Abandon: to leave completely and finally, forsake utterly, desert, to give up, discontinue, withdraw from, withdraw protection or support

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The fear of abandonment is extremely common in those of us who have been abused. When it comes to abandonment, we are very much driven by a fear of the unknown. We do not know if the people we are connecting to may one day withdraw their protection or support. "People always leave" can be a common inner belief we hold. Some of the behaviors that we fall into as survivors to try to avoid being abandoned can set us up for failure in our relationships.

In this three part series, my colleague, Misa Leonessa, and I discuss how to negotiate the tricky waters of overcoming our abandonment fears.

After listening to each audio lesson, come back here to complete the reflection section and dive deep into and transform your own relationship to abandonment.

With love,

Rachel
Understanding What Abandonment Is & Why We Fear It

**Listen Here:** [Total listening time ~ 15 minutes]
http://www.rachelgrantcoaching.com/media/abandonment1.mp3

- What drives or causes our fear of abandonment?
- What do survivors often come to believe about people, relationships as a result of being abandoned?
- What are some behaviors that survivors fall into in an effort to try to prevent abandonment?

**REFLECTION**

- Who abandoned me and how did they abandon me?
- What have I come to believe about people and relationships as a result?
- What do I do to protect myself from being abandoned? How do I behave?
- How do I contribute, if at all, to the cycle of abandonment?
- How do I cope with or try to manage my “fear of the unknown”?
Learn How to Overcome the Fear of Abandonment

**Listen Here:** [Total listening time ~ 15 minutes]
http://www.rachelgrantcoaching.com/media/abandonment2.mp3

- How can we overcome this fear of abandonment?
- Is thinking about the future a bad thing?
- How do we deal with anxiety?

**REFLECTION**

- How can I shift my focus from trying to control future outcomes to what is happening right now?
- How do I know if I am taking a calculated risk or not?
Practical Steps You Can Take Starting Today

Listen Here: [Total listening time ~ 11 minutes]
http://www.rachelgrantcoaching.com/media/abandonment3.mp3

- How can understanding how the brain works help us?

- What exercises and practices can we begin today to transform?

REFLECTION

- What are some practical steps I can take today?
- What can I do today to remain present?
- What false beliefs do I need to begin challenging about abandonment and myself?
Bonus Exercise #1
Explore Self-Abandonment

Another type of abandonment is self-abandonment! Not caring for ourselves may show up by our not taking care of our physical health, being careless in relationships, not asking for what we need, or not setting boundaries.

REFLECTION

• How do I abandon myself?
• What steps can I take to begin caring for myself?
Whenever we try to approach an emotion or think about a possible experience that we would rather avoid, we experience a very powerful feeling: anxiety.

Anxiety acts as a buffer, preventing us from getting to the underlying emotions that we want to avoid feeling, including the fear of abandonment.

Notice though that anxiety is not so much the fear of what will happen or the unknown. It is, however, the **fear that we will not be able to cope** with what might happen. We buy into the false belief that we do not have the capacity to feel these emotions or that we don’t know how to handle a given situation. To be fair, perhaps you do have some evidence that you don’t have all of the skills in place to manage these tough emotions, but we will work on that!

However, in order to decrease anxiety and gain access to these emotions, it is important to challenge the false belief that you are incapable of coping or handling what might come. Let’s practice this.
Write about a situation that causes you anxiety or that you believe you can’t handle.
Example: Going to a party and not having anything to say.

Now, imagine what you would do if what you are afraid of actually occurs.
Example: I would ask people questions about themselves rather than trying to come up with something to say.

Next, imagine the worst possible outcome.
Example: I don’t talk to anyone all night.

What would you do if that happened?
Example: I would enjoy the party as much as possible without making it mean that I am a loser.
As we project into the future and explore all of the different things that might happen and how we would handle it, our anxiety actually decreases. We realize we have the capability of handling almost any situation that might come across our doorstep. We either already know what to do or we know how to ask for support.

By removing this “anxiety buffer,” we are better able to approach and experience our emotions.

**REFLECTION**

Use the exercise above to explore your ability to cope with abandonment. What do you believe might happen if you lost a loved one or a relationship ended? What would you do?
Want to go further in your journey of recovery?

If you are ready to...

• Retrain your brain to finally end the emotional roller coaster of feeling good one day and miserable the next
• Let go of shame, guilt, and any belief that the abuse was your fault
• Break down the walls that keep you from connecting with others
• Learn how to set boundaries, enjoy intimate relationships, and trust again
• Connect with your genuine, authentic self and feel normal

... then apply for your free 60 minute Discover Your Genuine Self phone session. During our time together, you will:

• Discover the #1 belief that is stopping you from letting go of the pain of abuse and moving on with your life
• Create a vision of the person you will be once the lies and pain of abuse have been stripped away
• Discuss the most powerful actions that will move you from burdened and broken to finally feeling free and normal
• Determine if the Beyond Surviving program is the best next step for you

APPLY NOW!
If you are interested in purchasing the Kindle or paperback version of *Beyond Surviving: The Final Stage in Recovery from Sexual Abuse*, click here.

Contact me at coach@rachelgrantcoaching.com or 415-484-5682 if you have questions or feedback.