Riley's Story -
How does shame show up in this relationship?

When I first met Jamie, everything felt exciting. They were funny, confident, and always made me feel special.

They sent good-morning messages before I was even awake and told me things like, "I've never met anyone like you" and "You make my life better." At first, it felt amazing, like real love. Jamie wanted to spend all their time with me, walk me to class, and video-chat every night. My friends said it was intense, we had only been seeing each other for a couple of weeks, but I thought that just meant we were close.

After a couple of months, Jamie started to change little things. They'd ask who I was talking to online, why I hadn't replied straight away, or why I was hanging out with certain friends. If I said I was busy, they'd go quiet or send messages like, "I guess you don't care anymore."

Whenever I tried to explain myself, Jamie would sigh and say, "You always make out it's my fault," or "You are the one choosing your friends over me". Each time, I'd end up apologising even when I wasn't sure I had done anything wrong.

I began to notice how quickly Jamie could switch moods. One day they'd bring me a gift, like my favourite drink or ask me to do something I enjoy like going to the cinema and say, "I'm sorry I said those things to you, I just really like you and want to spend more time with you" and the next they'd accuse me of flirting if I laughed when talking to my friends. They said things like, "You're making me and your friends uncomfortable when you flirt like that."

Soon, I stopped spending time with my friends as much, I knew it was upsetting Jamie. I told myself it was easier to keep Jamie happy. I felt guilty for making excuses not to see people, but I didn't want an argument and I couldn't talk to my friends about it, I just don't think they would understand. When I did see my friends, I caught myself checking my phone constantly, worried that Jamie might be upset again.

Now I feel anxious about how Jamie will react to me, I really want the version of Jamie who made me feel amazing at the start. Maybe it's my fault for making it like this? But another part of me knows that person only shows up when I do what they want and I'm not sure how to keep doing that. When they make me feel special I know they care about me really, they just have a funny way of showing it.

I keep wondering, how did I go from feeling loved to feeling like everything's my fault?

Reflection Sheet

Take a few minutes to think about today's lesson.
Answer the questions below - there are no right or wrong answers, just your honest thoughts.

1. Where can people go for support if they are concerned about their relationship?

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2. Complete the sentence 'In a healthy relationship, people...

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3. What's one thing you learned or will remember from today?

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Pick ONE option from below and answer the questions in the space provided:

Option A	Option B	Option C
What has shifted in your thinking about relationships today and why?	What did you learn about yourself during this lesson? What strengths can you identify?	How did you show respect for others throughout this lesson?

Choose your question: ___ (Write the letter here)

Your answer:

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