Patterns For Absent/Abandoning Parents

The list of patterns below can help you explore the impact of having an absent or abandoning parent. For each parent that was absent identify the patterns that you developed as a result of their absence or abandonment. If you have any questions, please contact the office or speak to your teacher early on in the course.

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| **Patterns I developed in response to the absence/abandonment of my:** | | |
|  | **Mother** | **Father** |
| Not wanted |  |  |
| Bad girl / Bad boy |  |  |
| Banished |  |  |
| Broken |  |  |
| Feeling illegitimate |  |  |
| I am a burden |  |  |
| I am a mistake |  |  |
| I am damaged goods |  |  |
| I am not good enough for you |  |  |
| I am not needed |  |  |
| I am not worthy |  |  |
| I don’t belong anywhere |  |  |
| Have to be good or risk being abandoned |  |  |
| I shouldn’t have been born |  |  |
| I am a reject |  |  |
| I’m disposable |  |  |
| I’m immoral |  |  |
| I’m insignificant |  |  |
| I’m not safe |  |  |
| I’m worthless |  |  |
| I’m an embarrassment |  |  |
| My parents don’t care about me |  |  |
| No right to exist (plus compensations) |  |  |
| Not deserving |  |  |
| Shouldn’t be seen |  |  |
| Shunned by society |  |  |
| Sinful |  |  |
| Unworthy of love |  |  |
| Alone |  |  |
| Aloof |  |  |
| Armoured / Tough |  |  |
| Cold |  |  |
| Outcast |  |  |
| Outsider |  |  |
| Disconnected |  |  |
| Disenfranchised |  |  |
| Don’t / Can’t need anybody |  |  |
| Fear of attaching |  |  |
| I don’t need anyone |  |  |
| I don’t trust anyone (including myself) |  |  |
| I’m different / I’m better |  |  |
| Love is not important |  |  |
| Love / Connection doesn’t last |  |  |
| Mysterious |  |  |
| Reckless |  |  |
| **Patterns I developed in response to the absence/abandonment of my:** | | |
|  | **Mother** | **Father** |
| Rejecting |  |  |
| Resignation |  |  |
| Run away |  |  |
| Secretive |  |  |
| Secrecy |  |  |
| Self-absorbed |  |  |
| Self-centred |  |  |
| Shut down / Numb |  |  |
| Survivor |  |  |
| There is no place for me |  |  |
| Uncaring |  |  |
| Unfeeling |  |  |
| Untrusting |  |  |
| What’s the point? |  |  |
| Why bother? |  |  |
| Withholding |  |  |
| Cannot know the truth about myself |  |  |
| Expect abandonment/Rejection |  |  |
| Feeling lost |  |  |
| Be happy with what you get |  |  |
| I have no right to having any needs |  |  |
| Fear of alienating others |  |  |
| Fear of judgment / what people will think |  |  |
| all alone |  |  |
| I’m different / I’m worse than others |  |  |
| Longing |  |  |
| Never special |  |  |
| Need to prove my value |  |  |
| Have to earn my keep |  |  |
| Have to follow the rules |  |  |
| Ungrounded |  |  |
| Unrooted |  |  |
| Invalidation of feelings |  |  |
| Not entitled |  |  |
| Disenfranchised |  |  |
| Heartbroken |  |  |
| Humiliated |  |  |
| Needy |  |  |
| Desperate |  |  |
| Desperate for attention |  |  |
| Distrust |  |  |
| Sad is normal |  |  |
| Pessimism |  |  |
| Nothing can change |  |  |
| Search for completion outside myself |  |  |
| Second class citizen |  |  |
| Separation anxiety |  |  |
| Sex = love, connection |  |  |
| There’s no one for me |  |  |
| Everything could change at any moment |  |  |
| Tragic / Pessimistic outlook |  |  |
| Unbearable sorrow |  |  |
| **Patterns I developed in response to the absence/abandonment of my:** | | |
|  | **Mother** | **Father** |
| Lack of faith |  |  |
| Lack of self worth |  |  |
| Mistrust |  |  |
| No one wants me |  |  |
| People can treat me like a package |  |  |
| Others don’t fight for me / fight to keep me |  |  |
| Others just give me away |  |  |
| Abandonment |  |  |
| Absent |  |  |
| Ashamed |  |  |
| Careless |  |  |
| Childish |  |  |
| Children are a drag / burden |  |  |
| Children aren’t important |  |  |
| Family ties aren’t important |  |  |
| Cold |  |  |
| Conflicted |  |  |
| Confused / split |  |  |
| Cowardice |  |  |
| Deceptive |  |  |
| Denial |  |  |
| Deserter |  |  |
| Desperate |  |  |
| Detached and numb |  |  |
| Disconnected |  |  |
| Dismissive |  |  |
| Distant |  |  |
| Don’t expect anything of me |  |  |
| Don’t keep your commitments |  |  |
| Don’t think or care about consequences |  |  |
| Double life |  |  |
| Embarrassed |  |  |
| Family is not important |  |  |
| Giving up |  |  |
| Guilt ridden |  |  |
| Having a child isn’t worth it |  |  |
| Heartless |  |  |
| Image conscious |  |  |
| Immature |  |  |
| Impulsive |  |  |
| Incapable |  |  |
| Incompetent |  |  |
| Irresponsible |  |  |
| It’s all about me |  |  |
| Just take the easy way out |  |  |
| Mysterious |  |  |
| Neglectful |  |  |
| Oblivious |  |  |
| Out of touch |  |  |
| Preoccupied |  |  |
| Push aside or cast away others |  |  |
| Reckless |  |  |
| **Patterns I developed in response to the absence/abandonment of my:** | | |
|  | **Mother** | **Father** |
| Secretive |  |  |
| Self absorbed |  |  |
| Selfish |  |  |
| Too busy for me |  |  |
| Unaware |  |  |
| Uncaring |  |  |
| Unfeeling |  |  |
| Unknowable |  |  |
| Unloving |  |  |
| Unreliable |  |  |
| Unsupportive |  |  |
| Untrustworthy |  |  |