# THE SELF ABANDONMENT 7 DAY CHALLENGE

Self-abandonment is when we reject, suppress or ignore part of ourselves in real-time. It happens when we forget about our personal boundaries to make someone happy & we discount our own needs & comfort. UGH!!

This pattern of behaviour is insidious, like the weeds growing between the concrete lines in your driveway. It's been there our whole lives, it's engrained in our systemic culture, and it won't go away without some conscious *"weed-killing"* effort.

If you want to get a sense for **how prevalent it shows up in your conditioned patterns,** I invite you to keep track of how many ways you self-abandon EACH day. Make it a game and see if you can track it for an entire week. You'll be amazed what becomes clear after you track your habits.
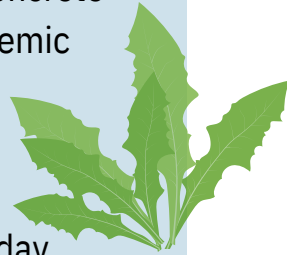
Instructions:

Read over the list & highlight the ones you KNOW sound familiar. Then, be on the lookout for when this is happening. I suggest you end each night by keeping a simple tally of how many times you "slipped up" in your day, otherwise it gets overwhelming to track. If they are a constant state of being, for you, then add a check for EVERY day. If it's only sometimes, note that. At the end of the week, notice your grand total.

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CAVEAT: The additional reason behind each phrase is important. For example, if you said yes AND you did have time, that is NOT self-abandonment. That's real kindness, not just an automatic habit of "niceness". Likewise, if you said yes to extra work because you need to pay for basic needs like rent, food, tuition... it's not the same as taking on extra work so you can have extra stuff (at the expense of your health).
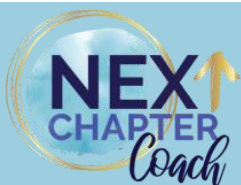
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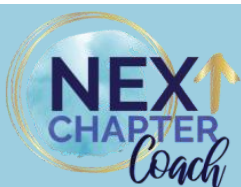B.A., B.Ed, C.O.C., C.E.C., ICF Certified Coach   www.nextchaptercoach.com

1. I changed my preferred outfit choice to better fit in with the people I was with - because I did not want to stand out as different.
2. I over-apologized & said sorry for something that wasn't my fault - because I'm used to being really "nice" & avoiding conflict.
3. I didn't speak up about an issue with my meal - because I cared more about not being a problem.
4. I let someone else choose the movie/restaurant/outing - even though I had a wish of my own.
5. I kept my opinions to myself during a conversation - because I didn't want to say the wrong thing.
6. I nodded & smiled in agreement, even when I didn't agree- so I'm always perceived as nice & supportive.

7. I did not speak my mind with a colleague/boss - because I feared I'd look dumb or ill-prepared.

8. During meetings, I noticed I sat away from the speaker & made myself as small as possible to avoid attracting attention. (eg. Crossed arms/legs, slouched posture, lean back & away).

9. I came home from work and was grumpy with loved ones - because I carry the stress of others on my shoulders.

10. I was not present in my own life - because I was stressing about other people's reactions & expectations.

11. I bought some *retail therapy* -because I'm used to looking outwards for happiness.

12. I said yes to an extra project/task - even though I didn't have time for it.

13. I said yes to extra work at the expense of my health- because accumulating more wealth (or status) always come before wellbeing.

14. I volunteered for something extra- because I want to be helpful, reliable & depended on.

15. I accepted blame for somebody else's mistake- because I felt uncomfortable speaking up to clarify.

16. I went along with the group consensus - even though it didn't feel right to me.

17. I said yes to plans - even though the other people going make me feel icky/uncomfortable.

18. I got stuck in a boring or uncomfortable conversation but continued to pretend I was interested, nodding & smiling instead of leaving - so that they feel good/don't get offended.

19. I dropped whatever I was doing to answer a call/text from a needy loved one - because their loneliness or crisis is more important than my energy level, plans or obligations.

20. I laughed along with jokes I didn't agree with or caused hurt feelings - to be liked & avoid confrontation.

21. I kept a plastered smile on, even though I felt low, stressed or exhausted - so that I didn't bother people with my "stuff".

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22.   In group scenarios: I noticed I grew into character, became the life of the party, a story teller or maybe even picked up the tab - because it's important to me to be liked be everyone, even though 'performing' feels exhausting and/or financially burdensome.

23. In group settings, I noticed I laughed a lot, nodded & smiled frequently, to be agreeable and avoid participating in discussions.

24. I adjusted my plans to accommodate others - because I like to be agreeable and don't know how to say no, or "*how about this instead.*"

25. I stayed in a relationship (personal or work-related) that leaves me feeling bad or unfulfilled- because it's easier than having difficult conversations.

26. I said yes to plans with someone because I figured I needed "to put in some time", even though every bone in my body wanted to cancel.

27. I sat through a whole bad date, even though I felt disrespected or uncomfortable.

28. I canceled my own plans when someone needed me - because I like to be supportive & a person people count on.

29. I said yes to a favour - even though I already felt maxed.

30. I suffered in silence- because I did not want to bring others down or make them feel uncomfortable.

31. I swallowed my tears and my anger and "just took it", because I didn't know what to do with big emotions. Fake smiles are easier than facing tough stuff.

32. I couldn't sleep all night with worry because I have "so much to do"- because I said yes to too many extra things.

33. I didn't stop to eat when I was hungry- because I didn't want to be an inconvenience or disrupt others.

34. I didn't stop and rest when I needed it- because I didn't want to be perceived as lazy or selfish.

35. I didn't accept help when it was offered- because I don't want people to think "I can't handle it".

36. I didn't ask for help when I needed it- because I didn't want to be perceived as weak or incapable .

37. I didn't confide any of my current troubles to anyone - because it's important that I am strong, capable and able to do it alone.

38. I felt sick to my stomach- because I was so hard on myself for screwing up or saying the wrong thing.

39. I felt the overwhelm of a *shame spiral* - because I questioned if I had done 'enough' or done it "right enough".

40. I felt exhausted & heavy - because of the painful emotions I absorbed from others.

41. I felt a lump in my throat when I tried/wanted to speak up, and couldn't.

42. I had a heavy, sinking, dread in my abdomen - because I did something I didn't want to.

43 . I felt uncomfortable in my own skin, like I was wearing a sweater that's the wrong size or fabric.

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POST-CHALLENGE REFLECTION

1. How many of these are a constant state of being, for you?

2. On what days did you find yourself self-abandoning the MOST? Why do you think that is?

3. On what days did you find yourself self-abandoning the LEAST? Why do you think that is?

4. What patterns can you notice about when & where you and your boundaries collapse or get pushed?

5. How does your BODY react to seeing this data? *In other words, how does it feel in your BODY to know that it happens that often? Notice any tension or sensation in your heart, abdomen, neck, back, shoulders, jaw, breathing, fists... What emotions do you notice come up?*

WANT HELP DOING SOMETHING about this? *I've got you!*

"Reclaim your SELF"

the self-paced course that shows you HOW to put an end to your self-abandoning habits and HOW to embody healthier boundaries.
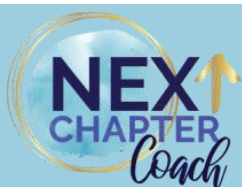
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