

INTERNAL FAMILY SYSTEMS

— Therapy —

HEALING FROM WITHIN.
LIVING FROM **THE SELF**.

“ When we heal our inner system with the leadership of *the Self*, true transformation becomes possible. ”

~ C. G. Jung



WE ALL HAVE PARTS

Every part of us has a positive intention and wants to help.



HEALING THROUGH CONNECTION

When we lead with Self—curiosity, compassion, and calm—our parts can trust and transform.



INTEGRATION CREATES WHOLENESS

When our parts work together, we become more whole, resilient, and free.

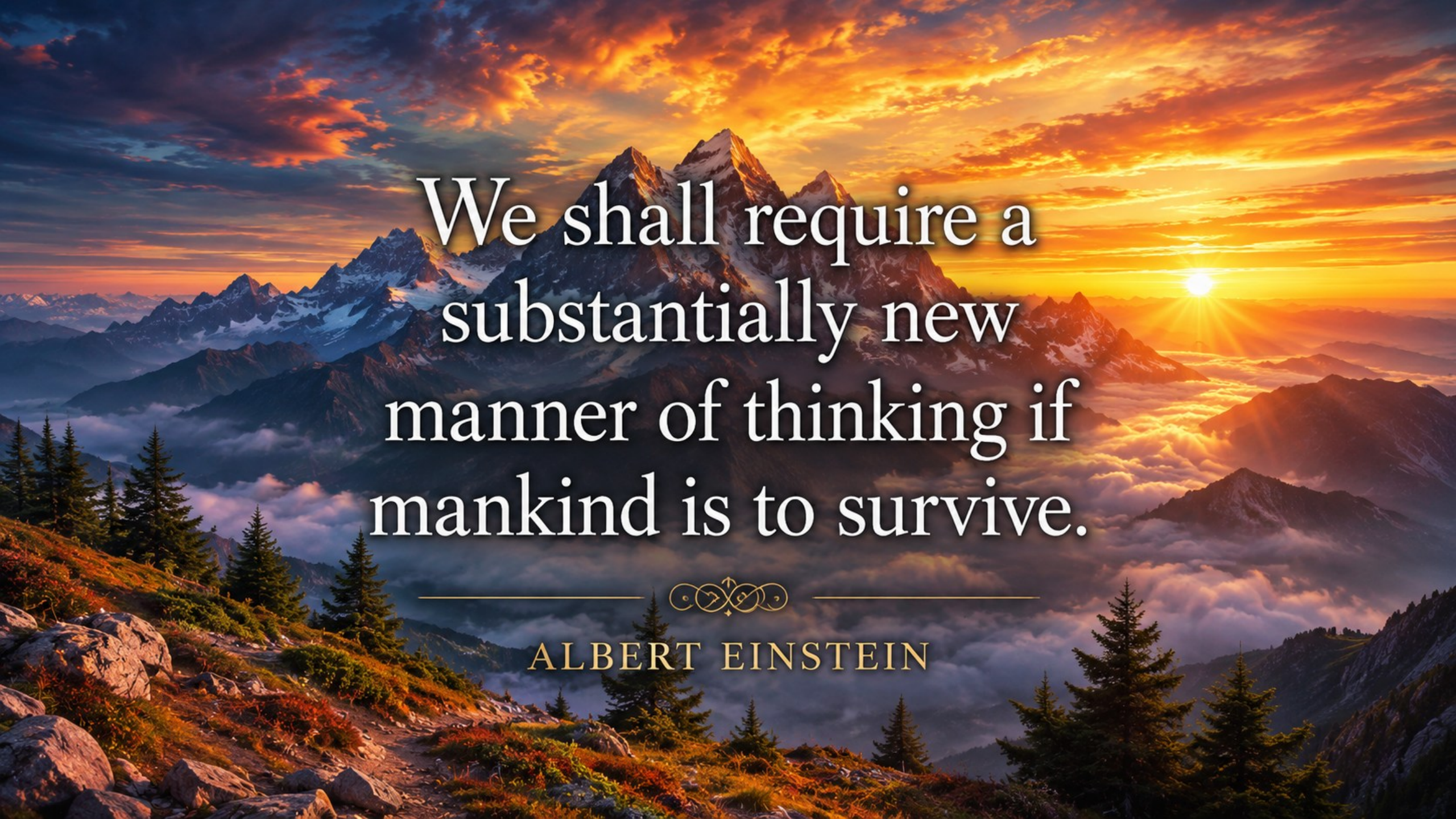


NEUROFAITH® LLC

— BRIDGING SCIENCE AND SPIRIT TO TRANSFORM LIVES

JEFFREY E. HANSEN, Ph.D.

FOUNDER & DIRECTOR



We shall require a
substantially new
manner of thinking if
mankind is to survive.



ALBERT EINSTEIN

HE IS BEFORE ALL THINGS, AND IN HIM ALL THINGS HOLD TOGETHER.

COLOSSIANS 1:17 (NIV)



POLYVAGAL THEORY

Trauma affects
the nervous system.



HEARTMATH®

The heart offers a
pathway to regulation,
resilience, and connection.



INTERNAL FAMILY SYSTEMS

The mind develops protective
strategies to help us survive
emotional pain.



FAITH

Christ brings integration,
healing, redemption,
and hope.



Christ does not erase our parts.
He **redeems, orders,**
and **holds** them together.



Understanding
our **biology.**



Honoring
our **emotions.**



Embracing
our **parts.**



Resting in
our **Healer.**

NeuroFaith®

Jeffrey E. Hansen, PhD

THE BODY ADAPTS. | THE HEART RESPONDS. | THE MIND PROTECTS.

From Body to Mind to Healing in Christ

So far, we have explored how trauma affects the **body**—activating the nervous system, shaping the brain, and influencing the **heart**.

But trauma affects more than the body.

To survive overwhelming experiences, the **mind** develops remarkable protective strategies that help shield us from emotional pain.

THE BODY



Trauma affects our physiology, nervous system, and brain.

THE HEART



The heart is a powerful conduit for emotion regulation, connection, and resilience.

THE MIND



The mind organizes into protective parts to help us manage pain and stay safe.



GOD DESIGNED US with remarkable biological, emotional, and psychological systems that help us **survive** adversity.

INTERNAL FAMILY SYSTEMS (IFS)

helps us understand these God-given psychological defenses—the roles our parts play, and how they influence our **healing** journey.



Understanding our biology. Honoring our emotions.
Embracing our parts. Resting in our Healer.

DR. RICHARD SCHWARTZ

FOUNDER OF
INTERNAL FAMILY SYSTEMS (IFS)



PIONEER. VISIONARY. TRANSFORMER.

Family therapist and professor who discovered that we all have inner parts—each with a positive intention.



CREATOR OF IFS.

Developed the Internal Family Systems model in the early 1980s—now a leading, evidence-based approach to healing trauma and restoring wholeness.



THE POWER OF SELF.

IFS helps us access the Self—a core state of curiosity, calm, compassion, clarity, courage, creativity, and connectedness.



A GLOBAL IMPACT.

IFS is used worldwide in psychotherapy, coaching, healthcare, education, and leadership.

“

*There are
no bad parts.*”

— RICHARD SCHWARTZ, PHD



UNDERSTAND YOUR PARTS. ACCESS YOUR SELF. TRANSFORM YOUR LIFE.



THE HISTORY OF INTERNAL FAMILY SYSTEMS (IFS)

A Transformative Model of the Human Mind and Heart

IFS began with one simple but profound observation:

*“The mind is naturally **multiple**,
but also naturally **whole**.”*



1980s

DISCOVERY OF PARTS

While working as a family therapist, Richard Schwartz noticed that our minds contain many distinct “parts” or subpersonalities.



EARLY 1990s

DISCOVERY OF THE SELF

He discovered an inner core of calm, curiosity, compassion, and clarity—what he called the Self.



MID 1990s

DEVELOPMENT OF THE IFS MODEL

IFS was developed to help parts and Self work together in a system of healing and inner leadership.



2000s

RESEARCH & INTEGRATION

IFS gained empirical support and was integrated into trauma treatment, attachment work, and many clinical approaches.



TODAY

GLOBAL IMPACT AND GROWTH

IFS is now used worldwide by therapists, coaches, healers, and communities transforming lives.



POLYVAGAL THEORY

Helps us understand how trauma affects the nervous system.



INTERNAL FAMILY SYSTEMS

Helps us understand how the mind adapts to emotional pain.



TOGETHER

They provide a powerful framework for healing and transformation.



Polyvagal Theory & Internal Family Systems (IFS)

TWO COMPLEMENTARY PATHWAYS TOWARD HEALING

POLYVAGAL THEORY

How our nervous system shapes our experience



VENTRAL VAGAL SYSTEM

Safety • Connection • Engagement
Feel safe, connected, and open.



SYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM

Mobilization • Fight or Flight
Prepare, protect, and take action.



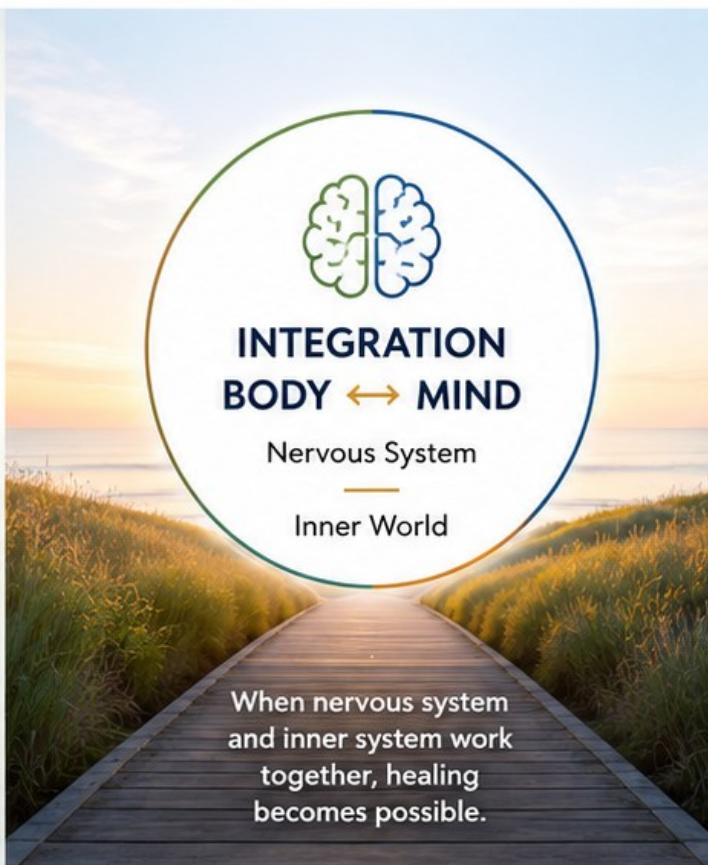
DORSAL VAGAL SYSTEM

Shutdown • Freeze • Disconnection
Conserve energy and disconnect.



THE GOAL

Increase regulation, resilience,
and window of tolerance.



INTERNAL FAMILY SYSTEMS (IFS) THEORY

How our inner world shapes our healing



MANAGERS

Prevent pain and problems.
Keep life running.
Protect us every day.



FIREFIGHTERS

Extinguish emotional intensity.
Act in the moment.
Protect us in the moment.



EXILES

Hold our deepest wounds
and painful memories.
Carry our pain.



SELF

Natural leader within.
Curious • Compassionate • Confident • Calm
Leads with compassion and wisdom.



Polyvagal Theory helps us understand how trauma affects the nervous system.

Internal Family Systems helps us understand how the mind adapts to emotional pain.



Together,
they provide a powerful framework
for healing and transformation.





POLYVAGAL THEORY: *The Nervous System in Action*

The chart below, adapted from Dr. Rothschild, nicely demonstrates the shifting body sensations, physiological symptoms, and emotions as we move between autonomic states (Rothschild, 2017).

AUTONOMIC NERVOUS SYSTEM: PRECISION REGULATION

** WHAT TO LOOK FOR **

	 LETHARGIC Parasympathetic (PNS I)	 CALM Parasympathetic (PNS II) Ventral Vagus	 ACTIVE / ALERT Sympathetic (SNS I) OPTIMAL ZONE	 FLIGHT / FIGHT Sympathetic (SNS II) DANGER ZONE BEGINS	 HYPER FREEZE Sympathetic (SNS III) THREAT TO LIFE	 HYPO FREEZE Parasympathetic (PNS III) Dorsal Vagus Collapse
 PRIMARY STATE	Apathy, Depression	Safe, Clear Thinking, Social Engagement	Alert, Ready to Act	React to Danger	Await Opportunity to Escape	Prepare for Death
 AROUSAL	Too Low	Low	Moderate	High	Extreme Overload	Excessive Overwhelm Induces Hypoarousal
 MUSCLES	Slack	Relaxed/toned	Toned	Tense	Rigid (deer in the headlights)	Flaccid
 RESPIRATION	Shallow	Easy, often into belly	Increasing rate	Fast, often in upper chest	Hyperventilation	Hypo-ventilation
 HEART RATE	Slow	Resting	Quicker or more forceful	Quick and/or forceful	Tachycardia (very fast)	Bradycardia (very slow)
 BLOOD PRESSURE	Likely low	Normal	On the rise	Elevated	Significantly high	Significantly low
 PUPILS, EYES, EYE LIDS	Pupils smaller, lids may be heavy	Pupils smaller, eyes moist, eye lids relaxed	Pupils widening, eyes less moist, eye lids toned	Pupils very dilated, eyes dry, eye lids tense/raised	Pupils very small or dilated, eyes very dry, lids very tense	Lids dropping, eyes closed or open and dark
 SKIN TONE	Variable	Rosy hue, despite skin color (blood flows to skin)	Less rosy hue, despite skin color (blood flows to skin)	Pale hue, despite skin color (blood flow to muscles)	May be pale and/or flushed	Noticeably pale
 HUMIDITY	Dry	Moist	Increased sweat	Increased sweat, may be cold	Cold sweat	Cold sweat
 HANDS & FEET (TEMPERATURE)	Variable	Warm	Less moist	Dry	Dry	Dry
 DIGESTION	Variable	Increase	Cool	Cold	Extremes of cold & hot	Cold
 EMOTION	Grief, sadness, shame, disgust	Calm, pleasure, love, sexual arousal, "good" grief possible	Anger, shame, disgust, anxiety, excitement, sexual climax possible	Rage, fear	Evacuate bowel & bladder Terror, may be dissociation	Stopped May be too dissociated to feel anything
 EMOTIONS WITH SELF & OTHERS	Withdrawn	Should be accessible	Should be accessible	Limited	Not likely	Inaccessible
 FRONTAL CORTEX	May or may not be accessible	Likely	Likely	May or may not be accessible	Likely inaccessible	Inaccessible
 INTEGRATION	Not likely	Should be accessible	Should be accessible	Not likely	Impossible	Impossible
 RECOMMENDED INTERVENTION	Activate, Gently Increase Energy	Continue Therapy Direction	Continue Therapy Direction	Put on Brakes	Slam on Brakes	Medical Emergency CALL 911



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FOUNDER & DIRECTOR

Regulate the Nervous System.
Access the Self.
Restore Connection.



Adapted from "The Polyvagal Theory in Therapy: Engaging the Rhythm of Regulation" by Deb Dana, LCSW, and Stephen J. Rothschild, PhD (Norton, 2017).

THE BASIC ASSUMPTIONS OF IFS

Every Part Has a Purpose. Every Part Wants to Help.



1. The mind is made of parts.
We all have multiple subpersonalities.



2. Everyone has a Self.
The Self is calm, curious, compassionate and wise.



3. There are no "bad" parts.
Every part has a positive intention.



4. Parts take on roles to help.
Exiles hold pain. Managers protect. Firefighters put out extreme pain.



5. Therapy is NOT about eliminating parts.
It's about understanding, accepting and leading them from Self.



6. Parts form a complex system.
They interact and influence each other constantly.



7. Parts can change when the system changes.
Healing inside transforms life outside.

*“When we lead from Self,
our parts can finally relax and heal.”*

– Richard Schwartz, PhD

Jeffrey E. Hansen, PhD



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Neuroscience Meets the Soul.

PROCEDURAL MEMORY

These parts are encoded in **implicit** rather than **procedural memory** and become rather reflexive or procedural much like riding a bike or shooting an arrow.



AUTOMATIC

Learned skills that become automatic with repetition.



EFFICIENT

Allows us to perform complex tasks without conscious effort.



ESSENTIAL

Frees mental resources for focus, creativity, and adaptability.



NeuroFaith®

Jeffrey E. Hansen, PhD

AUTHOR • SPEAKER



IFS EXILES

Vulnerable parts that carry deep pain.



PAIN & TRAUMA:

Exiles hold deep emotional pain and trauma.



PROTECTED:

They are protected by managers and firefighters to avoid pain.



GOAL:

Healing exiles is a goal for reintegration and relief.



VULNERABILITY:

They represent vulnerability and sensitivity.



NEED:

Need acknowledgment and compassion for healing.



TRANSFORMATION:

Healing transforms their roles for positive contributions.



LEADERSHIP:

Facilitates leadership by the Self, promoting calm and clarity.



IMPORTANCE:

Crucial for overall mental health improvement.



EXILED PARTS – NOT PART OF GOD'S/ YOUR HIGHER POWER'S PLAN.

“EXILES ARE THE **TENDER, HURTING, VULNERABLE** PARTS OF US THAT FEEL ALL OF OUR DIFFICULT EMOTIONS:

THINK SHAME, WORTHLESSNESS, TERROR, GRIEF, LOSS, DEPRESSION, LONELINESS, ANXIETY, PAIN, POWERLESSNESS, FEAR, AND ISOLATION.

WE COME BY THEM **HONESTLY** EVEN THOUGH THEY WERE **NOT PART** OF GOD'S PERFECT PLAN”

(Riemersma, 2020, p. 44).



EXILES

Early pain encodes deeply within us in implicit memory and becomes exiled from our “Self”



Exiles are tender, hurting, vulnerable parts of us that carry our most difficult emotions.

Shame • Worthlessness • Terror • Grief •
Loss • Depression • Loneliness • Anxiety •
Pain • Powerlessness • Fear • Isolation



The pain is real.



The exile is real.



The impact is real.



But healing is possible.

“We come by them *honestly* even though they were *not part* of God’s perfect plan.”

– Riemersma, 2020, p. 44.

Exiled parts – Not Part of God's/your Higher Power's Plan.



“Exiles are the tender, hurting, vulnerable parts of us that feel all of our difficult emotions:

Think shame, worthlessness, terror, grief, loss, depression, loneliness, anxiety, pain, powerlessness, fear, and isolation. We come by them honestly even though they were not part of God's perfect plan” (Riemersma, 2020, p. 44).

IFS MANAGERS

The managers help run our internal world.



ROLE:

Managers are parts that handle the day-to-day life of the individual.



PREVENTION:

They work to keep the person safe from harm and psychological pain.



STRATEGIES:

They use strategies like planning, judging, caretaking, controlling, and striving for perfection.



FUNCTIONING:

Managers help the person function effectively in their daily life.



MAINTENANCE:

They maintain a person's stability and self-esteem.



IFS FIREFIGHTERS

Protective parts that spring into action.



INTERVENTION:

Firefighters act quickly to extinguish emotional pain or discomfort from exiled parts.



DISTRACTION:

They often employ distracting behaviors to pull attention away from distress.



IMPULSIVITY:

Firefighter responses can be impulsive and may include behaviors like substance abuse, binge-eating, or overworking.



INTENSITY:

Their actions are usually more extreme and can be disruptive to everyday functioning.



SHORT-TERM RELIEF:

The focus is on immediate relief rather than long-term solutions.



PROTECTION:

Their primary goal is to protect the psyche from feeling the pain of wounded exiled parts.



CONFLICT:

Firefighters can be in conflict with Managers, as their strategies often oppose the Managers' approaches to control and order.





Firefighters
taking charge of
the pain by
reactively acting
out





TOO BIG.
TOO MUCH.
NOT SAFE.
SO WE HIDE IT.

From an early age, what we can't process gets suppressed.
It doesn't disappear—it gets exiled.

Treating a System, *Not* a Symptom

MANAGERS

-  Stabilize/Improve
-  Future-oriented
-  Proactive
-  Over-identified

SELF



FIREFIGHTERS DISTRACTERS

-  Avoid/Soothe
-  Present-oriented
-  Reactive
-  Reject/Concealed

EXILES



Absorb Energy



Past-oriented



Overwhelming



Repress/Ignore

Painful feelings and memories get suppressed and locked away—often from an early age.
They don't go away. They stay below the surface.

WHEN PROTECTORS BECOME EXTREME



PROTECTION

Healthy • Helpful • Adaptive



When **emotional pain** becomes **overwhelming**, protective parts can become **extreme**.

They are **not trying to harm us**.

They are trying to **protect us**.

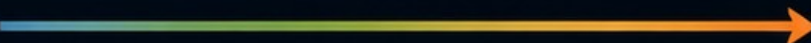
But in their urgency to help, they may begin using strategies that **create new problems**.



EXTREME PROTECTION

Overwhelming • Rigid • Harmful

FROM ADAPTIVE



TO EXTREME



Perfectionism
→ **Anxiety**



Self-protection
→ **Isolation**



Relief seeking
→ **Addiction**



Control
→ **Rigidity**



Achievement
→ **Burnout**



In IFS, there are no bad parts. Even our most troubling behaviors often began as attempts to protect us from pain.

The Self

The Center That Leads



At the heart of the Internal Family Systems model is the **Self**—the calm, compassionate center within each of us.



1. THE SELF AS MODERATOR

The Self is the “moderator” that the parts are talking to, that likes or dislikes, listens to, or shuts out various parts.



2. WHEN DIFFERENTIATED

When differentiated, the Self is competent, secure, self-assured, relaxed, and able to listen and respond to feedback.



3. THE SELF CAN LEAD

The Self can and should lead the internal system.



4. LEVELS OF EXPERIENCE OF THE SELF

- ▶ **Completely differentiated** (Self alone):
People describe a feeling of being “centered.”
- ▶ **In Self or Self-leading** in daily life:
When interacting with others (day-to-day experience), the Self is experienced along with the non-extreme aspects of the parts.



5. EVERYONE HAS A SELF

An empowering aspect of the model is that everyone has a Self.

The 8 Cs in IFS



Calmness

The ability to maintain a sense of inner peace and tranquility.



Curiosity

A non-judgmental interest in understanding one's internal experiences and parts.



Clarity

The ability to see situations and internal parts with clearness and understanding.



Compassion

A deep caring and empathy for oneself and one's parts, even those in pain or causing problems.



Confidence

A strong belief in oneself and the ability to handle what comes up inside.



Courage

The bravery to confront painful and challenging parts or memories.



Creativity

The innovative and imaginative energy to heal and transform one's parts.



Connectedness

A sense of being in harmony with all parts and feeling connected to others.

For those who are **faith-oriented**,
IFS's 8 Core Qualities correspond nicely with the
Fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23.



Calmness

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Fruit of the Spirit

GALATIANS 5:22-23

1. Love
2. Joy
3. Peace
4. Patience
5. Kindness
6. Goodness
7. Faithfulness
8. Gentleness
9. Self-Control



The Integrated Self

The Heart of Healing



The integrated Self
leads to inner peace,
happiness, and the
ability to connect
healthily to others we
care about and love.

“

*“The Self is in everybody.
It cannot be damaged.”*

— Richard Schwartz, PhD



INNER PEACE



JOY & HAPPINESS



COMPASSION



COURAGE



DEEP CONNECTION



WHOLE & HEALED

THE INNER CRITIC

A PART WITH  A PURPOSE



Parts that act as “**Inner Critics**” (using IFS language), appear to be a somewhat universal experience. In their milder manifestation, parts that criticize can be beneficial for you when they allow for the acknowledgment of mistakes and errors or the cultivation of positive change and humility.



Like all parts in IFS, “**Inner Critics**” have **value** and a **positive intention**. It’s when an “Inner Critic” moves into an **extreme role**, they can start to **impede** the individual’s ability to thrive, and the possible benefits of self-criticism may be overshadowed by possible harm to one’s well-being through internal turmoil.



WHEN UNDERSTOOD AND RESPECTED,
the Inner Critic can transform from an obstacle into an ally.



COMMON TYPES OF INNER CRITICS

Sean Cuthbert (2022)
Australian Clinical Psychologist



All Inner Critics have
a positive intention.

Their goal is protection.

Problems arise when they
become extreme and begin
leading the system rather
than serving the Self.



THE PERFECTIONIST

Protects through excellence.

"If I do it perfectly, no one can criticize me."

✓ **Core Fear:** Judgment, mistakes, failure



THE CONTROLLER

Protects through control.

Attempts to manage urges, impulses, emotions, and uncertainty.

✓ **Core Fear:** Losing control



THE TASKMASTER

Protects through achievement.

Pushes relentlessly toward productivity, success, and accomplishment.

✓ **Core Fear:** Being seen as lazy, inadequate, or a failure



THE UNDERMINER

Protects through self-limitation.

Keeps you small, cautious, and hidden from risk.

✓ **Core Fear:** Rejection, criticism, disappointment

ADDITIONAL TYPES OF INNER CRITICS



Sean Cuthbert (2022)
Australian Clinical Psychologist



**NEUROFAITH®
TEACHING POINT**



**Critics do not
attack because
they hate us.**

**They attack because
they fear what will
happen if they stop
protecting us.**



THE DESTROYER

Protects through self-attack.

Floods the system with shame, self-criticism,
and feelings of defectiveness.

 **Core Fear:** Worthlessness, rejection, abandonment



THE GUILT-TRIPPER

Protects through accountability.

Uses guilt to keep us aligned with our values
and relationships.

 **Core Fear:** Hurting others, losing acceptance



THE CONFORMIST

Protects through belonging.

Pushes us to fit in and avoid standing
apart from the group.

 **Core Fear:** Exclusion, rejection, abandonment



NEUROFAITH®
Neuroscience Meets the Soul



*When we understand our Critics with compassion,
they can **transform from saboteurs into protectors.***

A COMMON IFS OBSERVATION

- As people learn about their Inner Critics, they often discover another critic waiting in the wings:

A part that criticizes the critic.

- Inner Critics frequently become the target of frustration, anger, shame, or judgment from other parts of the system.

- This can create a cascade of internal conflict:

A critic criticizing a critic criticizing a critic.

- From an IFS perspective, every critic is trying to help, even when its methods are painful or extreme.



**NEUROFAITH®
TEACHING POINT**

Healing begins when curiosity replaces criticism.

Instead of asking:

"How do I get rid of this part?"

Ask:

"What is this part afraid would happen if it stopped doing its job?"



Goals of IFS Therapy



1. HEAL & ACCESS SELF

The goal of IFS is to help clients **access Self** so that they can heal wounded parts and bring their minds into balance.



2. ACHIEVE BALANCE

To achieve **balance** and **harmony** within the internal system.



3. ELEVATE SELF

To differentiate and **elevate the Self** so it can be an effective leader in the system.



4. SELF IN THE LEAD

When the **Self** is in the lead, the parts will provide input to the **Self** but will **respect** the leadership and ultimate decision making of the **Self**.



5. HONOR ALL PARTS

All parts will exist and lend **talents** that reflect their **non-extreme intentions**.



IFS WARNING

Don't Go to the Exiles Too Fast



Common Mistake

- Rushing to the pain (exiles).
- Ignoring the protectors.
- Assuming they are the problem.



What IFS Teaches

- Managers protect for a reason.
- Firefighters protect for a reason.
- Permission and trust are essential.



The Better Way

- Get to know the protectors.
- Earn permission.
- Let the system guide the timing.



NEUROFAITH®
Neuroscience Meets the Soul



GO TOO FAST AND THE SYSTEM WILL FIGHT YOU.
GO SLOWLY AND THE SYSTEM WILL GUIDE YOU.

IN IFS, WE LEARN TO LISTEN TO THE PAIN



I need to listen to my **anger** to know that I have been violated.



I need to listen to my **anxiety** to know that I have unresolved trauma that needs to be healed.



I need to listen to my **depression** to know that I need to care for my heart's deepest wounds.



I need to listen to my **fear** to know that I may need to create safety.



I need to listen to my **stress and irritability** to know that I'm out of balance and need rest or reprioritization.

(Riemersma, 2020, p 42).

Pain is trying to teach me.



When we **listen with curiosity** and compassion, pain becomes a path to **healing and growth**.



THE 5 P's

Essential elements that support healing and transformation in IFS therapy and any therapy.



When these five qualities are present, we create a safe and supportive environment where all parts feel seen, valued, and heard—and real healing can unfold.



NeuroFaith® Teaching Point

These 5 P's are not just about the therapist—they are cultivated together in the relationship.

Connection is the catalyst. Presence is the path. Compassion is the goal.

5. PERSISTENCE

We stay committed to the journey, even when it's hard. Small steps lead to lasting change.



4. PLAYFULNESS

We bring lightness, creativity, and even humor to help parts relax and explore new possibilities.



1. PATIENCE

We allow the process to unfold in its own time. No rushing, no forcing—just trust.



2. PERSPECTIVE

We help parts and Self step back and see the bigger picture with curiosity and compassion.



3. PRESENCE

We are fully here—attentive, grounded, and engaged with what is.



Together, the 5 P's create
Safety. Trust. Healing. Growth.



The Six Fs of IFS

From Awareness to Healing



THE GOAL: Move from **reacting** to parts → to **understanding** parts → to **healing** parts.



NEUROFAITH®
Neuroscience Meets the Soul



AWARENESS



COMPASSION



CURIOSITY



CONNECTION



TRUST



HEALING

— Jeffrey E. Hansen, Ph.D. —

INTRODUCING JENNA RIEMERSMA

Leader. Therapist. Author. Teacher.



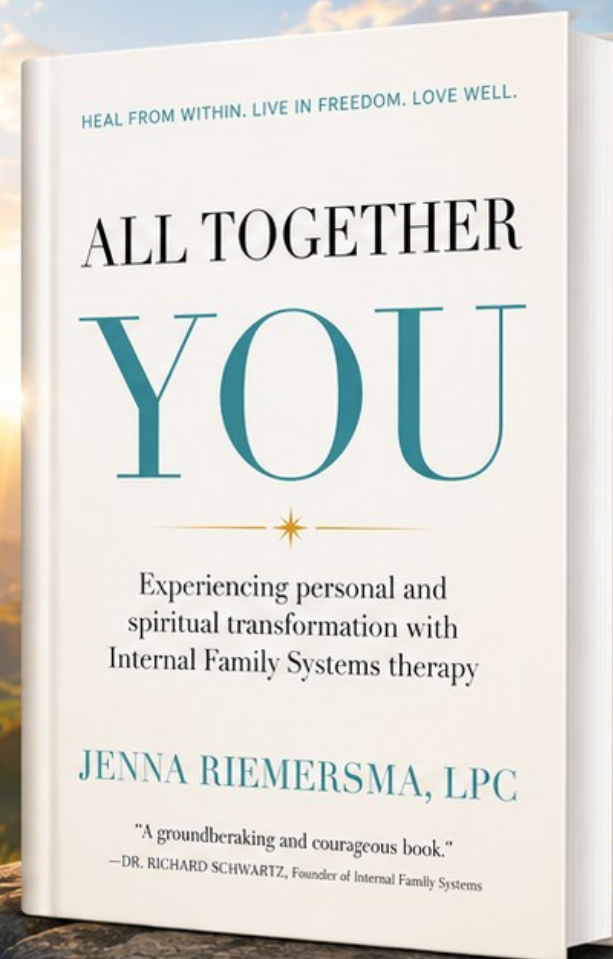
A leader in integrating
Internal Family Systems (IFS)
with Christian-based thought.



Helps individuals move from
internal warfare to healing,
unity, and purpose through
the power of **Self leadership**.



Brings deep clinical wisdom
together with faith, compassion,
and **transformational truth**.



“

When we know our parts and lead with Self,
healing becomes transformation and our lives
align with who we were created to be.



Jenna's work bridges the best of
psychology and the best of faith—
*offering hope, wholeness, and a
path forward.*



NEUROFAITH[®]
Neuroscience Meets the Soul

Bringing clarity to the mind.
Bringing hope to the heart.

Healing. Harmony. Leadership.



Lean Into the Pain

Ask Three Questions

Most of us are taught to avoid pain.
IFS invites us to do something different.
Move toward it. Listen. Learn.

- 1** What do I notice in my body?
Where do I feel it?
- 2** What is this feeling trying to tell me?
- 3** What does this part need
from me right now?



Click the link below for a wonderful
guide on how to Lean into the Pain by
Jenna (start at 48:20)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U0C2dLNWgPA&ab_channel=PureDesireMinistries



PRACTICAL IFS THERAPY TIPS

Understanding the System Before Pursuing the Pain



COMMON CLINICAL PRESENTATIONS



PERFECTIONISM
→ **MANAGER**



SUBSTANCE USE
→ **FIREFIGHTER**



DEPRESSION, ANXIETY, PTSD SYMPTOMS
→ Often signal wounded Exiles.

FIVE CLINICAL REMINDERS



1. SLOW DOWN

The urge to rush toward pain usually backfires.



2. MAP THE SYSTEM

Identify the Managers, Firefighters, and Exiles.



3. RESPECT PROTECTORS

Every protector has a positive intention.



4. LOOK FOR POLARIZATIONS

Parts often battle each other internally.



5. EARN PERMISSION

Trust precedes healing. Permission opens the door.

“Go as fast as the system allows—and no faster.”



NEUROFAITH®
Neuroscience Meets the Soul

Jeffrey E. Hansen, Ph.D.
Speaker. Author. Trainer.

PRACTICAL IFS THERAPY TIPS

— ✨ *Work With Protectors Before Approaching Exiles* ✨ —

1 BUILD TRUST WITH PROTECTORS



Develop a direct relationship with Managers and Firefighters.



Assume they are trying to help.



2 NEGOTIATE THE PACE



Ask what concerns they have.



Respect resistance rather than fighting it.



Create a signal if the work is moving too fast.

EXAMPLES



Manager:
Resistance,
overthinking,
avoidance



Firefighter:
Addiction,
impulsivity,
relapse



3 LISTEN BEFORE LEADING



Work out a system for the part to let you know when things are moving too fast.



Respect the concerns of the system.



Curiosity builds trust.



4 THEN APPROACH THE EXILES



Help the Exiles tell their story.



Witness their pain with compassion.



Support healing and integration.

MANAGERS

FIREFIGHTERS



PROTECTORS



TRUST



HEALING

“ No protector steps aside until it believes the system is safe. ”



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Speaker. Author. Trainer.

PRACTICAL IFS THERAPY TIPS

— ✨ *Non-Imaging Techniques for Internal Understanding* ✨ —

1 ASSESS INTERNAL DIALOGUE



JOURNALING:

What is the exile/manager/firefighter/self saying or wanting to do about this situation?



2 DIRECT ACCESS



THERAPIST TO PARTS:

Let me talk to the manager for a moment.



SELF TO PARTS:

What are the parts saying and what is the Self's reaction?



PART TO PART:

What is the manager saying to the exile?



WHY THESE TECHNIQUES WORK

- ✓ Increase awareness of internal dynamics
- ✓ Help parts feel seen and heard
- ✓ Strengthen Self-leadership and trust



MANAGER

Protects through control and planning



FIREFIGHTER

Protects through action and distraction



EXILE

Carries pain, shame and burdens



SELF

Calm, curious, compassionate and connected



CURIOSITY OPENS THE DOOR. CONNECTION BUILDS TRUST. **SELF LEADS THE WAY.**



When parts feel heard, they stop fighting and start cooperating.



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IFS OFFERS A DIFFERENT DEFINITION

— ✨ Psychological Definitions of the Addictive Process ✨ —



1. ADDICTIVE POLARITY

A chronic polarity between two sets of extreme parts: critical, controlling (Manager) and avoidant, soothing (Firefighter); both try to protect exposure of buried (Exile) emotional pain.
(Cece Sykes '06/'16)



2. PAIN MEDICATION

Coping with complex trauma.
(Gabor Maté)



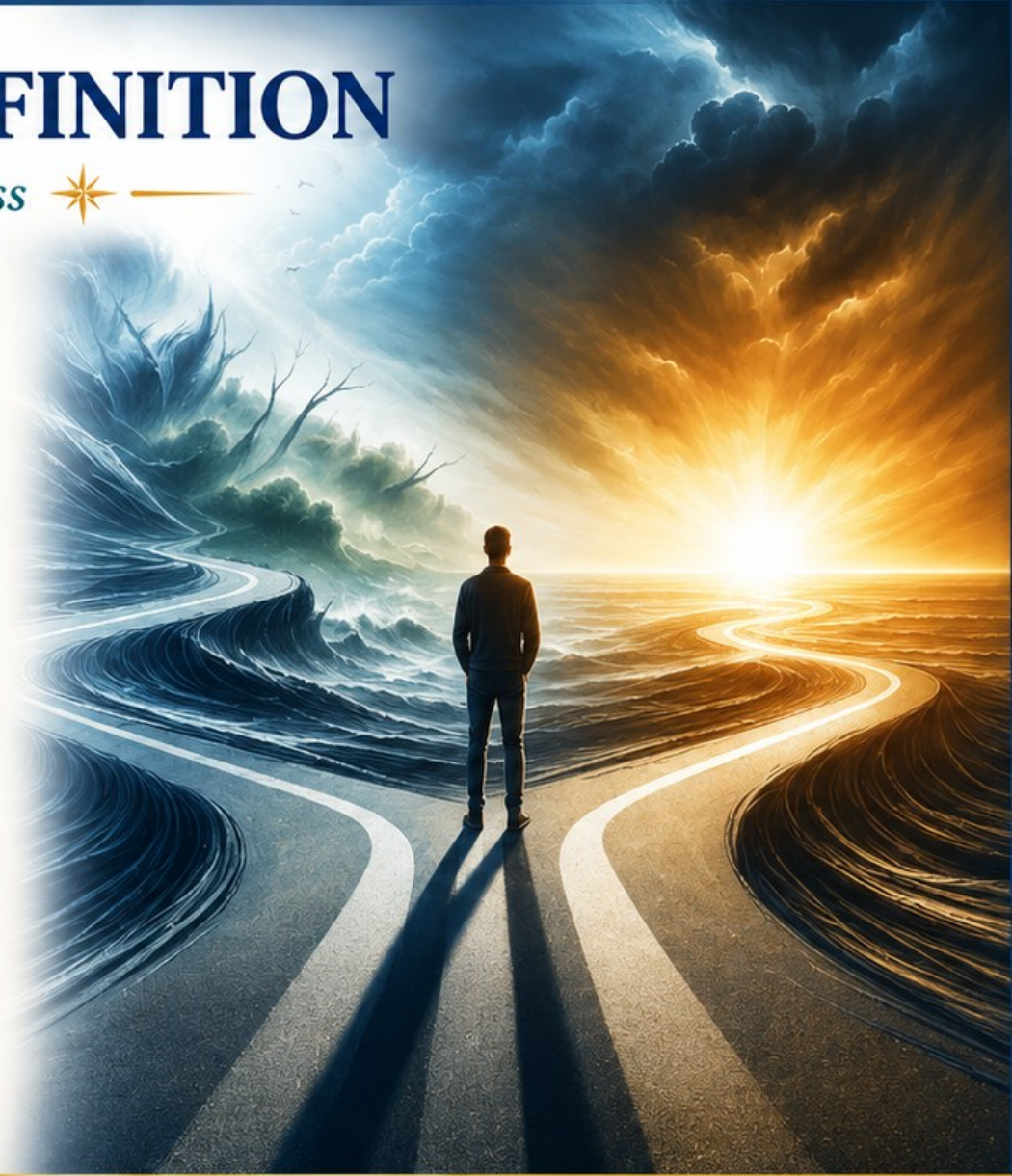
3. ADDICTION IS NOT RITUALIZED COMFORT-SEEKING

Addiction shouldn't be called "addiction."
It should be called "ritualized compulsive comfort-seeking."
(D. Sumrok MD; Center for Addiction Sciences, University of TN)



4. DEPENDENCE

Dependence on or commitment to a practice, habit or substance to the extent that cessation causes trauma.
(Kemerman Webster's)



*IFS sees addiction not as a moral failure, but as
parts trying to protect unbearable pain.*



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QUESTIONS IFS ASKS

— ✨ *Looking Beneath the Behavior to the Pain* ✨ —



- GABOR MATÉ – NOT, WHY THE ADDICTION?
.....Why the Pain??



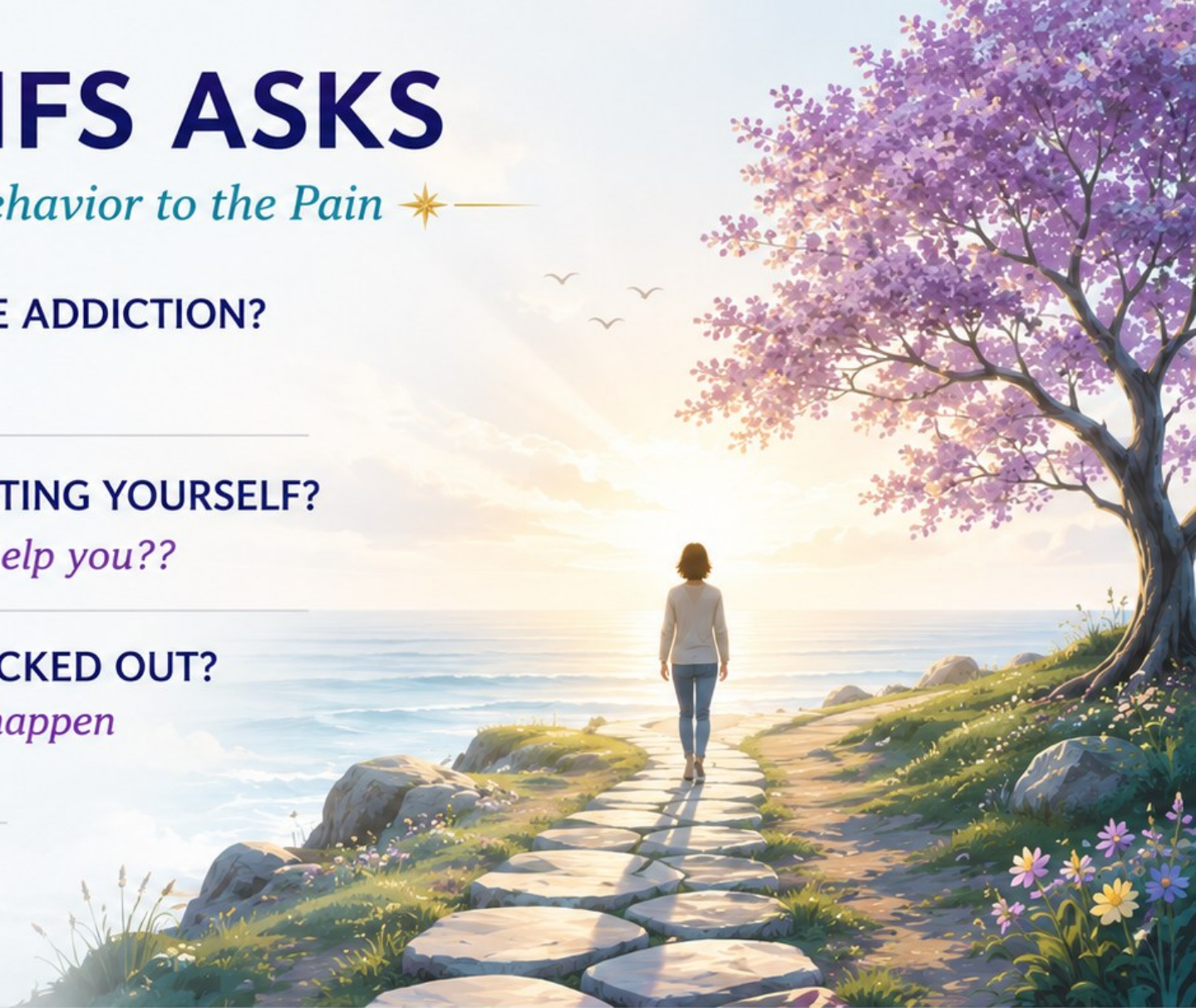
- IFS – NOT, WHY ARE YOU HURTING YOURSELF?
.....How is that part trying to help you??



- IFS – NOT, WHY ARE YOU CHECKED OUT?
.....What are you afraid would happen if you were more aware?



- NEVER AN EXCUSE
.....Always a Reason



WE DON'T JUST TREAT ADDICTION.
WE HEAL THE PAIN THAT DRIVES IT.



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PARADIGM SHIFT: WE ARE IN THIS TOGETHER

★ *"I am not here to take this away from you."*



Creating a contract or vision: what do you want for yourself out of coming here?
Not in charge of your sobriety plan...



It seems most parts of you want this to be different.
I am here to support you in sustaining those changes (vs. quick fix)



Can you sense parts nervous, not ready, not committed, not on board yet?



Parts that want a manager in charge?



What do you know about your stress, biggest hurdles...?



Ask about less risky FF/D that help soothe, ie screen time, work, music, exercise, food; sports



Choice: "The Ninth C" – What if you had a choice



IFS IS A PARTNERSHIP, NOT A BATTLE.
We walk beside every part toward healing and wholeness.



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GET IN RELATIONSHIP, NOT IN CONTROL



TRADITIONAL ADDICTION THERAPY

fight or tries to
control FF/S/Using parts



IFS APPROACH

creates self-to-part
relationship using
curiosity and compassion

IFS GOAL: CREATE SELF-TO-PART WITH USING PARTS



“I just want to get to know you.”



“I am not here to change you.”



*“Other parts have tried to shame you,
but I am not those parts.”*



*“There is more to you than meets the
eye – you’re more complex than you seem.”*



RELATIONSHIP BUILDS TRUST.
TRUST OPENS THE DOOR TO HEALING.



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Why IFS Resonates

— ✨ *A Different Way of Seeing Ourselves and Others* ✨ —



STRENGTH-BASED

The Self is not damaged.
Healing occurs when
Self begins to lead.



NEW PERSPECTIVE

Instead of asking
“What’s wrong with you?”
IFS asks,
“*How is this part
trying to help?*”



NO BAD PARTS

There are no bad parts—
only parts carrying
burdens or trapped in
extreme roles.



SELF AS CO-THERAPIST

Clients provide the material.
The therapist is a guide
and trusts the wisdom
of the internal system.



WHOLE-SYSTEM VIEW

Ecological understanding
of the entire therapy
system, including
therapist and client.



RESPONSIBILITY WITHOUT SHAME

Language encourages
self-disclosure and
taking responsibility
for behavior.

“ Beneath every symptom is a story, Beneath every defense is protection.
Beneath every burden is a *Self* capable of healing. ”



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MAY THE GOD OF HOPE

“*May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may **overflow with hope** by the power of the **Holy Spirit**.*”

ROMANS 15:13 (NIV)

THE NEUROFAITH® JOURNEY



POLYVAGAL THEORY

Trauma affects the nervous system.



HEARTMATH®

The heart offers a pathway toward regulation, resilience, and connection.



INTERNAL FAMILY SYSTEMS

The mind develops protective strategies to help us survive emotional pain.



FAITH

Christ brings integration, healing, redemption, and hope.

A FINAL REFLECTION

We are not **broken**.

We are **adaptive**.



Our struggles often reflect the remarkable ways the mind and body have worked to **survive, protect, and heal**.



The more we understand how God designed us, the more clearly we see both the **majesty of His creation** and the **depth of His love**.



Healing is not about becoming someone else. It is about bringing every part of ourselves into the presence of **Christ**, who restores, redeems, and makes all things new.



NeuroFaith®
LLC



Understanding
our **biology**.



Honoring
our **emotions**.



Embracing
our **parts**.



Resting in
our **Healer**.

Jeffrey E. Hansen, PhD



A few of my favorite speakers on IFS. Please take a listen.



Jenna Riersmesma – Faith and IFS

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=deqxDq9Xw6g&ab_channel=geoffreyholsclaw



Dr. Tori Olds

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tNA5qTTxFFA&ab_channel=Dr.ToriOlds



Kenny Dennis – IFS for Kids

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ji7bk3JfEmk&ab_channel=KennyDennis

