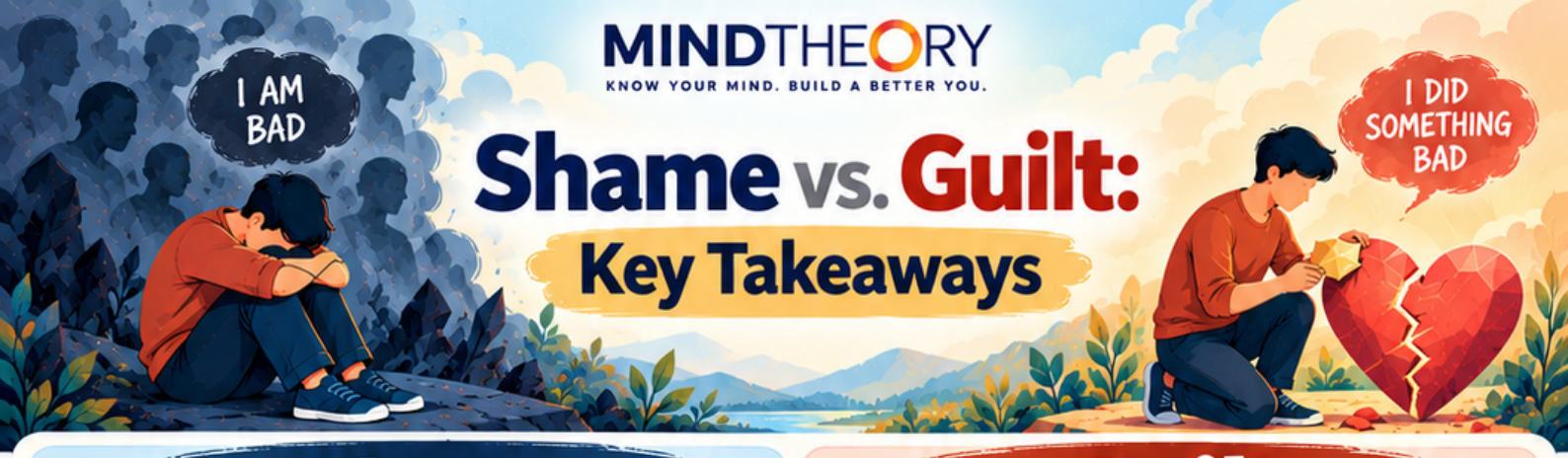
MINDTHEORY
KNOW YOUR MIND. BUILD A BETTER YOU.



Shame vs. Guilt: Key Takeaways

Shame
I AM BAD

Core Focus
Shame is about your identity. You see yourself as a bad, flawed or unworthy person.

Common Thoughts
"I am not good enough."
"I am a failure."
"Something is wrong with me."

Behavioral Outcomes
- Withdrawal and isolation
- Hiding mistakes
- Low self-esteem
- Fear of being judged

Psychological Impact
- Increases anxiety and depression
- Makes you feel small and alone
- Can lead to a cycle of self-criticism
- Blocks growth and positive change

Guilt
I DID SOMETHING BAD

Core Focus
Guilt is about a specific behavior. You feel bad about something you did, not about who you are.

Common Thoughts
"I made a mistake."
"I did the wrong thing."
"I need to make this right."

Behavioral Outcomes
- Takes responsibility
- Motivates positive change
- Encourages repair and apology
- Builds empathy and stronger relationships

Psychological Impact
- Can be uncomfortable but is healthy
- Helps you learn from mistakes
- Supports personal growth
- Leads to more positive and kind behavior

Brené Brown's 4 Steps to Shame Resilience

These steps can help you face shame, reduce its power, and build a kinder relationship with yourself.

1 Recognize and Name It
Notice when you are feeling shame and label it. Saying "this is shame" helps reduce its intensity.

2 Practice Self-Compassion
Be kind and supportive towards yourself, just like you would be with a friend in a difficult moment.

3 Reach Out for Support
Share your feelings with someone you trust. Connection helps you feel less alone and more understood.

4 Choose What Fits
Let go of what doesn't serve you and choose what helps you grow into the person you want to be.

4 Practical Ways to Reframe Self-Talk and Practice Self-Compassion

Use these simple strategies to move from shame to a healthier, kinder mindset.

1 Notice Your Inner Critic
- Pay attention to harsh self-talk.
- Pause and ask: "Would I say this to a friend?"

2 Use kinder, Balanced Language
"I am a failure." → "I made a mistake, but I can learn and do better."
- Replace absolute statements with balanced, compassionate ones.
- Focus on what you did, not who you are.

3 Take Responsibility Without Self-Attack
- Acknowledge what happened.
- Think about what you can do differently.
- Be accountable without being harsh on yourself.

4 Be Patient with Your Progress
- Changing self-talk takes time.
- Celebrate small steps.
- Remind yourself: progress is more important than perfection.

You are not your mistakes.
Feeling guilt can help you grow. Releasing shame can help you heal.

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