

# Loving Your Therapist Parts Mediation

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Toni Herbine-Blank:

Welcome everyone. In this last series of videos that you've been watching I've been talking to you about the therapeutic relationship in IFS and the extremely important subject of what happens to you in relationship to your clients. Two of the slides, one of them said "Therapist monitor thyself" and the other said "Therapist love thyself." This, I'm going to be guiding you in a meditation where hopefully you'll get an opportunity to do both of those things.

So when we're teaching students in the basic IFS training, we start right away with exercises and experiences to try to begin to notice what it's like when your parts begin to take you over in the face of trying to do therapy with a client, and then how you learn how to unblend from them quickly while remaining in relationship with them. And also, how you may make intentions with your parts right on the spot to come back and work with them.

This is an inquiry that you can do over and over again, and I hope that you do time and time again. When you notice that you're getting perpetually triggered by a client, you can always come back to this meditation to do an inquiry, what's happening inside of me, who begins to take over and why, and how can I be with them in a completely different way so that they trust me with the client and don't feel they need to interrupt or blend or take over the session.

Let's start as we do and we do guided meditations by turning your focus internally and taking some nice long deep breaths. Again, I encourage you to find a comfortable place, move your body if you need to, and use your breath to help your body relax, to get grounded, and to begin to bring your presence internally.

Now I want to invite you to think about that client, and if you aren't seeing clients you might be working with, you might be working with people in other ways, or there might be someone in your life with whom you just can't not react. So just take a moment and think of that client. Even sometimes it's looking at your phone or looking at your calendar, looking at your schedule book and seeing the name of that client and something begins to happen.

I talked a little bit about the autonomic nervous system. So as you bring that person, you bring that client into your mind's eye, and you invite them to do or say what they do or say, that begins to set off a reaction inside you. Just invite them to do that in your mind's eye. You can even picture yourself sitting in your office with this client. Just begin to notice what starts to happen in your body, and allow yourself to react so that you can start to pay attention. Something starts happening in my body. What is that? Just focus on that, just notice. Notice where in or around your body you start to feel sensation. Notice what happens to your breathing.

Then I want you to just start listening. What do you hear yourself saying to yourself about this client or this person? Allow yourself to react and allow yourself to listen to that voice in your head that's having a reactionary

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response. Just notice it, and see if you can do that without any judgment at all about what's coming up. You're noticing. You're paying attention to your body. You're listening to what's happening, the voice in your head. Also pay attention to your first impulse. What would you, what would the part that's reacting really love to do or say in these moments? Just allow the part to let you know about this, and invite it to tell you anything that it needs to tell you, as it's reacting and responding in this situation. Just notice what that is like.

Now I'm going to invite you to ask the image of the person that triggers you to float away. They've given you some information and now they're no longer necessary. So just ask them to float away, the client or the person, the image of the client or the person, just ask it to move away and ask the part of you that's responding to your client, if it would be willing to turn toward you, if it would be willing to turn toward you so you could spend some time with it.

Notice how you're feeling toward it, that same question that we ask our clients, we ask ourselves. Am I feeling friendly toward one of my own parts? Am I feeling warm toward my own parts? You want to clear the space so this part can have all of you, just for a few minutes.

When you're ready, begin to ask it, to tell you everything it wants you to know about why it's reacting and responding to this client. Reassure it that you're there to listen, that you're not going to try right now to ask it to step back or stop having a reaction, but that you really want to understand where this reaction is coming from and you really want to understand it. You really want to understand your own part.

No holds barred for this part. It gets to tell you everything it needs to tell you, and you can ask it not to take you over so that you can stay really really present, that you really really want to understand what's happening, what's happening.

After you've heard all that it wants to tell you about why it's reacting and responding, if it feels right, ask the part what it's afraid would happen if it stepped back and didn't come up the way that it does in the face of this client. What is it afraid would happen to you? Really pay attention to this answer. What is it afraid is going to happen if it steps back in the face of this client or these clients? What does it really need for you to know about this?

You can ask, is it afraid that something is going to happen you, is it afraid for itself, or is it afraid for a part that it's protecting? See if it can let you know what the alarm system is about, what the activation is about, and who it's protecting.

You might if you feel like it even ask if there's some history here. Is there some past history that's getting activated in the face of this client which would make so much sense? See if it wants to tell you or show you what's coming up. And if this part, maybe it's already happened, maybe it happened long ago in this meditation, but perhaps this part is letting you know about a childhood incident or an exile. And if it has, see if it will let you focus your

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attention on that young part, on that vulnerable part, noticing how you're feeling toward it, noticing if there are any parts in the way of having your heart open to it. Perhaps right now, if you're still with me, you're aware of the protector and the part that it protects, you're aware of the part that reacts and a part that it protects. And to just see if you can notice that pairing, that relationship between those two.

Perhaps one or both of them are able to tell you and help you understand what gets so activated in the face of this client. If you can stay unblended, you'll be able to make some sense of this given your history. Just extend that validation and that acknowledgement to these parts.

So right now you may be with a protector, you may be with an exile, you may be with both of them together, but whoever it is that is with you right now, I want to invite you to ask them to go to a place with you in nature, a place that you have been, a place that you have imagined, a place that would feel safe and comfortable just to spend a few more minutes with them.

As you find that place you might notice your surroundings, where you are, notice the earth, the light, the sun. Maybe there's water. Maybe there are animals. Just to notice your surroundings as you settle down with this part or these parts. Is it possible to breathe yourself just a little bit bigger or open your heart just a little bit wider as you hold them and are present with them? And inviting them to rest into your energy. Allow nature to support you, and hold you, and hold them.

Is there any more they want you to know? Is there any more story that it's important for you to know right now? Or are there burdens that they carry? Beliefs about themselves. So just listen, without judging, without pushing, making sense of it all. If there are burdens that they're carrying, perhaps there is a way that something in nature can help these parts let go, even just a little bit, in your presence and with your help.

So if they are able to let go of any burdens or release any energy, just hold, hold them and support them to do that. Perhaps there is something in nature that can support that as well. Just breathe and help them let go, support them to let go. Staying present. And then asking these parts what do they need from you to trust, to trust you, that you are okay with this client, that you are able to be safe with this client or these clients. What do they, what does it or what do they need from you to trust you so they can stay unblended from you the next time you're going to see this client? What do they need? What kind of reassurance do they need or what more help might they need ongoingly from you, to really trust you and really listen, listen to what they're saying, listen to what it's asking?

Before I bring you back, notice if there's anything more that can happen or needs to happen between you. Is there anything more that they need to say to you, it needs to say to you, you to them before I begin to ask you to increase your breath and come on back?

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Then when that feels as complete as it can for right now, begin to deepen your breath, thank your parts for the information that they gave you, and reassure them that you'll be back. Then bring yourself all the way back, and if you feel like taking some notes, that's great.