



TRUE NORTH
COUNSELING & WELLNESS

A KINDER RELATIONSHIP
WITH YOURSELF IS POSSIBLE.

Working With Shame

An IFS-informed journaling
exercise to explore, understand,
and compassionately hold
your shame parts.

*Shame loses
its power when
it is met with
curiosity, compassion,
and connection.*



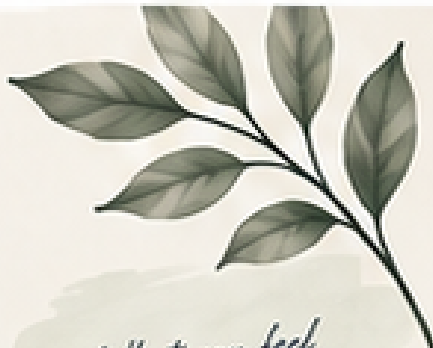
You are not
your shame.
You are so much
more than
your hardest
moments.

EXPLORE
REFLECT
BE COMPASSIONATE
RECLAIM YOUR STORY

1. Understanding Shame

Shame often tells us that there is something fundamentally wrong with us. It can make us feel flawed, defective, or unworthy of love, belonging, or connection. In IFS, we see shame as a part — often a protective part — that developed to keep us safe, often in response to past experiences, messages, or environments.

What does shame feel like in your body?
Where do you notice it?



*What you feel
makes sense.
A part of you
is trying to help
in the only way
it knows how.*



Shame is a signal,
not a truth.
It's a hurting part
asking for understanding
and care.



2. Getting to Know Your Shame Part

Let's get curious about the part of you that carries shame. There may be more than one part, and that's okay. Choose one part to explore.

What might this part look like, feel like, or be like?

How old does it feel?

What does it believe about you?

What is it afraid would happen if it didn't carry this shame?

What might it be trying to protect you from?

3. Listening With Compassion

Shame parts often feel rejected, alone, or unworthy. They may be very sensitive and can be easily activated by criticism, comparison, or feeling like we've made a mistake. Take a few moments to imagine sitting with your shame part. Let it know you're here to listen — not to fix, judge, or push it away. You can write a letter, have a dialogue, or simply reflect on the prompts below.



*Even the parts
we most want to hide
deserve to be seen
with kindness.*



What would you like this part to know?

What does it need to hear from you right now?

How can you let this part know that it is welcome, even with its shame?



Shame cannot survive
being spoken in a
compassionate voice.

— Brené Brown



*Curiosity creates space
for healing.*



4. Releasing and Reframing

As your shame part begins to feel seen and understood, you can invite it to soften. This doesn't mean the shame will disappear overnight, but with compassion and consistent attention, it can begin to release some of its burden.

*You are more
than your shame.
You are whole,
worthy, and
deeply human.*



What might this part need in order to feel safer and more at ease?

How can you offer this part compassion, support, or reassurance?

Is there a more balanced or compassionate belief you can offer instead of the shame message?

5. Moving Forward

Shame can make us want to hide, but healing happens in connection — with ourselves and with others we trust. As you continue this work, remember that you can come back to these prompts anytime. Your parts are always welcome.

What is one small, kind step you can take to support yourself this week?

What would it be like to live with more self-acceptance and less shame?

*Healing isn't about getting rid of your shame.
It's about changing your relationship with it.*

