

**ACTIVITY 2:**

**LEARNING TO IDENTIFY EXCESSIVE  
SHAME IN YOURSELF**

Think of a situation in which you believe you were feeling shame. Try to recall the specific details of that situation – who was there, what was said by whom, how you reacted, what you felt during and after the situation.

What was the specific situation in which you felt shame?

How did you react? Did you say anything? Was there any nonverbal body language from you (i.e., avoiding eye contact, blushing, leaving the area)?

How did you feel?

Check the feelings you experienced.

	<b>While It Was Happening</b>	<b>After It Happened</b>
Sad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Depressed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Small	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Anxious	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Embarrassed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hopeless	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ashamed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tense	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Angry	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lonely	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Guilty	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fearful	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Frustrated	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Self-Conscious	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**ACTIVITY 3:**  
**DO YOU EXPERIENCE**  
***EXCESSIVE SHAME?***

These next few activities have been designed to help you measure the frequency, intensity, and duration of your episodes of shame. The severity of your problem with shame is reflected in how often, how intensely, and how long you suffered from shame. The greater the frequency, intensity and duration of your shame, the more likely it is that you have a problem with excessive shame. Look over your responses to the activities above, and you will get an idea of whether your shame is excessive.

*Frequency: How Often Do You Feel Shame?*

How often have you felt shame in the last week?

- |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not once    | <input type="checkbox"/> Once                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A few times | <input type="checkbox"/> Several times       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Every day   | <input type="checkbox"/> Several times a day |

If you answered that you felt shame every day or more in the past week, your shame is in the excessive range.

*Intensity: How Much Shame Were You Feeling?*

In the last seven days, how much have you experienced the following? Rank each one according to the level that applies to you.

0 = Not at all                      1 = Somewhat  
2 = Moderately                    3 = A lot

- \_\_\_ Thinking that you are a failure
- \_\_\_ Wanting to hide from others
- \_\_\_ Feeling worthless
- \_\_\_ Being extremely sensitive to criticism
- \_\_\_ Blushing
- \_\_\_ Worrying obsessively about what others think of you
- \_\_\_ Feeling like something is wrong with you
- \_\_\_ Thinking that your reactions to any situation are inappropriate

Total Score: \_\_\_\_\_

If your score falls between 0-8, you have a pretty healthy sense of shame that is probably only present in situations in which it is appropriate to feel shame. If you scored within the 9-11 range, you sometimes have periods of shame, but you are able to bounce back. If your

score was 12 or above, shame is a major issue for you, and the higher your score, the more excessive your shame is.

*Duration: How Long After the Situation Do You Continue to Feel Shame?*

After a shame-inducing situation is over, how long do you continue to feel shame?

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A Few Minutes | <input type="checkbox"/> 30 Minutes    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Hour        | <input type="checkbox"/> Several Hours |
| <input type="checkbox"/> All Day Long  | <input type="checkbox"/> A Few Days    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Weeks         | <input type="checkbox"/> Months        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A Few Years   | <input type="checkbox"/> Many Years    |

Clearly, the length of time you feel shame after a situation is going to depend somewhat on how embarrassing or difficult the situation is. In some deeply humiliating situations, the recovery from shame feelings will normally take longer than if the shame-inducing situation was fleeting and somewhat less serious in nature. However, if you have shame feelings that last for days, weeks or months, that is a signal that excessive shame is a real issue for you.

## **Summary**

Look over your responses to the frequency, intensity and duration activities above, and you will get an idea of whether or not your shame is excessive.

If you scored in the excessive range on any of the frequency, intensity and duration activities, excessive shame is a problem for you.

In the next activity, you can do a similar self-inventory regarding your experiences of guilt.