

151. Ask a Coach: Good Shame vs Bad Shame



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Sara Brewer

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Welcome to the *Overcome Pornography For Good* podcast where we take a research-based, trauma informed and results focused approach to quitting porn. This approach has been revolutionary and changed thousands and thousands of lives. I'm your host, Sara Brewer.

Hi everyone, welcome to *Overcome Pornography For Good*. We are currently on a season break, and regular podcasting will resume January 1st. But we are still bringing you brand-new content every single week by sharing an Ask a Coach question and answer from me or from one of the other coaches in *Overcome Pornography For Good*.

Ask a Coach is a feature in the program, in our program *Overcome Pornography For Good*, where you can come and you can submit questions or coaching and get a personalized response from a coach on our team. This is something that when you join you get lifetime access to and you can submit as many questions as you would like.

You can submit 10 a day, 20 a day, you could come back down the road in three years and submit a question. You'll always get answers, you'll always get help and support via our portal through the Ask a Coach function in the program. So you can submit questions. If you're struggling you can ask for help. You can submit your learn and move-ons or other worksheets.

And so what we're doing right now is we are picking and choosing a few of these to answer anonymously, of course, here on the podcast until we pick back up with regular programming on January 1st. And I think you're going to love it, it's going to be so helpful and so good. And you get to hear from all the other coaches.

So before we hop in I do want to talk about a brand-new free resource that I have for you all that's perfect to announce during this podcast break. It is called The Podcast Roadmap. What this is, is it's a roadmap of all of the key podcast episodes. With around 150 episodes, that can feel really overwhelming if you're new to the podcast. So what we did is we created a roadmap.

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Here's 12 of the most important episodes to listen to. You can listen to them in order or not, but we have those listed out for you and linked for you and you can sign up for that and get that in your inbox for free at sarabrewer.com/podcastroadmap. No spaces, no dashes, podcast roadmap.

I really hope that you guys will go and take advantage of this. Even if you've been a longtime listener and you're using this podcast break to maybe catch up on episodes, go and download The Podcast Roadmap to re-listen to those most important episodes.

We also have our free masterclass that's always available if you want just the quick and easy version of how do I quit porn, that's sarabrewer.com/masterclass. It's just an hour long, it'll walk you through the process. It keeps it short and simple.

And then, of course, we always have our program open. So you can come and join and work with us. You can start getting answers to your Ask a Coach questions, you can come and get coaching. Remember, it's a lifetime access, so we've got the modules and all of the work for you to do in the program, the milestones to complete.

And then you have lifetime access to coaching calls. We have multiple coaching calls every single week. We have specialized marriage calls, relationship calls, support calls. We have regular coaching calls, which are the ones that I do. We have calls on each individual milestone. Anyways, there's so much in there. I won't go into all of those details here, but you can see all the details of the program, sarabrewer.com/workwithme.

All right, you guys, enjoy these Ask a Coach Q&As.

Hey, everyone, Sara here. I am going to do the Ask a Coach question for this week. And the question that we're going to talk about is, is all shame bad? And my answer to this is yes and no. It really comes down to semantics, right?

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The way that I use this phrase is, yeah, shame is destructive and something like guilt is going to be constructive, typically. But I know other people use phrases like good shame versus bad shame. It's really just semantics.

Here's the important thing, we're looking at the results. We're looking at the results of your life. The results of what you're doing. The results of the emotion that you're feeling. And so if the emotion is creating negative results for you, then it wouldn't be a great emotion to use. It would be like a "bad" emotion to use, and I don't like using that word. It's not a bad emotion, no emotions are bad, but it's just not a helpful emotion.

So is all shame bad? Yes and no. If shame is leading you to hide and avoid, to get into self-destruct mode, to think there's something wrong with you and you're just the worst and you spiral and spiral and spiral, yeah, that's not going to be useful.

Now, I like to use the term guilt versus shame. So guilt would be something that is like a trigger. It triggers, hey, this action that you took didn't quite align with your values. Hey, this thing that you did was not a great thing to do. Maybe where you feel some remorse and you don't feel proud of the way that you acted, okay?

That can be really helpful. In fact, we all need those types of emotion. And if we're not having those types of emotion, we're probably sociopaths. It's good to have little bells that go off in our brain that say, oh, that was not really how I wanted to act and I feel a little bit of remorse here, or a lot of remorse here, okay?

Now that can be really helpful if it just helps us get back on track and helps us act more vigilant and helps us become who we want to become. It is not helpful if it turns into, there's something wrong with me, I'm never going to change, hide, avoid, beat myself up, get into all or nothing spirals, be afraid that I'm going to be stuck in this forever, right? So that's not going to be helpful.

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So, again, we're looking at the results, the results, the results, the results. If the result, if you're like, "Oh, I'm getting rid of shame. I'm never feeling shame. I'm never feeling any remorse. I'm never feeling guilt." And the result is that you swing into justification and justifying your actions so that you're not able to live a life that lines up with their values and you're not living a life that is freeing and beautiful and full of great, healthy relationships with yourself, with other people.

We really want to avoid those types of emotions. Or at least not act – Not avoid, that's the wrong word too, but not act from those emotions, right? So we want to watch and see if it's swinging into justification, we just want to bring your right back here in the middle. If it's swinging into deep shame, we want to bring it right back here in the middle.

Now, the thing about guilt is that guilt needs to be released for it to stay helpful. Or if you're using the terms good shame versus bad shame. The good shame needs to be released for it to stay helpful. Here's what I mean by that, if you're driving down the road, some of you have probably heard me use this example before.

But if you're driving down the road and you cut someone off and you weren't looking and you made a dumb mistake on the road, and you almost got into a car accident and someone honks at you, honk, that's a good thing.

You needed to be told, "Oh, I shouldn't have done that. I need to watch, I need to be a little bit more vigilant." And then after you get honked at, you're a little more careful. You're more vigilant. You're watching where you are on the road. You're making sure that you're safe, and you're keeping everyone else on the road safe.

Now, if that car behind you continues to honk, honk, honk, honk, honk, honk, honk and follow you around for the next 30 minutes, it's going to become a nuisance and it's going to become more dangerous than helpful, right? You're going to get frustrated. You're going to get irritated. You might

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act stupidly because of the flare up of emotion around it. It's not going to be helpful anymore, it's just going to be a nuisance.

And so it's the same with guilt, or with good shame if you're using that word, right? It's the same with guilt. It's really helpful to see where we are, to make sure we're living a healthy good life, that we're lining up with our values. But if we continue to guilt ourselves over and over and over and over again for the same thing, it becomes a nuisance and turns into shame.

So, back to the original question, is all shame bad? What I want you to do is look at the results. Here's what we want, the results of the shame that you're feeling. If the results of the shame that you're feeling are helpful and good, it's probably less, like I would maybe classify it more as guilt. Some people might classify it as good shame.

If the results are that you are hiding, avoiding, viewing more porn, just getting stuck and feeling awful about yourself, that's something that we don't want to be operating from, okay?

All right, you guys, thank you for being here. And we'll talk to you next week. Bye bye.

I want to invite you to come and listen to my free class, How To Overcome Pornography For Good Without Using Willpower. We talk about how to stop giving in to urges without pure willpower or relying on phone filters so that you can actually stop wanting pornography.

We talk about how to stop giving up after a few weeks or months. And spoiler alert, the answer isn't to have more willpower. And then lastly, we talk about how to make a life without porn easily sustainable and permanent.

If you're trying to quit porn, this class is a game changer. So you can go and sign up at Sarabrewer.com/masterclass, and it is totally free.