



Episode 204: How to Get Out of a Toxic Shame Spiral

Quick Dip Episode

How would you identify yourself?

When answering this question, many of us instinctively think about our work and the level of standards we adhere to. But who are you beyond your work? Remember, you're more than your work. This isn't just about building confidence; this mindset is crucial to protecting yourself from letting shame and guilt affect you.

Think about this: what happens when you make a mistake at work? What will happen to this identity and your values?

When we wrap our identity around trying to meet some impossible challenge, we will be crushed, even if we know it is impossible. Not only will we lose our sense of self, but we'll also start to question our worth. "Am I enough?"

This episode covers how to rethink your values and deal with shame and guilt. The episode also outlines practical ways to get out of the shame spiral and realise how to have healthier values and principles.

If you've been feeling like you're constantly trying to prove yourself, this episode on shame is something you won't want to miss.

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Podcast Links:

You're Not a Frog Podcast Episodes relating to shame, guilt, and saying no:

- Episode 200: [What Shame Made Me Do](#)
- Episode 197: [How to Deal With Your Inner Critic](#)
- Episode 177: [Why You Should Expect Pushback and What to do About It](#)
- Episode 163: [Why Can't I Say No](#)
- Episode 152: [How Perfectionism and Shame Lead to Stress and Burnout](#)
- Episode 125: [How to Say No and Deal with Pushback](#)
- Episode 100: [Dealing With the Guilt of Not Being Okay](#)
- Episode 92: [How to Avoid Becoming the Second Victim with Dr Caraline Wright & Dr Lizzie Sweeting](#)
- Episode 7: [Why Saying Yes is Far More Dangerous Than Saying No with Dr Katie Bramall-Stainer](#)

Quote to remember:

'Please remember that you are trying your best. Nobody wakes up in the morning thinking I'm gonna be a psychopath today...you are good enough. You are trying your best and you're valuable as a human being.'

What You Will Learn

Most people think burnout is only caused by external stress and overwhelm. The reality is that burnout can also result from internal mindsets and what we believe in. When our values and standards are impossible to achieve, any failure to meet these standards will make us feel that we are not enough — leading to feelings of shame and guilt.

This workbook wants to challenge these beliefs and make you aware of any subconscious values you adhere to. The first part of this workbook focuses on your values and principles, starting with reflecting on past experiences of defensiveness and shame. From there, we investigate what you truly believe in and why certain experiences cause you to feel shame and guilt.



The second part of this workbook focuses on the S-H-A-M-E framework and takes you through each step. It will challenge you to think about how you can:

- Share — Share your shame and guilt with others
- Hang Out — Spent time with “useless” friends
- Awe — Be in awe of nature
- Multiple Identities — You’re more than who you are at work
- Empathy — Come to understand and empathise with yourself

This workbook is just the start. It may be hard to change overnight, but we assure you: keep working on yourself, and you'll eventually be free from the shackles of shame and achieve your highest potential.

Activity: Shifting Values and Utilising the S-H-A-M-E Framework

Part. 1 Reflecting on Your Values and Principles

Q1. How did your perspective on shame, guilt, values, and burnout change after listening to the episode?

Q2. Think back on past experiences. When are you usually triggered to become very defensive?

Q3. Let's delve further into these experiences and detangle your possible shame narratives. In the table below, list the experiences and what happened. Then, assess what you think you should have done or the standard you feel you didn't meet. Feel free to reflect on more than one experience.



What Happened	I Should Have...

Q5. Let's shift these values. How can you make your values and principles healthy and sustainable?

Observed Values and Principles	How I want to Change these Values and Principles

Part 2. Overcome Shame using the S-H-A-M-E Framework

Q6. Share — Share your shame with other people. Being vulnerable with people takes time. Focus on one shame or guilt you would like to tackle first. In the space below, brainstorm how you'd like to share your shame. You may choose to list specific people to share with or even consider posting anonymously in online support forums.





Q7. Hang Out — Spend time with "useless" friends who don't have ulterior motives. Reflect on the company you keep. When you hang out with friends, are there specific people with whom you feel you need to keep up an act? On the other hand, who do you enjoy spending time with because they don't need anything from you?

Friends who may have ulterior motives	"Useless" friends I enjoy spending time with

Q8. Awe — Get out of the shame spiral by being out in nature and be in awe of what's out there. When was the last time you took a walk in nature? You can plan a day trip or even just a simple walk. Schedule one now.

I commit to _____ on _____.

Q9. Multiple Identities — Learn to build multiple identities. Who are you beyond your work and professional life? If you have difficulty answering this question, reflect on your hobbies and roles in life outside work.

I am...





Q10a. Empathy and Understanding — Be aware of your feelings and cut yourself slack. Go back to your most common criticism about yourself. Now, shift your perspective. Talk to yourself like how you would to a friend. How would the statements change?

Common Self-Criticism	How a Friend Would Say It

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