

June 15, 2016 Webinar

Richard Schwartz

Richard

Welcome, everybody. This is my third talk. I've been enjoying it and I'm glad to hear many of you are. We had a recent new spurt of people joining us, people from all over the world. It's very, very exciting to me. This program is very dear to my heart. I really want to welcome everybody.

I hope you've been enjoying Pam and Toni. As we go along, I'm noticing that we're getting more practical with how to do this IFS thing. As we do that, the concern for me comes up again because these are delicate ecosystems that we're entering.

I just wanted to say a few words about how it's pretty safe to help clients get to know Protectors and to honor them. If you watched the last video, for example, which I was very moved by with Toni and Pam, where Pam found some Protectors and got to know them well and honored them and really loved them up, that's pretty safe to do. At this point, we'll give you clear instructions for how to do that, but the problem is that, often, as you do that, Exiles pop out. It's good to know what to do with Exiles. It's hard to learn that just from a course like this.

In our trainings, there are lots of assistants who supervise people as they practice and they help each other get to know how to work with Exiles. We're really asking that before you do that kind of deep work, that you do one of the trainings. It would be very much appreciated.

A lot can be done just by working with Protectors. That's really powerful for clients to get to know that they aren't these Parts, these Parts are part of them, that's not who they are, and that they can separate in a mindful way and listen to them, get to know them and honor them and help them relax. I'm not trying to minimize what you can do at this point.

What you saw with Toni and Pam is great, but also, it's important to remember that many Protectors won't relax until what they protect has been healed. By that I mean usually Exiles. I'm going to talk a little more about that whole map today.

My bent, and maybe more than Toni and Pam, is to get to know Protectors enough so we gain their trust and confidence and honor them, to the point where they're willing to step back and relax and negotiate permission from them to go to Exiles, and then go to the Exiles and heal them, and we'll talk about the steps for that before too long, and then come back and find that the Protectors now are much more malleable, they're much more amenable to new roles.

A lot of the upfront time you spend with Protectors is valuable, but they're still pretty constrained at how much they can actually change until the system that they protect has become less vulnerable and they can drop their weapons. Just a little note about that.

I'm going to show some video today, shortly actually, of working in a different way with

June 15, 2016 Webinar

Richard Schwartz

Protectors where I'm helping a guy get to know them mainly to try and talk them into stepping back and giving us permission to go to the Exiles, and show you how that goes. If they won't step back, then of course, you'd spend time with them and you'd get to know their fears and help them learn to trust that you know what you're doing and so on.

After I show a little video of me working with Protectors, we're going to talk more about the impact that trauma has on inner systems. A little about my background. I'm trained as what's called a structural family therapist. As such, I was taught that the past wasn't really that important in the healing process, that the main thing was to reorganize and help family members connect in a different way and get along in the present and restructure all these family interactions. You could do all that in the present and you didn't have to spend time worrying about the past.

I brought that bias, that assumption to this inner world when I was beginning to work with Parts. I would be able to help somebody connect with a Part that was scared or hurt or something. The Part would calm down and would feel much better. I thought, 'Okay, this is what I should be doing and this is enough,' and then was very disappointed to find that the next session, the Part was just as scared or just as hurt and that whatever we had done hadn't really made any lasting impact.

It was out of frustration with those kinds of experiences that I began to realize that we can't just stay in the present with these systems, that we have to work with what happened to create the dysfunctional structures that these inner systems have taken on.

I'm going to talk more today about the impact of trauma on inner systems and the idea being that trauma from some kind of traumatic event isn't inherently traumatizing. It's that impact, what happens with your Parts, what happens with your trust in yourself that has the lasting traumatic impact. I'll elaborate on that shortly.

First, I wanted to show this first maybe, I forgot how many minutes of this video, where I'm helping this client who is a crusty, older Israeli Jew as part of a program called Together Beyond Words that I've been consulting to, which includes about half Palestinians and half Jews, all of whom live in Israel and then come over to a place called Esalen once a year or once every couple of years. I think I've met with them four or five times now.

We spend time helping each of them with their Parts and demonstrating the model, but also with some dialogues. Down the road at some point I'll probably show some videos from those dialogues which were very, very powerful. This is an individual session. It was a demonstration to this group of maybe 20 Jews and Arabs, Palestinians. That's the context.

This guy, Romi is his name, I asked him what he wanted to work on, and he wasn't sure. When that's the case, I just have people focus inside and see what comes up. He's doing that. I think, as I recall, there was a sense of hurt around rejection that may well have been

June 15, 2016 Webinar

Richard Schwartz

an Exile, so I asked to talk to the Parts that didn't want us to go there first to the Protectors, which is what we do when Exiles come up first. Without further ado, I'm going to try to show some of this video. Whoops.

Focus inside and ask, who wants attention?

Romi: The first word that came out was "rejection."

Translator: [Foreign language 00:09:39].

Richard: Here's a translator.

Romi: The situation that I was associated with it was, the doctor of my mother told her that if she got pregnant, she's going to die, so I was an "Oops!" child. I don't know its effect, but I assume that she was probably very scared during the pregnancy and she was probably very scared when I got born, so I wasn't completely welcomed with this enthusiasm. Since she lived another 42 years, it wasn't completely right. I experienced a lot of rejection in many other ways, but I think probably this is the, I think this might be-

Richard: We'll see. We'll see.

Romi: What I feel is that I'm very sensitive to rejection. Whenever somebody is not completely enthusiastic about me ...

Richard: Go ahead and focus on that rejected feeling. Find it in your body or on your body.

Romi: There's something here, but also feeling that I maybe don't want to touch it.

Richard: We're going to start with that one, the one that doesn't want to touch it. Is that okay?

Romi: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Richard: Focus on that Part. Tell me how you feel toward that one.

Romi: I feel criticism. I feel that we shouldn't stop it because I have to somehow get rid of it because it disturbs me many ways in my life.

Richard: The sensitivity to rejection.

Romi: Yeah. It even happened to me here in this group.

Translator: [Foreign language 00:11:51].

June 15, 2016 Webinar

Richard Schwartz

- Romi: I feel very safe and very loving. I mean love is all these people. There was one person that I felt, by mistake, but I felt that he or she is rejecting me in some way. It hurt me. I cared a lot and I didn't know what to do. It took me some time to decide what to do about it.
- Tim Jenkins was the head of counseling. He once said that let's assume that the seven billion people of the entire world are applauding you and there's one person who is ... Who do you look? This is my feeling. If somebody is not enthusiastic, this is a disaster.
- Richard: I understand. The Parts of you that are frustrated with this one, let's get them to step back so we can just get to know it.
- Romi: Let's try.
- Richard: Okay?
- Romi: Yeah.
- Richard: How do you feel toward this one now?
- Romi: I can put him aside for five minutes?
- Richard: We don't want to do that. We just want to get to know him first.
- Romi: I suppose that there's a feeling of urgency. If you don't move away immediately, I won't be able to work on this and we need ...
- Richard: I get that.
- Romi: ... to solve it now.
- Richard: I get that. First, I want that urgent Part to step back.
- Romi: I can move him away by thinking that anyway it's not going to be solved instantly. If I do even a small step, I should be satisfied with-
- Richard: That's fine to tell him, but also tell him, we won't get anywhere if he doesn't step back. The more he pushes, the harder it's going to be. Okay?
- Romi: Mm-hmm (affirmative).
- Richard: Now how do you feel toward this Protector?
- Romi: He moved away a little.

June 15, 2016 Webinar

Richard Schwartz

Richard: Okay, but let's get to know him before he moves away. He seems like an important Part. Do you have curiosity about him?

Romi: Yeah.

Richard: Just ask him why he doesn't want you to go to the rejected Part. What's he afraid would happen if we did that?

Romi: It's connected with so many hurtful experiences.

Richard: He doesn't want to ...

Romi: I don't-

Richard: ... feel that or what? Okay.

Romi: No. It's too much.

Richard: It's too much feelings. He'd be overwhelmed.

Romi: Also maybe I don't feel very safe here. Safe enough. Many of the experiences are of the kind, that I wouldn't like to expose you.

Richard: Some of the experiences that happened ...

Romi: Of rejection, yeah.

Richard: ... of rejection, you don't want people to know about.

Romi: Not in general. I have people who are my accomplice...

Richard: The people here.

Romi: Yeah.

Richard: I can understand both those fears, and I'll speak to them. If this Part isn't convinced by my pitch, then we won't do it. The first one, of the overwhelm, you saw that we can manage that. You won't re-experience it; you'll just witness and feel some of the feelings, but it won't be too much. The second one about safety, you don't have to disclose what you see. See how the Protector reacts to that.

Romi: I can do that. I can feel safe and not fear about him.

June 15, 2016 Webinar

Richard Schwartz

Richard: Now, is this Part willing to give us permission?

Romi: Yeah.

Richard: Thank him for that.

Translator: [Foreign language 00:16:21].

Romi: [Foreign language 00:16:23]. Thank you.

Richard: If it ever feels like it's too much, he can come back and we'll talk to him about it. Okay?

Romi: Okay.

Richard: Focus again on the sensitive, rejected Part. Is that where you still find it?

Translator: [Foreign language 00:16:40].

Romi: Somewhere here.

Translator: [Foreign language 00:16:44].

Richard: I'm going to pause here and talk about what we just saw a little bit. I'm not sure how to get back. Let me see. I guess you guys can see me now. Is that true? Let me just see ... Here we go. I think I'm back now. Is that true? I'm going to assume that you can hear me.

As you saw, he wanted to work with this Part that feels rejected, but very quickly talked about being afraid to go to it, and so I jumped on that and I decided to talk instead first to the Part that didn't want to go there and was afraid of being overwhelmed by the feelings.

We were going to have that become the target Part. I was hoping to get him himself relative to that Part. This is a very common polarization. Parts that really wanted to do something with that rejection were other managers. The one who didn't want to go there was a kind of manager, but there's other protective managers who really want to go there right now, so we can heal it and get on with his life. We're pressuring the one who had his heels dug in.

That's something we call a polarization between two sets of Protectors. I managed to get the pushing Parts to step back to the point where he could be curious about the one who didn't want to go there and was able to ask what he was afraid of.

We heard a couple of common fears. One is the overwhelm and then the other was a fear

June 15, 2016 Webinar

Richard Schwartz

of being judged by what he would disclose, that he didn't feel safe to disclose the stuff in the group. I gave what I give, which is a kind of sales job, a pitch about how we can handle both of those fears. I didn't elaborate on the first one because he'd watched other demos where we did that, but if I were to elaborate, I would've said, "We can keep the overwhelm from happening by asking the Exile to not overwhelm, and if it agrees to not overwhelm, then it won't. They never do."

This is how in IFS we handle this issue of titrating the affect and not having people lose their grounding. We have a big advantage because we have them in Self before he goes anywhere near the Exile, and that creates a lot of grounding in itself. I would've explained that to him if he were curious or still resisting it.

As you could see, it didn't take real long. I have a lot of confidence when I give this pitch. That's over years of experience. Clients' Protective Parts generally respond to that kind of confidence and assurance that we can do it without the overwhelm in particular.

Then, how we handle, as you saw, this issue of having to disclose and be judged, he doesn't have to disclose. This is another, I think, advantage we have because it's Self who needs to know. It's not me, the therapist, for him to heal. I've had clients who don't tell me much of anything about what they're seeing in there, what kind of traumas they're experiencing. I'm just trying to get that glare out of my glasses so you can see my eyes, but it's a challenge.

Parts can heal without ever disclosing the details just by making sure that Self gets it. Here's Protector, both of those, so now we're going to start heading toward the Exile. I guess I'll go back for a little while, because I think several other Protectors come up as we do that, which isn't uncommon. Let me just see how to get back. Here we go.

How do you feel toward it now?

Romi: Suddenly I feel that I can look at it a little bit from outside because I have some compassion.

Richard: Let it know you feel compassion for it and see how it reacts.

Romi: A lot of feelings, but not very clear.

Translator: [Foreign language 00:22:41].

Romi: I see pictures also.

Translator: [Foreign language 00:22:47].

June 15, 2016 Webinar

Richard Schwartz

Richard: Is it okay or is it too much?

Translator: [Foreign language 00:22:50].

Romi: Yeah, I remember something that happened... I believe it's the first day of the kindergarten, so I must've been something like three years old.

Translator: [Foreign language 00:23:05].

Romi: I really have a visual image of it that there were two kids standing together or speaking with each other, and I was outside there. I don't remember anything we did or said or anything, just figuring that they are together and I'm, oh, this is very familiar for me. I was wondering how could it happen so early when I was only three? What have I experienced? The only thing I know is about what my mother told me, that I was ...

Richard: Romi, ask the Part who's thinking to step back.

Romi: That's hard.

Richard: I know it's hard.

Romi: But they're both working really, the analytical Part and the feeling they do feel and they hurt.

Richard: I understand, but it's still really important that the one who's trying to figure it out and speculating, that it really gives us the space to just be with this three-year-old boy. How do you feel toward the boy now?

Romi: Compassion.

Richard: Let him know.

Translator: [Foreign language 00:24:29].

Richard: See how he reacts.

Translator: [Foreign language 00:24:36].

Romi: He probably needed it very much.

Translator: [Foreign language 00:24:47].

Richard: That might be the speculating Part. Let's just really get that thinking Part to step back and

June 15, 2016 Webinar

Richard Schwartz

just really be with that boy, be with him ...

Translator: [Foreign language 00:24:57].

Richard: ... in that compassionate way, and tell me how he reacts as you're with him.

Translator: [Foreign language 00:25:05].

Romi: It's completely vague.

Richard: That's okay. The Part that came in to make it vague and cloudy, so we're going to ask what is he afraid would happen if it stepped out. Not getting an answer? Is it okay if I talk to that Part directly?

Romi: Okay.

Translator: [Foreign language 00:25:31].

Richard: All right. I want to talk to the Part of Romi who just came in and made it fuzzy in there.

Translator: [Foreign language 00:25:41].

Richard: Are you there? You just came out and made it hard for Romi to connect to that boy, is that right? What are you afraid would have happened if you'd let him stay with that boy?

Translator: [Foreign language 00:25:59].

Romi: That this boy would fall apart. That this is ...

Translator: [Foreign language 00:26:11].

Richard: You're protecting the boy from that.

Translator: [Foreign language 00:26:16].

Romi: Yeah.

Richard: We're not going to go back to him until you're convinced that that won't happen.

Translator: [Foreign language 00:26:27].

Richard: Tell me more about why you think Romi getting close to the boy would make him fall apart.

June 15, 2016 Webinar

Richard Schwartz

Romi: The feeling is that there was nobody there ever.

Translator: [Foreign language 00:26:51].

Richard: If you got close to the boy and realized that, what might happen?

Romi: He wouldn't be able to function.

Richard: Function, yeah.

Translator: [Foreign language 00:27:11].

Richard: I do understand that fear ...

Translator: [Foreign language 00:27:17].

Richard: ... but it's really, what we're going to do is the opposite of that.

Translator: [Foreign language 00:27:22].

Richard: Romi's going to go to that boy, so he won't be alone. Romi will be with him and we will take him out of that time to a safe place where he'll feel a lot better ... if you're willing to let us do that.

Translator: [Foreign language 00:27:46].

Romi: That's right?

Richard: Yeah. That's all I'm asking.

Translator: [Foreign language 00:27:55].

Richard: Are you willing to step out? Let me talk to Romi again so he's not so fuzzy.

Romi: I don't know.

Richard: All right. Are you there, Romi?

Translator: [Foreign language 00:28:11].

Richard: How do you feel now toward that boy?

Translator: [Foreign language 00:28:17].

June 15, 2016 Webinar

Richard Schwartz

Richard: Do you see him clearly?

Translator: [Foreign language 00:28:21].

Romi: Not really.

Translator: [Foreign language 00:28:30].

Richard: Still fuzzy?

Translator: [Foreign language 00:28:32].

Romi: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Richard: Ask again that that Part, step back, or else tell us why it won't.

Romi: I don't know.

Translator: [Foreign language 00:28:49].

Richard: Tell the Part that we won't do it if it doesn't want us to.

Translator: [Foreign language 00:28:55].

Richard: It's okay.

Translator: [Foreign language 00:28:59].

Romi: It is the Part that wants to work with me.

Richard: I get that.

Translator: [Foreign language 00:29:11].

Richard: My tendency is to really respect the Protectors if they really don't want to do it.

Romi: I cannot see the boy. I can see the other boys. I cannot see myse-

Richard: You can see other boys in other scenes?

Romi: Hm?

June 15, 2016 Webinar

Richard Schwartz

Richard: You can see-

Translator: No, the two other boys that were-

Romi: I see the two other-

Richard: Oh!

Romi: The two other boys, but clearly I don't see the little Romi.

Richard: Just ask in there what happened to little Romi.

Translator: [Foreign language 00:29:42].

Romi: Who?

Richard: Anybody. Just ask where he went. Ask him. Ask him where he went.

Romi: I remember that I once ran away from kindergarten back home.

Translator: [Foreign language 00:29:59].

Richard: Just see if that's true, see if he ran away.

Romi: No. He's still there.

Translator: [Foreign language 00:30:06].

Richard: Still at the school? You can see him now?

Translator: [Foreign language 00:30:12].

Romi: I can't see him, but I can see where he is ...

Translator: [Foreign language 00:30:17].

Romi: ... where he's located in space in some way.

Richard: That's fine. That's all we need. We don't need a clear image of him. You still feel compassion for him?

Translator: [Foreign language 00:30:31].

June 15, 2016 Webinar

Richard Schwartz

Richard: Again, let him know you care about him, that you're with him now.

Translator: [Foreign language 00:30:39].

Richard: Just stay with it, Romi, if you can. Just stay with it.

Romi: [crying]

Translator: [Foreign language 00:30:50].

Richard: Is it okay to feel all this?

Translator: [Foreign language 00:30:56].

Richard: Let him know it's okay to let you feel it all. Just stay with it.

Translator: [Foreign language 00:31:03].

Richard: There. Just go back to him.

Translator: [Foreign language 00:31:28].

Richard: Just stay with it and tell him to let you know and feel and sense everything he wants you to about how bad that was.

Translator: [Foreign language 00:31:39].

Richard: You really want to know what it was like for him.

Translator: [Foreign language 00:31:51].

Richard: Just stay with him, Romi. You're doing really well. Just stay with him.

Translator: [Foreign language 00:32:11].

Romi: I just feel that later when I was a teenager, it was much worse, this feeling.

Translator: [Foreign language 00:32:29].

Richard: Let's stay with this boy, this three-year-old anyway.

Translator: [Foreign language 00:32:41].

June 15, 2016 Webinar

Richard Schwartz

Richard: Just stay with him. Just stay with him. Tell him to keep going until he feels like you really get it.

Translator: [Foreign language 00:32:52].

Richard: Everything he wants you to know and feel and sense about it.

Translator: [Foreign language 00:33:03].

Richard: We're getting that he was really, really badly hurt.

Translator: [Foreign language 00:33:14].

Richard: It's okay to let you know that and it's okay to let us know that.

Translator: [Foreign language 00:33:24].

Richard: You can see, some other Protectors came up, the cognitive thinking, narrating Part, and I had to negotiate that stepping back, and then the fuzzy one, I wasn't sure if it was actually a Part trying to make it hard or if I just was not understanding that he was with the boy but just couldn't see him very well. Then toward the end, you could see a kind of minimizing Part come in and say, "This couldn't have been that bad compared to when he was a teenager."

The way I'm detecting those Parts is how do you feel toward him now, and in answering that I'm listening to how much Self, where's that compassion which he said several times, and just encouraging him, and then finally he does make some contact with the boy and you can see how emotional he gets, which is what all these Parts were afraid would happen, and so I'm just trying to encourage him to stay with the Exile starting what we call the witnessing process with that Part.

I think that's what I'm going to show this session. I'll pick it up here maybe next time that I do this and we can see some that work with the Exile after we talk more about that. I wanted to demonstrate how we can do this kind of work pretty quickly with Protectors in some cases and a lot just depends on how much access we have for the client's Self and how much confidence I can convey and how much trust their Protectors have in me, and then in him, in his Self.

Let me just pause here. There's a bunch of questions. You could hear me when I was asking about that. Can you go to the top of your screen ... Oh, yeah, yeah. That I did. Beautiful. Great. All right. I think we're doing okay.

Let me talk a little bit more about these consequences of trauma and of his rejections, for

June 15, 2016 Webinar

Richard Schwartz

example. We don't know the details about it, but looks like it was pretty bad. No one was there for him, it sounded like, so rejection by caregivers, it sounds like.

The impact of trauma is that the Parts of you who are most sensitive, which often are also the most creative, joyful little inner children, who also are spontaneous and innocent and so on, are the ones who generally get hurt the most by those kinds of rejecting experiences. Once they get hurt, they're not so much fun anymore. They're now holding all of the burdens, which I think we described earlier as extreme beliefs and emotions that come to you from these traumas, that come into your system and attach to your Parts.

Now these inner children are carrying the burdens, the extreme beliefs, like I'm not valuable or it's my fault or the world is dangerous, extreme emotions of rejection, of worthlessness, of despair. You don't want to be around them, and they carry the memories. They have the power. Not only do they have the power, they want to pull you back into those scenes, so you get how badly they got hurt.

With all of that, there's a natural tendency to pull away from them. In addition, everybody around you tells you to lock them away and to get over it and don't look back. In both Israel and also in the United States is a pioneering kind of culture, or immigrant culture, too, where you just did have to leave everything behind and move on. There wasn't a lot of leeway to indulge in the past and emotions.

All of that colludes to get you to lock all this stuff up inside, and not knowing that you're actually locking up your most precious Parts in many cases. You're cutting yourself off from all of their joy and playfulness and resources and you're moving on with all these Parts that now are forced into protective roles, and they're trying to help you make it as a three-year-old after you've been rejected and you still don't have the kind of care-giving you need.

They take on all kinds of extreme roles to try and keep these Exiles protected so that the outside world doesn't trigger them again, so they don't get rejected again and then there's this explosion of Exile flames of emotion threatening to consume you. As you can see, there's a lot of fear of going anywhere near those.

Some of these Parts focus on really controlling the external world, on controlling how close they let you get to anybody or how distant they let anybody you depend on get from you, on controlling your performance so you don't get rejected. Your appearance, you're constantly worrying about how you're coming across so you don't get rejected, obsessing maybe about your body image, your body, how people see it, becoming hyper-vigilant.

These, they try to manage your external environment so that you don't get rejected again, and so the Exiles don't get triggered and you don't have to be pulled back into those scenes when you were young. Often, these protector Parts who are trying to manage all this— we call them managers—become the inner critics because they're so desperate to get you to

June 15, 2016 Webinar

Richard Schwartz

behave in ways that won't get you more rejection, and you've got all these impulsive Parts.

They're trying to ride herd on all those Parts and they don't know how to do that except to criticize you the way your parents did maybe. They'll take on the voice of your parent or the energy of your parent to try and shame those other Parts into behaving.

It's not always the same. Sometimes there are other critics whose job it is to keep you safe by talking you out of or making you feel bad enough that you never take a risk and you never get close to anybody because you're too worthless, or you never show any disclosive things because you'll be rejected or judged. If they can run down your confidence enough, then they'll keep you safe that way.

These are just some common manager roles. They're like parentified inner children. When I was a family therapist, that was a big topic of how, when parents would abdicate, often the older kids, but not always, would be forced into a parental role. They would become parentified children and would operate very similarly to the way these inner parentified children operate, become very critical and rigid and controlling. Controlling.

Like those parentified inner children, these outer children, these inner children, are in over their head. They don't have the equipment to actually run a whole person, but they're trying their best and they carry the burdens also, managers and firefighters.

These Protectors also carry the feelings, emotions and also are stuck back in those scenes with the Exiles a lot of the time, such that if you were to ask a Protector, which we'll do in this video later on, how old it thinks you are, you'll often get a single-digit answer. These Parts really think you're still four and they have to protect you as much as they did back then. All of that combines to make them very leery of, first of all, opening the door to the Exiles, but also of trusting you and so on and so on.

Some managers become big caretakers, and if they feel like they could take care of everybody, then they won't be rejected. Others will keep you constantly anxious, anticipating catastrophes, or triggering hyper-vigilance, where you're scanning for any kind of danger. Others have the power to numb your body so you don't feel anything so none of the triggers can actually get through and trigger the Exiles, keep you out of your body, keep you numb that way, and you won't get hurt.

They might encourage you to take certain kinds of medications and keep you self-medicated or use illegal drugs that way—or alcohol, or make you numb with food, a lot of my career has been working with eating disorders, for example, or pump you up to a weight where you're not attractive anymore so you don't get people coming toward you sexually.

Then other managers are the masters of distraction. They keep you constantly obsessed

June 15, 2016 Webinar

Richard Schwartz

with how you look, with medical symptoms, or with your work, and really just try to keep your mind occupied and away from the pain that you carry.

Others have a kind of angry edge all the time that gives the message to people to steer clear, or they'll fill you with an inner emptiness, and then they'll recruit people to fill that inner emptiness. There are recruiting managers that are always trying to pull in somebody to take care of your Exiles.

You get the idea. Still, other managers are into power and trying to get you into a powerful position. So everybody admires you, but never attacks you or shames you or does anything like that, and want to become rich so you'd be admired and not rejected, grandiose sense of your value. Not speaking of anybody we know in particular right now, but there are people who fit that profile.

Then there are other managers whose job is the opposite, to keep you very humble and invisible and never let you feel good about yourself so that you don't get hurt and you stay under the radar, so you don't feel good about yourself or strive for any kind of goal.

What all of these managers share are several things. One is the need to control. The bigger the control, both inner and outer environments, they want to preempt anything that might trigger your Exiles. Remember, after 9/11, the US became very preemptive. Before 9/11, we were more just looking around the world for information about where countries were with us, but afterwards, we wanted to take people out before they could get to us.

The same happens with these managers. After a big trauma, they become very preemptive of anything that might trigger the Exiles. Many of them, not all of them, are organized to try and please everybody around you so you don't get rejected.

They're also very scared and tired and they're working constantly in many cases. They don't sleep at all. They don't even know that things are safer now than they were back when you were three, when you got hurt in the first place. Many of them are polarized with each other, as we found, as they're trying their best to keep you safe in opposite ways, and they'll alternate taking over or one will try to lock up the other Protector.

Just to reiterate, these are the roles that these Protectors are stuck in. They don't describe the essence of the Parts. Once they feel safe enough to leave those roles and they can unburden, they take on often the opposite role from the extreme one that they were in, and it's a role they're designed for. It's the role that they're happiest in.

Then you don't have managers so much anymore. You have advisers, you have consultants, but managers have now transformed out of their rigid, extreme, critical roles and are just part of the group of Parts.

June 15, 2016 Webinar

Richard Schwartz

What we called managers would probably be called the defenses in traditional psychodynamic therapy. Psychodynamic therapy sees them as attempts to adapt and to protect and so on. They don't necessarily see them as sub-personalities, these little people in there. They're doing that, though.

Managers do their best to preempt, to keep us safe, keep Exiles from being triggered. They still get triggered. When that happens, it's a huge emergency. Parts sometimes think you're going to die. They think, 'Oh, my God.' You are pulled back into those horrible times and feel all the feelings you felt then, and it's chaos inside because all the managers are scrambling.

There's another set of Parts whose job it is to deal with this big emergency and to do it right now, to get you out of your pain, out of your rejection feeling, out of your shame, out of your terror right now. They're trying to deal with these flames of emotions that have burst out from Exile in the best way they can, so we call them firefighters. Another class of Protector.

What they have in common is that they're very impulsive usually. They have to be, because their job is to "do it right now." They care very little about the consequences often if the emergency is severe enough, like a real firefighter is going to break down a house to try and get to that fire, regardless of the damage it might do to the house. These firefighters don't care about what happens to your body or your relationships. All they care about is getting you out of that state right now and keeping you out of it.

In contrast to managers who are careful often and cerebral, firefighters are impulsive, reactive and they seem like they take you out of control. They're often polarized with managers who are careful and they don't want you losing control and they don't want people to be upset with you, and firefighters often make you do things and they hijack. They damage your body or your relationships. That's a common polarization between firefighters and managers.

Many of the firefighter activities parallel that fight, flight or freeze activities. Some of them, if you feel powerless, for example, will make somebody feel very angry and enraged and powerful and vengeful and will distract you that way from the powerlessness or make you scream at your kids or your spouse and so on.

Many survivors that I work with, in particular combat vets and other people like that, are terrified of that rageful firefighter. Their managers lock it in inner jails, as I think we saw in the video of that, I think I showed it last time.

We can call that one a Protector in Exile, in contrast to what we're calling Exiles, which are these vulnerable Parts that got locked up because they're stuck in the scenes and they carry all the emotions. They're Protectors who get locked up because they're dangerous.

June 15, 2016 Webinar

Richard Schwartz

We call them Protectors in Exile, as a contrast to the vulnerable Parts that are traditionally called Exiles.

They'll often want to get you away from the scene, maybe make you run or take you out of your body to get you away from the emotions and let them burn themselves out, or to get you higher than the emotions somehow. That's the "to get away from," the flight.

The freeze is all the numbing that can happen with some firefighters. Some of them, as I say, give you this irresistible impulse to get drunk, to get high on drugs or go to sex or somehow get you high or happy to counter the pain of the Exiles, until the Exiles burn themselves out, or they get you to cut your body or binge on food, both of which get you out of your body and have a kind of high of their own. The big relief, the high, actually, the pleasure of it, is often just the relief that comes from being able to deal and get away from the Exiles' feelings.

Other firefighters will create a big distraction, in contrast to managerial distraction, which is often obsessing about something. Firefighters' distractions involve sudden shifts in topic and focused activities that can consume your attention, at least temporarily. If you saw the movie, *Inside Out*, a mother feels very disappointed at a table in one scene with her husband, and suddenly she feels this movie going on in her head of the Latin lovers. This is just a way to get her away from her disappointment.

We feel that. We all have Parts that will give us fantasies and take us away, your fantasies of winning, a football game in my case, or of being loved by somebody in the way we want. When some survivors whose Parts take over that way, they can be having affairs or try to recreate scenes in sex that their Exiles are stuck in, to try to get a different outcome to get the love they didn't have in the original outcome.

Then some firefighters can make you worry about your health suddenly and they can actually affect your body and trigger physiological, biochemical processes that'll give you medical symptoms. I have a genetic propensity for asthma and for migraine headache. If I'm around a lot of dust, I'll get an asthma attack. It has nothing to do with my Protectors, but sometimes, if they want to take me out for some reason, they'll push that asthma button and I'll have an asthma attack. Firefighters can do that.

Many survivors have things like fibromyalgia, irritable bowel syndrome, et cetera, and their firefighters or managers are using that to distract them. Then finally at the top of that hierarchy is suicidal activities. We all have hierarchies. If the first one doesn't work, we go to the next one and so on. It's suicide for most people.

It's a very comforting piece of information to know that if those flames get so hot, it's unbearable, there's an exit strategy that's very effective. Here we come along as well-meaning therapists and say, "I want you to sign this contract so you're not going to kill

June 15, 2016 Webinar

Richard Schwartz

yourself," and you wonder why your client panics so much, because you took away his safety net. We have a very different way of working with suicidal firefighters.

Because when it comes down to it, that contract isn't going to do you any good. As I say, these firefighters don't care about the consequences really. The managers are signing those contracts, anyway. The survivor feels more desperate and will spark other kind of firefighter activities.

A lot of the problems we're in in our society are because we think we can wrestle firefighters into submission, the war on drugs, the war on all kinds of things, on crime has backfired horribly that way and our prisons are overflowing because of that belief that if we just punish people enough, their firefighters aren't going to do their job anymore.

Also our culture gives us all kinds of great firefighter activities, from internet surfing to shopping. You can pretty well stay away from your Exiles living in this country pretty easily.

The difference between a manager and a firefighter isn't related necessarily to the activity, by the way. It's much more related to the point in the sequence. Managers are upfront, preemptive, trying to keep the Exiles from being triggered. The firefighters go into action after.

If I'm working with a guy who feels slighted or rejected and immediately goes out and gets drunk, his firefighter is using alcohol to do its job. You might find at some point, though, if he stays drunk most of the time, he never gets triggered in the first place. Now alcohol has moved from being a firefighter activity to becoming a manager activity, and other Parts are actually using it now.

That's about what I wanted to cover today. Now I'm going to go to some of these questions. Let me just see. Brooke asks, "If the managers still think you're four, what if you let them in a session, look at their hands and see that they're old, so still not four? With new choices, it's not in danger, that could be enough for them to get more information and elicit change."

That's actually true, Brooke. When I have a client ask this Protector how old it thinks they are, and as I say, more often than not, it's a one-digit answer. Then I'll say, "Just update this Part. Tell it how old you really are." Often, that is very shocking to the Protector. We do have to do something like, look at this old man's hands or pull out their ID and actually show them what year it is, and still the Parts can't believe it at first.

As they come to believe it, then often they relax a good deal, so it's a good intervention to use that way. Sometimes, the answer is, my Parts say, "Yeah, I know you're 66, and you're still an idiot, big deal." So sometimes it doesn't really work.

June 15, 2016 Webinar

Richard Schwartz

Mozelle asks, "I haven't witnessed and wasn't aware of the Protectors being unburdened, only Exiles. So you're saying that one could and should, unburdened managers are the same way." Yes. I am saying that. It's actually quite important to know this. All of the Parts that are in these roles, manager, firefighter, Exile, carry burdens, and need to be unburdened.

The deal, though, is that most Protectors won't unburden until the Exiles have unburdened. Not all of them, but the ones they are assigned to protect. That's why we go in that sequence. After we unburden an Exile, we bring in the Protectors to unburden also. We might even have to pull them out of where they're stuck in the past, too, and then they will take on their new roles.

Isabel says I haven't talked about extreme beliefs before. Okay. Aaron says, "Since the core self innately has compassion and love, if a person doesn't feel romantic feelings toward the spouse but did at a time, how do you work with the Part to step aside so the core self with love can show up in the spouse?"

That's what you do. You help the person find the Parts that are covering this heart, for example, and just get to know them. What are they afraid would happen if they let the love come back? They have common answers to those questions and you negotiate with those in a similar kind of way.

"In which situations," somebody anonymous asks, "do you only need to unburden the managers and not the Exiles?" There are times when managers will submit. Even if you haven't healed the Exile, it just depends sometimes, it's not that rare that a manager will actually go ahead and let you unburden it, but much more often you have to go in the sequence of the Exile first.

Don asks, "I have a question about a Part that says it's from the future. Has this been discussed before? The Part says it lives where the inevitable loss has already occurred. It speaks as if it has already happened. When triggered, person operates as if loss has already occurred. I'm assuming it's treated as standard protocol. However, the client is very troubled." I haven't run into that all that often, so I can't really say much about that.

Edward asks, "Do people with antisocial personality really have a Self?" I haven't worked with everybody who has that diagnosis. It's actually not a diagnosis. I haven't worked with everybody. I've worked with a number of people who were diagnosed with something similar to that, and for whom people thought they didn't have a conscience or a Self.

I can tell you that those people did. They did have a Part that fit the profile of an antisocial person and didn't care about the damage it did to anybody, kind of a firefighter or a manager, and had no compassion for anybody, was very self-centered and would do heinous things, but when they got caught, that Part didn't have as much power anymore

June 15, 2016 Webinar

Richard Schwartz

and was willing to negotiate stepping back ultimately.

Then their huge conscience came in. This was a brutal critic who was tearing into them for all the horrible things they've done. We got that to step back. They got Exiles and most of them have been pretty severely abused. That was the reason for those extremes of those two Parts. As I said, I can't speak for all the sociopaths in the world, but the ones that I've worked with, that was the deal. They actually could do a lot of healing and change a great deal.

Paula asks, "What about when the survivor can't discriminate age at all and still feels little to no compassion for the suffering Exiles? This is a person with long-term sexual abuse outside the home, domestic violence inside the home." If they feel no compassion for their suffering Exiles, it means they're still a Protector. It's keeping their heart closed to them, so you just keep working with that Protector about what it's afraid would happen if she let herself care for the Exile, and would it be willing to step back? We haven't gotten into all as much as we're going to get into about how you do that.

Lori says, "I'm working with a 60-year-old who doesn't care about the consequences of cutting, doesn't want a contract for safety. Likes cutting. Doesn't see anything wrong with it. 'Why do I care?' he asks." He's kind of got a point. Cutting, it scares therapists and it scares parents, but it's not actually the most damaging firefighter activity.

Typically, when somebody's cutting, I won't try to pressure them into stopping. I'll just work with the Part who wants to cut and get to know it and honor it and not necessarily try to get it to stop right away, unless it really is causing some kind of deep, unsafe thing. When you do have to sit on a firefighter, there's a whole other thing we can talk to you about that, but I've got all the leeway when the actual behavior isn't really doing long-term damage.

Jackie asks, "Is it possible to have self-allowed dissociated Parts to back off or unburden?" Yes. It's very possible. You'd be amazed at how these Parts that seem to have your client totally dissociated to the point where they can't talk, if you ask to talk to them like I did with Romi's fuzzy Part, they'll talk like little magpies to me. They won't talk to him.

Linda asks, "Can you say a bit about legacy burdens?" I think, Linda, we're going to save that topic for another one of these, but it's a really important topic. Edward asks again, "I like to let suicidal people know that their firefighter wants them dead for now. That's been very helpful." I'm not sure what that means, "wants them dead for now." Maybe dead in the sense of numb, I guess? Yeah, but that's all they want.

Nicole: "What are some reliable ways for people to access Self when hijacked by a firefighter?" When they're really hijacked by a firefighter, I'll shift to what I call direct access, that you saw a little glimpse of with Romi where I said, "Let me talk to that Part

June 15, 2016 Webinar

Richard Schwartz

that makes you fuzzy."

Because trying to get to their Self is often futile when they've really taken over, so then I'll just have a bit of dialogue with that Part and get to know why it's afraid to back away and let them come back, and again, honor it and thank it for all its service. We just love these Parts up.

Sean: "One of the tensions seems to be that we reassure the Protectors we won't go there unless they're okay, and yet we keep going back." I don't. When I tell a Protector, as I did I think a couple of times in this video, if you don't give us permission, we're not going to go there. I mean it. I didn't go there without permission. It's important not to.

Greg says, "In working with DID and dissociated alters that are all in communication with each other, I've noticed what seemed to be Parts within each of the alters. When I've approached that possibility, some panicked firefighter sets in, that the dissociation is worsening. Are there better ways to approach this?"

That also is quite a topic, because it does turn out that Parts have Parts, and you find that, like I've worked with DID clients where I worked with one Part for about 10 sessions. As you work with that Part, you learn about its Parts and its Self and how it can work with those Parts. I don't know why it creates such a panic to talk about it.

I don't have the time to go over better ways, but Parts do have Parts. It is kind of mind-blowing because I've gone one layer lower, and sub-Parts have Parts, too. That's as far as I've gone. Don't think about that too long because your head will explode, you'll get blood all over the walls.

"Can you speak to the influence of archetypes on our systems and Parts through the IFS lens?" Some parts would be considered archetypes in the onion system. Then there are these legacy burdens that are more archetypal that we got from our culture, that we got from our lineage, that we will do a session on sometime soon.

Sean: "Can you advise regarding ways of eliciting permission from Protectors if they're reluctant to step back?" We're going to spend some of the next couple of sessions talking about what the common fears Protectors have and how over the years we've learned ways to reassure them about each of these fears. You saw me do that a couple of times, but there's a lot more to that, so we'll be talking about that as we go along.

I think this will be the last one from Brendan. "How does IFS understand the interaction and intersection between personality and biology? That is, when does someone's depression, for example, become biological brain disease instead of a Part carrying burdens and wounds? When does an anxious part become in your mind an anxiety disorder? What's the intersection of IFS and the DSM?" Good questions. I'll give you a quick

June 15, 2016 Webinar

Richard Schwartz

answer now.

Basically, from my point of view, the DSM is a fairly accurate description of the way different people's Protectors organize in different ways, depending on what's happened to them, depending on their genetic biological bent, depending on a lot of things, but all these symptoms from manic depression, a manic part is trying to keep you higher than the flames, you've got a depressed part who's trying to shut you down so you don't do anything, that might be triggering to voices and schizophrenics, to all kinds of symptoms. I could give you a non-pathologized, IFS understanding that gives you a lot of clarity about how to work with the client system.

Anyway, biology, as I tried to say earlier, is intermixed with all of this, but to call it a brain disease and to treat it only with medication I think is a big mistake that, again, our culture is making. Medication can be very helpful. Frank Anderson, who's a neuropsychiatrist, is doing workshops on how to do medication and IFS and will collaborate with clients' Parts about, is this medication helping us or is it shutting everybody down, and should we change the dose, should we change the kind of medication?

Anyway, another very enjoyable session for me. I'm so glad you're with us and look forward to seeing you next time. Bye for now.