

The Practice

Ask Yourself First

If **self-abandonment** means **losing** connection with yourself, then **self-trust** begins with **rediscovering** connection. This week, I'd like you to practise one simple habit: **before considering what anyone else wants, needs, thinks, or expects, pause and ask yourself first.**

- ♥ What do I think?
- ♥ What do I feel?
- ♥ What do I want?
- ♥ What do I need?

You don't have to act on the answers, justify them, or share them. Your only job is to **ask the questions.**

Many people who struggle with self-abandonment have become so accustomed to focusing on others that they skip this step entirely. A request is made, a problem appears, a decision needs to be made, and immediately their attention moves outward.

- ♥ What does everyone else need?
- ♥ What will keep everyone happy?
- ♥ What will avoid disappointment?
- ♥ What will cause the least conflict?

This week, I want you to interrupt that automatic process.

- ♥ When someone asks something of you, pause, and ask yourself, what do I need right now?

- ♥ When you're making a decision, pause, and ask yourself, what works best for me?
- ♥ When you notice a strong emotion, pause, and ask yourself, am I being logical?
- ♥ When you find yourself automatically agreeing, helping, fixing, rescuing, or accommodating, pause and ask yourself, does this really work for me?

You may discover that you don't know the answer immediately and that's okay; many people who have spent years abandoning themselves need time to rebuild that connection. The goal is not to have perfect answers; **the goal is to start asking the questions.**

At the end of each day, spend a few moments reflecting:

- ♥ How many times did I check in with myself today?
- ♥ What did I discover?
- ♥ What surprised me?
- ♥ What did I acknowledge that I would normally have ignored?
- ♥ What did I need that I would normally have dismissed?
- ♥ What did I feel that I would normally have pushed aside?

Don't judge what you find; simply notice it. Every time you pause and consult with yourself first you send yourself a powerful message: **my thoughts matter, my feelings matter, my needs matter, my voice matters.**

And perhaps for someone who's spent years adapting to everyone else's needs, that's one of the most important messages you can hear.

This week, your practice is to remember that, in fact, you're not just **part** of the conversation – **you are the conversation.**