

UNDERSTANDING THE TRAUMATIC EFFECTS OF ABANDONMENT!

Since the earliest period of our life was preverbal, everything depended on emotional interaction. Without someone to reflect our emotions, we had no way of knowing who we were...John Bradshaw

WHAT TO KNOW!

- ❖ Abandonment is a core human fear and is related to the loss of love and connectedness
- ❖ Abandonment can ruin a person's ability to trust others, be intimate, or feel worthy and it can lead to codependence, addiction, depression, and anxiety
- ❖ Abandonment creates a devastating psychological injury due to a sense of being rejected, a feeling of not being important enough, a withdrawal of any love and caring, and a self-criticism of not being good enough
- ❖ Abandoned people have been so traumatized by rejection that they often have little sense of who they are and look to others to define them
- ❖ Abandonment is often accompanied by shame, very low self esteem, and unworthiness
- ❖ In relationships, abandonment by one person can include indifference, apathy, lack of intimacy, coldness, invisibility, and ignoring the other
- ❖ Abandonment can occur from the death of a loved one, from the moving away of a close friend, from being adopted, from feeling isolated in a relationship, from negligence and abuse by others, from being betrayed, from the breakup of relationships, and from the emotional unavailability of family members
- ❖ Feelings of abandonment can also come from losing a job, retiring from a job, children leaving home for college or work, divorce, and serious illness
- ❖ An abandoned person is likely to encounter serious and long term psychological issues and may unconsciously seek out partners who reinforce their negative self-beliefs
- ❖ The impact of abandonment can be so traumatic as to adversely affect every relationship the person who has been abandoned has throughout their entire life
- ❖ People who have been abandoned when a child often have current relationships where they replicate the emotional abandonment with new partners
- ❖ In these new relationships, abandoned people often look for flaws in others, tend to be reserved and shy, get bored with their partner, and let their partners define them
- ❖ Because of their trust issues, abandoned people often look to be rescued and can make strong demands upon others to prove their loyalty to them
- ❖ Therapy for abandoned people often focuses on developing an empathetic relationship with a therapist who can help them distinguish the helpless and traumatized child from the stronger and more capable adult who the person is today
- ❖ Therapy for people who have been abandoned also involves learning to care for oneself, developing a sense of calmness and safety, being able to communicate in intimate relationships, and developing trust in others

WHAT TO DO!

- ❖ Recognize and accept that you have a fear of abandonment and you did not cause it
- ❖ Allow yourself to grieve the rejection or loss and then let go of it
- ❖ Rather than shame, see yourself as a survivor and give yourself unconditional love
- ❖ Become emotionally self-reliant rather than looking for others to accept you
- ❖ Take the risks of trusting yourself and significant others
- ❖ Change your thinking to view yourself as a competent and capable adult
- ❖ Seek professional help to develop a caring, accepting, and trusting relationship with a supportive therapist who can help you heal from your feelings of abandonment

WE CAN HELP!

Call us at **954 755-2885** or email us at [**DrKimmel@KimmelPsychology.com**](mailto:DrKimmel@KimmelPsychology.com)

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