

Guilt free living

How to break free



Guide to guilt free living

By Dr Mariette Jansen

Guide to guilt free living

I am soooooo pleased you requested this guide.

Why?

Because it means you recognise how the unhelpful emotion of guilt doesn't contribute to a happy life.

And I know I can help you to change your perception and the way this dark cloud colours your life.

It doesn't have to be like this.

Guilt is a choice.

And you can choose to live without it.

Downloading this guide is a great step towards creating the freedom from guilt.

I have been fed the guilt pill for years.

My parents were experts in spoiling every situation by pointing out how 'lucky' I was compared to my disabled brother and my unwell sister. Trying to fill me up with guilt and using that as a tool to make me act in ways that suited them. Coming home a lot, parting with money, feeling guilty about having a 'normal' life.

I got out of it.

It was a bit of a journey but hey, it well worth it!

I am sharing my knowledge and experiences and hope it helps you to take a distance from that wild dangerous animal GUILT.

Healthy guilt

Guilt is a functional and helpful feeling to point out to yourself that you did something wrong. And what do you do when something is wrong?

You apologise.

You rectify it.

You make up for it.

End of story and thank you guilt for pointing out I made a mistake.

Unhealthy guilt

Unhealthy guilt is a feeling that isn't based on you doing something wrong. It is an automatic response, which is based on subconscious processes:

- Locus of valuation – fear about external LOV or having an unloving internal LOV;
- Limiting Beliefs
- Blurred boundaries.

Locus of valuation

Psychologist Benjamin Voyer explains: "Guilt is what we call an 'other-focused emotion' - that is an emotion that involves thinking about others. It is the opposite of 'ego-focused' emotions, such as 'pride' for instance. Other-

focused emotions are predominant with individuals who see themselves as closely related to others.”

In our culture and upbringing most women are programmed and conditioned to be more focussed on others then onto themselves. With this comes an external LOV, where the opinion of others is perceived as more important than one’s own opinion. And as all humans are looking for validation and confirmation, women are looking to get that from an external source. Other people’s feedback and approval of their behaviour is important for the sense of well-being and happiness.

When you live with an internal LOV, you value your own opinion more than others. This makes you independent and autonomous. It is irrelevant what others think of you. It gives a sense of freedom to act according to your own ideas and values. However, often the internal LOV is strongly influenced by the external LOV and could give the same messages. In which case it will only enhance the sense of guilt.

Looking at other people for validation is tiring and nerve-racking as you never know for sure what goes in someone else’s head. Wanting to do it right and receiving the approval becomes the (subconscious) drive for all actions. The questions that go with it are: ‘What will they think? Will I do it right in their

eyes? Will they tell me I have done it wrong?' And if they tell you you got it wrong, the guilt kicks in.

The judgment of others creates your guilt.

If your internal LOV is just a replication of your external LOV it will support you feeling guilty. However, looking at your internal LOV will help you to create a distance and independence away from the externally induced guilt.

Limiting beliefs

Unhealthy guilt is often manufactured and based on ideas which are actually not true. These ideas are passed on from others earlier in life and are called limiting beliefs. An idea that holds you back instead of empowering you.

These beliefs are hiding in your subconscious. Limiting beliefs are ideas such as 'It is selfish to put yourself first' or 'A good mother always puts her children first'.

Limiting beliefs are guidelines that don't serve you.

They keep you into your place.

Down there.

Never up here.

Boundaries

'You are you and I am me. Whatever you decide is your responsibility. Not mine. And you need to take responsibility for your choices. That is not my job.'

This sounds great, but how often do you take responsibility for a situation you haven't created? A situation that is beyond your control and has nothing to do with you.

If you overstep the boundaries between you and another person, you are inclined to take on the guilt on their behalf.

Like the mum who feels guilty when her son is late, because he didn't get up in time. Who's responsibility is it?

What about you?

You requested this guide. Most likely because you recognise there is too much guilt in your system and you would love to have less.

Great.

Because guilt is stifling, suffocating and oppressive. It stops you from enjoying the moment, throws a cloud over sunny events and keeps you awake with concerns about what happened.

Your steps to living free of guilt

Emotions prevent you from seeing a situation for what it really is. If you step away from emotions, you will be able to look at a situation from a different perspective. A rational perspective helps to see the 'naked' facts and offers an insight in your personal approach. This insight offers you the opportunity to make changes.

When you are overwhelmed with guilt, you are in an emotional state. Not being able to look rationally at a situation and just consider facts.

To help you make that transition from being emotional to rational, I have created a checklist and if you go through this checklist for every situation where you feel guilt, you will become aware of what is causing it. Having that awareness gives you the option of choice.

I am presenting 7 examples, which will show you how to use the checklist. If you struggle, please know that you can book a FREE coaching session with me to talk you through it. [Click here if you want to book a slot.](#)

Checklist

When you start using the checklist make sure you have a separate little notebook to write down your experiences, the answers to the questions, make notes on how you dealt with this situation or similar situations.

Oh dear, there it is guilt

What is the situation?

Who are involved?

What is the little voice inside my head telling me?

What is going on about

- locus of valuation (external and internal)
- limiting beliefs
- boundaries?

What have I done wrong?

Can I rectify it? If so how?

To whom and how should I apologise?

How can I make up for it?

And then, you can close the case

Anna feels guilty when she wins a tennis match. 'I feel bad for making her lose.'

Oh dear, there it is guilt

What is the situation? Anna and someone else have decided to play a match. Both take the risk to lose. But they enjoy the game and are

both competitively working hard to get the win. Anna played better, so she won.

Who are involved? Anna and her opponent.

What is the little voice inside my head telling me? 'I feel bad. I made her feel bad. She might have an awful rest of the day. It is my fault'.

She might hate me for it.'

Is it about locus of valuation / limiting beliefs / boundaries?

Ext LOV (unhelpful) I am worried she doesn't like me now

Int LOV (helpful) But actually, if she decides that she likes or dislikes me based on the results of a tennis match it doesn't make sense to take that seriously. Do I really care? I haven't been nasty, I played a fair game and I am a better player.

LB – It's nice to let others win – This is something my mother used to say. It's not that important to win and why not be kind and let someone else win? But then, why is that other person not letting me win? When you engage in a match, it is normal to try and win. It has nothing to do with being nice or nasty.

Boundaries – not relevant

What have I done wrong? Nothing

Can I rectify it? If so how? NA

To whom and how should I apologise? NA

How can I make up for it? NA

Case closed

Beatrice pointed out that her guilt complex meant that anyone could make her do anything if they played the guilt card.

Oh dear, there it is guilt

What is the situation? Neighbour asked her for a lift to the station during morning traffic. B usually took her dog for a walk at that time before starting work. There is no other time to walk her dog.

Who are involved? Neighbour, Beatrice and dog

What is the little voice inside my head telling me? Oh no, she expects me to bring her. She will be angry if I don't do it and I will feel bad.

But if I don't walk dog, dog will feel awful today. She doesn't deserve that and I will feel equally bad.

Is it about locus of valuation / limiting beliefs / boundaries?

Ext LOV – she will think badly of me. If I say no, she will think my dog is more important than she is

Int LOV – My dog is more important than my neighbour, I choose her over my neighbour and that is perfectly okay.

LB – 'Always help others whenever you can' B didn't want to not help her, but she had to make a choice between neighbour and dog.

Boundaries – Is it B's responsibility to neighbour to the station? Is it B's choice to take an early morning train? If neighbour makes that choice, who should carry the consequences? B can be helpful by finding another solution.

Maybe get an Uber? Or finding a dog walker?

What have I done wrong? The 'mistake' would be to choose the dog over the neighbour. But that is not really wrong, is it?

Can I rectify it? If so how? Discuss choices, like a later train or a taxi.

To whom and how should I apologise? NA

How can I make up for it? NA

Case closed

Carla feels guilty about working and not seeing enough of her kids. But if she leaves early for a parents evening she feels guilty about seeing her kids and not working.

Oh dear, there it is guilt

What is the situation? The parents evening is important and needed to be attended. As a result C didn't attend a meeting at work.

Who are involved? Children (happy), colleagues (couldn't care less), C

What is the little voice inside my head telling me? OMG, I will be behind tomorrow and my colleagues won't like it. Maybe I could work tonight to make up for it. Bad mum, bad career woman, tsjeeee, you can't do anything right.

Is it about locus of valuation / limiting beliefs / boundaries?

Ext LOV – What will my boss/colleagues say? They will think I am unreliable, always out of the office, holding the project back.

Int LOV – As I continuously juggle, there are choices to be made about priorities. In this situation I prioritise being a mum instead of being a professional. And I am okay with that.

LB – ‘Professionals spend long days at the office’ ‘Mums are always there for her kids’ – Both LBs need to be unravelled

Boundaries - NA

What have I done wrong? Not attended meeting

Can I rectify it? If so how? Read minutes

To whom and how should I apologise? No one

How can I make up for it? Start half an hour earlier tomorrow

Case closed

Dorine feels guilty about not seeing her friends enough, which means she feels guilty every time she's alone, because she feels like there's someone she should be seeing.

Oh dear, there it is guilt

What is the situation? D spends the evening reading her new book, curled up on the sofa and has an early night

Who are involved? D

What is the little voice inside my head telling me? ‘You could be seeing XYZ. You are selfish hanging here. You should at least call her.

What friend are you?’

Is it about locus of valuation / limiting beliefs / boundaries?

Ext LOV – I am not telling XYZ that I had a night in, otherwise they will be angry with me and possibly think they are not important to me.

Int LOV – Fuelled by lack of self-love ‘You are not a good friend, you should see XYZ’

LB – ‘Other people’s wishes are more important than yours’
Needs some re-evaluation.

Boundaries - NA

What have I done wrong? Nothing

Can I rectify it? If so how? NA

To whom and how should I apologise? NA

How can I make up for it? NA

Case closed

Elisa is a single mum on benefits and needs to be very careful with money. She feels guilty she can't buy organic food for her kids.

Oh dear, there it is guilt

What is the situation? Elisa doesn't have the budget to buy what she would buy, in an ideal world.

Who are involved? E and her children, who are actually not aware of her struggle

What is the little voice inside my head telling me? 'Bad mum, you can't even give your children what they need. You are a failure. Useless mother.'

Is it about locus of valuation / limiting beliefs / boundaries?

Ext LOV – 'Other people will think I am a bad mum, not giving my children the best.'

Int LOV – Based on lack of self-love and compassion for her own situation, E is telling herself off. Only fuelling the guilt.

LB – 'You should only have kids if you can give them the best'
Food for thought....

Boundaries – E's situation is just what it is. She has to make the most of it. But her children don't know and most likely don't mind.

What have I done wrong? Nothing

Can I rectify it? If so how? Maybe in a different stage in life when C has a job and more income

To whom and how should I apologise? NA

How can I make up for it? NA

Case closed

Fiona's partner got hit by glandula fever and needs to take it easy. She feels guilty when she leaves him alone at home, to go out and have fun.

Oh dear, there it is guilt

What is the situation? Partner needs to rest and stay in bed, F is out and about to go to cinema and meet friends.

Who are involved? Partner and F

What is the little voice inside my head telling me? 'You are selfish, do you think it is right that you have fun when he can't? You should support him by staying with him. Even though he is in bed and asleep'

Is it about locus of valuation / limiting beliefs / boundaries?

Ext LOV – Partner might think I am selfish or that I don't love him and prefer to be somewhere else, others might think I am selfish...

Int LOV – It doesn't make a difference for the healing process if I am around or not. I can do with an evening out, to re-energise and then I will be an even better nurse to partner.

LB – 'You always should be with someone who is not well' 'It is bad to have fun when someone else can't join in'

Boundaries – Partner needs to recover, that is his task. It is not Fiona's task. Her not being there for a few hours doesn't help nor hinder him.

What have I done wrong? Nothing

Can I rectify it? If so how? NA

To whom and how should I apologise? NA

How can I make up for it? NA

Case closed

Georgia said: “I feel guilty about everything. **EVERYTHING**. It sometimes feels as if I **feel guilty for the sake of feeling guilty**. It takes over completely and I can’t even remember what I **feel guilty about**.”

Oh dear, there it is guilt

What is the situation? Georgia has a big task here as she should sit down and start to list all her daily events and analyse them according to the checklist. This will give her an insight in a range of situations.

Then, it would help her to tackle one situation at the time and behave differently. Making a different choice and again go through the checklist to learn what triggers her guilty feelings and train herself in developing different responses.

Her case won’t be closed soon.....

Conclusion

Guilt has travelled with you and in you for a long time. Don’t expect it to leave you within no-time. But if you start looking at it from a rational perspective, using the checklist to get a clear picture of what is going on, you can change your awareness, perspective and responses. And step by step you will be able to take control of this wild emotional animal called GUILT.

Support

If you are looking for support to develop clarity on locus of valuation, limiting beliefs or boundaries, please contact me to book a FREE coaching call. Just email me to book a slot. I would love to help you to shed the guilt.



Lots of love,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mariette".

Mariette

About Dr Mariette Jansen

Dr Mariette Jansen is a qualified and experienced psychotherapist, life coach, meditation teacher and NLP and EFT practitioner, helping people since 2001 to understand how they get in the way of their happiness through thoughts and behaviour. Focus areas are anxiety, confidence and life purpose. Received a PhD for external communications, worked as a management consultant before changing careers. Studied counselling and psychotherapy

in Richmond and London and built a private practice in London, while teaching counselling at MET and Brunel universities.

Designed an award winning stress management technique based on Mariette's One Minute Meditation.

Columnist for Darling Magazine, a ladies magazine.

Author of a self-help course for exam stress and a book on meditation.

Published so far 2 online courses – one for driving test stress and one on decluttering.

Her blog <https://drdestress.co.uk> got several wards, the latest being number 8 in the Feedspot top 10 coaching blogs UK

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