

## **How To Heal the *Fear of Abandonment***

### **QUESTION:**

Why does the thought of being left – physically, emotionally, or even temporarily – cause such deep anxiety? How can I stop letting it control me?

### **ANSWER:**

The fear of abandonment is one of the deepest emotional wounds we can carry. It often begins in childhood when love, safety, or attention was inconsistent, unpredictable, or withdrawn as punishment.

As adults, we can relive that same wound in relationships, friendships, work, or even our relationship with ourselves. This fear can cause us to cling, to over-give, withdraw, or sabotage before someone else can leave us. Healing the fear of abandonment is about learning that your worth and stability don't vanish when someone else walks away. It's about building safety and belonging within yourself so no departure, real or imagined, can dismantle your sense of value.

Here's how to start the healing process:

### **1. Acknowledge the Origin of the Fear**

The fear of abandonment doesn't appear out of nowhere; it's rooted in lived experience. It could have come from a parent's absence, emotional neglect, rejection by peers,

or repeated breakups that confirmed your worst fear – that love isn't safe to trust.

Acknowledging this fear isn't about blaming the past; it's about understanding why your reactions still feel so strong. This fear is deeply rooted in your nervous system's survival response, shaped long before you had the choice to protect yourself differently. Naming its origin allows you to separate the wound from your current reality, creating space for healing.

## **2. Recognise the Behaviours It Creates**

Fear of abandonment can make you hypervigilant in relationships as you find yourself always scanning for signs that someone may be pulling away. You might become overly accommodating to keep people close or withdraw first so you're never 'left.' These behaviours make sense from a survival standpoint but often end up creating the very distance that you fear.

Noticing these patterns in real time is powerful. Ask yourself in the moment, 'am I **reacting** from past trauma or **responding** in present-day reality?' This kind of awareness allows you to pause before spiralling into a fear-based reaction and gives you the chance to respond in ways that protect you and your emotional connections.

### **3. Learn to Self-Soothe in the Face of Uncertainty**

One of the hardest parts of healing the fear of abandonment is reconciling the gap between feeling emotionally safe and **unsafe**. As past fears creep over you convincing you that you'll be left and won't survive you must consciously choose to return to a regulated reality where you feel emotionally and physically safe.

To close this gap when you feel anxiety rising you can practice grounding yourself before reaching for external validation. This could be through deep breathing, gentle self-talk, or placing a hand on your heart and saying, 'I am safe in this moment. I may not like it, but I am safe just as I am.' Over time, this self-soothing helps your nervous system realise that you can survive the fear of abandonment **without** spiralling into panic or impulsive action.

### **4. Build Secure Attachments by Choice**

Healing isn't about *avoiding* experiences of abandonment – it's about seeking out connections that are healthy, consistent, and trustworthy. Look for people whose actions match their words, who respect boundaries, and who can handle honest conversations without fear. Healing is not about expecting perfection but choosing connections where safety grows over time. Each healthy

bond helps retrain your mind to know that not everyone leaves, and not all love ends in loss.

### **5. Reclaim the Power You've Been Giving Away**

When fear of abandonment runs your life, your sense of safety is always in someone else's hands. The key to healing is reclaiming that power. This means learning to validate your worth internally instead of waiting for reassurance from others. It's reminding yourself that you are whole with or without someone's presence. This isn't about becoming detached or cold – it's about recognising that your stability is too important to be dependent on someone else's choices.

### **6. Rewrite the Story You Tell Yourself About Loss**

The fear of abandonment often comes with an old, unchallenged belief: 'if they leave, I won't be okay.' Healing means rewriting that story. You can remind yourself of times when you survived loss. You can shift the meaning from, 'I was left because I'm not worth staying for' to 'that relationship ended because it wasn't aligned.'

Loss will always hurt, but it doesn't have to strip away your identity. Your worth remains untouched, no matter who stays or goes.

**Affirmation:**

I am whole and worthy in all circumstances. My value is not defined by who chooses to stay.

**Journal Prompts:**

1. What early experiences taught me to fear abandonment?
2. How does this fear shape my current relationships?
3. What behaviours do I use to prevent people from leaving and how do these behaviours impact me?
4. What would trusting my ability to be okay look like?

**Visualisation:**

Imagine yourself standing in an open field. Around you are people from your life – some close, some far. One by one, they walk away into the distance. You feel a pang in your heart, but as you place a hand on your chest, a steady feeling of safety grows. You realise you are still standing, still breathing, still whole. That feeling of safety expands, filling you with the truth that nothing can erase your worth.

**Conclusion:**

The fear of abandonment is a powerful teacher, but it is not your destiny. Healing the fear means learning to anchor yourself so deeply in your own worth that you no longer live in fear of being left. When you become your

own constant, the comings and goings of others no longer threaten your foundation.

**Final Thought:**

People may come and go, but you can choose to remain strong and steadfast for yourself, always.