

# Internal Family Systems Therapy

**Polarizations:**

**Conflictual but complimentary parts  
with Toni Herbine-Blank**



# Working systemically



*It's never just one part*





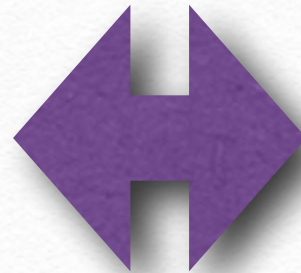
**IFS recognizes multiplicity in that it recognizes the systemic nature of the inner world. Parts develop a complex set of interactions among themselves.**

**Often polarizations are the first to emerge as interference when you are working with a part.**









**CONFLICTUAL BUT COMPLIMENTARY**







# Functions of polarizations

**1. Our system is constantly seeking balance. When one Part gains too much influence in one direction, others attempt to balance the system in the opposite direction.**







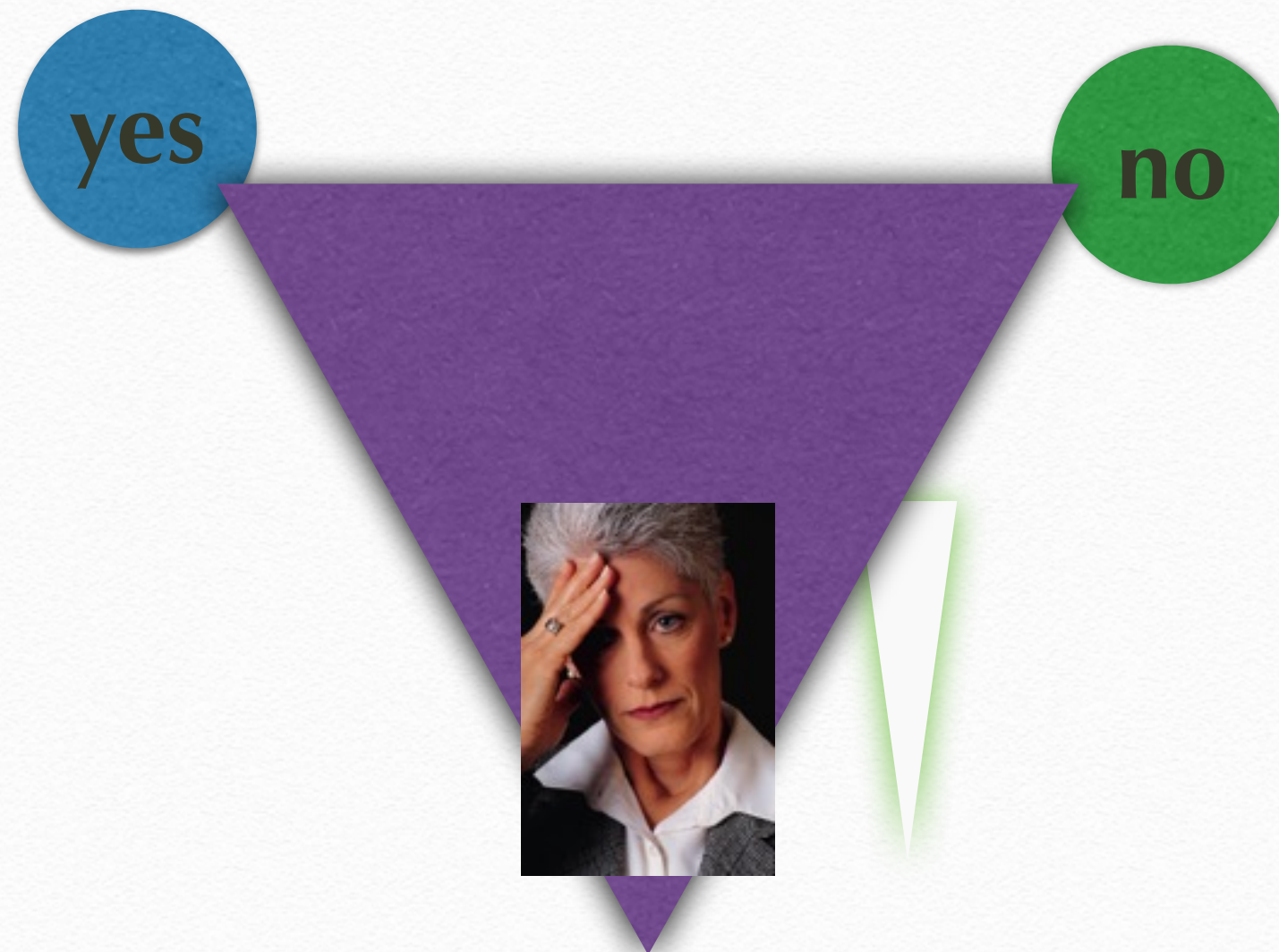
2. protection of exiles



3. distraction



# Spotting the inner triangle



**“what should I do?”**



# How to work with managers who become polarized





# Goals

- Un-blend and de-polarize  
Self as leader in the system
- Help client access self-energy toward both parts
- Listen for the non-extreme message of both
- Validate and negotiate
- Un-burden exiles



# Steps

- Unblend (anxious part, then polarized parts)
  - Listen carefully
  - How do you feel toward them?
- Validate fears
- Work with one while the other listens **OR**
- Mediate (Self of the client)



# Therapist's parts

- Our parts can easily polarize with our client's parts
  - Take sides
    - Become anxious and urgent
      - Push an agenda