

# Internal Family Systems Therapy

**The therapeutic relationship  
with Toni Herbine-Blank**

**in IFS**





- THE ROLE OF THE THERAPIST



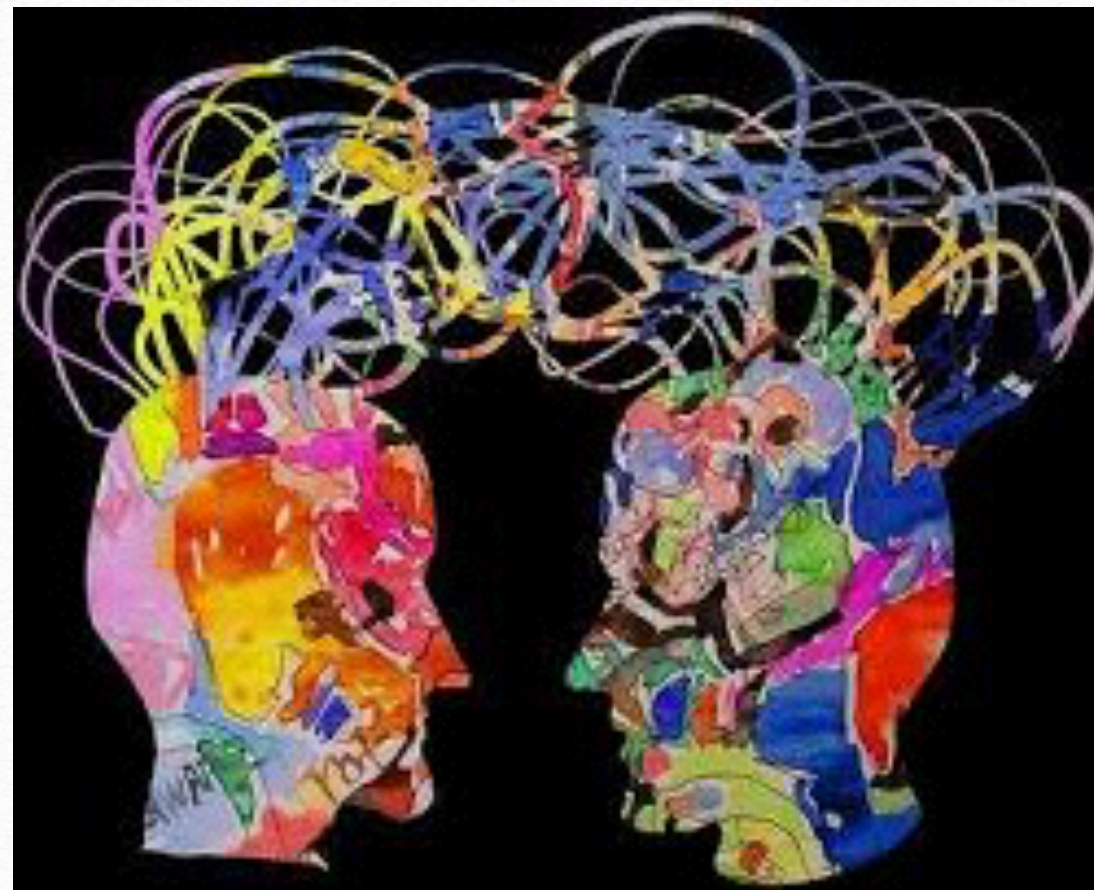
# Transference / Countertransference

- The transfer of emotion, fantasy or wish on to the therapist
- The therapist's reaction to the client's transference



# IFS & Countertransference

***Prts*** of the client will direct emotion or need on to the therapist. The clinician's ***parts*** will react inside ***or*** out.





# Our parts influence each other

- Our parts will react to our client's parts
- If we are unaware when our exiles become activated our protectors may begin to interfere and then trigger the protectors in the client



# IFS Perspective

- “If it’s intense it’s yours” Mona Barbera PhD
- When your parts react:
  - First: It’s about you
  - Second: it’s about your client
- If it’s perpetual, it’s an opportunity for you to do a U-turn
  - Look within





# Therapeutic Relationship

- Greatest predictor of change
- In IFS:

The Self of the therapist fosters the client's ability to access Self-energy. This creates a powerful alliance inside and out.



# The IFS Therapist

- Does little interpreting
- Develops the capacity to trust the client's Self-energy
- Acts as guide and facilitator
- Follows the client's lead. Intervenes when necessary
- Practices congruence



# Tasks of the Therapist

- Safety, connection, self-leadership
- Clarity to recognize exiles beneath protectors
- Courage:
  - Presence
  - patience
  - persistence





# More Assumptions of the Therapeutic Relationship

- All parts welcome
- Healing not dependent on interpretation insight or wisdom of the therapist.
- Speaking for own parts of the therapist can be healing
- The relational field is characterized by safety, acceptance, trust and compassion. This helps the client access inner wisdom





# Therapists's Parts

- **Parts of the Therapist**
  - Your personal history
- **Therapist's Parts**
  - The trained expert
  - Good theory
  - Concepts & judgements





# What the IFS therapist has to let go of:

- Being the expert
- A rigid road map
- Your agenda
- $1 + 1 = 2$





# Attachment: Inside & Out

- Witnessing a part internally involves attachment behaviors:
  - Attunement
    - Listening and being present without agenda
  - Emotional resonance
  - Eye contact
  - Extending love and care
  - Meeting needs



# Presence is Congruence

Inside and outside correspond  
Carl Rogers

- *I am not hiding from myself*
- *I am able to track my parts and stay un-blended*
- *I know what I feel (think or sense) and can be present with all of it while staying present to my client*





# Therapist Monitor Thyself

- How do I feel toward the client?
- Do I feel friendly toward protectors?
- What's happening in my body?
- Am I available for feedback from my client?
- How do I feel toward my own parts?





# Therapist Love Thyself

- Take a pause
- Breathe, notice inside and out





Support your parts to relax  
and experience ease:

