

## Assessing Our Shame

(taken from *Looking Good Outside Feeling Bad Inside* pages 9-12)

It is not easy to assess our shame. Part of this difficulty lies in the fact that the more shame we have, the greater our denial will be. Therefore I have designed the Shame Indicator, a self-assessment tool that helps identify the level of our shame. As self-assessment is meant to be constructive and confidential, we must be committed to answering the questions honestly and thoughtfully in order to gain an accurate appraisal of our shame. The resulting information can then guide us in recovery.

### Shame Indicator:

#### *A Self-Assessment Profile of Shame*

Instructions: Respond to each question by circling either T for True or F for False. When in doubt, base your response on the answer that appears most correct.

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| T | F | 1. I have been told that I have poor eye contact, slump my shoulders, or blush easily.                       |
| T | F | 2. I am more perfectionistic than I would like to be.  |
| T | F | 3. I get defensive when others criticize me.   |
| T | F | 4. It is relatively easy for me to criticize members of my family, people at work or school, God, or myself. |
| T | F | 5. I don't accept compliments well.  |
| T | F | 6. When I'm lost I find it difficult to ask for directions or help from others.                              |
| T | F | 7. When I make mistakes I feel bad for hours, even days.   |
| T | F | 8. I find it difficult to trust that others will meet my needs.  |
| T | F | 9. When things go wrong I have a hard time accepting blame.  |
| T | F | 10. I cannot talk to my friends and family about my fears and disappointments.                               |
| T | F | 11. I feel down, hopeless, and overwhelmed a good deal of the time.  |
| T | F | 12. I feel that I get angrier or angry more often than most people.  |
| T | F | 13. I find it hard to rest or relax without feeling guilty.  |
| T | F | 14. I was teased and called names when I was young.  |
| T | F | 15. I rarely reveal my feelings.   |
| T | F | 16. If someone does me a favor, I worry about having to return it.   |
| T | F | 17. I am sure I have addictive qualities in my personality.  |
| T | F | 18. I have difficulty holding a job or maintaining a friendship for a long period of time.                   |

- T F 19. As a child I felt neglected or abused.
- T F 20. I have a hard time believing that God can fully love and accept me.
- T F 21. I never allow myself to get angry.
- T F 22. My family of origin did not encourage or nurture my self-worth.
- T F 23. I have great difficulty getting close to people.
- T F 24. I have secrets that would surprise and shock others.
- T F 25. I feel embarrassed or humiliated by certain things from my past.
- T F 26. Growing up I received little or no support or praise for my accomplishments.
- T F 27. I have trouble praying to God after I do something wrong.
- T F 28. When with my family of origin, I rarely feel as if I'm treated as an adult.
- T F 29. I feel things must be done my way.
- T F 30. I take myself too seriously.

Scoring: Calculate the score by assigning one point to every TRUE response, then adding all of the points.

SCORE: \_\_\_\_\_

Interpreting your Shame Indicator score:

Score	Level of Shame
0-9	limited
10-14	moderate
15 or more	significant

According to this informal test, the higher the score, the greater our probable level of shame. In contrast, the lower the score, the less our shame. However, a low score also could indicate denial.