



WHAT IS IFS?

The goal of IFS is to gain a better understanding of ones internal dynamics, reduce inner conflicts and improve overall mental and emotional well-being.

Each person's mind is composed of different "Parts," which are like sub-personalities or inner characters.

IFS does not label Parts as inherently good or bad but seeks to understand their functions and how to work with them effectively.

Each Part has its own beliefs, emotions, and motivations. By understanding this inner system we can learn to accept and integrate all the different Parts of ourselves and thereby develop the capacity to transform the inner Parts of our feelings, thoughts and behaviors.

Some Parts develop us into who we are today, whilst other Parts are major role players in behavior that may be negative and self-destructive.

IFS aims to identify and understand these different Parts, acknowledge their existence and work toward integrating and harmonizing them.

KEY COMPONENTS OF IFS

SELF-LEADERSHIP

Enables the guidance of the internal system with the 8C's rather than being controlled or overwhelmed by its various components. When in a state of Self-leadership, the Self embodies the qualities of the 8C's: compassion, curiosity, calmness, clarity, confidence, courage, creativity, and connectedness. When Parts are led by Self, each Part's needs are understood, without being overwhelmed.

SELF-COMPASSION

Empowers individuals by helping them cultivate self-compassion, self-acceptance, and self-empowerment. By adopting a compassionate and curious attitude towards Self and internal experiences, one can reduce self-criticism, shame, and other negative self-perceptions.

INTERGRATION & HARMONY

it is important to understand and navigate the different aspects of the psyche, resolving conflicts between these aspects and fostering cooperation and collaboration among them. This process occurs when Parts that have been polarized, isolated, or in conflict are brought into a cooperative and understanding relationship within the internal system.

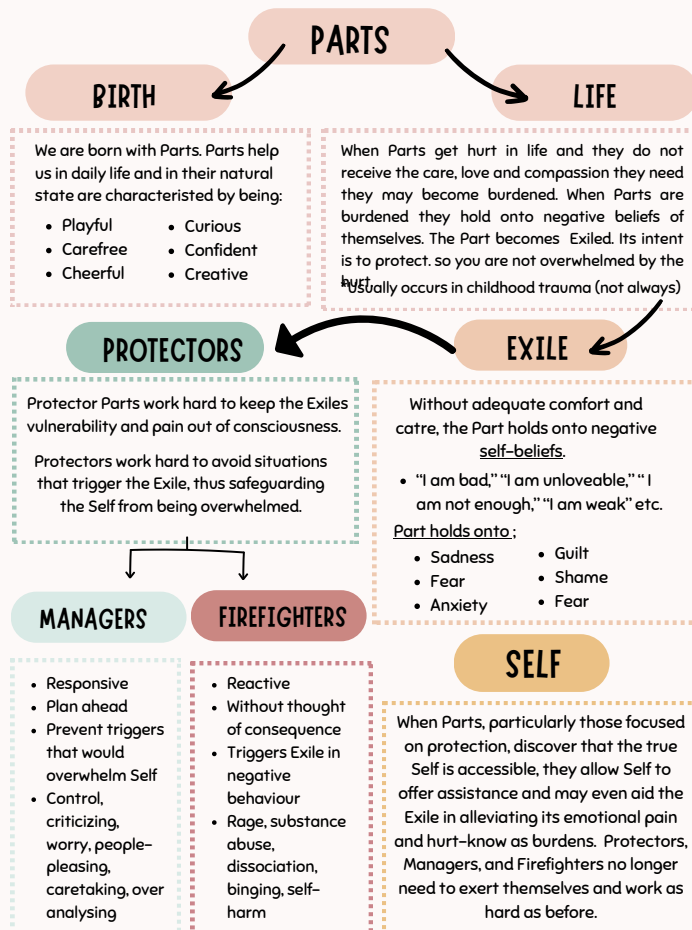
HEALING EMOTIONAL WOUNDS

Healing emotional wounds and trauma by providing a safe and nurturing environment for exploring and processing painful experiences. By engaging with different aspects of oneself and understanding their protective roles, one can gradually release emotional burdens and integrate fragmented aspects of oneself.

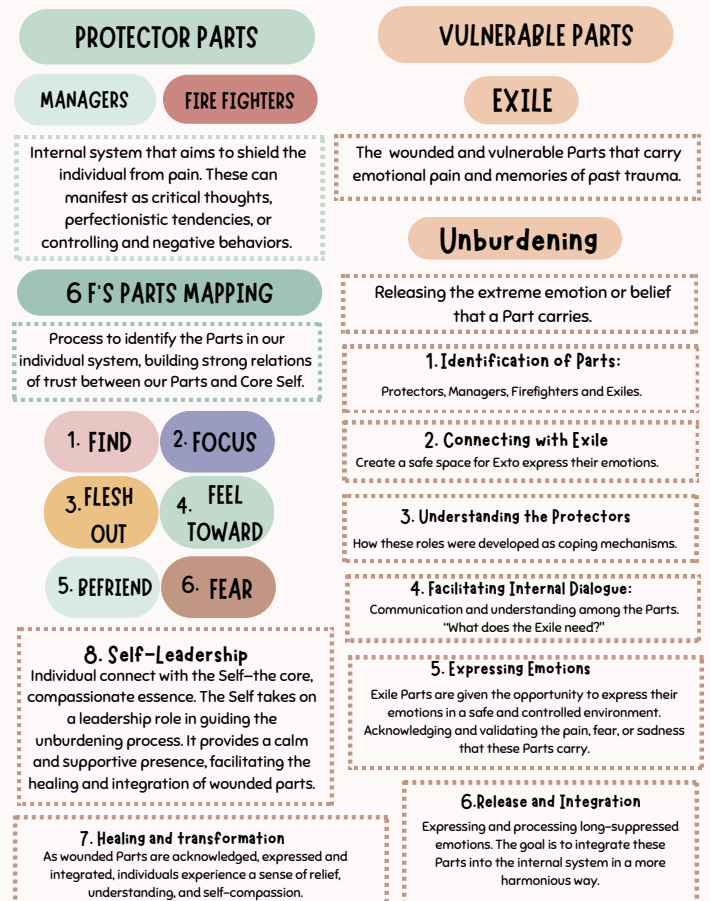
IMPROVING RELATIONSHIPS

Enhancing relationships by fostering greater Self-awareness, emotional regulation, and empathy. As one achieves greater internal balance and integration, one becomes better equipped to navigate interpersonal dynamics and communicate effectively with others.

OVERVIEW OF PARTS



OVERVIEW OF PARTS



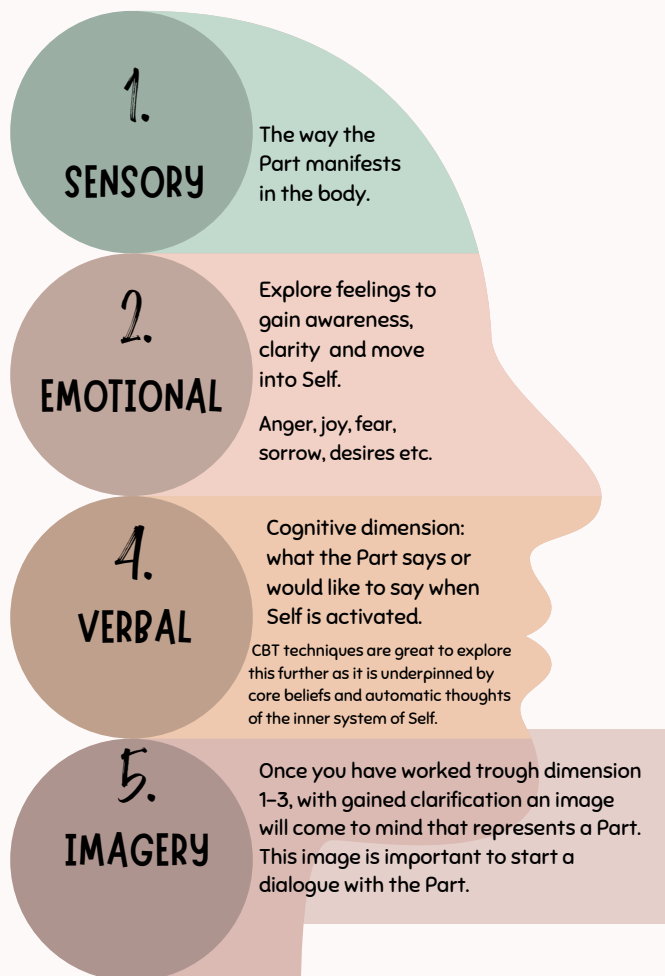
UNDERSTANDING PARTS

The goal of IFS is to identify Parts, enter the state of Self, and, from that state, communicate to the Parts.

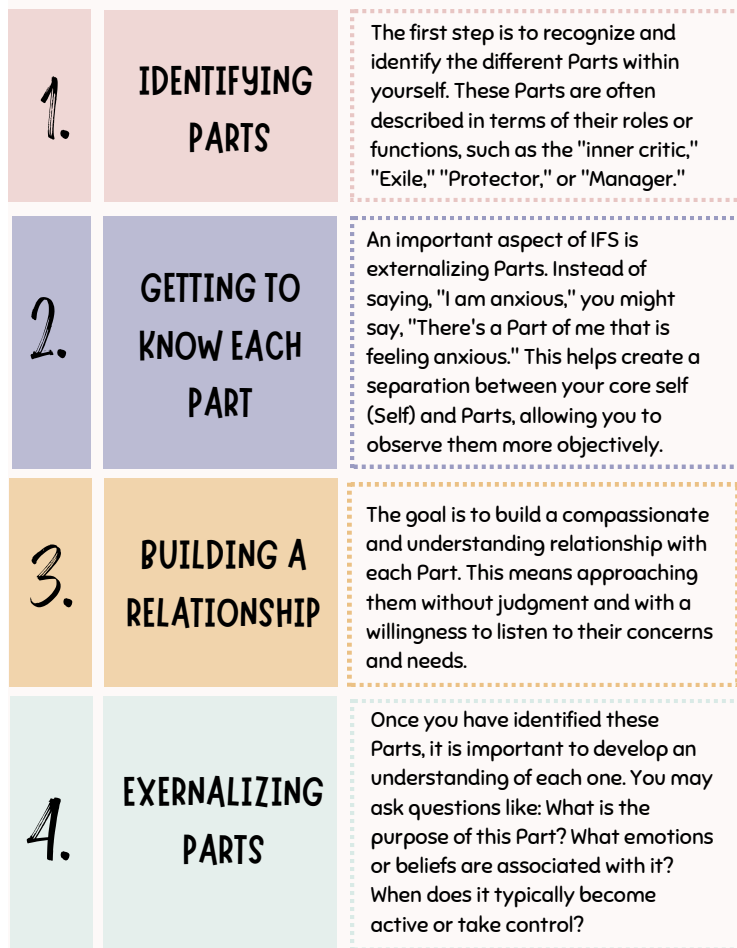


Some Parts develop us into who we are today, whilst other Parts are major role players in behavior that may be negative and self-destructive. By understanding this inner system we can learn to accept and integrate all the different Parts of ourselves and thereby develop the capacity to transform the inner Parts of our feelings, thoughts and behaviors.

4 DIMENSIONS TO EACH PART



PROCESS OF EXPLORING PARTS



PROCESS OF EXPLORING PARTS



Vulnerable Parts: Exiles

Vulnerable Parts

Vulnerable Parts hold painful emotional states and/or negative beliefs about themselves from past wounding experiences.

Vulnerable Parts: Exiles

Exiles remain anchored to their past, where their current reality is perpetually shaped by past traumas.

Exiles Burdens

Exiles painful emotional states and negative beliefs about themselves are referred to as "burdens."

Key to IFS is the process of identifying and releasing the extreme emotion or belief that a part carries

Protective parts

Protective Parts' job is to protect vulnerable Parts from being activated and to protect us from being flooded by the pain that vulnerable Parts hold.

Protective Parts assume roles that are more extreme than their true natures, in response to the circumstances that necessitate the exiling of Parts. Protective Parts methods may have a harmful impact, but their intentions are always positive.

NOTE:

Working with Exiles is delicate work. It is recommended that before you start any Exile work you ground yourself in Self-Energy. You can use any mindfulness-based activity ideas: Breathing exercises body scan, connecting with the 5 senses. ,



PROTECTIVE PARTS:



Protective Parts assume roles that are more extreme than their true natures, in response to the circumstances that necessitate the exiling of Parts.

Protective Parts methods may have a harmful impact, but their intentions are always positive. Protective Parts must be treated with respect and kindness, no matter how aversive their strategies.

Protective Parts are often the age we were when they took on their roles.

There are two types of Protective Parts:



Managers

- ◆ Operate pre-emptively, looking ahead to the future and doing whatever they can to keep Exiled Parts at bay.
- ◆ Concerned with staying on top of things
- ◆ Focused on planning, organizing controlling, and achieving, keeping things going.
- ◆ The more intense the affect of the Exiles, the more extreme the tactics of the Managers.



Firefighters

- ◆ Operate reactively, jumping in to lock escapee Exiles back down. They are only concerned with the present, without regard for consequences.
- ◆ Spring into action when life happens and an Exile is triggered.
- ◆ Impulsive, compulsive and/or addictive behaviors – to distract, comfort, numb or check out.

IDENTIFICATION OF PARTS – DESCRIPTION & FUNCTION

Description:

Protectors are Parts of the internal system that aim to shield the individual from pain and vulnerability. They often take on roles such as being critical, perfectionistic, controlling, or aloof.

PROTECTORS

Function:

Protectors' primary function is to guard against the pain and emotions associated with past traumatic experiences. They may employ strategies to maintain a sense of safety and control.

MANAGERS

Try to keep us safe by controlling other Parts, people or situations.

FIREFIGHTERS

Reactive emergency responders when the system is of being overwhelmed.

Description:

Managers are responsible for planning, organizing, and controlling behavior. They work alongside Protectors to maintain order and prevent the individual from feeling overwhelmed.

Function:

Managers try to prevent vulnerable feelings from emerging by staying in control and avoiding potential triggers. They are often associated with a sense of responsibility and duty.

SELF ENERGY 8 C'S

COMPASSION. CURIOSITY.
CLARITY. CREATIVITY. CALM.
CONFIDENCE. COURAGE. AND
CONNECTEDNESS.

Description:

Firefighters are Parts of the internal system that respond impulsively to overwhelming emotions. They often engage in behaviors such as substance abuse, self-harm, or other impulsive actions to distract or numb intense feelings.

Function:

Firefighters come into play when Protectors and Managers are unable to contain the emotional distress, providing a quick escape from the overwhelming emotions.

Description:

Exiles are the wounded and vulnerable Parts of the internal system that carry the emotional pain and memories of past traumatic experiences.

Function:

Exiles are often hidden by Protectors and Managers to prevent the individual from experiencing the intense emotions associated with past wounds. The goal is to keep these vulnerable Parts protected.

EXILES

IDENTIFYING PARTS

1.

FIREFIGHTERS



Firefighters are Parts of you that react strongly to protect the system from pain.

Often impulsive and seek to distract or numb you from distressing emotions or thoughts.

For example, overeating, substance abuse, or risky behaviors may be used by these Parts to cope with pain.

2.

MANAGERS



Managers are responsible for keeping the system safe and preventing emotional distress.

They try to maintain control and structure to prevent the activation of other Parts.

Managers are often perfectionistic and may engage in behaviors like people-pleasing or rigid self-control.

3.

EXILES



Exiles are the Parts of you that carry emotional wounds or traumatic memories.

The vulnerable, wounded Parts that Managers and Firefighters aim to protect the system from.

They are often hidden deep within the psyche to avoid painful emotions and memories.

FIREFIGHTER

REACT WHEN EXILES ARE ACTIVATED

EXTINGUISH EXILES FEELINGS

GROUP OF PARTS

SUBSTANCE
&
ALCOHOL
ABUSE



SELF-HARM

IMPULSIVE PROTECTIVE STRATEGIES

TYPES OF FIREFIGHTER

- ADDICTIVE
- BLAMING
- RAGEFUL
- IMPULSIVE
- SELF-HARMING
- DISSOCIATION
- DISTRACTION
- AVOIDANT
- CRISIS MANAGEMENT

TYPES OF FIREFIGHTERS

THE SELF-HARMING FIREFIGHTER

Emerges in response to distressing emotions or overwhelming situations and serves a protective role by engaging in self-harming behaviors as a means of coping with intense emotional pain or internal turmoil. This can include behaviors such as cutting, burning, or other forms of self-injury.

THE DISTRACTING FIREFIGHTERS

These Parts work to distract the individual from intense emotions or traumatic memories by engaging in behaviors such as substance abuse, compulsive behaviors (e.g. overeating, excessive shopping), or engaging in risky activities.

THE DISSOCIATIVE FIREFIGHTER

This Part typically emerges in response to overwhelming trauma or distressing situations and employs dissociation as a coping mechanism. Dissociation involves a disconnection from one's thoughts, feelings, memories, or sense of identity, often as a way to escape from overwhelming emotions or experiences.

THE AVOIDANT FIREFIGHTER

These Parts work to avoid or suppress difficult emotions or memories altogether. They may encourage the individual to withdraw from triggering situations or to disconnect from their emotions as a means of self-preservation.

THE CRISIS MANAGEMENT FIREFIGHTER

These Parts may take control during moments of crisis or extreme stress, employing drastic measures to ensure the individual's immediate safety or survival. While their intentions are protective, their methods can sometimes be harmful or disruptive in the long term.

TYPES OF FIREFIGHTERS

THE BLAMING FIREFIGHTER

Manifest through thoughts, emotions, or behaviors that involve assigning responsibility or fault to external factors, individuals, or situations. This blaming tendency can serve as a defense mechanism, shielding the individual from feelings of vulnerability, shame, or guilt by shifting the focus away from their internal experiences or personal accountability. It can perpetuate patterns of conflict, resentment, or avoidance in relationships and hinder personal growth or accountability.

THE RAGEFUL FIREFIGHTER

Emerges in response to perceived threats, injustice, or overwhelming emotions and serves a protective role by expressing intense anger or aggression as a means of coping with distressing situations or traumatic experiences. Characterized by intense anger, hostility, or aggression. This Part often arises in situations where the individual feels threatened, powerless, or invalidated, and it may seek to assert control, protect boundaries, or retaliate against perceived threats.

THE IMPULSIVE FIREFIGHTER

Serves a protective role by impulsively engaging in behaviors aimed at providing temporary relief or distraction from discomfort. The Impulsive Firefighter may manifest through impulsive actions, behaviors, or decisions that offer immediate gratification or distraction but may not align with the individual's long-term goals or values. These behaviors could include substance abuse, reckless spending, binge eating, self-harm, or other impulsive actions.

THE ADDICTIVE FIREFIGHTER

Emerges as a response to distressing emotions or overwhelming situations and serves a protective role by engaging in addictive behaviors as a means of coping with discomfort or emotional pain, providing temporary relief or escape from distressing emotions.

FIREFIGHTER

Getting to know your Firefighter Part involves a process of identifying the origin of the Part, exploration, understanding, and building a compassionate relationship with this aspect of yourself. Here are steps you can take to begin this process:

1. IDENTIFICATION

Situations where you experienced behaviors and feelings associated with the subtypes of the Firefighter. Explore their intensity and identify potential patterns.

2. ORIGIN

The first time this firefighter Part formed in your life, identify the initial feelings that the Firefighter Part is protecting you from. Connect this to your present life.

3. EXPLORATION

Sensations, behaviors and feelings associated with the subtypes of the Firefighter.

4. INTENTIONS & FUNCTION

The role that your Firefighter Part plays in your life. Identifying the Parts' fears and what is it protecting you from.

5. DIALOGUE

This process is not about blaming or trying to eliminate these Parts. It's about understanding their roles, appreciating their efforts, and fostering relationships based on trust and mutual respect.

6. COMPASSION

Compassion towards the Firefighter Part involves acknowledging its protective role and understanding that its actions stem from a desire to shield you from distress.

7. CORE SELF & SELF LEADERSHIP

When working with the Firefighter Part, the Self acts as a source of stability, empathy, and understanding. Providing a safe and nurturing space for these Parts to express themselves and be heard, without judgment or criticism.

8. POSITIVE COPING PLAN

Shifting from previous protective, potentially destructive behavior to positive coping mechanisms next time the Firefighter Part becomes active and tries to take control.

MANAGERS

DISCERNING

COLLABROTIVE

ORGANIZED

RESPONSIBLE

CONFIDENT

CREATIVE

LEADER

MINDFUL

PERFECTIONISM

PLANNING

RESPONSIBLE

PROBLEM-SOLVER

BALANCED

SELF-DISCIPLINED

NUTURING



TYPES OF MANAGERS

◆ PERFECTONIST

◆ CARETAKER

◆ CONTROLLER

◆ AVOIDANT

◆ WORKAHOLIC

◆ OVERACHIEVER

◆ TASKMASTER

◆ ANXIOUS

◆ RESPONSIBLE

◆ STRUCTURED

◆ CRITIC

TYPES OF MANAGERS

THE PERFECTIONIST MANAGER

This type of Manager is characterized by a strong emphasis on perfectionism, setting high standards, and striving for excellence in all areas of life. It may be critical of oneself and others, seeking to avoid mistakes and maintain control.

THE CONTROLLING MANAGER

The Controlling Manager is focused on maintaining order, structure, and control in both internal and external environments. It may resist uncertainty or change, preferring rigid rules and routines to manage situations.

THE TASKMASTER MANAGER

Taskmaster Managers are highly task-oriented and focused on productivity and efficiency. They excel at organization, planning, and problem-solving, but may struggle with flexibility or adaptability in dynamic situations.

THE CARETAKER MANAGER

This type of Manager is concerned with the well-being of others, often taking on a caretaking or nurturing role within the internal system. It may prioritize the needs of others over its own, seeking to provide support and guidance.

THE AVOIDANT MANAGER

Avoidant Managers tend to avoid or suppress vulnerable emotions and difficult situations, preferring to focus on tasks or distractions instead. They may struggle with relaxation or self-care, feeling uncomfortable with introspection or emotional expression.

THE OVERACHIEVER MANAGER

Overachievers Managers are driven by a strong desire for success and accomplishment. They may set ambitious goals and pursue achievements to validate their worthiness or competence, sometimes at the expense of their well-being.

TYPES OF MANAGERS

THE WORKAHOLIC MANAGER

Workaholic Managers are excessively focused on work or productivity, often to the detriment of other areas of life. They may have difficulty setting boundaries or prioritizing self-care, feeling restless or guilty when not engaged in tasks.

THE ANXIOUS MANAGER

Anxious Managers are characterized by heightened levels of anxiety and worry. They may anticipate potential problems or dangers, constantly seeking to mitigate risks and ensure safety in both internal and external environments.

THE RESPONSIBLE MANAGER

Responsible Managers carry a strong sense of duty and responsibility towards themselves and others. They may take on multiple roles or tasks, prioritizing obligations and striving to meet expectations, even at personal cost.

THE STRUCTURED MANAGER

Structured Managers thrive in environments with clear rules and guidelines. They prefer predictability and routine, feeling uncomfortable with ambiguity or spontaneity. They may excel at following protocols and procedures but struggle with improvisation or flexibility.

THE CRITIC MANAGER

The Critic Manager is characterized by a strong tendency to critically evaluate and scrutinize the individual's actions, decisions, and achievements. It may focus on perceived flaws, mistakes, or shortcomings, highlighting areas for improvement or correction. The Critic constantly judges and criticizes the individual to push them to do better or avoid mistakes.

MANAGERS

1. RECOGNITION

Acknowledge the presence of your Manager Part. Recognize that this Part emerged as a protective response to help you navigate life's challenges and responsibilities.

2. OBSERVATION

Pay close attention to the thoughts, beliefs, and behaviors associated with your Manager Part. Notice when it becomes active and how it influences your decision-making process and actions.

3. UNDERSTANDING PURPOSE

Reflect on the role that your Manager Part plays in your life. Understand how the Manager Part navigates and copes with the challenges of life in a way that promotes safety, stability, and functionality.

4. SELF-COMPASSION

Approach your Manager Part with kindness and empathy. Understand that it intends to keep you safe and organized, even if its strategies may sometimes feel restrictive or rigid.

5. COMMUNICATION

Foster open dialogue with your Manager Part. Understand its concerns, fears, and desires, and listen attentively to its responses.

6. VALIDATION

Validate the experiences and emotions of your Manager Part. Validation can help build a sense of trust and cooperation between you and this Part.

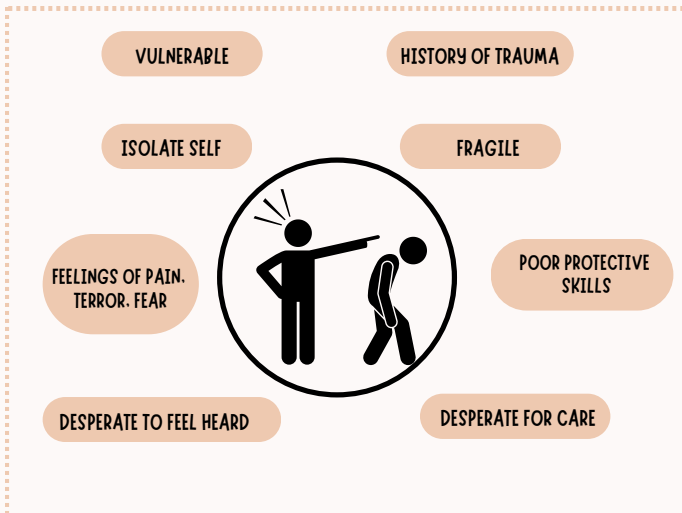
7. COLLABORATION

Work towards collaboration with your Manager Part. Strive to find common ground and negotiate compromises when necessary. Recognize that you are ultimately in charge of your internal system, but that your Manager Part can be a valuable ally in achieving your goals.

8. INTEGRATION & SELF-LEADERSHIP

Integrate your Manager Part into your internal system with Self-leadership. Instead of allowing it to dominate or dictate your actions, lead with compassion, wisdom, and balance. Maintain awareness of your other Parts and strive for harmony within your internal system.

EXILE



TYPES OF EXILES

- ◆ INVISIBLE
- ◆ WORTHLESS
- ◆ NEGLECTED
- ◆ SHAMED
- ◆ ABANDONED
- ◆ TRAUMATIZED

TYPES OF EXILES

THE INVISIBLE EXILE

Inner wounded Part that has been overlooked or ignored by the individual's conscious awareness. Unlike other Exiles that may manifest with intense emotions, memories, or beliefs, the Invisible Exile remains hidden from conscious recognition, often due to the individual's avoidance, denial, or dissociation from their inner pain or trauma.

THE NEGLECTED EXILE

Represents a Part of the psyche that has been overlooked, disregarded, or marginalized by the individual's conscious awareness. Similar to the Invisible Exile, the Neglected Exile holds wounds or unmet needs that have not received adequate attention or validation.

THE ABANDONED EXILE

Represents a Part of the psyche that has experienced profound abandonment, rejection, or neglect. This type of Exile holds deep wounds associated with feelings of being deserted, unloved, or unworthy of care and attention.

THE WORTHLESS EXILE

Represents a Part of the psyche that holds deep-seated beliefs and emotions related to feelings of worthlessness, inadequacy, or unworthiness. This type of Exile often arises from experiences of rejection, criticism, or invalidation, which contribute to a profound sense of diminished self-worth and self-esteem.

THE SHAMED EXILE

Represents a Part of the psyche that holds deep-seated feelings of shame, humiliation, or inadequacy. This type of Exile arises from experiences of perceived or actual rejection, judgment, or criticism, which contribute to a profound sense of being flawed or unworthy.

THE TRAUMATIZED EXILE

Represents a Part of the psyche that holds deep-seated wounds resulting from past traumatic experiences. Traumatized Exiles carry the emotional and psychological residue of trauma, which can profoundly impact an individual's well-being and functioning.

EXILES

1. SELF-REFLECTION

Spend time in introspection to understand your emotions, thoughts, and behaviors. Reflect on your past experiences, particularly those that may have caused emotional pain or trauma.

2. IDENTIFYING TRIGGERS

Pay attention to situations, events, or people that trigger intense emotional reactions or discomfort. These triggers often provide clues about underlying wounds carried by your Exile part.

3. EMOTIONAL AWARENESS

Practice mindfulness to become more aware of your emotions as they arise. Acknowledge and accept them without judgment. Journaling can be helpful in this process, allowing you to track patterns and gain insight into your emotional landscape.

4. CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCE

Childhood experiences often shape our inner world and influence our adult behaviors. Reflect on your upbringing and any significant events or relationships that may have contributed to feelings of rejection, abandonment, or shame.

5. CONNECT WITH YOUR INNER CHILD

Visualize and connect with your inner child, the Part of you that experienced past hurts and trauma. Offer compassion, comfort, and validation to this inner aspect of yourself.

6. INNER DIALOGUE

Engage in an inner dialogue with your Exile Part. Ask questions, listen to its concerns, and offer reassurance and understanding. Cultivate a compassionate and nurturing relationship with this aspect of yourself.

7. EXPRESS EMOTIONS CREATIVELY

Explore creative outlets such as writing, art, music, or movement to express and process your emotions. Creative expression can help you access deeper layers of your psyche and release pent-up feelings.

8. PRACTICE SELF-COMPASSION

Be gentle and patient with yourself as you navigate this inner journey. Offer yourself the same kindness and understanding that you would extend to a dear friend facing similar challenges.

9. INTEGRATION

Ultimately, the goal is to integrate your Exile part into your sense of Self in a healthy and balanced way. This involves acknowledging and honoring your past experiences while fostering Self-compassion, resilience, and inner healing.

Express emotions creatively EXILE

Explore creative ways to release feelings you may be holding onto. This could be writing, art, music, or movement to express and process your emotions. Think of activities that reconnect with your inner child in a carefree way.

Mindfulness-based activities

- Yoga
- Physical grounding activities
- Somatic awareness activities
- Grounding activities such as body scans and engaging with your 5 senses
- Visualization exercises—imagining the Self taking control back from the exile part.

Dance and movement

Use movement to express your emotions through dance or physical exercise. Allow your body to move freely, without judgment, as you let your emotions flow through you. Enroll in a yoga class or use the Somatic Awareness flashcards to start.

Journaling

Use the IFS journal prompts provided or start with writing down your feelings and thoughts, mindfully noting that these are not facts. You can also try writing poetry, short stories, or personal essays as a way to express and explore your emotions through language.

Arts & Crafts

Engage in hands-on crafts such as knitting, sewing, pottery, or woodworking. The process of creating something with your hands can be meditative and therapeutic, allowing you to channel your emotions into tangible objects.

Self-care

Engage in self-soothing activities that help you feel safe and loved. These activities can range from lighting a candle, taking a warm bath, using essential oils, walking in nature, going to a spa or listening to music.

UNBURDENING PARTS

Protectors acquire maladaptive strategies to that pain. It is important to understand how this can make us reactive instead of response and shifting to using protectors for a positive purpose.

Begin with Protective Parts—usually the Managers.
Firefighters can be unstable or upsetting to your system, so Managers often jump in when the focus is on a Firefighter.

Usually, Managers are burdened by and tired of their jobs and would prefer not to have to do what they are doing, but they have taken on an extreme role out of necessity.

It is important to explore and ask the Part how it came to take on its current role originally; and what the circumstances were that made it necessary for the Part to assume its role.

Once the Protective Parts (Managers and Firefighters) have given permission, you can begin to connect with an Exile.

Often, this leads to a memory of one or more painful events, usually in childhood or adolescence. The younger version of themselves in the memory is an Exile.

PATHS TO SELF-ENERGY

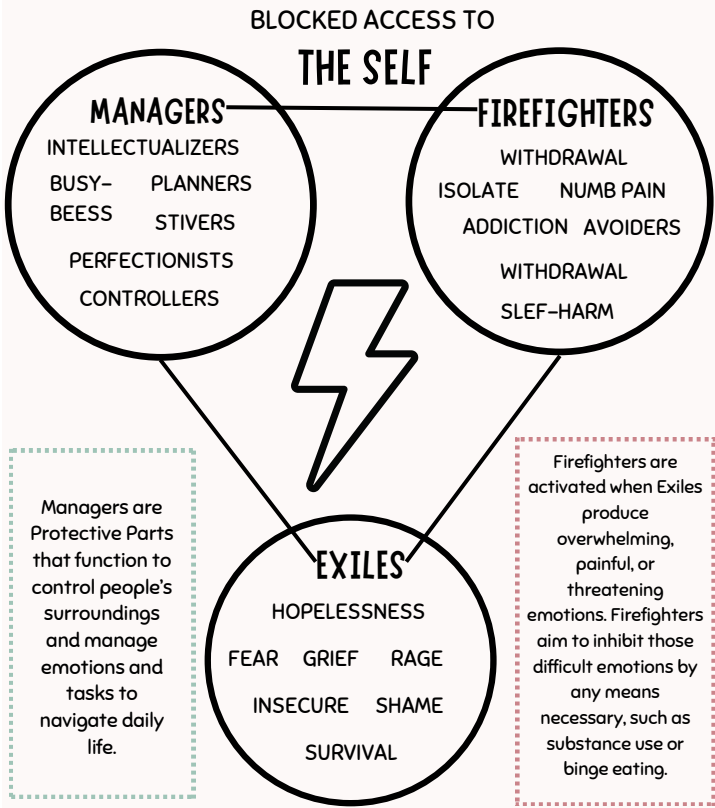
Working with Exiles can be difficult work. Developing a trusting relationship with your Exiles is vital. This is achieved with Self-Energy. With Self-energy you will have enough of your Self-energy, as you witness the pain of the Exile, you will develop natural compassion towards it. Compassion is very important to the Exile.

- Find a comfortable position and begin by taking slow, deep breaths.
- Imagine yourself meeting your Parts at the beginning of a path.
- Ask the Parts to wait there as you head off on a journey.
- Notice how they react. Are they afraid? Some days, they may not want you to go. And that's okay. You can wait for another day to continue.
- If it's okay to proceed, head out on your imagined journey.
- As you progress, if you find you are still thinking or watching yourself, then some Parts are likely to have remained with you. See if they are willing to stay behind. Repeat as many times as required.
- As you remove Parts, feel yourself becoming lighter, moving toward pure awareness without thought.
- You should begin to experience, among other things, clarity, a sense of wellbeing, and confidence.
- Invite the energy you are feeling into your body.
- Pause and experience what it is like to have so much self in your body.
- When you're ready, take some deep breaths and return your focus to the room.

NOTE:

It's important to engage in these steps with self-compassion and care. Start the process with Self- Energy. Reflect on the 8C's of Self for support. If the process becomes overwhelming at any point, consider seeking support from a trained IFS therapist.

BURDENED BEFORE HEALING



PROCESS OF UNBURDNEING THE EXILE



NOTE: Pay particular attention to the presence of **Self**
 ! 3. FLESH OUT ! 4. FEEL TOWARDS ! 6. FEARS ! Witness

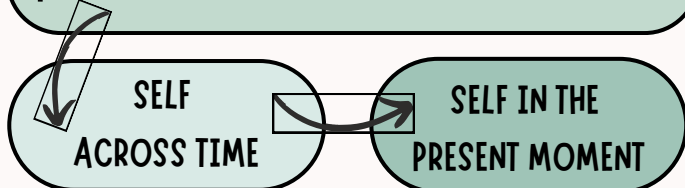
STEPS TO UNBURDEN THE EXILE PART

- 1. CONNECTION TO THE EXILE**
Establishing a connection between the Self and Exile in which the Self can be present with the experience of the Exile.
- 2. WITNESSING THE EXILE'S STORY**
Inviting the Exile to show anything it wants to show –any memories –so it can be seen, felt and understood – in what happened and how that made it feel.
- 3. EXPERIENCING THE EXILES EMOTIONS**
Exile Parts are given the opportunity to express their emotions in a safe and controlled environment. Acknowledging and validating the pain, fear, or sadness that these parts carry.
- 4. REPARING THE EXILE**
Allowing the Exile to have a new experience. Either in the memory of the past or in the present.
- 5. RETRIEVING THE EXILE**
Freeing the Exile from the situation of the past and bringing it into a better situation in imagination or the present.
- 6. UNBURDENING THE EXILE**
Holding a ritual in which the Exile can let go of the burdens it has been holding.
- 7. CONFIRMATION AND INTERGRATION**
The unburdened Part is integrated into your system free of burdens. This changes the behaviors and qualities of this Part and the integrated Self arising in you.

THE FINAL "PART" OF IFS IS THE SELF.

The Self is a Part we are all born with and is the core of who we are. We are pre-equipped with an identity core that contains the best of us.

Two distinct forms of self-awareness



Hides Exiles and uses Protectors to mask "undesirable" aspects of ourselves.

To recognize ourselves in the present moment, we quite literally have to get to know ourselves again.

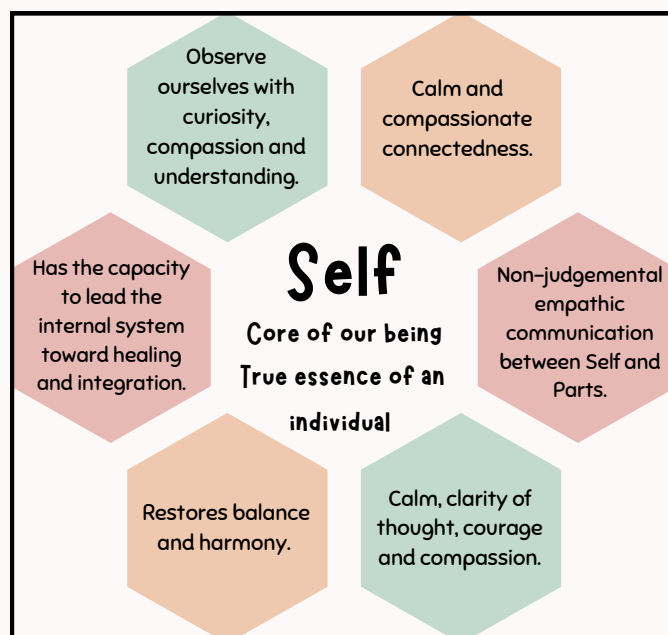
Creates the narrative that we are unsafe, unlovable, unequipped, and unable. This becomes our "truth".

SELF-LEADERSHIP

8C's OF SELF

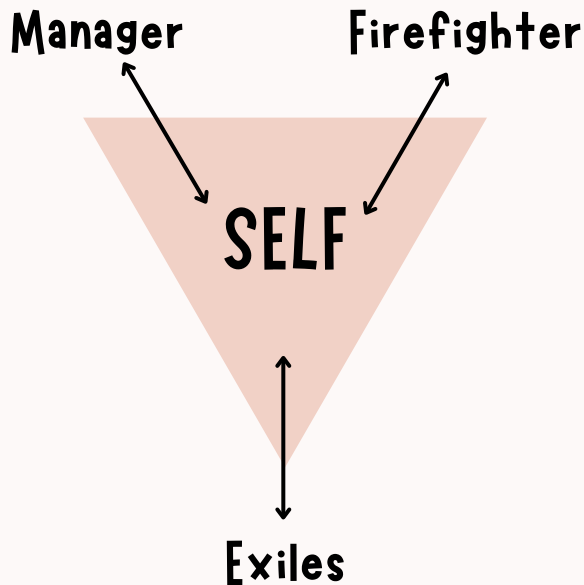
5P's OF SELF

UNDERSTANDING SELF



SELF-AWARENESS TRIANGLE

The dynamics of the internal system are similar in form and relation to the dynamics in an external family system.



The goal of IFS therapy is to bring the internal system into balance, with Parts in the roles that are consistent with their true natures, and Self as the leader.

SELF & SELF-ENERGY

Self-energy is the healing quality of IFS.

The goal of IFS therapy is to help individuals connect with their Self and facilitate a harmonious relationship between the different Parts, allowing for healing and transformation.

Healing happens when Self interacts with Parts. The stronger the relationship between Self and Parts is, the more healing will spontaneously happen.

By engaging with "Self" one takes charge of using energy of different "Parts" to obtain a more balanced and harmonious life.

Self, we are referring to a centered state of embodied Self-awareness and self-acceptance, combined with a deep sense of how we connect to others.

Self is the leader of our internal systems, and our Parts operate in harmony with Self and one another.

Everyone has a Self, but it can become covered up by Parts and lost awareness of/connection to.

Self energy enables protectors to open up and share what is keeping them in their current roles, and also supports Parts releasing burdens when they are ready.

Ways to access self-energy

TIP:

Mindfulness practices

Parts check-in
8 C's of Self

Self as bus driver
5 P's of Self



SELF-LEADERSHIP

Self-leadership is a crucial concept that involves the development of the "Self" as a core

By accessing and strengthening the Self, individuals can provide compassionate leadership to the Internal Family System, guiding the various Parts toward collaboration and balance.

As you work with your Parts and integrate them, you can begin to experience greater Self-leadership and a more balanced and harmonious inner world.

When Self becomes the leader of the internal system, and Parts live in harmony with one another.

The ultimate goal is to help individuals integrate these Parts into a harmonious whole, where the core or "Self" can take a leadership role in making decisions and managing life's challenges.

5 P'S OF SELF

The 5 P's of the Self are essentially another set of Qualities of the Self.

1.

PATIENCE

Allows individuals to approach their internal experiences with a gentle and accepting attitude. Patience enables individuals to give themselves the time and space needed for healing and self-discovery. Being kind to oneself during the process of understanding and integrating different aspects of the internal system.

2.

PERSPECTIVE

The Self has a broad and compassionate perspective that can see the bigger picture. It can understand and appreciate the roles and intentions of the different Parts without judgment. Creating a more comprehensive understanding of one's internal dynamics and fostering empathy towards the various Parts.

3.

PRESENCE

The Self is characterized by a sense of calm, centeredness, and mindful awareness. It is the Part of the individual that can observe and hold space for the various Parts without getting overwhelmed. Presence allows individuals to be in the present moment, fostering a non-reactive and compassionate stance towards their internal experiences.

4.

PLAYFULNESS

The Self is often associated with a playful and creative energy. It can bring a sense of joy, curiosity, and spontaneity to the therapeutic process. Playfulness helps to create a lighter and more open atmosphere, allowing individuals to explore and connect with their internal Parts in a more dynamic and engaging way.

5.

PERSISTENCE

Persistence refers to the ability to continue efforts and stay engaged in the exploration of one's internal landscape, even when faced with difficult emotions, resistance, or moments of discomfort. It involves a willingness to continue the therapeutic process, maintain self-reflection, and work towards personal growth and healing over time.

8 C'S OF SELF

Here you check for Self-energy and the 8Cs.

We all have a sense of Self.

When we embody Self-energy, we are in a state of being characterized by the 8 C's of IFS.

1.	CALMNESS	Serenity regardless of circumstances. The ability to react to triggering situations mindfully.
2.	CURIOSITY	The ability to perceive situations clearly, without distortion caused by beliefs – to remain objective.
3.	CLARITY	A strong desire to non-judgmentally explore and learn something new about a topic, situation or person.
4.	COMPASSION	Being open-hearted, present, and appreciative of others, without feeling the urge to fix, change distance or judge.
5.	CONFIDENCE	The ability to stay fully present in a situation and effectively handle anything that happens, understanding that life includes making mistakes.
6.	COURAGE	Having the strength to overcome threats, challenges or danger and taking responsibility for one's actions. Be willing to reflect and improve upon the past.
7.	CREATIVITY	Imagination is capable of producing ideas and expression spontaneously. Gaining a state of pleasure from immersion in the activity at hand.
8.	CONNECTEDNESS	Feeling connected to others lowers defenses and allows companionship; being a part of a team, community, organization, or group.

BLENDING & UNBLENDING PARTS

ALLOW SELF TO LEAD

Unblending contributes to the overall balance and harmony of the internal system. By preventing full identification with Parts, individuals can navigate life with greater flexibility, resilience, and self-awareness.

BLENDING

Blending is the process by which a Part of our system merges and becomes indistinguishable from Self. Through blending, Parts can take control over thoughts, emotions, physical sensations and pretty much any function of our body. Parts are in control of the extent to which they blend with Self.

When a Part and our Self are "blended," the feelings and perspective of a burdened Part merge with the Self. The compassion and patience of the Self becomes eclipsed by the needs, desires, and intentions of the Part.

When we are blended with the Part, we experience the reality of the Part as our own truth. The qualities, beliefs, feelings and behaviors of the Part can become so dominant that it overshadows and causes an imbalance to our Core Self.

UNBLENDING

Unblending is the opposite. When a Part unblends from Self, there is a sense of increased spaciousness in the body and there is also more scope for Self-energy to flow in the system. Parts can unblend from Self when they believe it is safe and appropriate to do so.

IFS Therapy uses the term "unblending" to indicate when a Part steps aside and leaves more space for Self to take the lead. Unblending for healing purposes is key.

The goal of IFS is to help unblend the Part, allowing the qualities of Self to emerge with Self Energy.

Before we can help our Parts, we must be able to unblend from them. In our day-to-day lives, the Self is frequently overpowered by one or more of our Parts– we are blended with this Part.

SELF AWARENESS WITH S.O.A.R

SELF

Self requires understanding the version of you that has evolved based on your unique combination of personality, physical and emotional traits, intelligence, habits, beliefs, strengths, and weaknesses.

OUTLOOK

Outlook is the awareness of how you view the world and how your background and emotions affect your larger worldview.

ACTION

Action revolves around how we can have conversations that enable us to advance complex and important relational situations.

REFLECTION

Reflection is the process of critically evaluating our behaviors, perspectives, and habits from previous actions to gain insight and adapt for future actions.

STEPS FOR UNBLENDING PARTS

1. IDENTIFICATION OF THE PART

The first step is to identify the Part that is blended with Self. This identification can manifest as intense emotions, automatic reactions, or a strong sense of being controlled by a specific aspect of the internal system.

2. FOCUSING ON THE PART

The next step is to focus on these intense emotions, sensations or thoughts. This can be physical sensations on your body; pressure on your chest, tension on your shoulders or a feeling on anxiety each racing thoughts

3. DIFFERENTIATION

After identifying and focusing on the Part, you are aware of its characteristics. This allows you to differentiate the Self from the Part. Remember this is a Part of you, not all of you. The reflective questions to follow will guide you with this as you move into Self and engage in a dialogue with Self.

4. MOVING INTO SELF

Unblending involves shifting from a blended state to a Self-led state. The Self is characterized by the 8 Cs. Connecting with the Self in a calm, and compassionate way, observing the Part from a more detached and curious perspective.

5. DIALOGUING WITH THE PART

Encourage an internal dialogue between the Self and the identified Part. This dialogue helps create a space for the Part to express itself and for the individual to understand its role, concerns, and intentions.

6. UNBLENDING FURTHER

If the Part is reluctant to unblend, explore the Part is afraid of. Let the Part express its fears or failures. Reassure this Part from Self, using the 8 Cs.

8 C'S OF SELF 6 F'S OF PARTS MAPPING

Before you start your Parts mapping journey check for Self-energy and the 8 Cs.

When we embody Self-energy, we are in a state of being characterized by the 8 C's of IFS.

1.	CALMNESS	Serenity regardless of circumstances. The ability to react to triggering situations mindfully.
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6 F'S OF PARTS MAPPING

1. FIND

Find out which Parts needs attention and then localising the Part in or around the body. The Parts make themselves known through behavior, images, emotions, or body sensations.

2. FOCUS

Focus your attention inwards on the Part. Acknowledge the Part's needs and concerns. Pay attention to the sensations, emotions and thoughts related to the Part.

3. FLESH OUT

Explore the Part in more detail. As questions about its role and how it came about. Explore the Parts beliefs and desires. Give it space to tell you things, or to share the memories that are triggering it. Encourage the Part to share its fears if it did not perform its role.

4. FEEL TOWARDS

This step explores how other Parts feel about this Part's presence. Using Self-energy, must determine if you have enough core Self-energy to move forward. If you don't, you may have to do some work with other Parts that are in the way before you can proceed. Work with the 8 C's of Self.

5. BEFRIEND

Learning more about the Part and establishing a good relationship between Self and Part. Show the Part curiosity a compassion and validate that it is heard. Imagine that this Part is a separate entity with its own voice. Get to know more about this Part with self-reflective questions.

6. FEARS

Asking about the deepest fears of the Part that influences it to act as it does. We learn the hard work of the protections. You may feel vulnerable, and the wounded Part may emerge, usually, this points towards Exiles and polarized Parts.

6 F'S OF PARTS MAPPING

Turn your attention inwards. Find out which Parts needs your attention

Focus on the specific element you identified in step 1. Acknowledge the Parts needs and concerns.

Explore the thoughts or emotions are emerging

FIND



FOCUS



FLESH OUT



Using Self-energy, explores how other Parts feel about this Part's presence.

FEEL TOWARDS



Imagine that this Part is a separate entity with its own voice. Learn about the Part and establishing a good relationship between Self and Part.

BEFRIEND



Note the fears and concerns that arise when you explore this Part.

FEARS



6 F'S POLARIZATION & EXILES

Polarization within Internal Family Systems refers to the phenomenon where Parts of an individual are in conflict or opposition to each other.

Conflicting Parts may have different perspectives, desires, or protective roles, and they can create inner tension and turmoil.

When two or more Parts have extreme roles and battle over how to feel or react, a person can feel torn inside.

By acknowledging and working with each Part in a compassionate and curious manner, individuals can achieve greater internal harmony and reduce polarization.



Working with polarization is a compassionate, open-minded approach that encourages dialogue, understanding, and integration. Use the 8 Cs and Self-leadership to guide you toward a more harmonious internal system.

See working with Parts & with Self-leadership workbook to explore further



Exiles are the Parts of you that carry emotional wounds or traumatic memories.

They are often hidden deep within the psyche to avoid painful emotions and memories.

Exiles are fragile and vulnerable Parts, that isolate Self, and are desperate to feel heard and be cared for. They have a history of trauma and have poor protective skills.

NOTE:

Working with Exiles are delicate work. Please explore this further, ideally with a therapist.

See working Unburdening Exiles workbook to explore further