

IFS Institute
Level 1 Course
Retreat-style with Three Extended Sessions

SESSION 1

Instructional Methodology:

Lecture
Demonstration
Audio/visual
Experiential; practice of techniques
Large and small group discussion

Session 1, Module 1: Introduction to the Internal Family Systems Model

Contact Hours: 14.25 hours

Description of Activity:

Module 1 includes a review of the history and development of the Internal Family Systems Model of therapy and the basic assumptions of the Model with regard to non-pathological multiplicity of mind and the concept of "Self." The goals of therapy using the IFS Model will be explored along with the concept of releasing uncomfortable feelings and beliefs that allow harmony and balance in the inner system and thus enhance therapeutic relationships with clients. Differentiation of the various sub-personalities from Self will be explored and the aspects of the personality that interact in specific sequences and patterns in therapy sessions. Discussions on how changes in the internal system can bring about changes in the external system of an individual, family or group will be fully explored.

Learning Objectives: By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

1. Describe the interpersonal matrix of the training group for the purpose of establishing safety and group norms
2. Cite the history and development of the Internal Family Systems Model of therapy
3. Describe the basic assumptions of IFS in regard to non-pathological multiplicity of mind and the concept of Self
4. Cite the key therapeutic goals of IFS therapy
5. Articulate the concept of releasing uncomfortable feelings and beliefs which allow harmony and balance in the inner system
6. Explain the concept of "unblending", differentiating sub-personalities from Self, as a means to speak for, as opposed to from, reactive affective states
7. Identify aspects of the personality that interact in specific sequences and patterns
8. Name the 3 categories of sub-personalities that most often present in therapy
9. Describe the three common roles assume by these parts of the personality
10. Describe the relationship and sequence of interaction between the three types of parts
11. Cite the IFS concept of Self and explain its role and effectiveness as a leader in the system
12. Identify and describe the qualities of Self (curiosity, compassion, confidence, courage, clarity, creativity, connectedness)
13. Utilize techniques to experience and identify the difference between parts and SELF
14. Use techniques to provide a direct experience of Self in the system
15. Explain how changes in the internal system will affect changes in the external system of an individual, family, or group
16. Identify differences in the role of the therapist in the IFS Model as compared to other models of therapy
17. Demonstrate an enhanced understanding of the IFS Model of therapy

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Session 1, Module 2: Working with the Protective System

Contact Hours: 12.75 hours

Description of Activity:

Module 2 is dedicated to working with the protective system of the personality that serves to protect and defend the system from pain. Ways to create internal and external safety for the protective “parts” of the personality will be explored. Identification of the protective parts of the system will be explored and include "manager" parts and "firefighter" parts. The roles of these parts are examined and analyzed. Differentiation of the "manager" parts of the system from the "firefighter" parts of the system is addressed. The core skills involved in achieving direct access to personality parts that emerge in therapy will be reviewed and examined. Strategies are identified for working with various personality parts that emerge during therapy as well as strategies for achieving harmony and balance for therapeutic success.

Learning Objectives: By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

1. Review and provide needed clarification of material from Module 1
2. Identify aspects of the personality that interact in protective ways
3. Explain the IFS belief that all parts, even those that manifest with extreme behavior, carry a positive intention for the system
4. Describe how managers and firefighters are forced into their extreme roles in an attempt to protect and defend the system from pain
5. Identify at least 2 ways to create internal and external safety for protective parts, with examples
6. Differentiate manager parts from firefighter parts
7. Cite the characteristics and roles of managers in the system
8. Role-play experiences to begin to identify manager parts
9. Explain how managers interact in the context of the training group
10. Use practice techniques to allow “unblending” internally to allow managers and firefighters to have an experience of Self in the system
11. Identify and discuss the 7 most common manager fears and how to effectively address each one
12. State and explain the importance of working with manager fears
13. Use practice sessions to work with managers within a client system
14. Explain the role of firefighters in the system
15. Describe one’s own reaction to firefighter activity when presenting in a client
16. Identify at least 2 techniques that aid in facilitating clients to establish a relationship with firefighters
17. Identify effective techniques to negotiate with firefighters
18. Define the term “backlash” as it relates to the protective system and state its significance when working with firefighters and protectors
19. Explain and describe two fundamental techniques – “in-sight” and “direct access” and when a therapist might apply either intervention

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SESSION 2

Instructional Methodology:

Lecture
Demonstration
Audio/visual
Experiential; practice of techniques
Large and small group discussion

Session 2, Module 3: Working with Exiles

Contact Hours: 14.00 hours

Description of Activity:

Module 3 is dedicated to working with parts of the personality that become “exiled” and how this phenomenon occurs. Ways to identify “exiles” in the client system are explored. The qualities of exiles and their role in the system are reviewed. The relationship between “protectors” and exiles is examined. The concept of “burdens” and how they are held in the system is reviewed. The eight primary steps to unburdening exiles are covered. How to negotiate with exiles and protectors is explored. Identification of the protective parts of the system will be explored and include manager parts and firefighter parts. The roles of these parts are examined and analyzed. Differentiation of the manager parts of the system from the firefighter parts of the system is addressed. The core skills involved in achieving direct access to personality parts that emerge in therapy will be reviewed and examined. Strategies are identified for working with various personality parts that emerge during therapy as well as strategies for achieving harmony and balance for therapeutic success.

Learning Objectives: By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

1. Summarize and provide needed clarification of material from Session 1 and Teleconference 1
2. Identify parts of the internal system that become exiled and how this phenomenon occurs
3. Examine the qualities of exile parts and their role in the system
4. Explain the relationship between protectors and exiles
5. Role-play exercises that safely allow an experience of one’s own internal system
6. Describe at least 2 ways to identify exiles in the client system
7. Describe the concept of “drive for redemption,” and explain how it affects the exile’s relationship with the external world
8. Examine “burdens” and explain how they are held in the system
9. Outline the 8 steps of unburdening exiles
10. Identify strategies in obtaining protector permission that allow access to exiles
11. Identify direct access methods for working with exile parts
12. Describe the practice of integrating changes, post-unburdening with exiles and protectors
13. Identify when and how to check for willingness from exiled parts to “not overwhelm” the client’s system
14. Identify strategies to introduce the IFS language to clients
15. Identify and examine parts of the therapist that emerge when working with the internal system
16. Role-play the concept of learning to unblend one’s own parts for the purpose of holding Self energy when working with a client
17. Use small discussion groups to appraise, process and review the IFS Model of therapy

18. Explain the concept of speaking “for” as opposed to speaking “to/from” parts, as a means of creating safety in a group context
19. Describe the importance of the body in IFS therapy
20. Identify at least 2 ways to facilitate clients in identifying and being present to parts in or around their body
21. Role-play exercises that facilitate awareness of how parts may communicate through movement or sensation

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Session 2, Module 4: Dynamics of the Internal System and Working with the Body

Contact Hours: 12.50 hours

Description of Activity:

Module 4 is dedicated to exploring polarizations and alliances in the internal system. Illustrations of polarizations that emerge in therapy sessions will be viewed. Practice sessions will be held for strategies to work with polarizations. Explanation and understanding of issues that arise due to therapists' parts that emerge during therapy sessions. Discussion will include why these parts emerge, triggers that cause the parts to emerge. The core skills involved in achieving direct access to personality parts that emerge in therapy will be reviewed and examined. Strategies are identified for working with various personality parts that emerge during therapy as well as strategies for achieving harmony and balance for therapeutic success.

Learning Objectives: By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

1. Review and provide needed clarification of material from Module 3
2. Define and examine polarizations, alliances, and hierarchies in the internal system
3. Describe the nature of polarizations and their protective role in the system
4. Identify polarizations, alliances, and/or hierarchies in the internal system, with examples
5. Identify at least 2 techniques that facilitate the client's Self as a mediator between polarized parts or groups of parts
6. Identify techniques that externalize the relational dynamics of the internal system with sculpting or mapping
7. Use small groups to role-play working with polarizations with a client
8. Identify at least 2 issues related to parts of the therapist that emerge during a therapy session
9. Recognize how the IFS Model views the relationship between parts and the physical body
10. Describe skills in body-centered techniques that increase kinesthetic awareness in working with parts and accessing Self
11. Identify at least 2 ways to facilitate clients in identifying and being present to parts in or around their body
12. Describe the concept of Self-led feedback
13. Examine techniques of the IFS Model in the context of groups
14. Explain the importance of the therapeutic relationship in IFS
15. Identify common "stuck points" in using the IFS Model and describe strategies for resolving these therapeutic issues

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SESSION 3

Instructional Methodology:

Lecture
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Session 3, Module 5: The Therapeutic Relational System

Contact Hours: 14.00 hours

Description of Activity:

Module 5 explores work with the internal system. Transference and counter-transference as it applies to the IFS Model are reviewed. The interface between client parts and therapists' parts will be examined. Self-compassion and Self-understanding are reviewed as they apply in working with clients. Self leadership and the IFS Model are reviewed. Skills for maintaining Self are examined and practiced. Self-led relationships will be examined in the context of clients and significant others. The core skills involved in achieving direct access to personality parts that emerge in therapy will be reviewed and examined. Strategies are identified for working with various personality parts that emerge during therapy as well as strategies for achieving harmony and balance for therapeutic success.

Learning Objectives: By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

1. Review and provide needed clarification of material from Session 2 and Teleconference 2
2. Describe the significance of the therapeutic relationship
3. Describe the qualities of the therapeutic relationship as it applies to the IFS Model
4. Explain transference and counter-transference as they apply in IFS therapy
5. Identify the 5 P's in the therapeutic relationship
6. Differentiate between states of pity, empathy, and compassion relative to the therapeutic relationship
7. Identify common therapist parts and explain how parts of the therapist act and react in session, examining possible impact on the therapeutic process, especially with difficult client systems
8. Explain at least 2 ways to increase awareness of Self in therapy sessions, both for the therapist and for the client
9. Examine and explain unblending as it applies to the therapist during IFS therapy sessions
10. Use role-play to allow for greater Self understanding and Self compassion while working with clients
11. Describe and explain the interface between client and therapists' parts
12. Cite at least 2 ways to detect and differentiate parts in relation to one's Self and clients
13. Identify at least 2 qualities of Self-led relationships with clients, significant others, and in the training group
14. Define Self leadership and explain its implications in society
15. State at least 3 competencies necessary to practice as an IFS therapist
16. Use small groups to appraise, process and review the IFS Model of therapy

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Session 3, Module 6: Working with Difficult Cases and the IFS Model

Contact Hours: 12.50 hours

Description of Activity:

Module 6 discusses the IFS Model as it relates to treatment endings. The relationship between ending the training program as it relates to treatment endings is explored. Difficult cases and the IFS Model will be examined and strategies reviewed. The most common personality parts that arise during the treatment termination process are reviewed and analyzed. The core skills involved in achieving direct access to personality parts that emerge in therapy will be reviewed and examined. Strategies are identified for working with various personality parts that emerge during therapy as well as strategies for achieving harmony and balance for therapeutic success.

Learning Objectives: By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

1. Review and provide needed clarification of material from Module 5
2. Explain the IFS Model as it relates to treatment endings
3. Identify challenges for ending “incomplete” sessions and how these can be addressed
4. Explain the relationship between ending the training program and the completion process in psychotherapy
5. Explain why “burdens” resurface in client when ending treatment and describe strategies that address these occurrences
6. Use concepts from the Unburdened Internal System for recognizing the gifts and strengths of Self-led parts
7. Demonstrate the opportunity to communicate for parts through creative expression when ending therapy
8. Use role-play exercise to work with those parts affected by treatment termination
9. Identify at least 2 strategies for achieving harmony and balance in the therapeutic process of ending treatment
10. Explain how to accomplish being in both the client and the therapist role
11. List at least 2 common mistakes made by IFS therapists in ending treatment, with suggestions for resolution
12. Identify at least 3 difficult clinical situations
13. Role-play challenging scenarios with input from staff and peers
14. Use small groups to appraise, process and review the IFS Model of therapy
15. Identify post-training opportunities