

HEALING IMAGERY AFTER IDENTIFYING SHAME

Identifying shame is a crucial step in the process of healing, but the journey doesn't end there. This worksheet guides you through a deeper exploration of unmet needs and utilizes the power of imagination to foster healing. Keep in mind, these are advanced exercises that can bring up powerful and difficult emotions. I advise trying them with a therapist first and ensuring that you're well resourced before trying them at home.

1. IDENTIFYING UNMET NEEDS:

- ▶ Reflect on the recent situation where you experienced shame. What needs were left unmet in that moment? Consider aspects like understanding, empathy, validation, or recognition.
- ▶ List the specific needs that were missing during the shaming experience. For example, was there a need for comfort, acknowledgment, or feeling seen?

2. CONNECTING WITH YOUR INNER CHILD:

- ▶ Visualize your younger self in the moment of shame. How old are you in this image? Imagine the surroundings and the people involved.
- ▶ Connect with the emotions your younger self felt. What did you need in that moment to feel safe, understood, or valued?
- ▶ Consider how your adult self can provide support to your inner child. What words of comfort or actions could help fulfill the unmet needs?



3. LETTER WRITING EXERCISE:

- ▶ If the unmet need involves being heard, consider writing a letter to the person who shamed you (not to be sent). Express your feelings, needs, and desires. Be honest and compassionate with yourself.
- ▶ Read the letter out loud to yourself or, if you feel comfortable, share it with a trusted friend or therapist. This act of verbalizing your feelings can be a powerful step in the healing process.

4. IMAGINING HEALING SCENARIOS:

- ▶ Envision a scenario where a competent, caring adult provides you with what was missing during the shaming experience. This could involve understanding, reassurance, or simply being seen.
- ▶ Write down the details of this imagined scenario. How does it feel to receive the support and understanding you needed?

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Healing from shame involves acknowledging unmet needs and utilizing the power of imagination to provide the support you lacked in challenging moments. This process may connect with inner child work, offering an opportunity to nurture and care for your younger self. Remember that this is a personal and ongoing journey, and seeking support from others can be a valuable part of your healing process.

