

# Internal Family Systems (IFS)

## Skills Training with Richard Schwartz, PhD

When I started my career as a therapist, I avoided my client’s internal emotions and instead tried to control the difficult symptoms I was seeing – which led to heated arguments and frustration rather than clinical progress.

But when I started listening more closely to my clients, I finally discovered the answer to healing and transformation...

As clients talked about their different parts and how those parts felt pain and emotions, I realized that was the key. To be effective in our work, we must free each part our client identifies with from the trauma, abuse, attachment injuries and suffering that they feel.

Since developing Internal Family Systems (IFS) 30 years ago, it has been scientifically evidenced to be effective at helping a wide variety of mental health conditions – such as trauma, addiction, anxiety, and depression – **which is why it is one of the fastest-growing approaches in therapy.**

**IFS can transform your clients’ lives as they learn to heal themselves.** No more pathologizing clients. No more therapist directives or insights, rather IFS will provide a connection with your client that creates lasting healing.

Please join me in this live and interactive webcast. I will give you valuable feedback, guided instruction, and share powerful in-session videos of IFS in action. I want to give you the core skills you need to use IFS, so you can improve what you’re doing in the therapy room – and see transformation in your clients’ lives.

*Richard Schwartz, PhD*

## Speaker



**Richard Schwartz, Ph.D.,** earned his Ph.D. in marriage and family therapy from Purdue University, after which he began a long association with the Institute for Juvenile Research at the University of Illinois at Chicago, and more recently at The Family Institute at Northwestern University, attaining the status of associate professor at both institutions. He is coauthor, with Michael Nichols, of *Family Therapy: Concepts and Methods*, the most widely used family therapy text in the United States.

Dr. Schwartz developed Internal Family Systems in response to clients’ descriptions of experiencing various parts—many extreme—within themselves. He noticed that when these parts felt safe and had their concerns addressed, they were less disruptive and would accede to the wise leadership of what Dr. Schwartz came to call the “Self.” In developing IFS, he recognized that, as in systemic family theory, parts take on characteristic roles that help define the inner world of the client. The coordinating Self, which embodies qualities of confidence, openness, and compassion, acts as a center around which the various parts constellate. Because IFS locates the source of healing within the client, the therapist is freed to focus on guiding the client’s access to his or her true Self and supporting the client in harnessing its wisdom. This approach makes IFS a non-pathologizing, hopeful framework within which to practice psychotherapy. It provides an alternative understanding of psychic functioning and healing that allows for innovative techniques in relieving clients’ symptoms and suffering.

In 2000, Richard Schwartz founded The Center for Self Leadership in Oak Park, Illinois. Dr. Schwartz is a featured speaker for many national psychotherapy organizations and a fellow of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, and he serves on the editorial boards of four professional journals. He has published multiple books and over 50 articles about IFS. His books include, *Internal Family Systems Skills Training Manual*, *Internal Family Systems Therapy*, *Introduction to the Internal Family Systems Model*, and *The Mosaic Mind* (with Regina Goulding), as well as *Metaframeworks* (with Doug Breunlin and Betty Karrer). Dr. Schwartz lives and practices in Brookline, MA and is on the faculty of the department of psychiatry, Harvard School of Medicine.

Speaker Disclosure:  
Financial: Richard Schwartz is the Founder of The Center for Self Leadership. He receives a speaking honorarium from PESI, Inc.  
Non-financial: Richard Schwartz is a Fellow and member of the American Association for Marital and Family Therapy.

**Target Audience:**  
Counselors • Social Workers • Psychiatrists • Psychologists  
Addiction Counselors • Case Managers • Marriage & Family Therapists • Nurses • Chaplains & Clergy • Other Professionals Who Work within the Mental Health Fields

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**Live Webcast Schedule**  
(Times listed in Eastern)  
**8:00** Program begins  
**12:00-1:00** Lunch Break  
**3:50** Program ends  
There will be two 15-min breaks (mid-morning & mid-afternoon).  
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A more detailed schedule is available upon request.



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# Internal Family Systems (IFS)

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# Internal Family Systems (IFS)

## Skills Training with Richard Schwartz, PhD



**Developer of IFS and Pioneer Therapist**

Revolutionary & transformative treatment of PTSD, Anxiety, Depression, Substance Abuse – and more!

Take away the methods of IFS to help individuals, couples and families

Case studies, videos and demonstrations of the model in action!

Hailed by  
**Dr. Bessel van der Kolk**,  
the world’s leading expert in trauma, as  
*the treatment method that all clinicians should know to treat clients effectively.*

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Outline

Internal Family System (IFS)

- The development of Internal Family Systems model
- A non-pathologizing, accelerated approach rooted in neuroscience
- Apply inner resources and self-compassion for healing
- How to heal implicit memory wounds
- Study limitations
- Clinical considerations for clients experiencing abuse

The IFS Technique

Step 1: Identify the Diagnoses & Symptoms

- Assess the diagnoses: PTSD, anxiety, depression, substance abuse, and eating disorders
- Apply meditation practices
  - Find the symptom, focus on its fear
  - Separate the person from the symptom
  - Become curious about it
  - Find the real story behind the symptom

Step 2: Gain Access to Internal Strengths & Resource for Healing

- Move from defensiveness to curiosity
- Access compassion to open the pathways toward healing
- Foster “internal attachment” work
- The “Self” of the therapist-countertransference redefined

Step 3: Healing of the Traumatic Wound

- Three phases to healing the wound:
  - Witness the pain
  - Remove the wounded part out of the past
  - Let go of the feelings, thoughts, and beliefs

Empowering IFS-Specific Grounding Techniques

- Flashbacks
- Panic attacks
- Suicide
- Dissociation

Objectives

1. Summarize Internal Family Systems (IFS) steps, concepts, and techniques to inform the clinician’s choice of treatment interventions.
2. Develop a deep understanding of how neuroscience informs therapeutic decisions in IFS therapy.
3. Identify, specify, and clarify the protective parts of clients who have a history of trauma to help with assessment and treatment planning.
4. Articulate the IFS belief that all parts want something positive for the client and how the parts will use a variety of strategies to gain influence within the internal system.
5. Compile an alternate view of client symptoms and psychopathology, showing how client’s parts are trying to protect them from emotional and psychological pain for purposes of client psychoeducation.
6. Demonstrate how IFS translates common comorbidities into parts language, showing a non-pathological perspective of mental health disorders as it relates to clinical treatment.




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National Approvals

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