
Therapeutic Intervention Process Sheets

Therapeutic Intervention Process (TIP)

This section will focus on specific interventions for IFS specifically adapted for equine engaged psychotherapy.

It is important to make clear that training and certification in IFS is extensive and substantial. It is deceptively simple yet deeply nuanced. The TIPs provided in this manual are the basics in applying IFS to EEP. Equine engaged psychotherapy is principled in the belief that the horse is an equal member of the facilitation team in which they interpersonally support the healing of the client. It is within this relationship that clients learn to connect with themselves and be vulnerable with another. The facilitation team guides this process with the lens of IFS and the understanding of the anatomy of the internal system of parts.

It is highly recommended that facilitation teams continue their learning in IFS and EMDR (if they have basic training through EMDRIA). Resources are included at the end of this manual. Consultation is imperative to ongoing learning and ethical practice. Consultation and on-going education are offered through Equid-Nexus.

The below bulleted list of nuances has been compiled in an effort to bridge the gap for those not formally trained from the IFS Institute. This is by no means is an exhaustive list. It is merely offered to the learner as “things to be aware of” as they will most likely come across these dynamics.

- Using the 6F’s helps the facilitation team to be a parts detector and a Self-detector.
- Be mindful of using questions that begin with, “what do you think...”, as this may invite a cognitive part to emerge. Also important with asking, “how do you *feel towards*...” instead of “how do you feel about...” “Feel towards” has a relational context which the client needs to drop into themselves instead of answer the question from a cognitive place.
- Client’s systems have a hierarchy. Depending upon the client’s history and the more trauma and relational ruptures they have had, the more protectors you will encounter. The strength of the protector hints at how burdened the exile is.
- Parts can appear through images, feelings, a felt-sense, somatically, through medical issues, thoughts, and beliefs. They can also look like just about anything. Be careful not to gender the parts, as parts can have masculine and feminine energy. It is also helpful to ask the part what it would like to be called instead of the client giving it a name. Follow the client’s lead and use their language without interpretation.
- Using the 6Fs with protectors is the main work. This may be counterintuitive, especially if the learner has been trained in other trauma processing modalities (including EMDR). Targeting the worst of a situation is the equivalent of going right to the exile of the system. Protectors have spent their lives trying to keep the exile’s burdens and trauma energy from coming to the surface. If the exile emerges and is worked with too quickly there will most likely be backlash. Protectors must be worked with first in order to get consent and permission to gain access to the exile.

Remember that everyone can experience parts in a different way. The more connected the person is with their parts the more expansive the communicate can be.

- There may be many layers of protectors. To quote the Syzygy Institute “**parts are not in the way – they are the way and slower is faster**”. Stay patient and trust the client’s system and process.
- The 6F’s are used repeatedly throughout the session as parts emerge for different reasons. Bruce Hersey encourages working with the part that has the most energy and calls it “**the biggest part in the room**”. This is determined by the client, not by the facilitation team. Each session begins with asking the client to “go inside” and find what parts are present. Ask the client “are there any more parts that are present?” to help determine what part needs the most attention. Other parts are likely to emerge, it is helpful to ask, “what would this part like to share? Or can it soften back?”. At times parts do step back, but if they refuse the “biggest part in the room” shifts and the 6Fs begin again.
- Often there are **polarizations** between parts, meaning that two or more parts have opposing views or experiences. Make room for all parts to be heard. The **acknowledgement** of each part is quintessential for to feel heard and understood.
- When clients are blended and have difficulty observing their parts, as they are absorbed by them (they are the part), direct access is used. Direct access simply means you are talking to the part. This is contrasted by insight work, which means you ask the client to converse with their part. There are two different types of direct access: implicit and explicit. Implicit direct access is when you are talking directly to the part, which is very similar to traditional talk therapy. Explicit direct access means you will ask the client’s permission to talk with the part. This is used when the client has some insight that they are blended, but they are having difficulty conversing with the part.
- There are times when the client becomes dysregulated and an exile emerges. Burdened energy is trauma energy. If the managers and firefighters have not been worked with prior to the exiled part emerging, the best course of action is to contain the exile energy by acknowledging it, extending the exile Self-Energy, and asking other parts (**known or unknown**) permission to work with the exile. Mostly likely protectors will emerge and the target part will shift to those protectors.
- Working with the protectors on “the front end” makes the unburdening of exiles go more smoothly. Important to note, that protectors may carry their own burdens and also need to be witnessed and unburdened after the exile.
- There are many types of burdens, such as legacy, cultural and unattached burdens (UBs). Facilitating these un-burdenings takes enhanced skill and additional training. These cases can be discussed in consultation and learned about in ongoing education.

Since there are so many variables in experiential therapies, the list below provides a simplified overview on the flow of a session. Interweave the horse's reaction throughout. Returning to Dan Siegel's concept of **Contingent Communication**, the interventions are based upon the context between client and horse.

- **Find:** What are you noticing as you are here with the horse?
 - Ask the client to notice (using all of their senses) what is happening in or around their body or within their system
 - Part responses could be a physical sensation, emotion, memory, cognition, or belief
 - Contract with the part: Is it okay to **focus** on that? If yes, what do you notice? If no, ask the part, why no?
- What does that part want to share with you?
 - What does it want you to know?
 - Ask what the part does for you. Is there an emotion or physical sensation that goes with it? Does that make sense? If yes, let the part know that you get it.
- How do you **feel towards** this part? Assessing for Self-Energy or presence of polarized parts.
 - Befriending protectors **is the main work*** ("slow is fast" to avoid backlash)
 - Be **curious** to understand the protector's main goal or "solution (behavior/action) to a problem (exile energy)"*
- Ask the protector (insight or direct access) what would happen/what is it afraid of if it did not do its job (**finding the fear**)
 - This is the **protector's positive intention***
 - Validate and ask the **level of urge to protect***
- Gain consent and contract with the protector to be open to a new experience in the present with the horse
- The goal is for the client to be able to observe their internal state and activation and stay connected with the part while remaining present with the horse. This expands relational attention.
- Therapist continues to hold Self-Energy and connection with the horse while the client continues attuning to their parts and the horse
- Watch for **perspective changes** and **disconfirming knowledge*** from client, which may signal increased access to Self
- Notice changes in client's affect and behavior and horse's responses
- Reflect back any 8C's or 5P's, ask if the client wants to use butterfly hug to tap in (resource) and increase connection with Self *and* the horse
- Ask the part to share whatever it wants with you... Is there more?
 - Ask what was that experience like for that part?

- What do you want to tell that part?
- What does that part need from you now?
- Does the part want to leave where it is?
- Ask the part if it is ready to let go of their burdens (using the elements)
(part's choice)
- Ask the part what it would like to take in now that it has more space?
(part's choice)

Becoming a Parts Detector – Finding and Focusing on Parts

With invitational language, the therapist guides the client to close their eyes and take a few deep breaths (if that helps) and go inside to identify a part.

Guiding Questions:

- Where do you notice that part in or around your body? Or, how do you sense the part?
- How do you notice it? Or, how do you know it's there?
- Is there a physical sensation that goes along with it?
- Is there an emotion that goes along with it?
- What does the part say?
- What does the part do? Does it have an impulse to do something?
- Ask this part what it would like to be referred to (do not name the part).
- Do you notice any other parts around this one?
- As you focus on this part, what else can you sense?
 - o The more the client focuses on a part, the more information emerges. Sometimes parts can show up as walls or blockages. In these cases, it is best to assist the client in increasing their focus on what they are noticing. Ask questions about the shape, density, texture, movement, temperature, appearance, color, etc.

Facilitation Tips: People experience parts in different ways. Not everyone sees or hears parts. Some people feel or sense them. How parts communicate can also change over time. Use the client's language and do not make assumptions or interpretations. Note that clients with eating disorders and/or body dysmorphia are typically dissociated from their bodies. Using broader language is helpful here (eg: "use all of your senses"). Reflect back what the client says to acknowledge that you are "getting" what the client is expressing. These questions are not a check-list. Rather, these are guiding questions to help the client understand how their internal system communicates for them. Your questions will become more intuitive after getting acquainted with the trend of how your client's system communicates.

Un-blending: Flesh out and Feel Toward

With invitational language, the therapist guides the client to focus on their internal experience of the part, practice un-blending and identifying Self qualities (8C's and 5P's).

8C's: Curious, Calm, Compassion, Connected, Confident, Courageous, Clear, Creative

5P's: Presence, Perspective, Patience, Persistence, Playfulness

Guiding Questions:

- Find and focus a part that has the most energy or is the loudest.
- How do you feel towards this part?
 - o Notice the client's language and demeanor, and be on the look-out for Self-qualities or other parts.
 - o Be aware of your parts and how curious you are. Are you curious from an agenda point of view (head) or from a connected place (heart)?
- As the part if it could soften back to a nice conversational distance. As again how the client feels towards this part.
- If the part will not step back, as what it is afraid of or concerned about if it doesn't.
- Begin to "flesh it out":
 - o Let the part know you are aware of it. How does it respond to your presence?
 - o Ask what the part would like to share with you. Is there more?
 - o Let the part know you "get it" and it "makes sense". How does it respond to this acknowledgement?

Facilitation Tips: Important to note that other parts will most likely step in – this is what parts do ("parts are not in the way, they are the way"). Remain curious and notice any parts that come up for your while you are guiding the client to focus on the parts that emerge. As the part why they are coming up now and what they would like to share with you. Acknowledge them, and then ask them to step back and give the client some internal space. Thank them for stepping back and then return to the original part. There are times when the "biggest part in the room" changes. When this happens work with the new part, but not before asking the original part if it is okay to get back to them. Remember to thank parts when they are cooperative.

Witnessing the Protector: Befriending and Finding the Fear

With invitational language, the therapist guides the client to un-blend, increase Self-Energy, and begin the Self-to-part connected relationship.

6F's: Find, Focus, Flesh out, Feel Towards, Be-friend, Find the Fears

Guiding Questions:

- Find, focus and flesh out the part.
- How do you feel towards this part?
- If another part emerges, ask it step-back and ask the feel towards question again until the client has access to Self-Energy.
- Guide the client to establish a Self-to-part connection by asking the part what it does for them.
- When did it start doing their job? What is this part's story?
- What is its positive intention?
- Find the fear: what would happen if it didn't do its job?
- Guide the client to ask the part what age it thinks it is. Update the part.
 - o This provides a clue to the exile it is protecting.
- Continue to establish a Self-to-part connection, increasing trust in order to work with the exile it protects.

Facilitation Tips:

- Sometimes the client will blend with a cognitive part that wants to "figure things out". When this happens, offer "don't think – ask".
- Remind the client that "slower is faster".
- Some clients have a fast-moving system and it may be difficult at first to track what parts are present. When in doubt always ask the client "what are you noticing now?". Try not to get lost in the content or trying to track things perfectly – stay focused and attuned to the client's experience.
- Remember – engaged Self-to-part connection is always the intention.

Constellation Conceptualization TIP Sheet

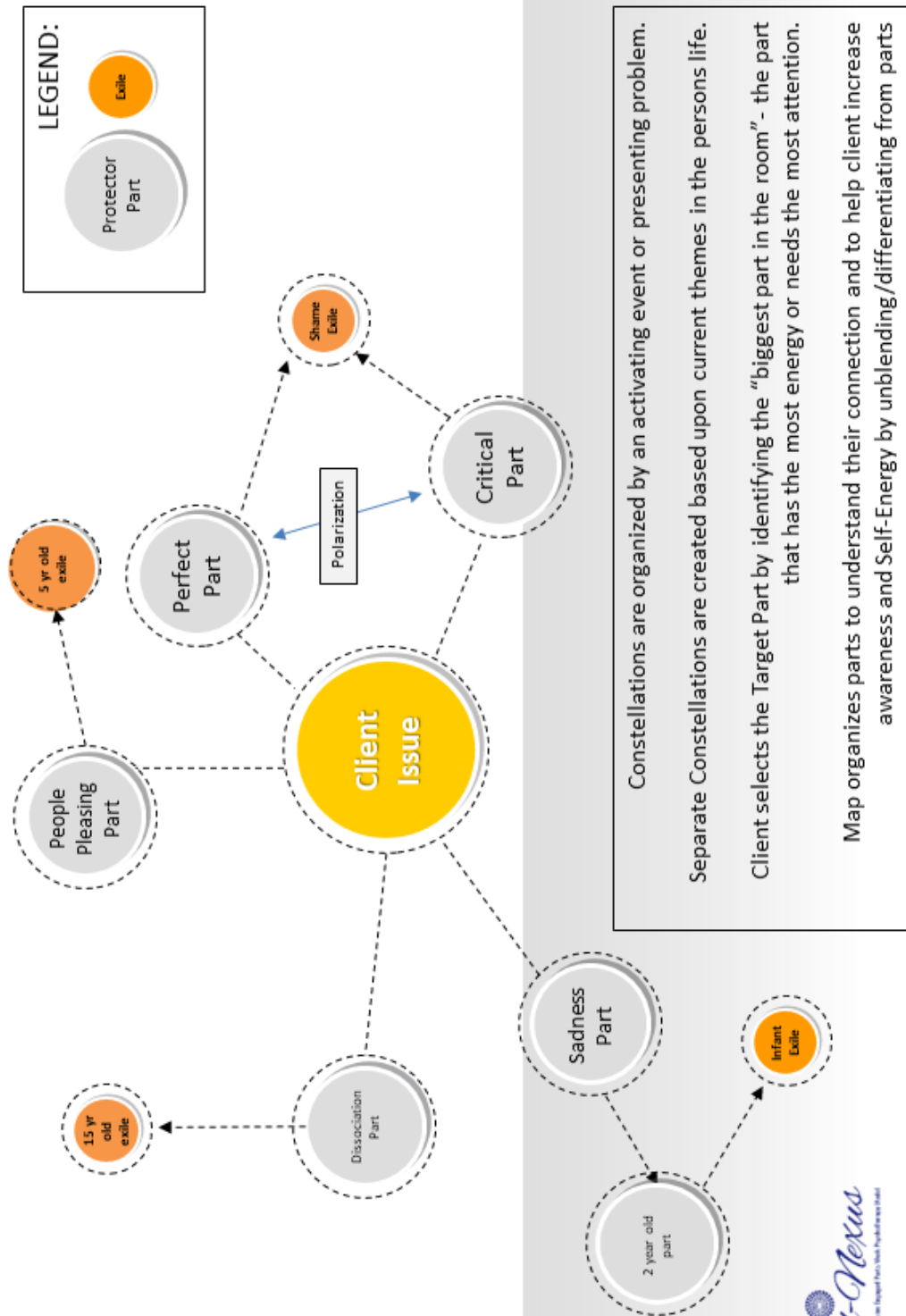
This template can be used to help organize your client's parts that are connected through experiences and memories. Constellation Conceptualization is based on being curious about how the client's parts interact with each other, if they know each other, identifying polarizations, what their relationship is, and how they feel toward the another to gain clarity about how the subsystem works in tandem to achieve a common goal.

As an IFS therapist or practitioner, it is extremely valuable to be able to zoom in to engage with one part and to zoom out to understand this part's role in the Constellation subsystem. It also supports the notion to not side with a favorable part over another (for example, the good client part versus the part that acts on addictive behaviors) and aids in compassion,

Parts mapping also assists in identifying relational patterns that emerge within the client's interaction with the horse within a specific context or working on a specific goal. From an EMDR lens, this can be understood by the concept of neural networks, in that specific memories are connected to a negative belief, an emotion, physical sensation, and an image(s). There can be several parts that are connected to a memory that hold a component of the experience.

Recognizing patterns in the horse's responses are also helpful information for the Constellation Conceptualization. Equine professionals may add their observations to provide an even clearer picture of the relational dynamic. These details offer space for therapeutic interventions to increase awareness and increase Self-presence between the client and the horse. This data is also helpful to inform client's progress notes and to track changes in the relationship.

Constellation of Parts Mapping - Example



Constellations are organized by an activating event or presenting problem.

Separate Constellations are created based upon current themes in the persons life.

Client selects the Target Part by identifying the "biggest part in the room" - the part that has the most energy or needs the most attention.

Map organizes parts to understand their connection and to help client increase awareness and Self-Energy by unblending/differentiating from parts

