

## **Final Chapter**

### **A Closing Reflection**

If you've worked through this workbook from beginning to end, you've already done something meaningful. You've paused long enough to look at patterns that many people move through life without ever noticing:

- you've reflected on the ways your nervous system learned to maintain connection
- you've recognised moments where you adapted yourself to keep relationships stable
- you've begun exploring how those adaptations may have affected your sense of balance throughout your life

This kind of reflection requires honesty and courage.

Many of the patterns explored in this workbook developed quietly and gradually. They often appear in behaviours that are praised by others – being thoughtful, reliable, understanding, and accommodating.

But when these qualities require repeatedly setting aside your own feelings or needs, they can slowly create a sense of imbalance.

The purpose of this workbook has never been to criticise those qualities - your empathy, attentiveness, and willingness to care about others are strengths. The goal has simply been to bring balance back into the equation and to help you recognise that connection does not require self-abandonment.

Throughout these chapters you may have begun noticing moments where the self-abandonment loop appears in your daily life. Perhaps you recognised situations where you soften your opinions, how quickly you responded when someone asks for help, or realised how often your attention moves toward managing other people's emotions.

These observations are signs of awareness and awareness is where change begins.

You may have also experimented with small adjustments. Pausing before responding, expressing a preference, setting a gentle boundary, or allowing your feelings to exist without immediately dismissing them. These moments may seem simple, but they represent an important shift.

Instead of reacting automatically, you're beginning to move through relationships with greater awareness. You're allowing your own voice to matter.

Change does not happen all at once but through repeated moments of awareness and choice. Some days you may notice yourself responding differently. Other days you may return to familiar habits. Both experiences are part of the process.

What matters is not perfection. What matters is that you have begun paying attention and, over time, this attention strengthens something that may have felt uncertain for a long time: your relationship with yourself.

You begin recognising your instincts more clearly, trusting your feelings, allowing your needs to exist without automatically pushing them aside. As this connection to yourself strengthens, you're able to remain connected to others without leaving yourself behind.

Relationships begin to feel more balanced, conversations feel more honest, your presence in your own life becomes more visible and gradually the self-abandonment loop begins to loosen its hold. In its place, a different pattern begins to form where connection and self-respect exist together, where your needs are not treated as problems, where your voice is allowed to be present in the relationships that shape your life.

You do not need to rush this process. Simply continue noticing your internal signals and allowing them to guide you. Over time, something powerful happens: you stop organising your life around avoiding tension and begin organising it around staying connected to yourself. You rediscover something that may have felt distant for a long time: your own place in the centre of your life.

## **Final Reflection**

Take a moment to write down a few thoughts as you complete this workbook.

**One thing I understand about myself now that I did not understand before is...**

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**One way I would like to treat my own needs differently moving forward is...**

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**One reminder I would like to carry with me after finishing this workbook is...**

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Returning to yourself is not a single decision but an ongoing relationship. Each time you choose to remain connected to your own experience, that relationship grows stronger.

The person you once adapted away from has never truly disappeared. They've simply been waiting for the moment when it felt safe to return.