

# The Shame Detox Workbook

Release the story that the problem was you.

A gentle workbook for neurodivergent adults ready to start over — without shame.

*"You didn't fail the system.*

*The system failed you."*

— The Soft Systems

## How to Use This Workbook

### This is not a productivity exercise.

This workbook is about something more important than getting organised. It's about untangling the shame that built up every time a system let you down — and you blamed yourself for it.

**There is no wrong way to use this workbook.**

Skip pages. Write messily. Come back later. Use it on hard days and okay days.

### What's inside:

Part 1

Where the shame came from

Part 2

What you've been telling yourself

Part 3

Rewriting the story

Part 4

Moving forward without the weight

### A note before you begin:

You have been carrying something that was never yours to carry. This workbook is just the beginning of putting it down.

## Part 1 - Where the Shame Came From

*"Every failed planner left a mark. This is where we look at those marks."*

Shame doesn't arrive all at once. It builds slowly — one abandoned routine, one missed deadline, one 'I'll start again Monday' at a time. Before we can release it, we need to name it.

### REFLECTION

**The systems I've tried and abandoned:**

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### REFLECTION

After each failure, I told myself...

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**The truth:**  
Those systems were not designed for your brain. The failure was theirs.

## Part 2 · What You've Been Telling Yourself

The shame doesn't just live in memories — it lives in the voice that narrates your day. Let's surface what that voice has been saying, so we can stop letting it run the show.

TICK ALL THAT APPLY

### Thoughts I've had about myself:

- "Everyone else manages fine. Why can't I?"
- "I'm lazy. I just need more discipline."
- "I've tried everything. Nothing works for me."
- "I start strong and always let myself down."
- "I'm too chaotic to ever be consistent."
- "There must be something fundamentally wrong with me."

YOUR TURN

### Other thoughts I haven't admitted out loud:

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#### Notice this:

Every thought above is a conclusion you drew about yourself from broken evidence. You were the student given the wrong textbook and marked down for using it.

## Part 3 · Rewriting the Story

Shame survives on unchallenged stories. This section is about taking each belief and asking — is this actually true? Then replacing it with something more accurate.

### REFRAME EXERCISE

**The old story I've been telling myself:**

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**The evidence I used to reach that story:**

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**What I know now that changes that evidence:**

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**The new, more accurate story:**

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## Part 3 · Reframe Prompts

Use these prompts to challenge the beliefs you ticked on the previous page.

### **"I'm lazy"**

Laziness is a moral judgement. What you experience is a nervous system that struggles with activation — not a character flaw.

### **"I can't be consistent"**

Consistency is easier when systems match your brain. You've been consistent at lots of things — they just weren't being measured.

### **"Everyone else manages fine"**

Most people are masking. Many are struggling quietly. You're comparing your inside to their outside.

### **"I always let myself down"**

You've been setting yourself up with systems designed to fail. That's not letting yourself down — that's using the wrong tools.

## Part 4 · Moving Forward Without the Weight

Shame keeps us stuck by making the past feel like permanent evidence of who we are. This section is about choosing what you carry forward — and what you leave here.

### LETTING GO

**Things I am choosing to stop blaming myself for:**

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### CARRYING FORWARD

Things I now know to be true about how my brain works:

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### COMMITMENT

One thing I will try differently with Plan Without Pressure:

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## Affirmations to Return To

Read these on hard days. Or any day. They are all true.

I am not behind.

My brain works differently — not wrongly.

Rest is not failure. It is part of the system.

I am allowed to start again as many times as I need.

The system was broken. I am not.

Small progress is still progress.

I deserve a planning system that works for me.

**You've done the hard work of looking honestly at yourself.**

Now go use a system that was actually built for your brain.