

# ART THERAPY RESOURCES



## ART THERAPY CASE STUDY BACKGROUND: SHAME

Rebecca came to therapy due to intense feelings of anxiety from problems that had arisen in her marriage. Rebecca discloses that early in her marriage she had an affair and recent problems in her marriage brought these memories to the surface. Rebecca felt that disclosing her affair to her husband would relieve her feelings so she told him about the affair. The disclosure has brought out intense feelings in Rebecca's marriage and she constantly feels ashamed of what she's done.

This art therapy exercise focuses on exploring the impact shame has and the negative messages it reinforces about our experiences. Shame can impact our feelings of self-worth in various ways. When we are under that attack, it becomes difficult to find a way to move forward constructively. This exercise can occur after a discussion of shame and what it means to your client.

### INSTRUCTIONS:

- Ask your client to reflect on their experience of feeling shame.
- Do they feel there are common negative messages about their self-worth that is arising from feelings of shame?
- What is shame trying to tell your client about themselves? Maybe it is attacking through name-calling or staying in a loop of replaying hurtful conversations or images.
- Ask your client to reflect these feelings through artwork.
- Explore with your client the concept of using the artwork as a container to hold those feelings. This container is a safe space to express all hidden thoughts and emotions they may feel.



NOTE: more details can be found at [www.arttherapyresources.com.au/shame](http://www.arttherapyresources.com.au/shame)