'Guilty Secret' Questionnaire

1: Most people have a secret, or even several secrets, and would be horrified if the whole world were to know about it. Now, if you have such a secret, I'll never ask you to tell me about it but it helps the therapy greatly if I know there's something there. So, is there anything that you really want to keep absolutely to yourself?

No ↓

Yes →

1.1: Okay, thank you, And can you now tell me how bad that would feel on a scale of 1 – 10 if *everybody* knew about it? Make it really vivid in your mind.

We need the highest possible PAL here. If < 6 we can probably ignore it.

1.2: Good, thank you. Now can you tell me if this is (a) about the way you are, so that you didn't choose it; or (b) it's about something you did; or (c) it's about something you still do. You can tell me it's any of those, all of those, or just 'a' and 'c', for instance.

This covers every eventuality and we need to know in order to allocate the best replacement response.

1.3: Okay – now, sometimes, anxious secrets of that sort can get in the way of the best results for therapy. It's possible to take the anxiety out of it while we're working if you want to so we can get the best result for you. You won't need to say even one word about it but I'll only work at it if you agree. We can still do some good work, though, if you don't want to. So, yes or no?

Yes [ ]; No [ ]
a b c choice/combination:

← Now continue in column 1

2: Original Question 1

If 'yes' to 1:3: This routine is going to be directive, rather than content free and you will begin by helping the client to grasp the idea that sometimes a guilty secret can contribute to physical illness. When this is the case, the therapy we are doing might well make changes for the future, but in order for that to work, we have to disable the associated guilty feelings at least for a while. Get agreement on this point before continuing.

You will be using prefabricated replacement responses dependent upon which of the (a), (b), or (c) responses your client has given.

(a): *You didn't choose it, so it's not your fault*

(b): *You've been punished enough now*

(c): *When you are stronger you will stop doing that*

<u>Any combination of 2 or 3 of a, b and c:</u> *You're making changes today*

(This last option is <u>almost</u> universal enough to be applied to all circumstances but the first three are more 'targeted' and might be better with specific circumstances.)

- We avoid the PAL here – we need to deal with this issue and close it in one session
- Hold some representation of the secret in thoughts, then Zoom and freeze
- Fade to pale colours - this is like NLP but we avoid fading to black and white so there is still a connection with reality but greatly diminished
- Now the Replacement Response but handled like suggestion therapy: *"Now I want you to create an image in your mind that means* <whichever of the above is valid> *and drag it in front of that frozen image so that it become such apart of that frozen image that you can really* ***feel*** *it, and just nod once when you have it."*
- Continue as the standard protocol (6 loops) but without testing the PAL

NB: If we test the PAL in this routine the client might be fearful that the therapy won't work if the PAL isn't reduced enough. We ***can*** *enquire as to how much (<u>not 'if'!)</u> less uncomfortable the secret feels now we've worked at it, confirming that it's good when it's reduced. If it's the same, we can say that this proves it to be static and therefore not affecting anything. If it's more uncomfortable, we can say this shows it to be active and there's a need to desensitise it – and the client now has two choices:*

1. *Go through the above again working harder with the replacement response.*
2. *Tell you what the secret is so that you can help them disarm it.*

Most clients will opt for 1.