

**IFS**  
**UNBURDENING**  
**THE EXILE**

# UNBURDENING PARTS

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

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 critical 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, consider seeking support from a trained IFS therapist.

# BURDENED BEFORE HEALING

BLOCKED ACCESS TO

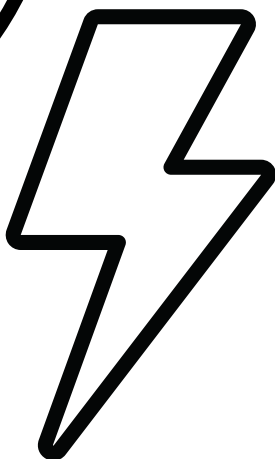
## THE SELF

### MANAGERS

INTELLECTUALIZERS  
BUSY BEES      PLANNERS  
                    STRIVERS  
PERFECTIONISTS  
CONTROLLERS

### FIREFIGHTERS

WITHDRAWAL  
ISOLATE      NUMB PAIN  
ADDICTION    AVOIDERS  
WITHDRAWAL  
SELF-HARM



### EXILES

HOPELESSNESS  
FEAR    GRIEF    RAGE  
INSECURE    SHAME  
SURVIVAL

Managers are Protective Parts that function to control people's surroundings and manage emotions and tasks to navigate daily life.

Firefighters are activated when Exiles produce overwhelming, painful, or threatening emotions. Firefighters aim to inhibit those difficult emotions by any means necessary, such as substance use or binge eating.

THE INNER CHILD THAT CARRIES THE PAIN, BURNS, AND WOUNDS FROM TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCES, USUALLY OCCURS IN CHILDHOOD.

# UNBURDENED AFTER HEALING

## MANAGERS

PROBLEM-SOLVER  
SOUND-JUDGMENT  
BALANCED  
COLLABORATIVE  
CONFIDENT

## FIREFIGHTERS

PASSIONATE FUN  
HUMOUR ADVENTUROUS  
SENSUAL COURAGEOUS  
PASSIONATE

## SELF-ENERGY

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

## 8 CS

## EXILES

SPONTANEOUS  
OPEN CURIOUS WARM  
TRUSTING PLAYFUL  
TENDER

APPROACH DAILY  
TASKS MINDFULLY.  
EMBODIED DOERS  
OF DAILY TASKS.  
THEY ARE  
COLLABORATIVE  
TEAM PLAYERS AND  
EFFECTIVE  
LEADERS.

FIREFIGHTERS CAN  
USE EFFECTIVE  
SELF-SOOTHING AND  
DISTRACTING  
STRATEGIES.  
EXPRESSING  
THEMSELVES  
WITHOUT BECOMING  
OVERWHELMED.

THE INNER CHILD CARRIES FREEDOM. IT TRUSTS THAT THE SELF WILL LOOK  
AFTER THEM AND CARE FOR THEM.

# LEARNING ABOUT YOUR EXILE

What is your name and how old are you?

What do you do (activities and behaviors associated with this Part)?

What is your role and function?

What do you do (activities and behaviors associated with this Part)?

When did you first appear in my internal system?

# LEARNING ABOUT YOUR EXILE

What emotions and thoughts does the Part experience?

Are there any concerned Parts? What are their fears?

How can you respond to the concerned Part? How would it respond to you?

How would it respond to you?

How do you presently feel about this Part?

# LEARNING ABOUT YOUR BURDENS

What are the extreme emotions burdening this Part?

Hurt, fear, or shame from early experiences, and they carry the difficult emotions and memories associated with those experiences.

What are the wounds that you are carrying?

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What extreme events or interactions in your life created this burden?

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What are the extreme beliefs that this Part is carrying?

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How has this burden modified or impacted your behaviorally unhealthy way?

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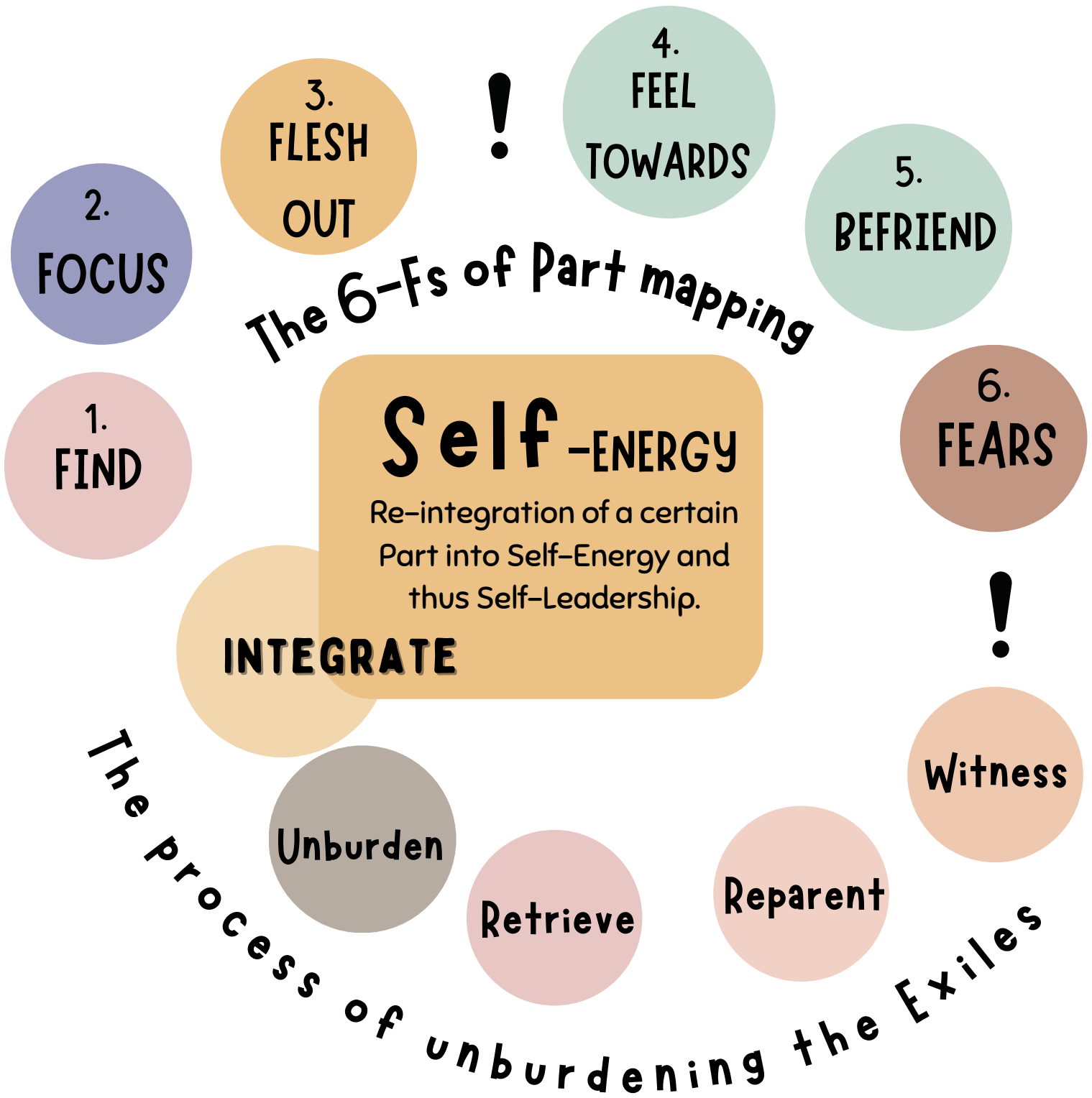
# LEARNING ABOUT YOUR BURDENS

What have you tried to do to shield yourself from the distressing emotions or memories associated with your Exile Parts?

How is this burden no longer serving you? How can unburdening bring about healing in your life?

How can you help these wounded Parts feel acknowledged, understood, and cared for?

# PROCESS OF UNBURDENING 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. REPARATING 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 INTEGRATION

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.

1.

CONNECTION TO  
THE EXILE

*Reflective Questions*

Exile Name:

[Blank space for Exile Name]

What do you feel towards the Exile?

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How do the emotions of this Part manifest?

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How do the thoughts of this Part manifest?

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How do these Exiled Parts affect my current behaviors and reactions?

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# 2.

## WITNESSING THE EXILE'S STORY

### *Reflective Questions*

Exile Name:

After connecting to the Exile, you can ask it to show you its memories or tell you its story. Write the narrative as if you are a witness. This is the Part's story, not yours.

# 2.

## WITNESSING THE EXILE'S STORY

### *Reflective Questions*

What do you want me to know?

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What do I need to know to understand how this was for you?

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When did the Part first feel these emotions or experience these memories?

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# 2.

## COMPASSIONATE WITNESSING

### *Reflective Questions*

As the Self, respond to the Exiles story. Use the 8C's of Self to express understanding, non-judgement, compassion, and validation to the Part for sharing your memory and experience.

A large rectangular area defined by a dashed blue border, intended for writing reflective questions.

# 3.

## EXPERIENCING THE EXILES EMOTIONS

### *Reflective Questions*

What do you want to show me? What Part is showing up for you?

What does the Exile need to feel safe and secure – to share all intense emotions?

What emotions is this Part holding onto?

What are the deep, painful emotions or memories that the Part had been avoiding or suppressing?



# 4.

## REPARENTING EXILE

### Reflective Questions

How did it make the Exile feel?

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What kind of reparenting was given to the Exile?

Allowing the Exile to have a new experience. Either in the memory of the past OR in the present.

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What does the Exile need?

Is there anything the Part needs from you to change this situation?

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# 4.

## REPARENTING EXILE

## Reflective Questions

### Self identification

Write down how you identify your 'Self' in the present moment. What qualities does your Self possess? (Consider the 8 C's of IFS: Calmness, Clarity, Curiosity, Compassion, Confidence, Courage, Creativity, and Connectedness.)

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### Identification of Part

Think about a young or vulnerable Part of you that needs nurturing and care. Describe this Part. How does it feel? What does it want or need?

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### Describe the situation

Write about a recent situation where this Part was triggered or activated. What happened? How did you react? What did this Part need at that moment?

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# 4.

## REPARENTING EXILE

## Reflective Questions

### Reparenting role

Imagine your Self stepping into a nurturing, parental role. What kind of parent would you be to this Part? Write down your vision of this.

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### Words of comfort

Write a letter from your Self (as a parent) to this Part. What would you say to comfort, validate, and meet the needs of this Part?

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### Act of care

Imagine an act of care or nurturing that you can provide for this Part. It could be a comforting action, a symbolic gesture, or a mental image that brings comfort.

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# 4.

## REPARENTING EXILE

## Reflective Questions

### Continual care

How can you continue to provide this care for your Part in your daily life?  
Create a small action plan for this.

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### Reflection

Reflect on this process. How did it feel to take on a parenting role for your Part?  
How did your Part respond?

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5.

RETRIEVING  
EXILE

Reflective Questions

Exile name :

[Empty light blue box for writing the exile name]

Where is it in the past? Where will you look for it?

[Five horizontal lines for writing the answer to the first question]

Do you want to leave this place?

Does this Part want to be in a different place?

[Five horizontal lines for writing the answers to the second and third questions]

5.

**RETRIEVING  
EXILE**

*Reflective Questions*

How did you bring the Exile out?

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What concerns does the Exile have about coming out of the past?

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How did the Exile respond to being out of the past?

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How can you support and handle these concerns?

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# 6.

## UNBURDENING EXILE *Reflective Questions*

One needs to assist the Exile in a ceremonial releasing of its burdens. Expressing and processing long-suppressed emotions. The goal is to integrate these Parts into the internal system in a more harmonious way.

Exile Name:

Where do you feel this burden in your body? Where is it carrying the pain?

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What are the concerns of the Exiles if they are unburdened?

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# 6.

## UNBURDENING EXILE *Reflective Questions*

How can you create a safe space for the Exile to release its burdens?

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What beliefs do you want to release?

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What feelings do you want to release?

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6.

## UNBURDENING EXILE *Reflective Questions*

What qualities do you want to be reunited with that were displaced by this burden?

What do the Parts feel like once they let go of this burden?

Once unburdened, what do your thoughts sound like?

What would others notice about you once you are unburdened from this Part?



# 7.

## CONFIRMATION AND INTEGRATION

## *Reflective Questions*

As the Part is unburdened, reflect on the changes unburdening has brought to the behaviors of Parts. Reflect on the qualities that are now integrated with Self. Reflect on how it feels to be integrated and embodied in a balanced and harmonious way. You can draw or write about this below.

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# RELEASING BURDENS WITH 5 ELEMENTS



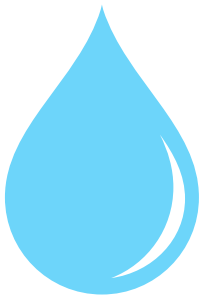
**Earth**

Exile may want to bury its burdens and maybe even stomp on the freshly turned soil a few times for good measure.



**Air/  
Wind**

Exile may let its burdens be carried off by the wind. Or it can “fly in an airplane” and release its burdens from the sky.



**Water**

Fling the burdens into the sea or “wash them away”, “cleansed” of their burdens.



**Fire**

Burn the burdens into ash and watch those ashes disintegrate into nothing. Or let the wind take away what’s left of them.



**Light**

Offer up the burdens to the sun or a brilliant flash of light.

# UNBURDENED PART FOLLOW UP

## *Reflective Questions*

How can I make this Part feel safe and comfortable after these changes?

How can I check-in on this Part regularly?

What can I do to maintain a connection with this Part?

How can I ensure that the Parts needs are continuously met?