

Key Takeaways

Pamela: Hi everybody. I am going to review some of the key teaching points that we made during this year of the program. I think it's always helpful to summarize everything. We told you at the beginning that we were going to give you ... Early in the training we gave you an overview of the whole model, and then we filled in the pieces. This is sort of a wrap up to make sure all those pieces are filled in, that all the pieces of the puzzle got put together.

Remember back to the beginning of the program, Toni and I started out explaining to you what parts are, what the self is. We talked a lot about the goals of IFS therapy. I think one of the easiest ways for me to think about the goals of the therapy is that we're really looking, or trying to help clients, free up their self energy that's already there, that they already have. Just free it up so that it can be in the lead of the system.

You'll remember, at the beginning of the training, that in Month Two I gave you a whole overview of the flow of the model. You can go back and review that, if you like. But, just as a reminder, we talked about how, in general when we're starting work with a client, we start with protectors. They're there to keep the system safe, to keep those young and wounded parts from either being wounded again, or from flooding our system. So we start with protectors. You'll remember that we talked about two kinds of protectors, managers and firefighters, and just remembering the difference between the two. Managers are proactive, and firefighters are reactive.

Go back and look at your materials from Month Three, when Toni first introduced protectors, because in that month you will find a handout for the Six F's. I really encourage you to print that out, keep it on your lap. When I'm doing level one trainings, I invite all my students to have that with them to help them follow the flow. Remember, the first F is when you're starting with a protector, any part, you want them to Find the part in or around their body. You want them to Focus on it and Flesh it out, just begin to notice if there's any images, or words, or body sensations that go with that particular part.

Then the fourth F is how do they Feel toward it? That's a question that allows unblending to take place. You're beginning, with that unblending, how do you feel toward it, to move into the next F, which is Facilitating the relationship between the self of the client and the part of the client. Right now I'm talking about in-sight, this is if we're taking the client into their own internal system. So facilitating the relationship, which is key, remember the self is the healing agent in IFS. We really want to develop that relationship between the self of the client and the part of the client.

Now, if it's a protector, we want to find out what the fears of the protectors are, like what are they afraid would happen if they didn't do what they do, so that we can answer whatever fears they have and help them. At this point, remember we're not trying to change the behavior of any of these protectors, whether it's a manager or firefighter, at this point. Because they can't really change until the parts they protect are unburdened. We're not working to get them to cooperate with each other, or moderate their behavior. We want to know what they do, how they do it, what they're afraid would happen if they

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didn't do it, and then let them also instill some hope into the system.

The next step is to let them know, once we know what they're afraid would happen if they didn't do what they do, then we can offer them some help. If they say, "I'm afraid that if I don't do this she'll feel worthless." Then we become the hope merchant. This is a really, really fundamental place that I want to remind you of. We're trying to, again, not change protectors, but just have them step back so that we can have access to these wounded parts.

We have to give these protectors a reason, some kind of hope, to allow us to get in contact with something that's so painful. I mean, they've been working their whole lives to keep us from feeling that. Think about it, they're not just going to go, "Okay, whatever." So, you want to really remember being a hope merchant. What if we told you that we could go to that place in you that feels worthless and heal it so it didn't have to feel that way any longer. We're reassuring. Our main job with protectors at this point is to reassure them to allow us access to the exile.

You may go through a number of protectors before you get to an exile. Exiles are really the young, wounded parts. They hold all the wounds from all the trauma that we have. When you get to exiles, you really are doing the same thing with exiles that you're doing with protectors. First and foremost, you want to facilitate a relationship between the client's self and this exiled part. That's especially critical with exiles, because they've been alone for a long time, they may not trust people. Remember, this is a client-centered model, so you want to follow the rhythm of the exile there.

In Month Five, Toni went through the entire steps of witnessing and unburdening exiles, so I encourage you to review that also. But remember, you want to hear the story of this exile, you want to hear what's happened to them either through images, or words, or emotions, or body sensation. Then, once the part feels understood, it can release its burden. Again, Month Five covered all that, and feel free to review that. There were some great slides that went along with that month also.

Then, after the exile is unburdened and invites in qualities that we'll need, we begin the integration process. Integration begins right after the witnessing ends by inviting protectors in to see what happened. Then we go back to that same grouping of parts for at least four weeks in a row to allow integration to become more complete. So remember, some protectors will spontaneously unburden as soon as the exile unburdens, some will have that "wait and see", "Yeah, it seems like something changed, but I really need to see if anything really does change, if it really is different," and then that third class of protectors that actually need to be witnessed and unburdened in exactly the same way that you would do with exiles.

In the second half of the program, we really focused not as much on the individual steps, but really viewing our clients as a system. In Month Seven, Toni talked a lot about polarizations and alignments, and how we as IFS therapists, how helpful it is to view it as a whole system that's interrelated,

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and also begin to look at the parts of us that may align or polarize with our clients. Which then led into the Month Eight, which was on direct access and in-sight. Again, that flow of the model covers what we do in in-sight.

direct access is the other modality that we use in IFS, which is still the self is the healing agent, but it's the self of the therapist to the part of the client. So you're talking directly with that part either overtly, where you'll ask a client, "I want to talk to that part. Let it come up and take over your body and speak to me." which we call Explicit direct access, or it's implicit, where you just talk to the part without actually naming or doing that.

Implicit direct access, I talked a little bit about how it really is the foundation of the therapeutic relationship for us. That our clients come in, and to be able to do that journey inside, their parts have to feel safe enough with us, right? Which is why it's so critical that we're self-led. So that was really another theme that ran through ... It was a thread throughout this program, that we're teaching you these steps of the model, but to really utilize this model fully and effectively, it's important for the therapist to be self-led.

Again, remember at the end of Month Ten, I talked with you a little bit about what it means to be self-led. It doesn't mean that we are never going to get triggered again, that we're never going to feel anything again, that we can tolerate anything that anybody does. It means that we are in a relationship with our parts. When we're self-led, we actually hear from more parts rather than less parts, because no parts have to be excluded, no parts are too hard to be with or listen to, and so we can take advantage of the wisdom that is held in every single one of our parts. Remember that phrase that I really like, that the self is a resource for the parts, and the parts are a resource for the self. So self-led means we speak for our parts, not allowing our parts to come up and take over and speaking from them.

Then Toni did an entire month on the therapeutic relationship, which really was some teaching and also some experience for you to be able to find some of your own parts and how they may cover you over, or take over in a session and keep you from being self-led. I also encourage you to go back. Those meditations are really wonderful meditations, and something that you can do over and over again in your journey about self exploration.

Then, the other theme that ran throughout this program was the fact that IFS is the body-centered model. The Six F's is all about finding parts in our body, beginning to locate them there. Last month Toni spent a lot of time talking with you about the body, how important it is in our model. Also Toni did a meditation on the body, which again, I really encourage you to use the meditation also.

So in this year we've given you a lot of material, and we've also given you some exercises that can be helpful. Some of the ones I just talked about, there's also the parts mapping exercise, which you can do over and over again. Also, as part of the program, you have Dick's CD meditations, the meditations for self that you can also use. There's some wonderful

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meditations there. So I really view this as parallel tracks for learning the model. The fundamentals of the model, and the outline of the model, and the teaching that we've done is really important, and all the experiential stuff that we've tried to give you is also critically important.

So I encourage you to keep exploring your own internal system, because the more you know it, the more you know your parts, the more successful you'll be with the use of this model. It really is true that we can only go as far with our clients as we can go with our own parts. It's been great being with you, and enjoy the journey.