

THE ANCIENT WELL

When Midlife Meets the Old Memory

*A free guide to IFS, Brainspotting,
and talk therapy*

Who this guide is for

This is a plain-language introduction to two ways of working that I use alongside talk therapy: Internal Family Systems (IFS) and Brainspotting. It is educational, not a substitute for therapy, assessment, or crisis care.

It may be useful if you have spent years being the capable one, and something in you is tired of holding the whole story by yourself. Many people I meet are carrying unprocessed trauma, C-PTSD, grief, or the aftereffects of a controlling relationship. Some are also living with chronic illness, caregiving, or family patterns that asked them to grow up too soon.

Faith in Christ is welcome in the room if it matters to you. It is not required to work with me. The work itself does not depend on sharing my beliefs.

Therapy with me is paced and collaborative. You will not be pushed to share more than you are ready to share.

What Internal Family Systems is

IFS is a model of therapy developed by Richard Schwartz. It starts from a simple observation: the mind is not one single voice. Most of us can already name an inner critic, a part that shuts down, a part that keeps everyone else comfortable, or a younger place that still holds old pain.

In IFS those inner voices are called parts. Parts are not a diagnosis and they are not “multiple personalities.” They are a practical map for the different ways you learned to survive.

Three kinds of parts you may recognize

Protectors try to keep pain from flooding you. They can look like overworking, people-pleasing, numbness, control, or a hard inner critic.

Exiles hold the hurt, shame, fear, or grief that protectors have been managing.

A steadier center is the place in you that can get curious instead of at war with yourself. IFS calls this Self. It is not a personality makeover. It is the capacity to meet your own inner life with more calm and compassion.

The point of the work is not to exile the parts that have been running the show. It is to understand what they have been protecting, and to help them stand down when they no longer have to do it

alone.

What Brainspotting is

Brainspotting was developed by David Grand. It is a focused, body-based way of processing material that talk alone often cannot reach. The working idea is that where you look can connect to how the nervous system is holding an experience.

In a session, we find a visual point (a “brainspot”) that links to activation in the body: tightness, heat, a lump in the throat, a sudden quiet. You stay with that point while I help you notice what comes, without forcing a story or a catharsis.

People often use Brainspotting for trauma that lives more in the body than in a tidy narrative: medical trauma, accidents, relational shock, grief, or years of bracing that never had language.

Brainspotting is not hypnosis and it is not being put into a trance. You remain present. You can stop, slow down, or keep your eyes closed at any time.

How the two can work together

IFS gives language and relationship to inner parts. Brainspotting gives the nervous system a focused way to release what those parts have been holding. In practice that can look like this:

We start with talk and consent. You set the pace.

If a protector part is loud, we listen to it first. We do not barge past it.

When there is enough safety, we may use a brainspot to help the body complete something that talking has only circled.

We close by orienting back to the room, so you leave more settled than flooded.

Not every session uses both. Some hours are conversation. Some are quieter and more somatic. The method serves you, not the other way around.

A Christian way of seeing IFS, if you want it

This section is optional. You do not need a Christian faith to do this work with me. I offer it because some people want their inner work to sit inside a life of prayer, and they do not want a model that replaces God with the self.

A careful Christian reading of IFS does not say “your inner Self is God.” God remains God. What IFS names as a compassionate, curious center can be understood as the image of Christ in us, not a second deity (Genesis 1:26–27).

Parts are then not enemies to crush and not excuses for harm. They are the places that learned to survive. Meeting them with curiosity is closer to how Christ moves toward the weary than to a project of self-improvement by force.

If faith is part of your life, we can leave room for it: prayer, Scripture that actually comforts you, or simply naming God as present while a frightened part is in the room. If faith is not part of your life, we will not import it. The same respect runs both ways.

Faith in Christ is an option in the room. It is never an entrance requirement.

What working with me looks like

I am a Marriage and Family Therapy Trainee at Attune Center for Healing in Redding, California, supervised by Christina Whitney, LMFT #111050.

Telehealth is available to residents of California.

Partnership, Aetna, and United Healthcare are accepted, as well as cash pay. Superbills are available upon request.

I offer a free 15-minute consult so you can hear how I work and decide if the fit is right.

I work with adults carrying trauma, C-PTSD, grief, and the aftereffects of narcissistic or controlling relationships. Chronic illness, caregiving, and complex family systems are often part of the picture. You do not have to arrive with a polished story.

When this guide is not enough

If you are in immediate danger or thinking of harming yourself, skip this document and get urgent help. In the United States you can call or text 988. If you are in crisis in the room with me, we stop the method and attend to safety first.

A free 15-minute consult

If you want to see whether this work is a fit, you can book a brief consult. There is no pressure to begin therapy after we talk.

Text 530-444-1522

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This guide is for education only. It does not create a therapist–client relationship. IFS is associated with the work of Richard C. Schwartz. Brainspotting is associated with the work of David Grand. Christian language here is a pastoral framing some clients find usable. It is not a claim that either model is a church teaching.

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