Untangling a Shame Moment

Pick one recent moment. Move slowly. You're separating what happened from what shame said it means.

SHAME LEVEL NOW
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

1 **What happened?** Just the facts, the way a camera would record it.

2 **What did shame say about me?** Write it word for word, even if it's harsh.

"I'm _____."

3 **Where did I feel it?** Circle any that fit.

Hot face | Tight chest | Sinking stomach | Wanted to hide | Froze or went blank | Got defensive | Teary | Numb | Other: _____

4 **What was my brain up against?** Context isn't an excuse. It's information.

Sensory overload | Low sleep or energy | Hungry | A transition or surprise | Unclear expectations | Masking all day | Fear of rejection | Too many demands | Other: _____

5 **Is there anything to repair?** This is where shame turns into guilt you can act on.

☐ **Yes. My repair could be:**

☐ **No. This was a brain-needs moment.**
Nothing to fix about me. What I needed was:

6 **What would I say to a friend with my brain?** Now say it to yourself.

7 **One soft next step** Small and kind. Rest counts. Telling someone counts.

Shame level after untangling: 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Any drop counts. No drop is okay too. Some moments need more time or support.

Pairs with Brain Library handouts "Shame & the ND Brain" and "Shame at Work, at Home & in Love." If this brings up a lot, pause and reach out to someone you trust. Educational only, not therapy.