

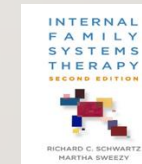
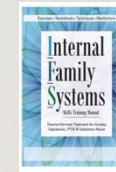
A CLIENT IN CRISIS

UTILIZING IFS TO HELP A CLIENT CURRENTLY EXPERIENCING TRAUMA



IS IT APPROPRIATE TO DO IFS WITH THIS CLIENT?

- Internal Family Systems Skills Training Manual by Frank Anderson, MD, Martha Sweezy, PhD, and Richard C. Schwartz, PhD. (pages 11-12)
- Internal Family Systems Therapy, 2nd Edition by Richard C. Schwartz, PhD and Martha Sweezy, PhD (pages 95-96)



ASK: Does something about the client or the client's situation trigger your protectors?

Work with your own parts. If unable to lead from Self, do not attempt to guide the client inside.

ASK: Is the client's external environment dangerous or hard to deal with? Is the client safe?

- Work with the environment first.
 - Create a plan for client's safety
 - Assist in de-escalation, if possible
 - Provide resources, such as domestic violence hotlines, safe houses, sources for food and medical care, etc.
- If unable to work with the environment, be cautious of going to exiles!

ASK: Does the client's position in his family or job allow room for vulnerability?

- If being vulnerable decreases safety, be aware of how relatives (and others) are responding to client making changes.

ASK: Has a recent traumatic event occurred?

- Focus on Safety.
- Assist in de-escalation, if possible
- When appropriate, check in with all parts involved. "Find out who feels what and who thinks what." (IFS skills manual, pg. 12).

ASK: Is the client highly polarized and has a limited number of sessions available?

Remember that “In order to accompany our clients safely in their inner worlds, we need time along with a reasonable amount of external safety and access to our Selves.”

- Concentrate on befriending and validating.
 - Notice (find) parts.
 - Be a Hope merchant. Let them know they can be helped.
 - Do not judge
 - Listen to every part.

WHAT WE CAN DO

- Help clients listen to the fears of managers.
- Understand the reactivity and good intentions of firefighters.
- Recognize the vulnerability that drives the behavior of the protectors
- Locate Self.
- Begin process of relating to the whole inner system differently.
 - “Even if we cannot complete the job of witnessing and unburdening exiles, developing relationships with protectors can be empowering.” (Internal Family Systems Therapy 2nd Edition, Pg 96)