

Ways to reduce Trauma Related Shame

1. Use compassion as a tool. It allows us to increase trust, connectedness, and calmness within ourselves through the release of oxytocin. Self-compassion has been researched and evident in reducing the effects of shame. When leveraged, it can be a powerful antidote in halting self-criticism, which is a top characteristic for those who have intense shame. Selfcompassion.org
2. Another fundamental way you can reduce shame includes distracting yourself from those negative thoughts so you can reconstruct mindful control of your emotions. You can train your mind to stop shameful feelings from lurking and wreaking havoc in your mind and form new, healthier ones instead on your recovery journey from PTSD. You can make a rule for yourself, such as when you feel a shame rising, you immediately turn on your favorite music, go for a walk, or call a close friend. Do what you need to do to distract yourself and your mind from entering that darkened place.
3. Shame often emerges when you are at your most vulnerable state, and for those with PTSD, it could very well be the same triggers that cause you to relive your painful past. This is because insecurities are a prime component for people to default to shame. Take some time to know what your shame triggers are so you can either learn to avoid them or be prepared with healthier ways of thinking when they do come about.
4. Be very aware of your language and how it affects you – language is very powerful. Instead of saying “I am bad” or “I am worthless”, say “I feel bad” or “I feel worthless”. The first statement reflects identification with a painful emotion, whereas the second statement allows for recognition of a feeling without being consumed by it.
5. Avoid “shoulds”. “Shoulds” are one way of pushing perfectionism or perceived expectations on yourself and rejecting your authentic presence. You might say, “I should be over this by now,” “I shouldn’t make mistakes,” or “I should be strong.” When you notice yourself using a “should”, stop, take a step back and focus on self-acceptance.
6. Imagine shame as a bully. This will allow us to get some space from it and allow us to talk back to it. How do you feel when the shame bully puts you down? What do you want to shame to know?

<https://drarielleschwartz.com/shame-in-complex-ptsd-dr-arielle-schwartz/#.Yd2-Qf7MJaQ>

<https://questpsychologyservices.co.uk/shame-why-does-it-come-from-trauma/>