

Self check-in



A grounding check-in, for noticing which of the 8 C's are present.

Date _____

Which of the 8 C's are present right now?

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| ☐ Calm | ☐ Curiosity |
| ☐ Compassion | ☐ Clarity |
| ☐ Creativity | ☐ Courage |
| ☐ Confidence | ☐ Connectedness |

5 things I can see

4 things I can feel

3 things I can hear

What shifted when I slowed down?

What part was active before I started, and what was it protecting me from?

Want to keep going with whatever this surfaced? traitpath.com/ifs-discovery/companion

The "Room" Meditation



A visualization exercise developed from Dr. Richard Schwartz's work that helps create internal space between Self and parts.

Date _____

STEPS

- Close your eyes and imagine you're in a comfortable room—this is your Self space.
- Notice any thoughts, feelings, or sensations. These are parts visiting your room.
- Gently ask each part: "Would you be willing to wait outside the room, just for now, so I can get to know you better from here?"
- Parts don't have to leave—they just need to give you some space. Reassure them you're not abandoning them.
- Notice what remains when parts step back. That spacious awareness is Self.
- From this place, you can invite one part back in to learn about it with curiosity.

NOTES

Tip: If a part won't step back, that's information. Ask it: "What are you afraid would happen if you gave me space?" Listen without judgment.

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Free IFS worksheet from traitpath.com/ifs-discovery/worksheets — print as many copies as you need.

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Parts map



One entry per part. Start with the ones that show up most — you are not trying to be complete.

Date _____

PART

Type

☐ Manager ☐ Firefighter ☐ Exile ☐ Not sure yet

What I call it

Where I feel it

What it says or believes

What it seems to protect me from

When I first noticed it

Not sure which parts to start with? The free assessment builds you a starting map: traitpath.com/ifs-discovery/assessment

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The Trigger-Response Map



Track how external triggers activate your parts system. This reveals patterns and helps you catch part activations earlier.

Date _____

MAPPING TEMPLATE

Trigger: What happened externally? (criticism, rejection, uncertainty, conflict)

First Part: Which part activated first? (usually a Manager)

Escalation: If the Manager couldn't handle it, which Firefighter showed up?

Hidden Exile: What vulnerable feeling were these protectors guarding against?

Pattern Name: Give this sequence a name you'll recognize ("The Criticism Cascade")

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Protector interview



One entry per protector. A half-finished interview is still worth keeping.

Date _____

PROTECTOR

Which protector is this?

What does it do for me?

What is it afraid would happen if it stopped?

How do I feel toward it right now?

What does it need from me to feel less burdened?

Has my relationship with it shifted at all?

If a question stalls you, the TraitPath Companion can help you think it through: traitpath.com/ifs-discovery/companion

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Firefighter Tracking Log



Firefighters often act before we realize what happened. This log helps you catch patterns and intervene earlier.

Date _____

DAILY LOG QUESTIONS

What reactive behavior showed up today? (numbing, bingeing, raging, escaping, procrastinating)

What happened right before? (the trigger)

What feeling was the Firefighter trying to extinguish?

Did it work? For how long?

What might have helped the underlying feeling instead?

Remember: Firefighters aren't the problem—they're responding to overwhelming exile pain. The goal isn't to eliminate them but to help the exile so the Firefighter can relax.

If a question stalls you, the TraitPath Companion can help you think it through: traitpath.com/ifs-discovery/companion

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Letter to a younger self



Nobody else reads this. Go at whatever pace you want, and stop whenever you want.

Date _____

This is the tender end of parts work. These exercises are for witnessing with compassion — unburdening deep wounds is work for a trained IFS therapist (ifs-institute.com/practitioners). If it starts to feel like too much, stopping is the right move, not a failure.

Which age, or which memory?

What I want them to know

What did this part need me to understand?

Did any protectors get activated? What were they worried about?

The Witness Practice



Simply being present with an exile—without fixing or changing—is profoundly healing. This exercise practices compassionate witnessing.

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STEPS

- First, establish Self-energy — the 5-4-3-2-1 Self Check-In and the Room Meditation are both ways in.
- Notice a vulnerable feeling that's present—sadness, loneliness, shame, fear.
- Ask protectors for permission to be with this feeling. If they're worried, reassure them you won't be overwhelmed.
- Turn toward the exile with curiosity: "I see you. I'm here."
- Don't try to fix, change, or make the feeling go away. Just witness it.
- Ask the exile: "What do you want me to know?"
- Listen. You don't need to do anything—your compassionate presence is the healing.
- When complete, thank the exile for sharing. Reassure it you'll return.

REFLECTION PROMPTS

What did the exile need me to understand?

How did it feel to witness without fixing?

Did any protectors get activated? What were they worried about?
