

CORONAVIRUS MANAGING THE EFFECTS OF SHAME

Dear parent/carer

Shame is the emotion we feel when we consider our actions against moral ideals, and conclude that they fall short. To feel shame, we must experience a self-awareness of the judgement of others. Our entire self is encompassed by the feeling and produces a need to hide ourselves, or even disappear entirely.

There are three different models of shame which can result in physical expressions including blushing, drooped head and averted eyes:

Unrequited love is rejection or love that is not reciprocated and can feel intensely shameful, humiliating, ultimately affecting our self-esteem via 'self-blame'. When we have a negative perception of ourselves in the face of negative experiences like these, we might blame our "bad self". If we feel like this often, then we are likely to greatly affect our self-esteem.

Public mistakes are common. When our attention is drawn in public to a mistake we have made, we can feel humiliated and exposed by others. We are all aware of socially acceptable ways of behaving and, if we go against those, we can feel shame. If we are particularly self-conscious, we are more likely to feel shame or project that shame onto others.

Disappointment expectations can happen in all areas of our lives, for example, when your achievements are not rewarded at work, or when friendships/relationships turn hostile. As human beings, we naturally search for explanations and shame can be the emotion that we internalise through that process.

Remember, be patient and kind to yourselves as we embrace our new sense of normal in these challenging times.

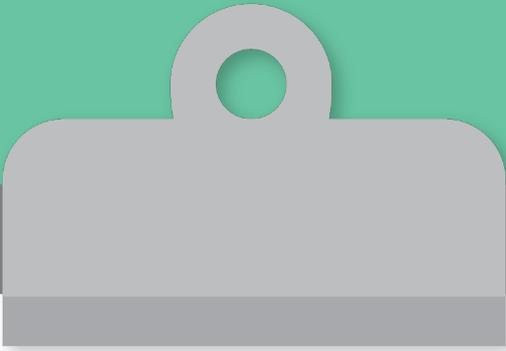
Take care.

The Unravel Team

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Experts in children & young people's
emotional well-being

Supporting you on behalf of your child's school



HOW YOU CAN EASE THE FEELING OF SHAME

- ✔ Address the strong urge to get rid of the feeling of shame because of how intense and uncomfortable it can make you feel. By allowing yourself to 'sit' in the emotion, thoughts and feelings to move transiently and you enable them to disperse. Having an awareness of your own triggers can lessen the impact of feelings of shame.
- ✔ Be aware of your self-talk. Judgement phrases like, "I'm not good enough", "I shouldn't feel this way", "Why can't I do things like other people?", "I should have..." can really strengthen your self-doubt. Try affirming and validating words like, "I am learning all the time", "I am worthy", "In this moment I feel...".
- ✔ Be self-compassionate. This is really important to help you re-frame the shaming event. It needs practice, so be patient with yourself.
- ✔ Separate your self-worth from what you do. If you define yourself by what you do, you can give others control over your happiness which can result in low self-worth.
- ✔ Alter the standards you live by. Be mindful that people do make mistakes and mistakes form part of our learning journeys.
- ✔ Talk to friends and family about the event that you feel shame about. Connection with others weakens the feelings of shame and allows you to view the event with forgiveness and love.



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**TOGETHER WE CAN
BEAT IT**

**Please keep yourselves
and your children safe**

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