

Repair Without Self-Abandonment

The Difference Is Not the Behavior. It's the Function.

Repair and self-abandonment can look similar on the surface. Both may involve apologizing, changing, waiting, or making sacrifices. The difference is what the behavior is organized around.

◆ Applying the McInnis Method

REALITY	<i>Something happened that requires accountability.</i>
THREAT	<i>Losing the relationship, or even the hope of repair, feels emotionally dangerous.</i>
PROTECTION	<i>You organize around preventing the other person's reactions instead of responding to reality.</i>
FUNCTION	<i>The protection reduces conflict or uncertainty by keeping you focused on restoring the relationship.</i>
COST	<i>You may give up voice, limits, or judgment to keep repair moving.</i>
CAPACITY	<i>You can own what is yours while allowing the other person to own what is theirs.</i>
ACTION	<i>Take responsibility for what is yours without taking responsibility for what is not.</i>

◆ Repair Looks Like

- Taking responsibility for your actions.
- Making meaningful changes.
- Remaining emotionally present without surrendering yourself.
- Allowing another person's feelings without accepting endless punishment.

◆ Self-Abandonment Looks Like

- Organizing your life around avoiding someone else's reactions.
- Accepting shifting standards to prove your goodness.
- Losing your voice, limits, or judgment to preserve connection.
- Mistaking endless suffering for accountability.

◆ Reality Check

Ask yourself: Am I restoring trust, or trying to purchase it?

If repair requires giving up your voice, limits, or judgment, something other than accountability is happening.

Bottom Line

Repair owns what is yours. Self-abandonment takes responsibility for what is not.