

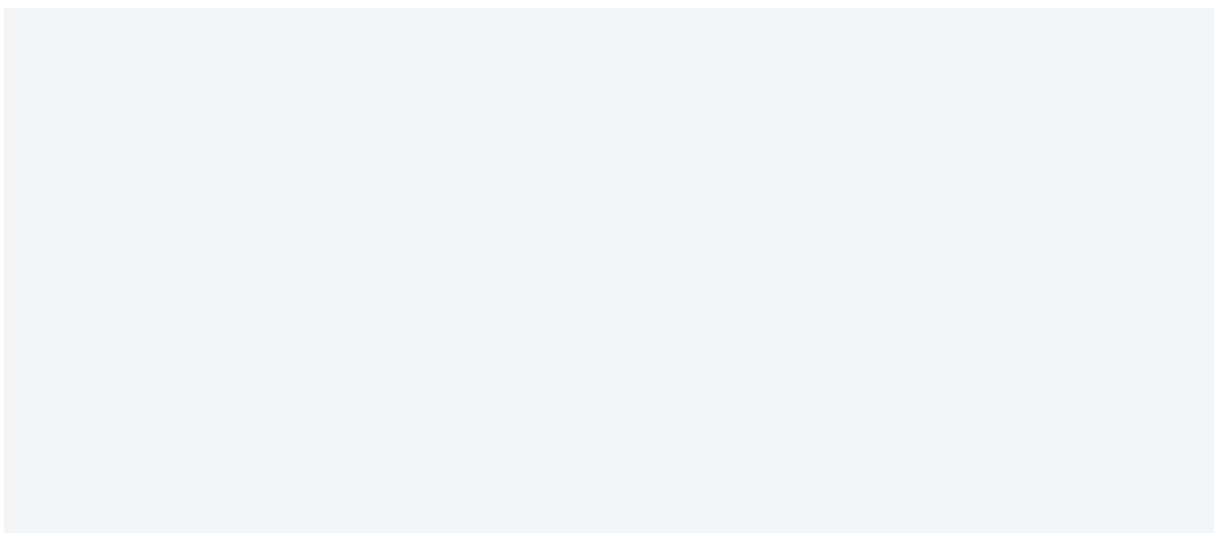
Guilt and Shame Emotions That Drive Depression

When an individual experiences depression, some of the more common feelings that come to mind are sadness and overwhelming emptiness. However, unhelpful guilt and shame can act as emotions that 'drive' you further into a depressive mood or state.

- **Helpful Guilt** is a feeling of discomfort about something that you've done that is objectively wrong.
- **Unhelpful Guilt** is a feeling of discomfort about something we have done against our standards. Typically, when you experience guilt, you emphasize self-punishment over your change in behavior. This can lead to depression, anxiety and a low feeling of self-worth.
- **Shame** is a deeply held belief about our worth as a person. It also causes us to feel like we will be rejected and result in disconnecting from others.

In order to identify patterns of unhelpful guilt or shame that might be harmful, consider the following activity:

Do you ever feel guilty for your depression or state of mind? List a few thoughts or reasons you experience guilt.

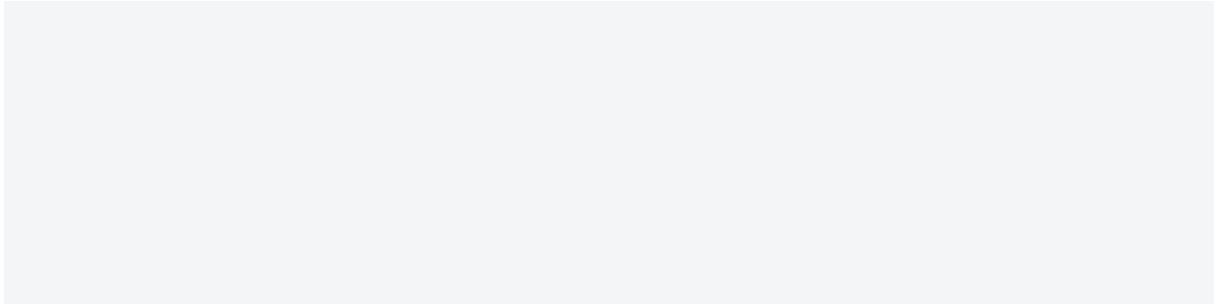


Does your guilty feelings ever contribute to feelings of self worth? Use the chart below to connect your guilty thoughts above to some feelings/recurring thoughts.

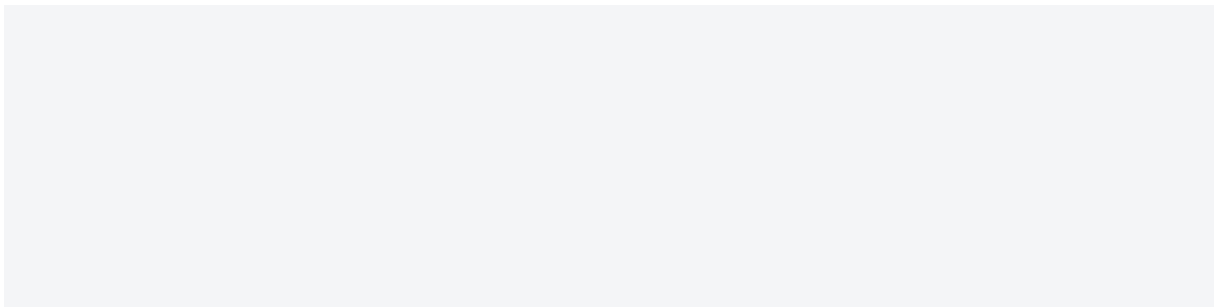
Guilty Thoughts	Self-Worth
"I feel awful that my family has to see me depressed."	I am a burden on those I love.

Now, use the chart below to help connect your guilty thoughts and self-worth to alternate solutions to help combat your depression.

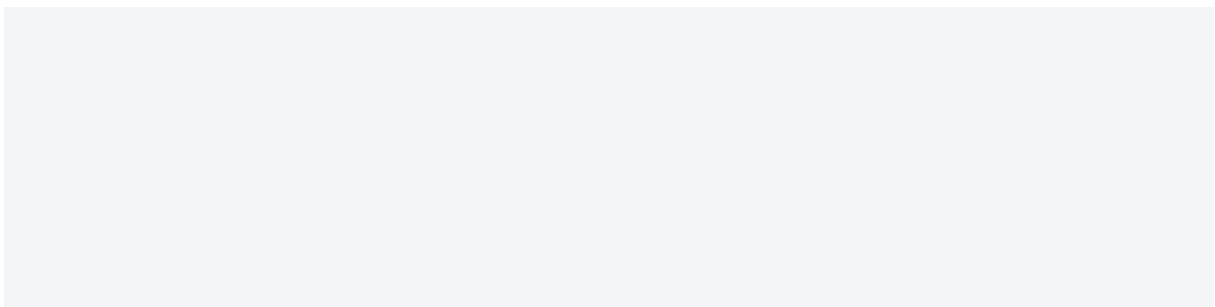
I feel guilty because



My perception of myself as a result of these feeling is



Another way I can think about this is



because I am a person who is worthwhile.

Gabriella Lancia, PhD