

Conversation 5: The Life Self-Abandonment Creates

How Self-Abandonment Affects Every Area of Your Life

By now, I hope you're beginning to recognise something important: **self-abandonment is not just a pattern**. It's a way of living, a way of relating to yourself, a way of making decisions, and a way of moving through the world. Because of that, the impact of self-abandonment rarely stays contained to one area of life. Instead, it spreads quietly, gradually, often invisibly until one day you realise that self-abandonment is not just affecting your relationships, it's affecting your confidence, your wellbeing, your choices, your happiness, your sense of identity, and your future. This is why self-abandonment can be so difficult to recognise.

Most people don't walk into a therapist's office and say: I think I have a self-abandonment problem. Instead, they say: I'm exhausted, I don't know who I am anymore, I feel stuck, I keep ending up in the same relationship patterns, I have no confidence, I don't know what I want, I feel resentful, invisible, and lost.

They're experiencing the consequences of self-abandonment **without seeing the pattern underneath**.

Imagine a tree with damaged roots. At first glance, the problems seem unrelated. One branch is struggling, some leaves are dying, growth has slowed. You could spend years focusing on the individual symptoms, or you could examine the roots. **Self-abandonment is the roots**.

When you stop paying attention to your needs and abandon yourself, every area of your life is affected.

- ♥ Your relationships often become built around adaptation rather than authenticity.
- ♥ You become who other people need you to be.
- ♥ You become easy to be around, easy to accommodate, easy to depend on, but increasingly difficult to know.

People can only know the version of you that you allow them to see. If you're constantly editing yourself, hiding your feelings, suppressing your needs, and avoiding difficult truths, then intimacy becomes difficult.

You may be surrounded by people, you may be loved by people and still feel profoundly unseen. Nobody can connect with the emotional parts of you that never arrive in the room.

Many people assume confidence comes from achievement, but genuine confidence is built on self-trust. Yet every time you ignore your instincts, dismiss your feelings, override your boundaries, or betray your own truth, you weaken self-trust.

Eventually, you begin looking outside of yourself for answers because you no longer believe your **own answers** are enough. You second-guess yourself, question yourself, and doubt yourself because the relationship you have **with yourself** has become unreliable.

Imagine having a friend who ignored you every time you spoke, who dismissed your concerns, questioned your experiences,

and consistently prioritised everyone else. Trust would eventually disappear. The same thing happens within us. **Self-abandonment slowly erodes self-trust.**

When you lose connection to yourself, choices become more difficult because you've lost access to an important source of information - you.

- ♥ What do you want?
- ♥ What feels right?
- ♥ What matters most?
- ♥ What aligns with your values?

These questions become difficult when you've spent years prioritising the expectations of others. As a result, many people drift into careers, relationships, commitments, responsibilities - whole lives they never consciously chose because they never paused long enough to ask themselves what **they** wanted.

It's exhausting to constantly monitor the needs, emotions, expectations, and reactions of other people and it's equally exhausting to suppress your own feelings, to carry unspoken resentment, to ignore your own limits, and continually give more than you receive.

Eventually the body begins to speak through stress, fatigue, overwhelm, anxiety, and burnout because it's trying to communicate something the mind has been ignoring:

- ♥ Something is not working.
- ♥ Something needs attention.

♥ Something needs to change.

Perhaps most importantly, self-abandonment affects identity.

We reach a point in life where we ask:

♥ Who am I?

♥ What do I want?

♥ What matters to me?

♥ What do I enjoy?

♥ What kind of life do I want to create?

These questions can feel surprisingly difficult to respond to because the answers have been buried beneath years of adaptation, of becoming what was needed, what was expected, years of becoming what felt safest.

The truth is that self-abandonment creates a life that often looks **functional from the outside** while feeling **dysfunctional on the inside**. You may be successful, responsible, dependable, capable, helpful - and still feel as though something is missing: **connection with yourself**.

This is why unravelling the patterns of self-abandonment matters so much - not because it's a flaw, or a diagnosis, but because it quietly shapes the quality of your entire life: the way you love, the way you work, the way you rest, what you choose, how you trust, how you relate to yourself and the way you relate to everyone else.

The good news is that understanding this pattern changes everything because once you see the root, then the symptoms -

the exhaustion, the resentment, the confusion and disconnection - begin to make sense, and understanding *that* prepares you for the next stage of the journey.

Part One of the Summer School has been about understanding how you got here, understanding your story, your coping mechanisms, the cost of survival, and understanding self-abandonment. Now you're beginning to see the life these patterns created, you'll become far more willing to create something different. Awareness is the bridge between understanding and change.

And that's exactly where we're heading next.