

IFS Online Circle Month 1

Dick Schwartz: So welcome everybody. We've learned in doing these it takes a minute or so for people to come on so I'm just going to be sitting here doing a little meditation for another minute or so, and then I'll start to talk. Okay.

Okay. So welcome. This is the first session of our third year of running the IFS circle program. I think you're going to like it. It's been a big hit so far. What we love about it is we get to introduce IFS to people from all over the world. We think the last one we had 21 different countries represented. So it's very exciting for us to have you here, and it's designed to introduce you to IFS so that you can experiment somewhat on your own. Then, ideally, if you want to pursue it, take our training programs because this isn't a substitute of those, but this will give you a really good overview of the concepts and methods too. We'll show some video of clients. Most of the talks like the one I'm giving now will be done by people live. I'm live.

I'm actually in a hotel room, as you can see, in Chicago. I'm here as part of a family reunion. I have five brothers and all of our brothers and their wives and other assorted people are coming to honor my father who would have been 100 last month. So it's a kind of memorial to him. So it's an emotional couple days. The actually party is tonight and IFS wouldn't exit without him. We both gave me a lot of the burdens. We'll talk about what that is, what those are, that kind of drove me to develop this and also was a mentor in many ways. He was a scientist and injected into me a kind of empirical rigor that has served me very well.

So anyway, that's why I'm here, and shortly I won't be live. Throughout this program will be replaying sessions that I did in the past and I'll be live after. In this case, after 40 minutes, I'll come on and I'll do questions and answers live. But

that's going to be my piece of it. Everybody else, we're honored and very fortunate to have Tony Irvine Blank whose a lead trainer and Pam who's name ... I'm so embarrassed. Her last name isn't popping in my head right now. They'll both be live, doing live talks in their sections.

So yeah, before we go to the video of me, I wanted to just do a little bit of a survey on terms of how much people already know about IFS. So Asa, if you wouldn't mind putting up the survey, and just click on one of those and we'll very quickly

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have a total. While you're doing that, I'm so embarrassed. Pam Crause is the other lead trainer whose going to be joining us for this training. Maybe you saw the trailer that she and I did where she did a piece of work on herself. It was very powerful actually.

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Okay. So we'll use this information to help them gauge the level at which to teach, and maybe I have to click off here. Okay. So somebody, Kylene said she didn't see the survey on her screen. Maybe it just showed up on my screen. Okay. So anyway, Audia, the screen is frozen. I wonder if that's a problem, mine or yours. Okay.

Looks like things are working okay. So anyway, I will see you in about 40 minutes. In the meantime, Asa, why don't you go ahead and start the video of me.

Okay. Hi, everybody. I think it only takes about a minute for everybody to get on and I can see many of you are on now. I want to welcome you to this online circle program that this is the second version. We're repeating the first online circle because it was so enjoyable and so successful. So I'm very excited that you're here and I'm honored by your interest in this model, which has been my life for 35 years. So it's very gratifying. The first round was quite amazing. Both in terms of the numbers of people and from all over the world. I think 28 different countries represented and great discussions, great experience. Subsequently, I've traveled around and met lots of people who have been on and maybe I'll meet you also. Really loved the feedback. People just loved it. So I think you're in for a treat.

I also want to thank many of the people that are involved and responsible for making this happen. There's Brian and Richard, who are the guys who set all this up, and my brother John also collaborated with them. Then you've met Pam, I think, last week who is amazing, as you can tell, and Tony Hervanblank, who will be I think maybe next week. So we have quite a team. It was just a real treat last time.

So today, I just want to kind of go over the basics, which I think this time maybe more than last time, will be new to many of you. I think last time we had more people who had been exposed to IFS or at least maybe even started the level one training or maybe even completed several levels. Then they'll be a chunk of time at the end where we'll take a number of questions. In the meantime, as I said, I want to go over some of the basics of the model. Then I'd like to do a little experiential exercise because this is one of those models that people don't really

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get unless they've tasted it actually. It's a hard sell without some kind of

experiential experience. So at various times through this year I'll be offering that, and today is one of those.

So I'll be doing the call live this time and the next time, and then we were so happy with how my sessions with in the last round that subsequently, we'll so at least some of those sessions, maybe all, and then I'll be there to do the Q&A at the end.

So that's going to be my participation.

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Yeah, so anyway, welcome again. Let me just see if there's anything else in way of an introduction. Yeah, I think that's it.

So you probably know that in IFS we believe that the mind is naturally multiple, that what I call parts, what other systems have called other things like sub-personalities or internal objects or complexes, what Yung called complexes, archetypes. That the mind is populated by these things, and so many, many explorers of the psyche have run into this multiple personality phenomena and they walk away with different ideas about what these are. I happen to be lucky because when I first encountered the phenomena, I didn't have any pre-consumptions about it because as a family therapist I had assiduously avoided studying inter psychic process. Then as my clients began talking about these things that are called parts, I just got very curious about it and I didn't have any reference point. So I was forced to actually learn from my clients what they were, and the down the road, people told me about or I started to explore other ways that people have understood this phenomena and learned some from some of those too. I can, as we go, mention some of those, but what I'm most proud of in terms of developing this thing is that I just stayed pretty curious and pretty close to the data even though the data was taking me way outside my comfort zone and way outside my original paradigm.

William James had a term, a phrase, radical empiricism, and I see myself as a radical empiricist, which means you go with the data even if it makes you uncomfortable or takes you other places.

So my clients started talking about these parts and other systems, see them different ways. So one of the points I'm going to try and drive home is how you understand this phenomena or the emanations or the secretions from the mind, whether it's emotions or thoughts or impulses or imagines, whatever it is. How you think about that organizes how you get your client to relate to them. So it becomes very important to explore your basic assumptions about the phenomena. So some systems run into them but don't take them as seriously as we do in IFS. So there are some systems that see them as kind of metaphoric, kind of imaginary or metaphoric fantasy that came from some impulses trying to

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express itself from the psyche product of the imagination or see them as things that emerge and then evaporate, so ephemeral, or see them as ego that gets in your way and keeps you focused on things that aren't important is attached to the outside world.

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Some systems see them but see them as uni-dimensional like the anger part is just above anger and the sad part is just sadness.

If you saw the movie Inside Out, one of the things I like best about it was while they started out kind of inter dimensional, as you went through it, the parts filled themselves out and you can see that Joy wasn't always so joyful and the sad part actually wasn't just a bundle of sadness but was sad for reasons and so on. So that's sort of the way we see parts. Some of them identify them as their roles. So there's the part of you you adopt with your family, which is different than the part that comes forward when you're at work, which is different from when you're dancing and nobody's watching and so on. So that the role is the part and then some systems see in my mind misidentify them with what are called internalization's or interjects and would see, for example, a critical voice inside your mind as just that, as a piece of your mother's internalized criticism that is just playing itself out inside of you.

Then finally, there's a view that might have started with Pierre Jeannie in the 1800s or the early 1900s who was a prominent trauma researcher theorist, and saw this multiplicity but also postulated that it was the product of the trauma. So that you have parts exist in traumatized people but not in other people. That's the position that a lot of our field has taken that the existence of parts themselves is sign of pathology, of the splintering of the unitary mind. That the healthy mind doesn't have them. It just has thoughts and emotions and so on. That's actually the part that drives our culture.

So the way we see them and the way I was taught to see them by them, through my clients, is that they are much like inner full range personalities or even entities or like people who need to be taken seriously and aren't just one emotion or one belief, but that emotion that you feel is an immunation from a part. So if you were to focus on your anger, the anger itself isn't the part but if you stayed with it, you would follow it to the part that was making you feel so angry at the time. Then as you got to know that part, it's likely you would learn that it also carried tame and fear. But it was forced into the role of the angry part.

Just like in a family, kids become forced into very rigid, kind of stereotypic roles when the families been traumatized. So if you're familiar at all with the

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addiction's literature, you might have heard of the names of common roles that kids get forced into like the lost child and the hero and the scapegoat and so on. Those kids do say much more uni-dimensional than kids and families who haven't been traumatized, but it's not because they don't have the whole range of emotions.

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It's because they were forced into these roles. So these are inner children in my mind who were forced into extreme roles by what happened in your life. We'll be talking more and more about how that all happened, but the main point I'm making is it's

a mistake to sell them short and to think of them only as one dimensional or to think of them as the creation of trauma.

So instead, we see them as full range personalities who came into the world with you, either manifest or to potential. So infant researchers talk about five or six discrete states that infants will shift from one to another. So maybe those are the parts that in board when you're born and then the others come out almost like a time release capsule as needed through the rest of your life. So, for example, those of you who are parents might remember that night when you put to bed this compliant little two year old and overnight came this part that says no to everything. So it's, for us, the natural state of the mind to be multiple, which is in our culture a fairly radical position. Although some other psychotherapies have stumbled on to this also, but they're not mainstream psychotherapies. As close as multiplicity came to the mainstream is probably young.

So it's a good thing to be multiple personality. Each of them contains talents and resources and gifts for us. If there are not what I'm going to call burdened and if they're allowed to remain in their naturally valuable states, what they were designed to do, then they're very happy and they get along with each other and they are very helpful to us. They lend creativity maybe, some parts. They lend liveliness. They lend all kinds of things. But for various reasons it doesn't stay that way.

So this distinction is important because if you believe these are say just these irrational thoughts or you believe them that they're ephemeral, then it makes more sense to not really pay much attention to them. You might instead try yourself and try to help your clients be more mindful and just not really attend to the extremes that are bombarding them inside and try to separate from all of that. If you're doing CVT, you might turn toward them but with an interest in correcting the error of their ways and letting them know that they're irrational inside. But if instead you consider them permanent inner residence of your

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psyche, with full range personalities have lots of intelligence and autonomy and power and contains all these valuable resources, then you're going to relate to them in a different way. That way we're encouraging is to love them and to listen to them and to help them and to become a kind of good internal leader. Rather than just observe them, which I'm a fan of mindfulness practice because by separating from and observing from a place of acceptance with thoughts and emotions, you're accessing a state that we call self that I'll get to later.

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You're helping part C, that it's safe to do that. That actually things go better when they allow you to have this sense of well being that comes with that state. So it's a useful practice.

But it doesn't necessarily help the parts otherwise. So this is sort of like taking the next step after you got mindfulness to actually begin to interact with them. But you'll only want to do that if you believe they have something that's to share with you, that they're valuable and you can interact with them. You can actually talk to them and hold them and help them. So you actually to really do that in a serious way and to do it on an ongoing way, which is what we encourage clients to do, it becomes a kind of life practice. It's hard to do that if you don't buy into this first basic assumption that they're in there, they have a right to be in there, they're very valuable and we want to help them and have compassion for them and show them they belong and round them up and bring them all back home. So that's a lot of what we're trying to do, and until you have a really clear understanding of these basic assumptions, it's a little bit harder to do that.

So in IFS there are three basic things in your mind, in the psyche. One I've been calling parts so far, as I say, other systems have other terms for them. Actually the word part is not the greatest word. It's too mechanical for me. It doesn't convey the humanity of these things. But we use it because it's the most user friendly word, but it doesn't get you very far in academia, but most everybody will say some version of part of you is happy to be on this online thing right now. Another part of me wishes I was taking a nap. Everybody uses the word parts. Everybody talks that way so that when I'm with a client and I'm asking about their inner experience of their problem and they say, "Well, I get really angry and then I criticize myself for getting angry." I'll feed back and say, "So one part of you that's angry and another one criticizes you for that. Is that right?" They'll say, "That's right." But if I were to say, "So one of your sub-personalities gets angry and another internal object comes after you," they'd say, "What are you talking about?" So that's why I stuck to the parts word, and it actually in a clinical way has sort of done very well.

Okay. So there are parts in there, and then parts carry what we call burdens, which is a whole different thing that's inside of us, which I'm going to get to later in this talk. In addition to the parts and burdens they carry, and just to give you a hint on that. A definition of a burden is an extreme belief or emotion that came

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into your system either from some experience in your life. It might have been a trauma, might have been an attachment injury. It might have been something bad that happened to you.

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The beliefs that came from those experiences then attach to these parts and drive them almost like a virus. One of the big mistakes, this goes back to what I'm saying about internalization and interjection, is the field has often mistaken the part for the burden it carries and tried to throw the baby out with the bath water.

So as we're going to learn on burdening, how can parts release these things? Actually it allows them to transform into their naturally valuable states, often immediately. So for me this distinction between parts and their burdens is a big deal. It's one of the contributions of IFS to the field because it allows us to know that a part isn't its burden. So it relate to it with compassion rather than trying to fight it and try to help it feel like it's safe to unload the burden. Again, we'll be talking about all that shortly more.

Then there is what I'm going to call the Self with a capital S, which is often around or beneath the parts. It gets obscured or colluded by the parts and their burdens, but is there in everybody and that's another thing that we're going to go into more depth about toward the end of this particular session. But that's about it. There's a couple other esoteric things, but that's what most of us will find when we do this inner work.

So couple other things about parts, many of them, as I implied, even ones that seem so grown up and demanding or critical view or wise even, many of those parts are young. They're maybe single digits or early teenagers. So one metaphor I like a lot is to think of this almost like the book you read in elementary or middle school maybe, Lord Of The Flies. It's like a bunch of kids who don't have any adults around they feel like and there's danger lurking and they get hurt or scared. So some of them become warriors and protectors and some of them are very vulnerable. But none of them are equipped to actually lead a tribe, but they're kind of recruited.

In family therapy, we have a word for kids like that, which is a parentified child. The child who's forced into a parental role to try and keep a family going when a parent is advocating for some reason. So many parts are forced into a kind of protective role before they're ready and they're not designed and they become very rigid, just like a parentified child, and sometimes very critical and so on.

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They can't be eliminated. They can go into dormancy, but they can't really be killed. But, as I said, like children in families, they're recruited or forced into these roles they're not equipped for by traumas and attachment injuries. Then burdens by those experiences with these oppressive beliefs and emotions.

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So that keeps them extreme. But also, the effect of trauma forces them to become frozen in time often. So frequently, if I'll have a client ask a part how old it thinks the client is, the part will say single digit answer. I'll tell the client to tell them how old they really are, the part is a gasp. Just can't believe it. The updating experience itself is actually kind of hugely relieving for these parts to learn that I'm not still six years old and it doesn't have to protect me in the way that it did back then. So many protectors are frozen back in time and also the parts they're protecting live back there and are experiencing the world now as hurtful and dangerous as it was back then.

So all of these things keep parts of their extreme roles. The burdens they carry, the fact that they're frozen in time, that they were needed at one time to jump into the role they're in, and then also they also tend to polarize with each other, get into huge battles with each other. Fear that if one takes over the others are all going to die. So again, it's like a bunch of kids on an island. They're stranded and fighting for survival. So they just get into it with each other just to try and make it. Then all of this makes it hard for them to trust what I'm calling the Self. One of the worst impacts of trauma is that this phenomena where parts lose trust in self leadership because Self wasn't able to protect the system when the trauma happened. In fact, the parts felt like they had to jump in front and protect Self, move it out of the body sometimes, and they take the hit. So from that point on, they feel like they've got to run things. A lot of times they don't even know about self anymore. So all of those things I just mentioned force parts to stay extreme and as we change each of those things, they more and more trust that it's safe to relax into their not extreme states.

So as I said before, parts are not but they do contain a variety of thoughts, emotions, sensations, beliefs. So whenever you experience one of those, a thought, emotion, sensation or belief or an image, then you are experiencing a manifestation of a part that if you follow almost like a trail head, if you know what I mean by that. Here in Massachusetts, they have trails and then they have the heads of those trails where if you start on the trail head, follow the trail, it'll take you to some nice place or important place. The same is true in an inner role. Each of these is a manifestation. So if I had you focus maybe on pain in your back, use it as a trail head, it would lead to a part that it was trying to get your attention that way perhaps. So I just want to introduce that concept of trail heads.

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Parts can also take over. It's almost like your personality or your body is a bus and you're trying to drive along and then different times you get thrown out of the drivers set and some part totally takes over and takes it to some very extreme place.

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Another part gets scared by that and tries to throw the other one out, and so they will jostle with each other to try to run the whole system and blend with Self. This whole concept of there being Self but then it's gets secluded and merged with a part and the part obscures Self through this blending process by infusing its energy, its beliefs, all of its burdens with self. So if you don't have any of those great qualities we're going to talk about soon. All you experience is the part's experience. That is something that parts can do. They can take over that way at times.

Good news about that is they can also undo that. So another big discovery is stumbled onto that has revolutionized the way we can operate, especially with traumatized clients is that parts can totally control how much they blend with you or how much they separate from you. If you can convince them it's in their best interest to separate, then they will. They don't have to overwhelm you. That's a big deal, and that allows us to work with trauma without doing very much grounding skill trainings or all that kind of stuff that you find you have to if you don't believe this stuff.

Then finally, while you can't kill parts, you can lock them up inside. You can what we call exile them so that you lose conscious access to them, lose conscious sense of them. That whole realm of exiled parts in other systems is called the unconscious. Actually exiled parts can still exert considerable influence over you, but is unconscious influence because they can't tell you directly what they want. Sometimes they do it by effecting your body because they can't get through directly or they do it by giving you a bad dream or various things. But a lot of the work is designed to help these exiles come out of exile and become members of this internal family again that are very welcome and then not only do you not have them with all the pain to carry or the shame or the things you locked them up for, but you now have access to all their resources that you didn't have access to before.

So that's a lot of the basic stuff that I wanted to cover about parts. So what I thought I'd do now is to offer an exercise where you can actually focus on a part and get to know it just a little bit. We're going to invite you to start with what we call a protector rather than a very vulnerable part because that's safer. So if you're aware of the part that protects you and even a part that protects you in a way that you don't like that gets in your way in your life, that maybe inhibits you

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somehow or criticizes you or gives you an impulse that bothers you, all of that is grace for the mill. So maybe just take a second and think of a part that you might like to get to know better or change your relationship with at least a little bit. I'll give you a second to come up with one.

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Again, it could be just an emotion or a thought pattern or a sensation. You don't have to come up with an actual sub-personality right now. Just come up with the trail head. Then go ahead and focus on that exclusively for a second, and when we do work, we find it useful to find it in your body or around your body if you can. Just notice where this part seems to be located or broadcasting from in or around your body and we'll use that as kind of an anchor point as we get to know it.

Then when you have a sense of it, notice how you feel toward this part of you. So you have a relationship with it. You fight it maybe or you depend on it or you fear it. So just notice how you feel toward this part of you. If you feel any of those things toward it, we're going to ask all the parts that either don't like it or depend on it or fear it or anything else that's extreme toward it to just relax for a minute so you can get to know it. Maybe allow you to get into that mindful set relative to it. So you can be a little more open to it and accepting because it'd just be easier to get to know it if you can do that.

If you can't, that's okay. If these other parts won't step back, don't worry about it. You can get to know them and why they're afraid too.

If you can get into that curious at least place relative to the original part, then it's safe to begin to get to know it. You can start with this very open ended question. What does it want you to know about itself? What does it want you to know about itself? Don't think of the answer. Just wait for an answer to come from that place in your body. Sometimes it takes a little while.

Another useful question is ask what it's afraid would happen if it didn't do this job inside of you. What's it afraid would happen? And in answering that question, you might have learned about parts that are vulnerable that it does protect or parts that it's afraid would take over that's polarized with. But if you got any kind of answer to that question, then you have enough information to extend some appreciation to this part for this trying to protect you. So see if you can do that, extend a kind of appreciative energy to this part and see how it reacts to that.

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Then another good question to ask is to ask the part how old it thinks you are. If it thinks you're younger than you are, maybe just update it and see how it reacts to that.

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Then a final question ask the part if you could fix, that is heal, or change what it's been trying to protect, so was liberated from this role, what would it like to do instead inside of you?

Then thank the part for whatever it let you know and other parts for giving you space if they did it. You can begin to shift your focus back outside. Sometimes it helps to take deep breathes while you do, but you don't have to. Come on back here.

So welcome back, if you participated. I forgot to mention anything like that that we do is totally voluntary. Don't feel compelled to follow along if it doesn't feel right to you. But if you did try it out, I'd hope you'd got a sense of what I'm saying is true, that these parts are more than what they seem initially, desperately trying to help us and keep us safe. Even sometimes in misguided ways.

I think that's much of what I wanted to cover today. We have some time left to get some more questions.

Dick Schwartz: Yeah. Okay. So here I am live again, a little older and hopefully a little wiser. Yeah, so this first round was to introduce you to the idea of parts and the way we think of them in IFS. And we have a lot of time we have about, let me see 35 minutes to discuss today and answer any questions you have.

So I see we have some questions in the Q and a box, but could use more with the time we have so let me get started with what we have here.

Pegi, where do archetypes maybe fit into this?

So what you call archetypes are one aspect of what we're calling parts. He talked about archetypes and complexes and the archetypes he postulated were common across people and we'll run into some parts that fit that role, that fit that profile. But for us they're just a different kind of part.

Nicola, how do you work with a part that wants to self harm to protect? Does talking and exploring this part, make it more likely to act out?

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So this is a common fear Nicola that people have when they start using IFS. In fact, back in the day when I was trying to bring this model to the professional public, that was common objections and working with parts that if you give them access, they're more likely to take over and act out. That hasn't panned out at all. In fact, the ones that you're afraid to go to and listen, to turn out to be some of your most valuable parts but to really pull this off, you have to believe that they aren't what they seem.

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That your rage, for example, isn't just a bundle of rage that if you focus will more likely to take over, but it's maybe a teenage a part of you that is in the role of trying to protect you that you'd ever listened to so it's furious and as you get to know, it turns out not at all to be what you thought. Again, that's what we've been found over all these years of doing this.

Agnes, are protector parts always younger than us? What does it mean when a protector is older than us?

Most of the time if you stay with a part and you stay curious about it, it will reveal the fact that it is quite young. Usually a inner child, you may have heard that phrase before or a teenager, occasionally a little older than that, but that's its natural state. Sometimes over, promoted to seeming quite old and, and adult like and what's called the ego is usually a collection of those parts that are trying to manage our lives and don't trust us to do it and can seem quite old but again, when you really get to know them and stay with them, they will ultimately reveal that there a lot younger.

As people add questions it keeps jumping up so it's hard to see.

Agnes, What are interjects?

In psychodynamic psychotherapy, the idea is that what I'm calling parts is something that was injected almost into you in the form of a extreme image or a voice or a motion. For us, one of the big problems with that conception is that people then mistake the part for the interject or for the extreme thing that it's carrying but doesn't define us. I think many, many problems in ourselves, our lives and in our culture are the product of this conflation of parts or interjects or burdens. Interject would be a burden in this case. Parts are not the burdens they carry but when you think they are, then you have the feeling like you want to throw the baby out with the bath water and that's always a huge mistake because you're fighting against and trying to exile parts of you that are very valuable when they're not in their extreme role, when they've unburdened.

Mark, Is there a sense of heart, inner knowing wisdom that provide input to the self that isn't necessarily a part or persona in this model? Are all our voices knowings consolidated into a sense of self?

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Not exactly Mark, but I talk more about the self in the next session. For now this self isn't the parts, it's separate from them except when it's blended with them and is a good inner leader and can't be damaged doesn't need to develop and is in everybody.

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That's some of the, the big magic of IFS is finding that self and it can be accessed fairly quickly. So we'll get into more of that next time.

Daniela, What's the role of the self when were children, how come self isn't able to help kids in the moment of the original trauma?

: It's a good question

Daniela, In the absence of major trauma, adult children spend most of their time most of the time.

So the first question, it turns out that self has to have a certain level of development of your body to actually be effective and as children ourself it doesn't have the hardware. It doesn't have a big enough brain or a big enough body to actually protect you and parts don't get that really. So when you weren't able to protect yourself as a child, your parts lost trust in yourself, stability to protect. Then they become these petrified children who think they have to take over and run everything. Then your second question, don't children spend most of their time in self. If they haven't been traumatized or burdens tremendously, yes, then children can be quite self led.

Agnes, How do we calm the nervous system and a body when a person becomes dysregulated by his exiles and protectors speaking during therapy session, would you recommend any body mind interventions for self regulation while doing deep parts work.

So this is an interesting question that we'll explore as we go. How do you keep people from being overwhelmed? Basically the translation for your question and as I alluded to in this session, we have a bit of a different way of doing that. Although there are times where IFS therapists will use grounding skills and affect regulation skills, but much of the time because we believe these parts have a lot of agency, they can actually, if they choose to not overwhelm, often we can help the client ground themselves simply by helping the part trust it's safe to separate and if it trust it's safe to separate it will at which point the person will feel grounded again, there self who will be accessible again. So that's a bit of a difference from some of the other trauma models. In terms of other ways of working with the nervous system, there are a lot of people, for example, who are combining IFS with a somatic experiencing or with polyvagal kinds of work and to good effect

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Daniel, Could you talk more of somatic oriented approaches to trauma versus or with IFS? Same question for emotionally focused approaches to healing in IFS?

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I think I sort of hinted at that last answer, but yes there's a nice fit between somatic experiencing and Polyvagal theory and IFS. As to EFT emotional focus therapy. There are some similarities, the one major difference what I'm going to talk about is that IFS is like attachment theory taken inside. So the self becomes the good attachment figure to the parts who are either insecurely attached or avoidantly attached, rather than the therapist becoming that attachment figure or rather than anybody else. EFT is very much an attachment based theory that says that you try to get your partner to become that good attachment figure so that would be a difference.

Kristen, hello thank you for this wonderful course looking forward to learning more, is this model compatible with developmental theories?

:

Yes and no so what I'm calling self doesn't need to develop and can't be damaged. So to that extent contradicts many developmental theories but your body develops and your parts kind of one way to think about it is, as I said, you have a certain number of parts when you're born that are active online and then others are dormant and they often will come forward at different developmental stages when they're supposed to. So if you have a child, you might remember that night when you put this compliant little two year old to bed and then in the morning he was saying no to everybody. It's like that assertive part just debuted overnight on time. So that's some of how we think about development.

Elki, what happens when a client struggles to access self and what happens when parts deny admittance?

Good question and we'll be talking about that as we go through the course. I'll give you a short answer now, many parts don't know about self, they don't believe there's anybody in there like that because they'd been running things for so long and hey don't necessarily fear giving access to self, they fear if you have access to, you might start taking risks for example, or you might like yourself, which they are afraid to let you feel. Or you might start accessing what we call exiles, which we'll talk about more, which they're afraid of. So in this system there's really no such thing as resistance, there's just parts that are scared to let certain things happen for fear that you'll be overwhelmed or for fear that you take risks. So we first often start with those parts and get to know their fears. Then it's incumbent on us to reassure them and to address their fears in a way

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that makes sense to them. My take is that all parts would love to have the system heal if they thought it was safe. So our job is really just to help them trust that it can be done and that can be done in a safe way.

Can you fight, love and fear this part at the same time?

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I'm not sure which part, but yes you can because you have a bunch of other parts as I was talking about earlier that get polarized with the part. So you can have all these different mixed feelings are really just different parts that have different relationships and different kinds of conflict with whatever part is the target at the time. So one of the ways we find that out is by asking how do you feel toward this part? And in answering that question you're usually telling us about other parts that either don't like it or love it too much or fear it and that's always the way you can have many, many feelings at the same time because of this multiplicity.

Zoo, What's the reason for asking the protective part how old we are?

Because many times you'd be quite amazed protectors in particular were the age that they're frozen in time. We're feeling pretty good and doing their naturally valuable roles, but the trauma forced them into this protective job at a particular age in your life and they become frozen there and they think you're still that young. They think they have to protect that much and when I might ask you to tell the part that you're not five years old anymore, often the parts astonished, they can't believe it, but it's a big relief to know that you're not still a child and you can handle a lot more than it thought you could.

Michael, Could you please review the concept of trailheads again?

: So it's pretty simple, Michael. A trailhead is an emotion, sensation, memory, thought pattern, an impulse. Basically any mental experience that if you focus on and stay present with will lead you to the part from which it's emanating. So we think of these manifestations as trails that will take you to some key part usually. So that we start with somebody, I'll just say focus on that thought or that voice in your head or that motion and just stay with it and in staying with it and as asking some questions, the part that it's coming out of will emerge and you can start a conversation.

Afshan, When updating a part of your, about your age, is it helpful to update them about your life and that you're no longer a teenager at home and are married with a child, etc?

: Exactly and that's a lot of what we do. As I say for some parts it's a tough self they really are convinced that you're at the age that you were when they got their role.

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Lynn, There's so many parts hw do we keep track of doing this for myself and keeping a journal, but I feel like I need more guidance. How long do we interact with the part before we move on to another part? What are the best practice tips?

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Dick Schwartz: So in terms of keeping track, different clients use different techniques. Some people will map their parts. So it might start with one, follow a trail head and find one and represent it on a page and then just wait and see another one, how it comes forward in the represent that on a page and so on. Or as you go through a session just map them that way or do it afterwards. Many people will record the sessions with me and then later start their maps while they're listening to the recording. There's a book by a woman named Michelle Glass called the Daily Parts Meditation I believe that gives a lot of different ways to do what you're asking. We sell that on our website, self leadership.org in the store. How long do we interact with the part before we move on to another part? It really, really depends and we'll be talking about that as we go, but generally we interact with the part, if it's a protector long enough to get to know it and honor it for its service and learn about what it protects and then negotiate permission to go to what it protects.

Michelle, How do you introduce this process to an untrusted client?

I might say a little about how you introduce it in general. So a client comes in to see me and is naive to the model and is talking about their problems. As I'm interviewing them, I'm asking questions about their inner experience of the problem. So when this happens, what do you say to yourself? What do you feel? Just like you might and as they answer, I will do what most therapists learned, which is to reflect back what I'm hearing. I'll add the phrase, so one part of you feels this way another parts saids this to you, is that right? And everybody says, yeah, that's right because it's just common parlance to use the word part. So as they do that, I might say, is there one of those you'd like to get to know or change your relationship with or help not have to do this job anymore? And most people that sounds good to them and they don't say, what do you mean parts? They just say, okay, that sounds good. If it's a protector, then we'll just start by having them focus on it in front of their body. If it seems like it's an exile which we haven't gotten into yet I then I'll say we'll wait on that one and I want to go to the parts that are afraid to go to it first because we'd learned the hard way to always go to protectors first. Not expecting them to change, but just to get permission to go to exiles.

Barbara, Can you talk about the difference between IFS and psychosynthesis?

: So what psychosynthesis and IFS share is a respect for the personhood of parts with psychosynthesis, but I can't remember what they call them and psychosynthesis also has a concept that's like what we are calling self, but as far as I know, it's not nearly as

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promoting of self as a active leader as we are and self is more of a place you're trying to get to. It's been a long time since I really looked into psychosynthesis.

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Jeff, When a client disengages during a session, is this always a protective part? Can an exile blend with the self and take the client out of the session to?

Yes, Jeff. There are times when exiles can blend and overwhelm and the client will seem suddenly like they're having a panic attack for example, or they're just a totally bereft and were very sad and maybe crying, sobbing or they're terrified, just a panic attack or feeling terribly ashamed. That sometimes is a big panic time for a client because all their protectors have been trying to keep those exiles locked up and just through interacting with you, it either trigger the exile or give the exile permission to break out. So that could be a bit of a crisis point but again we'll simply go in a kind and calm way to talk to the exile directly. This process is called direct access we'll be talking about later. I might say, I see you're here and I see you have all these feelings and it's great to have you here. We're really happy to, to help you but it might help us to help you a little more if you wouldn't mind separating a little bit from her so she could help you too. If you pull your energy out a little bit, not so you locked it locked up again, just let her be present more than we can really help you and you'll be amazed clients suddenly say, okay, I see this part whereas they were really blended with the overwhelmed by it now they can start to work with that.

Christy, Do you find it easier for clients to get this exercise? I know for me it's very difficult how many sessions can it take to get to the part and how do you handle the frustration of one part of that being able to slip into exercise?

So Christy, I'm sorry. It was difficult for you, it has been. If I were working with you, I probably would start with the part that gets so frustrated and maybe even says you're no good at it and you're not going to be able to do it and maybe is blocking your ability to even try it or is afraid to let you try it for any number of different reasons. So it would become the target part and I would probably do direct access, so I would probably ask, let me talk to this part that gets so frustrated, Christie and I would say, okay, are you there? Okay. So you think Christie can't do this exercise and you get so upset when she seems to that seems to be the case is that right? And the part would answer the question and I would try to get to know it better and maybe help it step back a little bit.

Sally, Can a diagnosis such as OCD be a part, a protector?

Yeah, absolutely. One of the things I liked best about IFS is that we could take the DSM and every diagnosis in it and give you a protector part based description of what

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it is that is non pathologizing and gives clients a clear map for how to change it. So for me, the DSM is a fairly accurate description of the kinds of protective parts that typically take over with people and the differences among them. If it were only that I'd be an advocate, but because it has such pathologizing characteristics it can scare of both client and therapist and can get in the way.

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Emma, Do parts reflect reciprocal roles of cat therapy?

I'm not sure what you mean Emma by cat therapy.

Elizabeth, Are you familiar with the Nathaniel Brandon's work with sentence completion process that addresses different ages of a person?

I'm not, so I really can't speak to that Elizabeth.

Andrea, Sometimes when I try to work with my parts, especially when I'm trying to get my exiles to unblend from me and to turn toward and look at me, I have difficulty getting those parts to hear and acknowledge me, what are some techniques I can use?

So Andrea most of the time when a part can't hear you, it's because there's another part blocking and doesn't want the part to hear you. So when somebody says that, I'll say, well, let's see if we can find the part that's blocking and we'll work with it before we work with the part that you can't hear. Now if parts won't look at you, you see an image of the part, which by the way, you don't have to have an image many people don't, but many people do they see the parts clearly. If you see it and it won't turn to look at you then it, it probably has some parts do, particularly exiles have an attitude about you and need a repair. So many times when you get to an exile, they'll turn their back on you because they're furious that you locked them up for so long, they don't trust you anymore. So I'll try to encourage my clients to apologize and just hang around to try and help the part start to trust again. That can take some time, not like a feral child where it takes months, but it can take a couple of sessions of the self just hanging out with the part and showing them indeed she does care.

Linda, could you please share some of your own inner journey with parts are you still discovering unmet parts with it?

I am indeed Linda, I don't know if it ever ends, but I'm a very different person from when I started because I've had many clients and friends and two wives who have been very good at bringing forward the parts of me that I need to heal and that still is happening to this day. I'm far less reactive to very a variety of things now because I've

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done the work but yeah I'm still finding parts and I've just come to value what we call tormentors the people in your life who torment you and then mentor you like tormentor with hyphen between the two of the mentor because they teach you what you need to heal.

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Lamese, Can IFS be used as an intervention for complicated cases such as developmental trauma?

: Yes, indeed, in fact, that was my population for about 20 years. People who were raised with horrible parents who would abuse them every day and had very severe symptoms most of the time were quite suicidal, would be labeled borderline personality and so on and so on. With that population, they are the ones who taught me how to use it in a careful way and taught me the importance of respecting protectors and their pace and not going to exiles without permission. So they're wonderful teachers, they know their parts cause their parts stand out, they'd been abused so much, the parts are quite extreme, so there very good at teaching you about how to do this.

Karen, What if your part can't answer how old it is? What are the reasons for it's important for self to know these?

You don't have to know the exact age, it's more the updating process is a relief to the part. Very often the age the part thinks you are, gives you a sense of the age at which the trauma happened that forced this part into that role and is often the age it takes you back to when it shows you what we call the witnessing stage, what happened and how bad it was. So it does give you a sense of where you might be going after.

Shannon, Do you find a lot of health challenges can be caused by parts, for example, chronic illness and pain?

Absolutely, we've had a lot of good luck with a lot of different kinds of medical symptoms are big outcome study for example, was with Rheumatoid Arthritis. Not only did the patients feel better and less anxious and depressed, but the physical manifestation of their illness as measured by blinded physicians changed enormously over the course of the therapy. Through the followup and based on that study were evidence based. So we do a lot with medical kinds of symptoms and that's because parts we'll use the body to get a point across or to punish you if they don't like what you're doing or they have all kinds of different reasons to push different buttons inside of you. Sort of like inside out movie where they sit in front of a control panel and can push the migraine headache button if they need to. So as you use the migraine

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headache is a trailhead, you come back to find the part that's doing that and negotiate with it then the headaches get a lot better.

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Mandy, Complex trauma sometimes it seems there are infinite parts continue to emerge. Is it simply parts that manifested in multiple forums? How could we organize that process?

I know what you're talking about Mandy, and particularly in people who've really been abused badly, these little sub parts pop out of parts. I'm not going to blow your mind too much with this, but it turns out that parts have parts and so in some cases you're going to find really like multitudes and it can become, can seem overwhelming but it isn't if you just stay in self yourself, if you find a way to organize it so we've got one more minute.

Juliettea, How can I address infidelity when working with a couple from an IFS perspective?

Let's save that question cause it's a big one.

Crystal, Would you say a part has two sides such the side a person is born with that has talents and the side created to protect as the part experiences adverse situations would be called the shadow side?

I wouldn't put it exactly like that. It's more for me like the part has the good side, that they're born with the talents and then the burden's force it into the dark side, the shadow side and the protective side too. The part, we'll then use those burdens to protect.

Diane, I once had a client that had a strong shame part, but I was unable to help her connect with it. Can you comment on this? My own shame part is triggered because I felt as if I was failing her.

Shame is usually a multipart phenomena, but one of those parts is an exile who carries a lot of worthlessness and feels very much like they're bad and you'll have a lot of protectors who don't want you to go anywhere near that and will resist any efforts to get close to it for fear that you're going to feel that shame that they swear they never let you feel again. So my advice would be to go to the parts that don't want to go to the shame and negotiate with them and reassure them that your client isn't five anymore and can handle more than they used to, things like that. So anyway, thank you for all these great questions and it feels like we're off to a good start and I will see you next time. Will again, have a video from the past circle program and then I'll be

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around to answer questions afterwards. So again, thanks so much for signing up for this. Bye bye.