



**“We did not come into this world loathing ourselves or wishing to numb our feelings. As small children, we operated from a place of wonder, curiosity, spontaneity and creativity.”**

Christopher Dines, Drug Addiction Recovery: The Mindful Way

# INNER CONNECTING VERSUS SELF-ABANDONING

When we try to avoid our painful feelings, rather than making the CHOICE TO REMAIN PRESENT, we are abandoning ourselves. The more you attempt to ignore your emotions, the louder and bigger they may get, like alarming anxiety. Or they may "give up," and go numb into a sense of deep helplessness and depression. Resentment, rejection, emptiness, and shame, have little to do with other people, and a lot to do with self-abandonment and Wounded Self.

## UNDERSTAND WAYS YOU MAY BE AVOIDING AND/OR ABANDONING YOUR EMOTIONS

**Examples of ways we learn to control and/or escape feelings (self-abandonment). Which may apply to you?**

**Over-thinking** (analyzing is healthy, yet over-analyzing can be a way of avoiding feelings and it fails to process emotions)

**Judging and Rejecting** feelings, ie. "anger is bad," "sadness is weak" (realize all emotions have value)

**Numbing or 'Self-Medicating'** feelings through alcohol, substances, or processes, shopping, etc.

**Making Others Responsible** for your feelings, examples: "He made me angry!" or "She makes me feel misunderstood." "He makes me feel alone." "She makes me feel worthless." Realize you are 100% responsible for all your emotions.

**Getting Lost in Details and Telling 'he said,' 'she said'** (sharing experiences is healthy and wonderful, yet stuck in details may be a subtle avoidance tactic if you aren't recognizing the emotional impact)

**Severely Isolating Yourself or Avoiding Joyful Situations** to not feel painful emotions or anxiety

**Perfectionism and People-pleasing** behaviors in hopes of avoiding feeling unworthy, anxiety, disappointment, shame, etc.

**"Flushing-out"** painful emotions by over-sharing with loved-ones (sharing is HEALTHY, but sharing in attempt to avoid your feelings is not. Support and navigating through protective emotions to get to AUTHENTIC wants, etc. is HEALTHY however)

**Sabotaging** relationships or goals due to fears of rejection, failure, disappointment and other emotions

**Controlling** others, intentionally or unintentionally, in fear of feeling abandoned, inferior or powerless

**Over-giving**, enabling, or being 'nice', consciously or subconsciously, in attempt to be loved and valued in return

## Understanding more about how you may be abandoning your emotions and yourself

Are you telling yourself that you are okay, only if others like you and approve of you? Are there specific people?

**“When the intent is to control our feelings or to control others and outcomes,  
we are operating from our Wounded Self.”**

~ Margaret Paul, PhD

What is it about others that makes their opinions of you so important?

What ways do you set RIGID limits (perfectionism, strict diet, abiding by others' stringent demands, etc.) on yourself that are not necessarily in your highest good?

Have these RIGID limits helped you feel accomplished and happy?

What OVERLY-INDULGING behaviors (over-eating, over-drinking, procrastinating, over-texting, over-spending, or other behaviors) have you been engaged in recently that are not aligned with your values and highest good?

What are you telling yourself during these behaviors?

**"As long as I believed that others' unloving and rejecting behavior toward me was my fault because I wasn't good enough, I could continue to believe that if only I changed, I could control their behavior toward me. Magically, when I finally fully accepted my lack of control over others' feelings and behavior, my shame disappeared and has never returned."**

Margaret Paul, PhD

Are you caring for yourself or are you being like a permissive parent, confusing poor choices (five cupcakes) with rewards that are genuinely caring, healthy and balanced (one cupcake after a healthy dinner)?

What else are you telling yourself? In what other ways are you abandoning yourself - what are you doing or not doing that may cause anxiety, depression, guilt, shame, anger, sadness, loneliness, emptiness, hopelessness, resentment, etc.?

How are you defining your worth and sense of worthiness?

Who or what do you allow to determine your value as a human being?

Take three deep breaths and focus on feeling heavy and grounded in your body. Imagine yourself when you were four years old. Who or what would you allow to determine your value as a human being as a four-year-old?

What is getting in your way of claiming your pure unconditional self-worth and self-lovability in this moment?

**If you want to feel cherished, respected and valued, you need to understand your genuine needs and wants, dreams and desires, likes and dislikes, boundaries and limits, and then clearly communicate them to those worthy of a chance. These are the seeds for which love grows so we may feel cherished, respected and valued.**

When someone rejects you, disappoints you, gets angry at you, blames you, withdraws, ghosts you, or is unloving to you in any other way, what do you tell yourself? Do you have a recent example? Describe.

What is your Wounded Self and its shaming, controlling, false beliefs telling you about yourself during these situations?

What do you tell yourself that makes this other person's behavior your fault?

How would you treat yourself if you valued yourself and accepted your helplessness over others intentions (and their own wounded pain and reactions) - while fully accepting your power is in taking care of yourself, establishing healthy boundaries, and claiming your intrinsic value and worthiness?

Are you able to see how you are not the cause of others' rejecting, controlling, angry, withdrawn, reactive or shaming behaviors?