

Getting to Know a Manager

REFERENCE | Internal Family Systems Therapy, Dr. Richard Schwartz, 6 Fs of getting to know a protector

Take a moment to settle into a quiet, peaceful space with your devices turned off, and get comfortable.

Take several deep, slow breaths and allow your attention to gradually settle into your body.

Close your eyes or let your gaze settle softly on the floor if that's comfortable. Notice what you are experiencing. Pay attention to any emotions, thoughts, images, and physical sensations.

You may connect with a Manager that you can tell is present for you in this moment, or you can invite one that you'd like to get to know. Remember, when you work with parts you are sending signals of welcome, offering verbal and non-verbal cues of safety for the parts to trust you to do this work with them.

1. Find the part:

- What is coming up inside of you (thoughts, feelings, sensations, images)?
- Where do you feel that in your body?
- Pause to linger here, be with that part showing the 8 C's.

2. Feel toward it:

- How do you feel toward the part?
 - ☉ This is a parts-check. If you feel anything negative toward this part, you have another part coming in trying to protect you.
 - ☉ Invite that part to un-blend (step back please) so you can relate to your part from Self. The goal is to relate to all your parts from Essential-Self. From this place inside, you notice feeling the "8 C's": curious, compassionate, calm, connected, and confident toward this part right now. And you might sense your courage, creativity, and clarity about connecting with this part.

3. Flesh it out:

- What else do you notice about the part?
- How are you experiencing it now?
- Is there an image that represents this part (some people see the parts, or see them as colors)?

- ▶ Can you notice anything else about the way you perceive this part?

4. BeFriend the part:

- ▶ Let it know you appreciate its positive intent and how it's trying to help you. See if it will receive your appreciation and respond positively. If it doesn't, be calm and confident with your message of welcome. Perhaps ask it what it needs to feel seen, soothed, safe, and secure.
- ▶ In this step really tap into your "attuned engagement" stance: you are trying to let this part know you are a friend, an ally, you are just here to understand and get to know it, to attend and befriend.
- ▶ Ask that part of you if it would like to show you anything about itself:
 - ⓪ Where it learned to help you in this way
 - ⓪ What parts of you it is protecting
 - ⓪ Its role in your internal system
 - ⓪ How it feels about its role
 - ⓪ If there's anything else it would rather be doing
 - ⓪ Remember to always acknowledge and show appreciation for that part when they give you answers to these questions (don't drill them)

5. What is its Fear?

- ▶ Ask the part what it is afraid would happen if it didn't show up and "help" you in this way? What outcome is it trying to prevent?
- ▶ What wounded parts of you is it working to protect?
- ▶ How does it feel about the job it is doing for you?
- ▶ You are finding out why this part does this job inside of you. From Essential-Self, show compassion and calm during this part since you are asking it to be vulnerable and share its fear. Offer loving kindness and gratitude as this part tells the story of why it does this job inside of you.
- ▶ Check-in with this part to make sure it feels seen, safe, soothed, and secure.

Spend as much time as you'd like getting to know this part of you. When it feels complete, gently bring your awareness away from your internal experience and back into the room around you. It may help to focus on deepening your breath, noticing the ground beneath your feet, or listening for any sounds that you can hear.

- ⓪ What was that exercise like for you?
- ⓪ What did you learn?
- ⓪ Did anything surprise you?
- ⓪ Has your experience shifted in any way?

Because parts often show themselves in a visual way, it can be helpful to draw out a quick sketch of your manager here:

Journal anything you want to remember here:

