

Internal Family Systems (IFS)

The premise of IFS is that we are made up of multiple parts. We also all have an authentic Self that leads our system of protective and wounded parts. Self is present in all of us and holds the capacity to heal.

Some parts take on proactive roles to manage life and prevent pain (Managers). Some carry deep emotional wounds and vulnerability (Exiles). Others step in to stop overwhelming feelings when things get too intense (Firefighters). This image shows how these parts relate to one another and how we can reconnect with Self—the calm, confident core of who we are.

When we experience pain, our protective parts often take on burdens to keep us from being overwhelmed. Over time, these burdens can create distress or disconnection within the system. It can be helpful to think of this as, “good intentions, not so helpful impact.”

The goal of this work is not to get rid of any parts. Instead, we listen to them, build trust, and support them in releasing what they’ve been carrying. When parts feel safe and supported, they can take on new roles and we can experience more clarity, connection, and internal balance.

