

Introduction to The Self-Led Project

The purpose of the Self-Led Project is **to help you develop Self-leadership**. I have capitalized the word Self just as the Internal Family System (IFS) model does to represent your true, authentic Self.

The Self-Led Project is a personal development coaching program which focuses on self-discovery using IFS. Self-discovery helps develop Self-leadership. And Self-leadership yields personal power and choice.

Use of the IFS model in the Self-Led Project is not therapy nor is it a substitute for therapy.

The Self-Led Project will help you shift from self-management and control to self-discovery and personal development. Imagine how much your life could change if you could get past the idea that you need to be fixed or improved!

One result could be a life directed by your authentic Self, with access to untapped resources and energy.

The Three Modules of the Self-Led Project

This program is designed to be completed in 33 group sessions over the course of nine months.

There are nine exercises in each of the three modules of the program. We will complete each of these exercises together during group sessions. There are also several bonus exercises you can take on between sessions if you wish.

As we work through the exercises in **Module 1, Your Automatic Life**, you will become more aware of your automatic reactions to the circumstances of your life.

Whether you are already familiar and practiced with the IFS model, or new to the idea of an internal world of parts, Module 1 will help you understand the influence your parts have on your life and how you perceive it. With a focus on increasing awareness of your inner world, parts begin to feel seen, known, and understood. The result is more clarity and more room for your authentic Self.

The exercises in **Module 2, Developing Self-Leadership**, will show you how to use the Internal Family Systems model to transform your life from the inside out.

In Module 2, we go deeper into the world of parts and discover the healing and unifying power of Self. The exercises in this module enable you to strengthen the connection with your parts and build trust between them and Self. As this happens, participants feel less out of control and more confident in their responses to what is happening in their external worlds.

Completion of the first two Modules will prepare you for the final exercises in **Module 3, Practicing Self Leadership**. In this module, you will leverage all you have learned about yourself to create more capacity in your life.

The Appendix, Documenting and Mapping Your Parts, will help you map and track your journey and document what you are learning about your internal world.

What you can expect

Make a commitment to really get to know yourself. Throughout the Self-Led Project, you will learn who you are and who you are not. Then, with a perspective untethered by the past, you will generate a life that reflects your authentic Self.

Participation in the Self-Led Project will help you take a deep and honest look at yourself. You will gradually understand how you unconsciously react to circumstances in ways that have life unfold just as it does. And you will learn how to transform your view of the world.

Each exercise in this workbook expands self-awareness and builds on the previous exercises. We will do most of the work in group sessions and you will have some optional work to do on your own between sessions. Many of the bonus exercises are designed as practices that will help you increase self-awareness and develop an ongoing connection with all parts of yourself.

In this program you will learn about your inner world, which is made up of parts, as in “There is a part of me that...” You will learn to appreciate how some of your parts protect and serve you. As you befriend and grow to understand them, your relationship with them transforms. This process softens internal conflict so that you will eventually respond to life’s circumstances in a balanced manner that reflects current reality. These more balanced and harmonized inner relationships will gradually be reflected in your external relationships and experiences.

This program will remind you of who you are and what you are capable of.

While participating in this program, you are considered the expert in your life. Please do not assign authority to your coach or to anything you find in the workbook. Instead, challenge what doesn’t resonate, and acknowledge your own discerning wisdom. Be willing to challenge your fixed ideas as well.

By viewing your experiences through the lens provided in this program, you will gradually begin to trust yourself more than you ever have. Consciously focusing your attention on your automatic responses will make you far more self-aware and will help you shift from what is problematic and habitual to a more conscious and balanced state of being.

How we react to the circumstances of our lives is often automatic and unconscious. Parts of ourselves often influence how we perceive, feel about, and react to external events. But, when we try to change our behavior, we pit one part against another, and the result is often frustration and failure.

Due to the nature of how our parts relate to each other, trying to change can get in the way of permanent change. But getting curious about why we do what we do makes change possible. This curiosity leads to understanding and creates an opening for self-compassion.

Before discovering IFS in 2016, I had been a life coach for 5 years and had completed one year of life coach training provided by an accredited International Coaching Federation (ICF) training program. Shortly after completing my life coaching training, I was introduced to IFS as a therapy client. I quickly realized the practical and powerful applications of IFS for my clients. I saw that the IFS model could help resolve unfinished aspects of the past that get in the way of having the life we want.

I've taken some of what I learned during my own personal development journey including addiction recovery, years of therapy, having my own coach, and hundreds of hours of professional training to create this program. My successful personal transformation has inspired and informed the program you are about to apply to your life.

I believe that each of us has a reliable internal source of wisdom, comfort, and guidance. In the Internal Family Systems model, this source is referred to as Self. Our inability to access Self-leadership is due to emotional injuries we have never recovered from. Our parts lost their connection to Self at some point in the past when they volunteered to take on extreme roles to help us survive.

The strategies we employ to avoid the pain of our unhealed emotional wounds have unintended consequences which result in a complicated life which is endured rather than enjoyed. While we may have become proficient at avoiding pain and discomfort, we have done so at the cost of self-confidence, joy, spontaneity, authenticity, and connection.

Participation in this program will help you understand yourself deeply and compassionately. Rather than thinking of yourself as a single-minded individual who occasionally gets lost, stuck, confused, overwhelmed, and conflicted, you will learn to think of yourself as a multi-dimensional being with a rich cadre of parts that can help or hinder your attempts to live the life you want.

As you get to know your parts, you will gain access to resources needed to meet challenges and take advantage of opportunities in life with clarity and wisdom.

Congratulations on your decision to invest in yourself. You are about to begin a journey that will place your life on a new trajectory. Commit to this journey and very soon you will be looking back at this decision as a turning point in your life.

Let's get to work.