

# How to make shame smaller

**There are different types of shame – helpful and unhelpful shame.**

- If we did a bad thing the shame fits the facts and helps us right our wrongs.
- Shame is also part of the trauma we feel in our body when we can't escape an abusive person. Shame makes us curl up and feel "small". This helps protect us by reducing the abusive person's unwanted attention. But this shame can stick on the victim long after the threat passes. It makes us feel sad, worried, angry and unable to connect.
- This shame becomes unhelpful. We haven't done a bad thing on purpose. We can help this shame reduce.

**Past**



**Present**



## Strategies

How do we stand up strong?

- Take pride in culture, language, Country, family.
- Be kind to ourselves. Give yourself a break.
- Keep coming back to the here and now – shame is from the past but gets triggered in the present.
- We can ask loved ones if they would feel the same shame? Shame grows in the dark and shrinks in the light! If treated with kindness, shame reduces.
- When we express our shame and are offered love and support – shame reduces