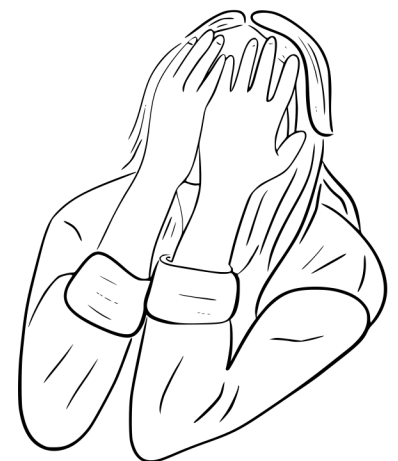
**Isolation:** The shame that arises from feeling cut off from others or socially excluded.

**Envy:** Feeling ashamed of coveting what others have, whether it be possessions, achievements, or qualities.

**Helplessness:** The shame experienced when being unable to handle a situation or feeling powerless.

**Unworthiness:** A deep sense of shame related to feeling undeserving of love, success, or happiness.

**Neglect:** Feeling ashamed due to a lack of attention, care, or emotional support from significant others.

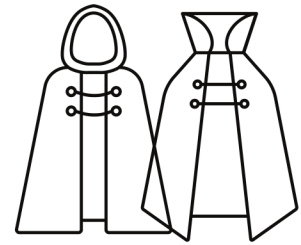


# SHAME BINGO REFLECTIONS:



How do you feel after participating in Shame BINGO with everyone today? Journal about your current level of self-awareness regarding the experience and in relationship to any shame that you claimed.

# EMBODIMENT REFLECTIONS:



**How do you feel now that you've shed your Shame Cloak?** *(or at least participated in the process)*

**Describe your Liberation Cape - what does it look like?**

# FREE YOURSELF MEDITATION:



**What did you learn about your Prison Guard?**

**What got set free for you?**

**What will you put in place to make sure you stay free in this area of your life?**

# PRINCIPLES IN PRACTICE:

## #4 What's In The Way, Is The Way

*We believe every problem contains the seed of its own solution and the impulse of evolution. Anything we perceive as an obstacle is an opportunity for our own development and emotional maturation. We trust that all of life is conspiring for our highest good and are grateful for the obstacles that we may initially perceive as in our way, because they point to a more noble path, giving rise to new opportunities, rewards and evolutionary ways of seeing and being.*

## HOMEPLAY

*Answer these questions later with your partner and/or your Couples Council*

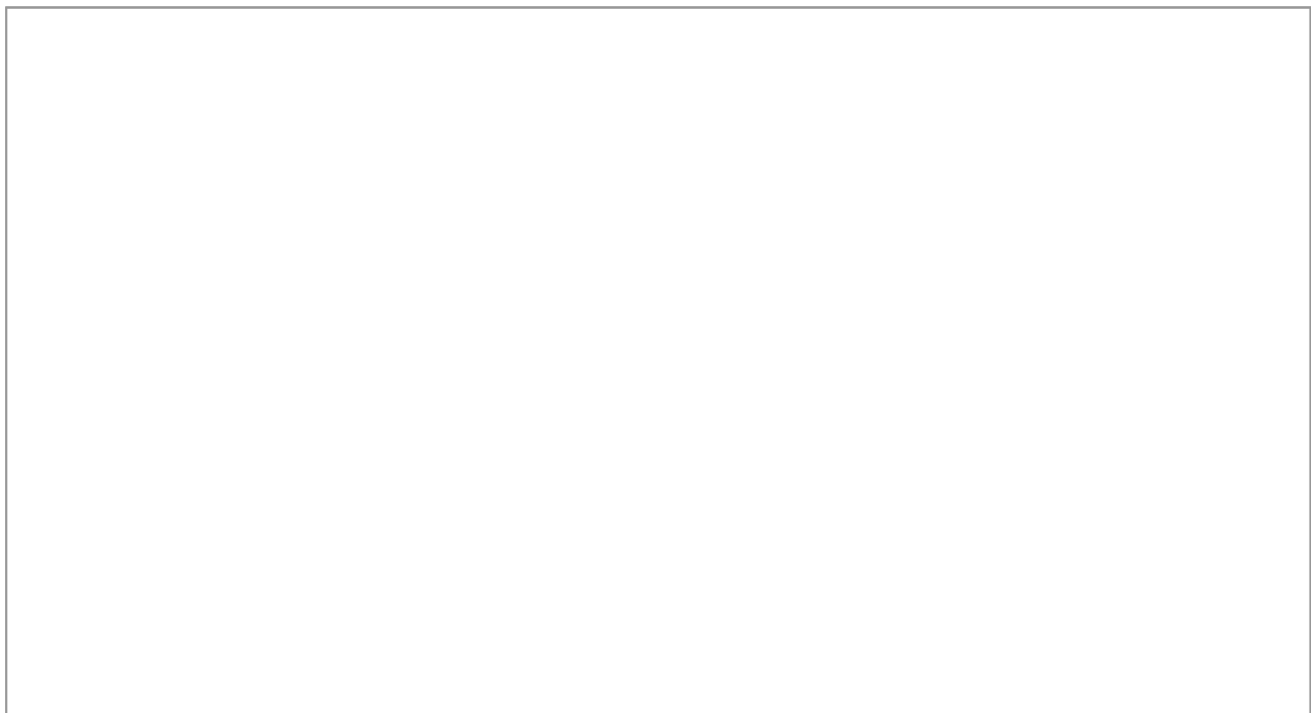
**What are some obstacles you've identified today that are holding you back from experiencing Liberated Love?**

**How do these obstacles make you feel?**

**What can you learn from these obstacles? What are the hidden gifts that these obstacles are offering you?**



**How can you use these obstacles to grow and evolve as a person? How can you use these obstacles to create a more fulfilling life for yourself?**



## #11 All Needs Met

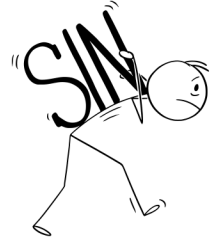
*All human beings have needs. Some go unexpressed and some are loud and clear. At times those needs may feel in conflict with someone else's needs, yet when we commit to seek ways to meet all needs, we illuminate a path towards creating something greater than what we originally thought possible.*

*As a practice we strive to distinguish our needs from our preferences, desires and self-protection and are committed to exploring any friction or perceived "problem" with an open heart and mind. This process activates an emergent field of opportunity that allows us to discover and reveal the higher needs within every situation.*

**What is one need that you're currently struggling to meet that would support you to experience Liberated Love?**

**How can you take steps to meet this need- for yourself first?**

# SHAME VS GUILT



## SHAME AND GUILT: EXPLORING THE DIFFERENCES

Shame is a feeling of \_\_\_\_\_ or worthlessness about oneself as a person. It stems from the belief that our actions reflect negatively on our core identity. When experiencing shame, we might feel exposed, humiliated, or as if we are fundamentally flawed. This emotion often arises from a fear of being \_\_\_\_\_ by others.

Guilt, on the other hand, is a feeling of \_\_\_\_\_ or responsibility for a specific action or behavior that we believe was wrong or harmful. It is directed towards the action itself, not our entire identity. Guilt emerges from a sense of having violated our own \_\_\_\_\_ or ethical standards.

### KEY DIFFERENCES:

The focus of shame is on the \_\_\_\_\_; guilt's focus is on the \_\_\_\_\_.

Shame can lower self-esteem, while guilt can lead to \_\_\_\_\_ and personal growth.

Shame is linked to a fear of \_\_\_\_\_; guilt encourages seeking forgiveness and making amends.

Guilt can be adaptive, prompting corrective actions; shame can be \_\_\_\_\_.

Chronic shame can contribute to mental health issues; managed guilt can lead to personal growth and stronger \_\_\_\_\_.

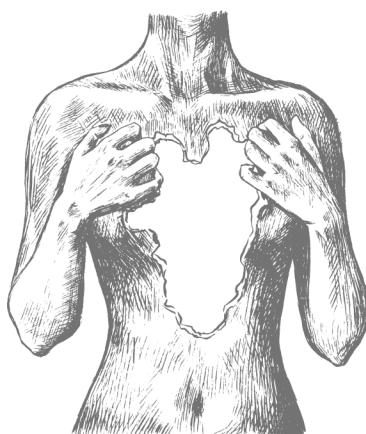


## **GUILT EXAMPLE: SOCIALLY PERCEIVED WRONG**

Imagine a scenario where a person named Alex is attending a friend's party. At the party, there's a game that involves sharing embarrassing stories. Alex decides to share a story about his friend Sarah that he knows is embarrassing but thinks it's all in good fun. However, after sharing the story, Alex notices that Sarah is visibly hurt and upset by it. Later, when reflecting on his actions, Alex feels guilty for sharing the story because he realizes it was socially inappropriate and caused harm to Sarah's feelings. This is an example of guilt because Alex acknowledges his wrongdoing, takes responsibility for his action, and might apologize to Sarah to make amends.

## **SHAME EXAMPLE: SELF-LABELING OF WRONG**

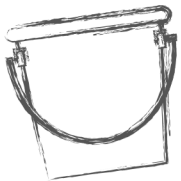
Imagine a scenario where a student named Emily is giving a presentation in class. During the presentation, Emily stumbles over her words, forgets important points, and feels like she's not performing well. After the presentation, Emily starts thinking, "*I'm such a failure, I can't do anything right.*" She feels deeply embarrassed and believes that her poor performance reflects her inadequacy as a person. In this case, Emily is experiencing shame. She's labeling herself as a failure based on her performance, and this is impacting her self-esteem. Unlike guilt, which focuses on the action, shame is directed at her core identity.



Based on the distinctions above, is there anything you thought you had shame about that is actually in the guilt category? And if so, what?

Use these buckets to separate your feelings of Shame from your feelings of Guilt for anything that has been identified for you so far today.

Today we are Liberating shame. Your Homeplay is to work on resolving your Guilt. **Read on for your “Guilt Release” Homeplay (page 19).**

**SHAME BUCKET**  **GUILT BUCKET**

Two large, empty rectangular boxes are positioned below the bucket labels. A curved arrow on the left points from the 'SHAME BUCKET' label to the left box, and a curved arrow on the right points from the 'GUILT BUCKET' label to the right box.

# THE PHOENIX EFFECT

Just as the Phoenix emerges anew, we too can ascend beyond wounds and bask in Liberated Love, despite past hurt. This effect emboldens us to transcend old narratives, embracing growth and vulnerability. Through this, we reclaim the power to forge connections unburdened by past suffering—a testimony to the human ability to nurture profound, renewed love from the embers of our past.



## PROCLAIM YOUR PHOENIX EFFECT

If you've worked through something today to liberate a part of yourself you now have an opportunity to say that in front of the community to be Seen & Heard as you rise into your newly Liberated self.

**What has been Liberated for you today?** (IE- what has been freed or released?)

## LIBERATION PROCLAMATION:

*I proclaim that I am no longer confined by the chains of shame. I am stepping into my liberation, embracing more of my worthiness and authenticity.*

*I release the grip of \_\_\_\_\_*

*{insert what you have liberated/ released}*

*...and I welcome the boundless possibilities that lie ahead. I am free to give and receive love without fear. I stand in my power to co-create a relationship that honors my journey and reflects my true essence.*

**All witnesses respond with... "HEARD"**

# HOMEPLAY

## ADDRESS & CLEAR YOUR GUILT

*“Guilt is an energizing emotion: it drives us to act. The most effective way to reduce guilt is to undo our behavior, make amends, atone or apologize.”*

- Dr Lawrence Howells

It's important to differentiate between healthy guilt that prompts positive change and excessive or irrational guilt that can be harmful.

There are several ways to categorize guilt, and different researchers or psychologists might use slightly different frameworks. One commonly cited framework divides guilt into four types: adaptive guilt, nonadaptive guilt, survivor guilt, and existential guilt. Each type of guilt is associated with specific situations and emotional responses.

### **HERE'S A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF EACH TYPE:**

#### **Adaptive Guilt:**

Adaptive guilt is often considered a healthy form of guilt. It occurs when an individual acknowledges that they have done something wrong or harmful and takes responsibility for their actions. This guilt can prompt individuals to make amends, change their behavior, and seek forgiveness from those they have wronged. Adaptive guilt can lead to personal growth and improved relationships.

#### **Nonadaptive Guilt:**

Nonadaptive guilt refers to excessive or unwarranted guilt that is not proportionate to the wrongdoing or is not based on actual actions. People experiencing nonadaptive guilt might feel guilty for things beyond their control or might feel guilty even when they have not done anything wrong. This type of guilt can be distressing and hinder emotional well-being if it's not addressed.

**Survivor Guilt:**

Survivor guilt occurs when individuals feel guilty for having survived a traumatic event while others did not. It is often associated with situations like natural disasters, accidents, or conflicts where some people perish while others survive. Survivor guilt can lead to emotional distress, feelings of unworthiness, and a sense of responsibility for others' fates.

**Existential Guilt:**

Existential guilt is a more abstract type of guilt that arises from a broader sense of responsibility for larger societal or existential issues. It's often linked to feelings of not living up to one's potential or not making a meaningful contribution to the world. Existential guilt can lead to feelings of emptiness, purposelessness, or a sense of moral duty to address broader issues.

**Think about a time you felt guilty. What made you feel this way? What impact did it have on you? How did you respond?**

**Which of these types of guilt have you experienced and why?**

# 3 GUILT RELEASE EXERCISES

1. Write a Self-Forgiveness Letter
2. Accountability & Amends
3. Cognitive Restructuring

## 1. WRITE A SELF-FORGIVENESS LETTER

### Step 1: Find a Quiet and Comfortable Space

Choose a calm and quiet environment where you can focus without distractions. Have some paper and a pen or use a digital document if you prefer typing.

### Step 2: Address Yourself with Compassion

Begin the letter by addressing yourself in a kind and compassionate manner. You can use your name or a term of endearment that resonates with you.



### Step 3: Acknowledge the Situation

State the situation or action for which you feel guilty. Be honest and clear about what happened. Avoid blaming or being overly critical of yourself. Simply describe the event and your role in it.

### Step 4: Express Your Feelings

Share your feelings of guilt, remorse, and any other emotions you've been experiencing. Allow yourself to be open and vulnerable in expressing how the situation has affected you emotionally.

### Step 5: Offer Yourself Compassion

This is the core of the self-forgiveness letter. Treat yourself as you would a close friend who made a mistake. Offer understanding and compassion for your actions. Remember that everyone makes mistakes, and these mistakes don't define your worth as a person.

### **Step 6: Reflect on Lessons Learned**

Discuss what you've learned from the situation. Reflect on how you can grow and make better choices in the future. This part is about focusing on personal growth and positive change.

### **Step 7: Apologize to Yourself**

Apologize to yourself for any pain or harm you may have caused yourself or others through your actions. This is a sincere acknowledgment of the consequences of your behavior.

### **Step 8: Commit to Moving Forward**

Promise yourself that you will work towards making amends, whether it's by taking positive actions or avoiding similar mistakes in the future. This shows your intention to learn and grow from the experience.

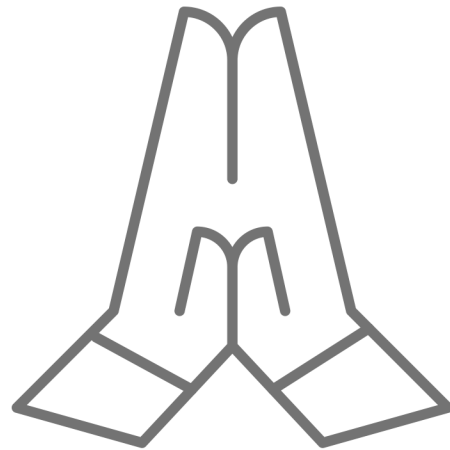
### **Step 9: Close the Letter with Kindness**

End the letter by reaffirming your self-compassion and self-forgiveness. Use words of kindness and affirmation.

### **Step 10: Read and Reflect**

After you've written the letter, take some time to read it aloud or silently. Reflect on the emotions you've expressed and the self-forgiveness you've offered.

*Remember that the goal of the self-forgiveness letter is to provide yourself with healing and closure. It's a personal process, so there's no right or wrong way to write it. Allow yourself to feel the emotions that arise, and take the time you need to nurture your self-forgiveness journey.*

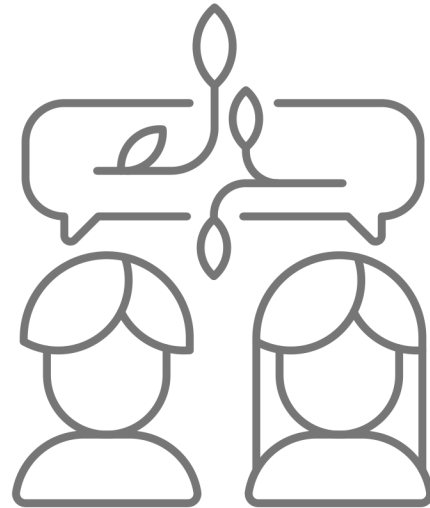


## 2. ACCOUNTABILITY & AMENDS

*If guilt stems from hurting someone, seek to make amends. Apologize genuinely, offer to make things right, and demonstrate commitment to improving. Genuine intention and respect for their feelings are crucial.*

*Taking accountability and making amends requires sincerity, humility, and a willingness to address the consequences of your actions.*

*Here's a step-by-step guide on how to take accountability and make amends:*



### **Step 1: Self-Reflection**

Take time to reflect on your actions and their impact on others. Recognize the specific actions or behavior for which you need to take accountability.

### **Step 2: Acknowledge Responsibility**

Acknowledge your responsibility for your actions. Avoid making excuses, blaming others, or minimizing the impact. Accept that you made a mistake and own up to it.

### **Step 3: Approach with Sincerity**

Approach the person you've hurt with sincerity and humility. Choose a time and place where you can have a private conversation without interruptions.

### **Step 4: Apologize Directly**

Offer a heartfelt and sincere apology. Express your remorse for your actions and the pain you've caused. Use "I" statements to show your ownership of the situation.



### **Step 5: Listen Actively**

Allow the other person to express their feelings and reactions without interruption. Listen attentively and validate their emotions. This step is crucial for them to feel heard and understood.



### **Step 6: Ask for Forgiveness**

While you can't demand forgiveness, you can ask if they are willing to consider it over time. Respect their feelings if they need time to process before granting forgiveness.

### **Step 7: Discuss Making Amends**

If possible, discuss ways you can make amends for your actions. This could involve corrective actions, compensating for any harm caused, or offering support in some way.

### **Step 8: Follow Through on Amends**

If you've discussed making amends, ensure that you follow through on your commitments. Taking concrete actions to rectify the situation is a vital part of making amends.

### **Step 9: Learn and Grow**

Reflect on the experience and what you've learned from it. Use this as an opportunity for personal growth and to prevent making the same mistakes in the future.

### **Step 10: Maintain Respect and Boundaries**

Understand that the other person's response, including forgiveness, is their choice. Respect their decision and any boundaries they set.

### **Step 11: Be Patient**

Rebuilding trust and healing takes time. Be patient and allow the other person to process their emotions at their own pace.

## **Step 12: Reflect on Your Actions**

Continually reflect on your actions and the steps you've taken to make amends. Use this experience as a reminder to be mindful of your choices in the future.

*It's important to keep in mind that taking accountability and making amends is not about seeking personal absolution but about acknowledging the harm caused and demonstrating your commitment to personal growth and positive change.*

## **3. COGNITIVE RESTRUCTURING**

*Guilt often stems from negative thought patterns and self-judgment. Practice cognitive restructuring by identifying and challenging your guilt-inducing thoughts.*

*Cognitive restructuring is a cognitive-behavioral technique that involves identifying and challenging negative thought patterns to create more balanced and rational thinking. It's a powerful tool for managing negative emotions, including guilt and shame. Here's a step-by-step guide on how to practice cognitive restructuring:*

### **Step 1: Identify Negative Thoughts**

Start by becoming aware of the negative thoughts that contribute to your feelings of guilt or shame. Pay attention to the thoughts that automatically pop into your mind when you recall the situation or action that's causing these emotions.

### **Step 2: Write Down Your Negative Thoughts**

Write down the negative thoughts on paper or in a digital document. This helps externalize your thoughts and makes them more tangible.



### **Step 3: Examine the Evidence**

For each negative thought, critically examine the evidence that supports or contradicts it. Ask yourself questions like:

- Is this thought based on facts or assumptions?
- Are there any alternative explanations for the situation?
- What evidence supports or refutes this thought?

### **Step 4: Challenge Cognitive Distortions**

Identify cognitive distortions, which are irrational or exaggerated ways of thinking. Common distortions include all-or-nothing thinking, overgeneralization, and emotional reasoning. Evaluate if your negative thoughts are influenced by these distortions.

### **Step 5: Generate Balanced Thoughts**

For each negative thought, generate more balanced and rational thoughts that take into account the evidence and challenge cognitive distortions. Frame the situation in a more objective and compassionate light.

### **Step 6: Practice Affirmations**

Create positive affirmations that counteract the negative thoughts. These affirmations should be realistic, empowering, and self-compassionate. Repeat them to yourself regularly to reinforce positive thinking.



### **Step 7: Reframe and Rewire**

Replace the negative thoughts with the balanced thoughts and affirmations you've generated. Remind yourself of these thoughts whenever the negative ones resurface.

### **Step 8: Review and Repeat**

Regularly review your cognitive restructuring exercises and the balanced thoughts you've created. Repetition helps reinforce new thought patterns and makes them more automatic over time.

### **Step 9: Be Patient**

Cognitive restructuring is a skill that takes practice and time to master. Be patient with yourself as you work to shift your thought patterns.

### **Step 10: Seek Professional Help if Needed**

If your negative thought patterns are deeply ingrained or significantly impacting your well-being, consider seeking guidance from a mental health professional, such as a therapist or counselor. They can provide personalized support and strategies tailored to your needs.

*Know that cognitive restructuring is a process, and progress may be gradual. Consistency and commitment to challenging and changing your negative thoughts can lead to more positive emotions and improved mental well-being.*



*Eden World & The Sanctuary community is a massive resource for additional personalized support. From coaching to councils, from experiences to excursions there is someone in our community who can support you further in letting go of things that are not serving you anymore. If you would like to find additional support reach out out to our concierge 442-222-2346 or [concierge@edenworld.org](mailto:concierge@edenworld.org)*