

Basic Assumptions of the IFS Model

Hi everybody. Welcome back. I'm Pam and I'm going to start you off with the basic assumptions of the model. This is the framework, the underpinning of our model, okay? The very first assumption that we have is that it's natural to be subdivided, that it's the nature of the human mind. It's normal, it's not a result of trauma but it's a normal and natural piece of who we are.

Okay, so we have these parts which are really aspects of our personality. We also believe, the next basic assumption that you'll see on this slide, is that everyone has a self. The self in IFS is the healing entity. You're going to learn more about the self later in this particular month. Toni is going to talk with you a lot about the self a little bit later, but just to know that we all have a self no matter what's happened to us in our lives, no matter what early trauma experiences we've had, everyone has a self. It's the healing entity and it is meant, the self is meant to be the natural leader in our system, okay? Make sense so far? Okay.

We have a self; we have these parts, right? In most of us, the self does not emerge as a natural leader of the system. These parts develop these intricate internal relationships with one another. Just like in any ... Like think about a family. There are family members who can be aligned with each other or in conflict with one another. The same happens for our parts inside our system. I mean, it's called Internal Family Systems for a reason. It's because all these parts form a system and no part operates in isolation from another. Right now early in the training we're going to teach you about parts in isolation just to help you learn about them, but just keep in the back of your mind that no parts operate in isolation. They're all part of this intricate web.

We also believe, you'll see on the slide also that it's our belief that as we change our internal relationships, our external relationships will change also. Our model of therapy, we don't look at specific incidents as they're happening out there like this happened with this person, how do I fix that, this happened with this person. We look at our own internal relationships, how we're relating to our parts, how they're relating to one another, and as we heal those internal relationships, we take that same healing into the external world, okay? Make sense to everybody? I like to say ... They always say, "You can only love someone as much as you can love yourself," I always change that a little bit and say we can only love someone else's parts as much as we can love our own. It's a slight variation of that but it's really very true.

The final assumption that we have is that the therapist and the client are really in the same process. We're in a parallel process with our clients. I as therapist will have parts that react; our clients will have parts that react, so we spend a lot of time in this model getting to know what's happening inside ourselves. Really counter-transference. What parts in me are reacting to the parts in my client so that I can be as selfless as possible when I'm working with my clients? That's why it's just critical for us to know our own parts and that's why during these 12 months we're going to give you some opportunities to get to know some of your parts a little bit better.

Okay, so now I'm going to turn it over to Toni. She's going to talk about the goals of therapy.