

**Intimacy  
from the  
Inside Out®**

**BASIC TRAINING MANUAL**



**Toni Herbine-Blank**

# Intimacy from the Inside Out<sup>®</sup>

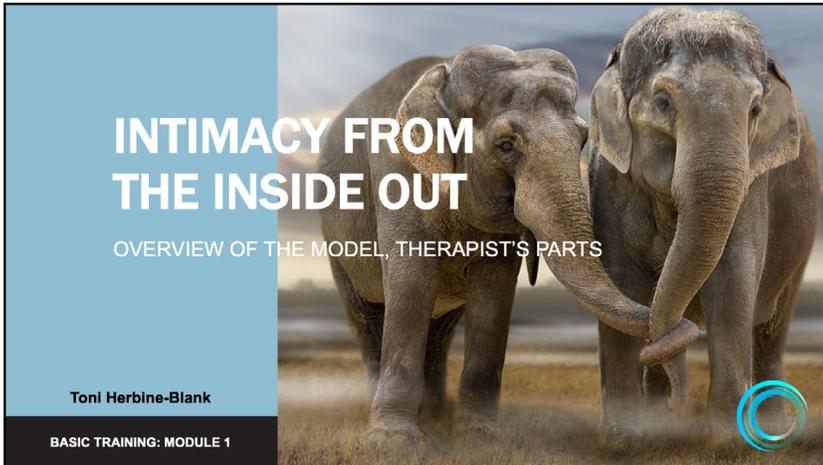
- 
- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>03</b> <b>MODULE ONE</b>   Overview of the Model +<br>Therapist's Parts               | <b>51</b> <b>MODULE SIX</b>   Review   |
| <b>04</b> Presentation Slides  | <b>52</b> Review Presentation Slides   |
| <br>   | <br>   |
| <b>10</b> <b>MODULE TWO</b>   Getting Started, Tracking Sequences                        | <b>57</b> <b>MODULE SEVEN</b>   Anger and Needs,<br>Transitions from One Protocol to Another |
| <b>11</b> Presentation Slides  | <b>58</b> Presentation Slides  |
| <b>17</b> Handout: Tracking Sequences Meditation   | <b>63</b> Handout: A Choice in Every Moment Meditation                                       |
| <b>18</b> Handout: Who Am I in Conflict?   | <b>64</b> Handout: A Choice in Every Moment Worksheet  |
| <b>19</b> Handout: Simple Roadmap for Tracking   |  |
| <b>20</b> Handout: Expanded Roadmap for Tracking,<br>Understanding the Cycle of Conflict |  |
| <br>   |  |
| <b>22</b> <b>MODULE THREE</b>   Unblending, Individual Work                              | <b>66</b> <b>MODULE EIGHT</b>   Autonomic Nervous System +<br>Co-Regulation                  |
| <b>23</b> Presentation Slides  | <b>67</b> Presentation Slides  |
| <b>31</b> Handout: Unblending Parts  |  |
| <br>   |  |
| <b>32</b> <b>MODULE FOUR</b>   Courageous Communication,<br>Triangles                    | <b>75</b> <b>MODULE NINE</b>   Shame + Reactive Parts  |
| <b>33</b> Presentation Slides  | <b>76</b> Presentation Slides  |
| <b>42</b> Handout: Roadmap for Introducing<br>Courageous Communication                   | <b>83</b> Handout: Direct Access   |
| <b>43</b> Handout: Courageous Communication  | <b>84</b> Handout: Takeaways > Reactive Couples  |
| <b>45</b> Handout: Triangles and Therapist's Parts                                       |  |
| <b>46</b> Handout: Talking About Hard Things   |  |
| <br>   |  |
| <b>47</b> <b>MODULE FIVE</b>   Review IFIO Basics  |  |
| <b>48</b> Presentation Slides  |  |
| <b>50</b> Handout: Reminders for Working with Couples                                    |  |



INTIMACY FROM THE INSIDE OUT  
BASIC TRAINING

# MODULE ONE

OVERVIEW OF THE MODEL  
+ THERAPIST'S PARTS



1



2



Intimate relationships are formed and maintained based on many factors; including but not limited to:

- > intergenerational influences
- > religion and spirituality
- > gender and sexuality
- > cultural and legacy burdens
- > people's connectedness to extended family or self-made community.

Module 1 | Overview of the Model, Therapist's Parts

© Herbine from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

3

No single theory fits everyone which is why we emphasize discernment as you learn. We also stress the importance of multicultural sensitivity when beginning therapy with each individual, couple or system.



© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

4



### Overview of the Model

THREE PHASES OF IFIO:

- Beginning:**  
Getting to know the relationship, introducing possibility
- The Eddies and Flow of the Middle:**  
Non-linear protocols
- Ending: Repair and Visioning**

Module 1 | Overview of the Model, Therapist's Parts

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

5

### IFIO is a Model of Differentiation

> Differentiation is defined as the ability to Self-Regulate and Attach

FROM INNER DIFFERENTIATION to OUTER DIFFERENTIATION

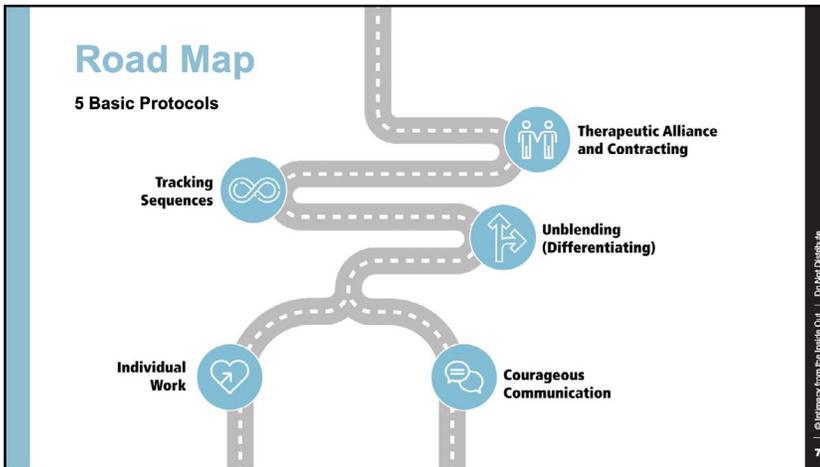


Securely connected inside      Securely connected with the other      Differentiation strengthens intimacy

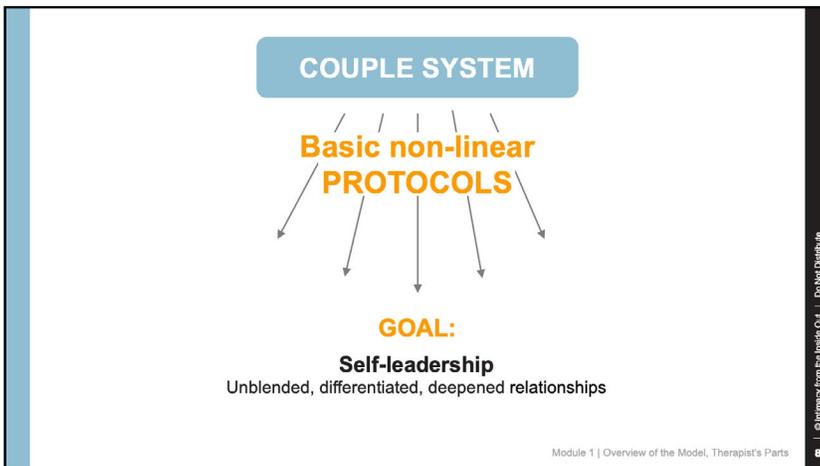
Module 1 | Overview of the Model, Therapist's Parts

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

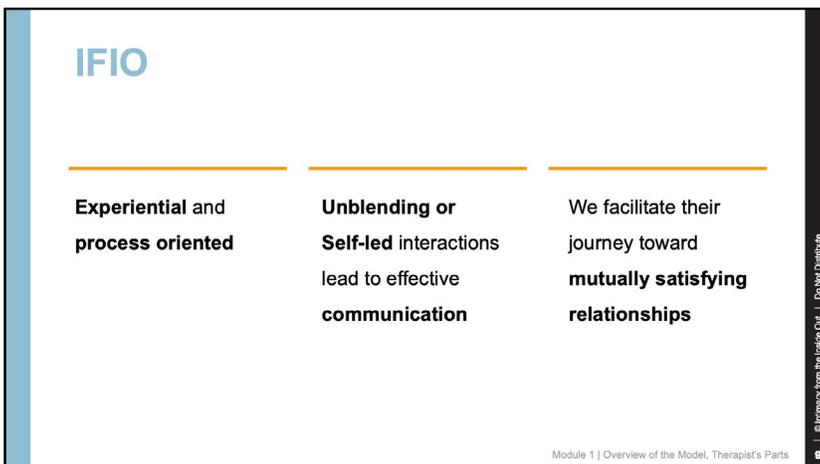
6



**7**



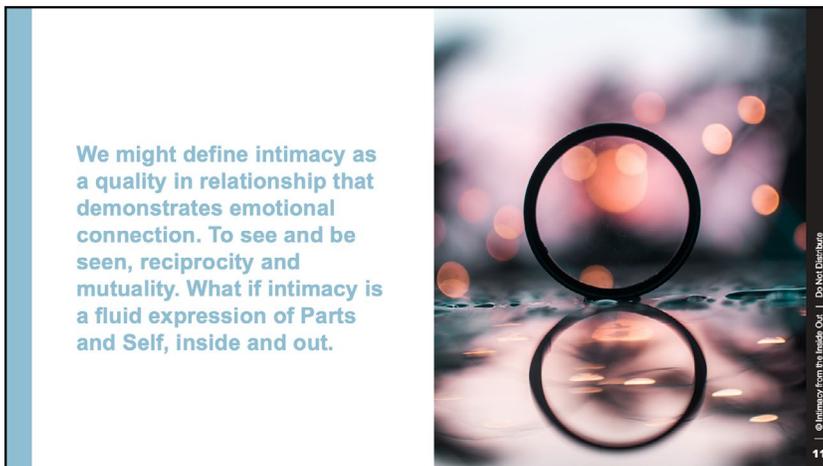
**8**



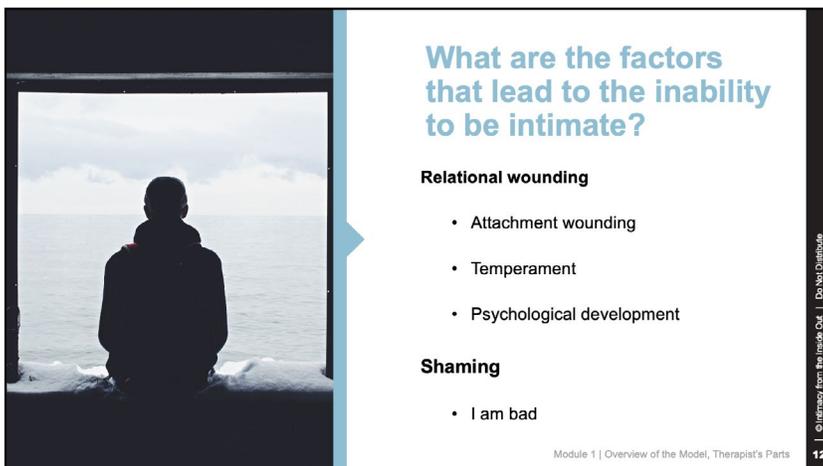
**9**



10



11



12

## What do protectors do to try to prevent pain?

- > Fight
- > Flee and avoid
- > Numb
- > Freeze
- > Control Self or Other
- > Caretake
- > Shame/Blame
- > Submit
- > Attempt to attach in a desperate way

Module 1 | Overview of the Model, Therapist's Parts

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

13

## Tasks of the Therapist

- > Safety, connection, empathy, compassion and attunement
- > Clarity to recognize exiles beneath Protectors
- > Courage to both validate and challenge Protectors with clarity and kindness
- > Ability to listen to blended protectors and wait to challenge them until trust is built

Module 1 | Overview of the Model, Therapist's Parts

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

14

## Qualities of Self-leadership that IFIO therapists will cultivate

- COURAGE**
  - > To stay with protectors and remember their dilemmas or binds
- CLARITY**
  - > To hold the big picture for the couple when they can't
- PERSISTENCE**
  - > "Lean in" during difficult moments in couple therapy
- PERSPECTIVE**
  - > Trust the process
  - > See the big picture
- COMPASSION**
  - > As well as empathy (know the difference)
- CREATIVITY**
  - > Humor
  - > Willingness to change direction quickly and often
- PATIENCE**
  - > Pay attention to the client's pacing and rhythm

Module 1 | Overview of the Model, Therapist's Parts

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

15



## Direct Access

**A SKILL NECESSARY FOR THE IFIO COUPLE THERAPIST**

- > Implicit or explicit
- > Especially necessary with blended protectors

Module 1 | Overview of the Model, Therapist's Parts

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

16

## Awareness of One's Own Parts is Essential to Being Successful

**Therapist's skills**

- > Expertise, good theory, concepts and judgment, awareness of implicit biases

**Parts of the therapist**  
(Can get therapist caught in a triangle)

- > Countertransference (childhood triggers surface)



© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

17



ToniHerbineBlank.com

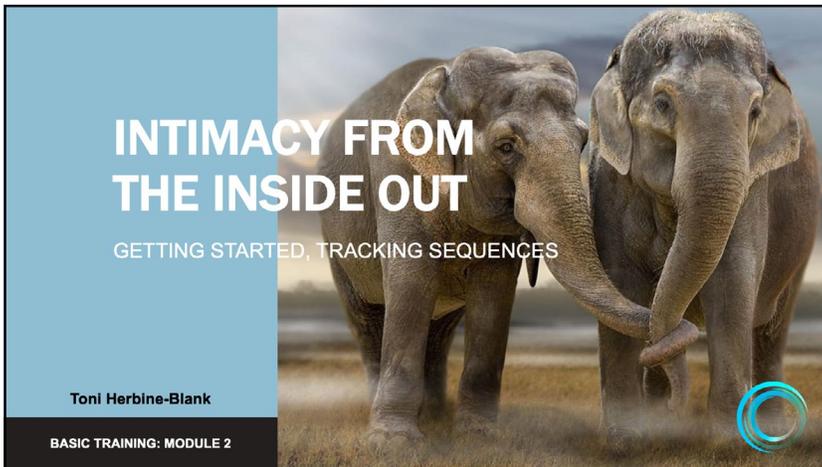
18



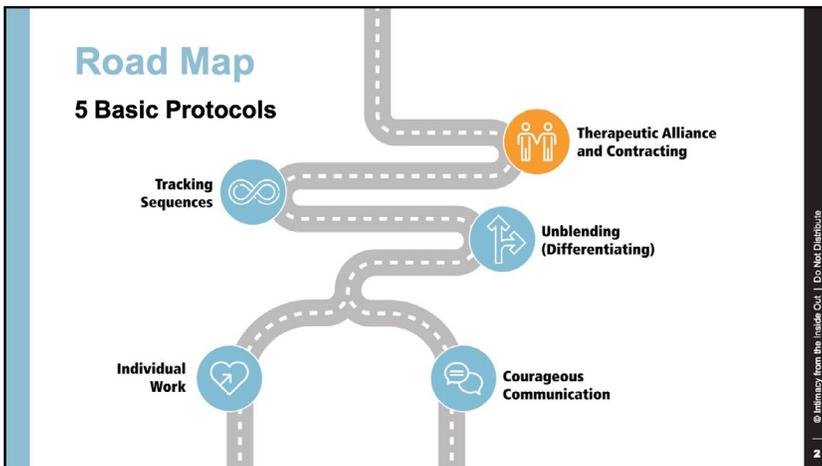
INTIMACY FROM THE INSIDE OUT  
BASIC TRAINING

# MODULE TWO

GETTING STARTED,  
TRACKING SEQUENCES



1



2



### Therapeutic Alliance

**What does this mean?**

- Self-Leadership
- Safe mirroring
- Honoring the people. Their struggle and their perspective.
- Listening and tracking carefully with a high level of attunement.

Module 2 | Getting Started, Tracking Sequences

3



## Getting Started

### Listen to their Parts

> Stories, needs, struggle etc.

> Past or present trauma?

> Legacy or cultural burdens from:

- their family of origin
- the community to which they belong
- racism
- the dominant culture

### Contract for outcome

> What outcome do you want?

### Invite questions and concerns

- > *What's it like to be starting therapy?*
- > *Do you have questions about how I work?*
- > *What's it like to be here with me?*
- > *What differences between us or between you might make therapy challenging?*

Module 2 | Getting Started, Tracking Sequences

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

4

## More questions

- *Is sexuality something you are interested in exploring in therapy?*
- *Is there a history of addiction? Chronic illness?*
- *Do you have specific questions for me about how I work?*
- *Have you been in therapy before?*
  - > *What worked?*
  - > *What didn't?*

Module 2 | Getting Started, Tracking Sequences

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

5



## What are the beliefs you hold about relationship based on:

> Culture

> Family values

> Legacy Burdens

> What is your style of communicating?

> What works well in your communication?

> What doesn't work well in your communication?

Module 2 | Getting Started, Tracking Sequences

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

6



- > **Contracts** are for **safety** but are also for the **work of therapy**
- > **Present the model by teaching or showing**
  - What is universal
  - Parts and Self
  - Why you love the model
  - What is possible for them based on your initial interview

Module 2 | Getting Started, Tracking Sequences

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

7

 **Tracking Sequences**

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

8

**Road Map**

5 Basic Protocols



Tracking Sequences

Individual Work

Courageous Communication

Unblending (Differentiating)

Therapeutic Alliance and Contracting

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

9



## Tracking Sequences: UNDERSTANDING PATTERNS

**Sequences are:**

- Predictable and repeating patterns of behavior between protective Parts.
- Protectors acting in response to the deeper feelings and needs of Exiles.
- Painful interactions that are maladaptive attempts at restoring connection.
  - > They keep people feeling hopeless and disconnected.

Module 2 | Getting Started, Tracking Sequences

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

10



## The Purpose of Tracking

- Bring awareness to the dance of protectors
- Name the repetitive cycle
- Offer a U-turn
- Begin a drop to vulnerability

Module 2 | Getting Started, Tracking Sequences

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

11



## The Process

**Reflect and name the cycle using parts language, if appropriate**

**Begin a U-turn**

- *What happens inside you?*
- *What happens in your body?*
- *What do you hear yourself saying to yourself?*
- *Are you aware of any emotions?*
- *What is your protector's first instinct? (even if you don't react this way)*

**What action do you take?**

- *What do you do or say in relationship to them?*

Module 2 | Getting Started, Tracking Sequences

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

12

∞

- Continue to work horizontally until you (and they) **recognize the cycle**
- Flesh out the **hopes and fears** of Protectors
- Name **Exiles**, if possible

Module 2 | Getting Started, Tracking Sequences

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

13

∞

## The Invitation

*What if when they did that you were able to **be more present with yourself** and have **more choice** in how to respond?*

*What if when they did or said that your **vulnerable or defensive feelings didn't flood** you?*

*What is the invitation you can **authentically** give to your clients?*

Module 2 | Getting Started, Tracking Sequences

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

14

∞

## Reminders

**Keep moving horizontally**

---

**Don't get hung up in content**

---

**Vulnerability drives protection**

---

**Are you feeling friendly toward their Protectors?**

---

Module 2 | Getting Started, Tracking Sequences

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

15



**16**



# Tracking Sequences Meditation

Use this with couples. Guided meditation followed by the work sheet. Have them share with each other, if appropriate.

1. Take a moment to consider someone who triggers a protective response in you. Bring that person to your mind's eye. What is that they say or do that you just have to react to?
2. As you watch them do or say the thing that triggers your Protectors notice the following about yourself:
  - > What happens inside you?
  - > What happens in your body?
  - > What do you hear yourself saying to yourself?
  - > Are you aware of any emotion(s)?
3. What do you do or say in relationship to that person? Can you recognize this as a Part?
4. What response do you get back?
5. How do you react to that?
6. Step back enough and allow yourself to see the reaction/counter reaction of your cycle.
7. Ask the person who triggers you to fade from your mind's eye and invite your Part(s) to turn toward you
8. Begin an inquiry with your Protector(s):
  - > Tell me about your job or role?
  - > What is your wish for me?
  - > How long have you had this job?
  - > What is your fear about not responding in this way?
  - > Whom do you protect?
9. If you are with an Exile, connect with it now and then set an intention to come back.
10. Go back to the Protector and validate the role it has played and make an invitation:

*What if there was something we could do so that when that person did whatever they do you could actually feel some space inside and had a choice in how you responded? Let me help you...*



# Who Am I in Conflict?

**1. As you watched the person do or say the thing that triggers your Protectors what did you notice about yourself:**

- > What happens inside you?
- > What happens in your body?
- > What do you hear yourself saying to yourself?
- > Are you aware of any emotion(s)?

**2. What do you do or say in relationship to that person?**

**3. What response do you get back?**

**4. How do you react to that?**

**5. What did you notice as you stepped back and allowed yourself to see the reaction/ counter reaction of your cycle?**

**6. What did you learn about your Protector?**

- > Job or role?
- > Wish for you?
- > How long has it had this job?
- > What is its fear about not responding in this way?
- > Who does it protect?

**7. How did your Protector respond to your invitation?**



# Simple Roadmap for Tracking

## FOR REFERENCE IN PRACTICE GROUPS

### THERAPIST REMINDERS:

- > Unblend as much as possible
- > Warmth for Protectors
- > Try to avoid getting hung up on content, stay with process

### 1. Reflect what you hear, name the sequence, introduce Parts language.

### 2. Slow down and help them begin a U-turn

When they say or do that:

- > What happens inside you?
- > What happens in your body?
- > What do you hear yourself saying to yourself?
- > Are you aware of any emotions?
- > What is the first instinct of your protector? (even if you don't act it out)

### 3. What action do you take?

- > What do you say or do in relationship to them?
- > Repeat back and forth until they begin to recognize the cycle.
- > Explore the hopes and fears of the Protectors.  
ie: "What are you afraid would happen if you stepped back?"
- > Name the Exile if possible

### 4. Extend an invitation:

*What if when they did that you were able to be more present with yourself  
and have more choice in how to respond?*

*What if when they did or said that your vulnerable or defensive feelings didn't flood you?*

*What is the invitation you can authentically give to your clients?*



# Expanded Roadmap for Tracking

## UNDERSTANDING THE CYCLE OF CONFLICT

### **SUPPORT EACH INDIVIDUAL TO BEGIN A U-TURN.**

- Slow them down so they can begin to unblend from Protectors
- Help surface the dance of the Protectors

#### **When they raise their voice:**

- > What happens inside you?
- > Do you notice any sensation?
- > What do you hear yourself saying to yourself? About you, your partner, your relationship?
- > Are you aware of any emotions?
- > What is your protector's first instinct? Even if you don't react this way, what is your first impulse?



### **SURFACE THE ACTIONS OF THE PROTECTORS:**

- >> And with all that going on inside, what do you do or say to your partner? (I yell back)
- >> To the partner – Are you familiar with that part that yells back? Ask that person the questions above (and when they yell back, what happens inside you? Etc.)
- >> Repeat back and forth (what happens inside and what do you say or do?) until the cycle begins to reveal itself and you can name it.



### **EXPLORE THE ROLES OF THE PROTECTORS – THEIR HOPES, FEARS, AND VULNERABILITY THEY DEFEND:**

- >> When that part begins to retreat, what is its hope? What is it concerned would happen to you if you stayed present with your partner? If appropriate and possible, pursue "And then..." until the exile's belief is revealed (I would feel unlovable).
- >> Remember that the tracking of the sequences helps us know what the conflict is *really* about. It's not the remote control, it's a belief that each partner carries about themselves.



# Expanded Roadmap for Tracking CONT

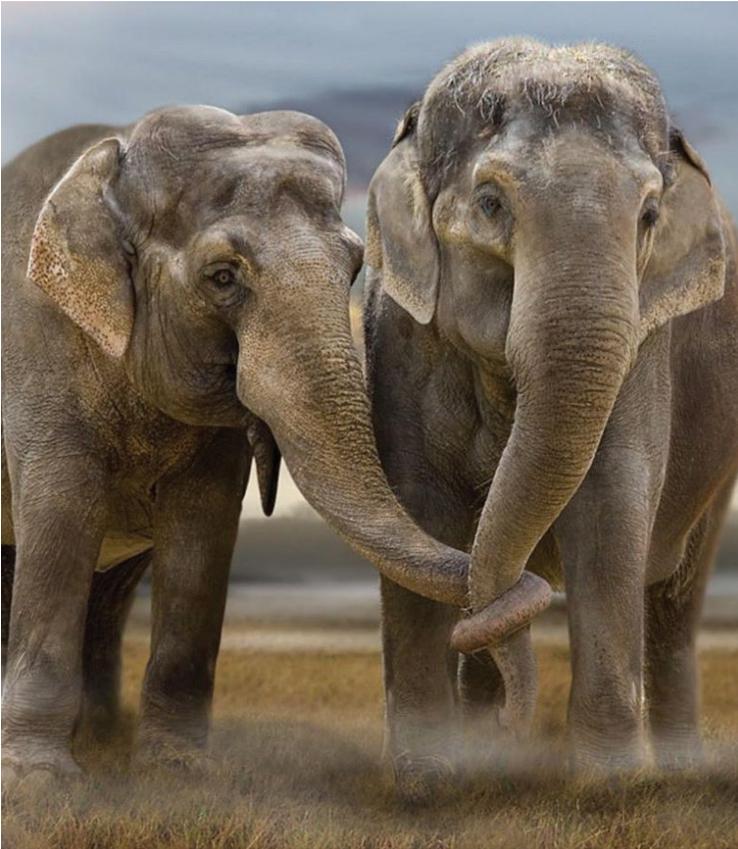
## UNDERSTANDING THE CYCLE OF CONFLICT



### EXTEND THE INVITATION TO EACH:

>> What would it be like for each of you if there was something we could do here together so that...

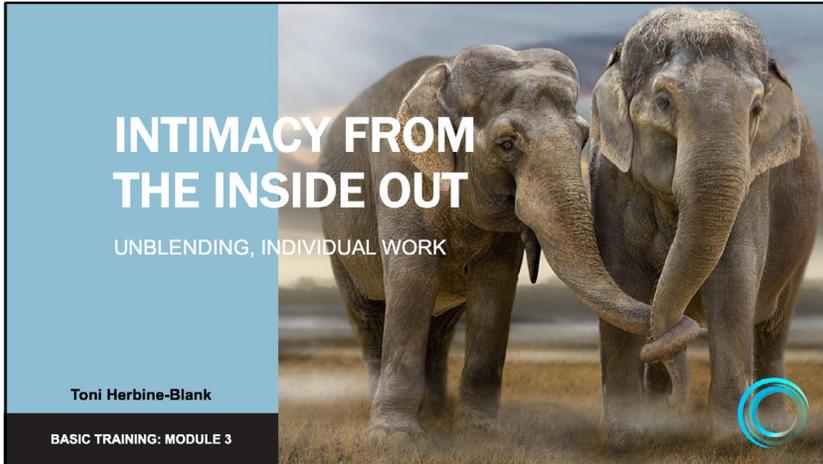
- > You had more choices in responding to each other?
- > When they did that, you felt less reactive and uncomfortable inside?
- > I could help you change how you are having this conversation?
- > You were able to pause before responding?



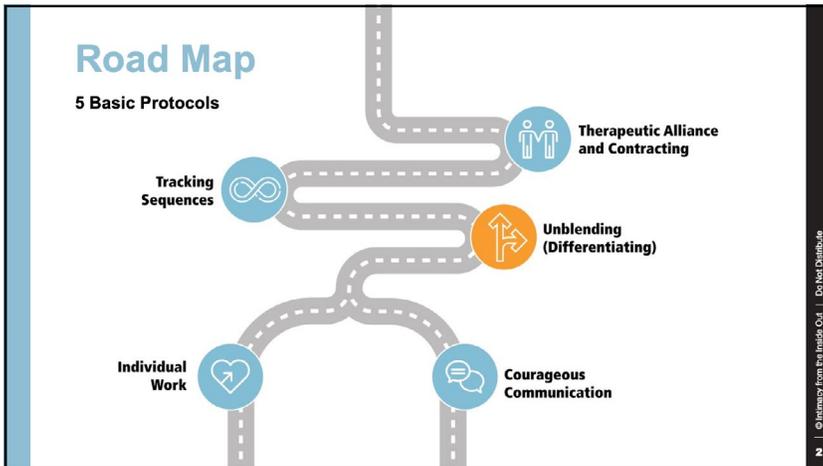
INTIMACY FROM THE INSIDE OUT  
BASIC TRAINING

# MODULE THREE

UNBLENDING,  
INDIVIDUAL WORK



1



2

3

 **What it is NOT:**

 **Shutting down or numbing**

 **An absence of affect**

 **Re-exiling reactive Protectors or overwhelmed Exiles (Shaming)**

Module 3 | Unblending, Individual Work

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

4

 **The Importance of Unblending:**

**AFFECT REGULATION**

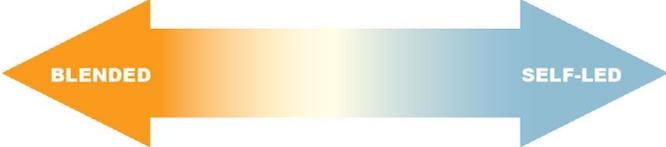
- Self to Part connection
- Calm not numb
- More available to work
- Able to self-soothe if distressed

Module 3 | Unblending, Individual Work

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

5

**Unblending Continuum**



Adapted from: Sykes, C. (2017) IFS Lens in Addiction: Compassion for Extreme Parts in "Innovations and Elaborations in Internal Family Systems Therapy". Sweezy & Ziskind, Eds., London, Routledge Publishing.

Module 3 | Unblending, Individual Work

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

6

Being unblended adds a resource to challenging situations.



Module 3 | Unblending, Individual Work

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

7



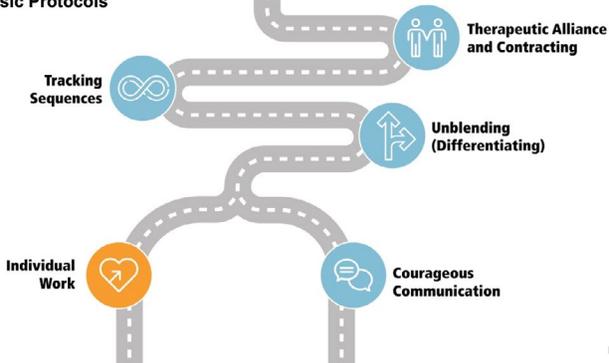
Individual Work

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

8

### Road Map

5 Basic Protocols



Individual Work

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

9



**Internal Attachment**  
*Love and attunement is what it's all about.*  
— ALLAN SCHORE

Module 3 | Unblending, Individual Work

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

10

**Attachment and the Autonomic Nervous System (ANS)**

Caregivers help infants and toddlers develop emotional regulation through behaviors such as safe touch, eye contact, and staying regulated themselves.



© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

11



Negative states such as fear, anger, depression can be soothed and ...

Positive states such as happiness and joy can be mirrored and encouraged.

Module 3 | Unblending, Individual Work

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

12

Intuitive attunement to an infant helps a child learn to attune to and soothe themselves.



13 | © Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

13



## Safe interactions in childhood may affect:

- > How able we are to depend on others later in life
- > Our ability to self-regulate and attune to our partners.
- > Our ability to be vulnerable with ourselves and partners.
- > Our ability to accept our imperfect partners.

Module 3 | Unblending, Individual Work

14 | © Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

14



## Parts Perspective

- > Exiles carry burdens from repeated misattuned interactions with caregivers
- > Protectors develop relational strategies in an attempt to get exiles' needs met and to prevent painful exile energy from emerging
- > These protector relational strategies are carried forward and activated in adult primary relationships

Module 3 | Unblending, Individual Work

15 | © Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

15

## The Protective System

Operates under (what it believes) are  
life or death circumstances

Expression of vulnerable feelings becomes more difficult  
when Protectors lead in relationship

Module 3 | Unblending, Individual Work

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

16



## Self-Energy

Healing exiles leads  
to a systemic  
increase in  
Self-energy in the  
internal system of  
each person

Self-leadership is a key  
to successful adult  
relational functioning

Module 3 | Unblending, Individual Work

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

17



## Witnessing Exiles is an Example of Inner Attachment Work

Mirroring

Attention to Needs

Emotional Communication

Emotional Connection

Presence

Empathy and Compassion

Resonance

Module 3 | Unblending, Individual Work

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

18

## Why We Go Inside with Each Partner

<p><b>BENEFITS FOR THE PARTNER GOING INSIDE:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foster internal attachment through Self to Part bonding</li> <li>Heal childhood wounding that is impacting adult relational functioning</li> </ul>	<p><b>BENEFITS FOR THE WITNESSING PARTNER:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feels empathy, compassion, and support for their partner's dilemmas</li> <li>Takes an active role in partner's healing</li> </ul>	<p><b>BENEFITS FOR THE RELATIONSHIP:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partners become aware of how childhood experiences play a critical role in adult relationships</li> <li>Strengthens potential for co-regulation to occur based on the open heart and availability of individuals</li> </ul>
--	---	---

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

Module 3 | Unblending, Individual Work



## When We Go Inside with One Partner

<p>One partner is flooded and needs help</p> <p>Both triggered, take turns unblending, speaking for protectors and naming the exiles</p>	<p>Protector's relational schemas learned in childhood are present in the relationship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Family-of-origin issues</li> <li>&gt; Shame and shame protectors</li> </ul> <p>Uncovering assigned meaning to partner's troubling behavior—Why does that bother you in that way?</p>
--	---

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

Module 3 | Unblending, Individual Work



## How We Go Inside with One Partner

- ① Contract with the clients
- ② Support Witnessing Partner
  - > Witnessing is an active process
- ③ Begin Intrapyschic Work
  - > Standard IFS protocol
  - > Maintain safe triangle
  - > Pause if witnessing partner(s) are unable to stay with process
- ④ Foster and support interpersonal connection, co-regulation, and relational healing

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

Module 3 | Unblending, Individual Work

**Notice:**

- > Your own body and body language. Are you unblended?
- > Have you dropped the listener(s) from your awareness and lost attunement?
- > Are the witnessing partner(s) connected with both you and their partner(s)?



© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

22



**Considerations:**

How deep do you go with the individual work?

- > *Incremental changes vs. unburdening process*

When do you separate partners to do the individual work?

Exiles and their protectors tend to be youngsters. They aren't equipped to manage adult relationships. Help Self be responsible for the relationship with the partner(s).

- > *Primary vs. secondary caregivers for exiles*

Module 3 | Unblending, Individual Work

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

23



ToniHerbineBlank.com



24



# UNBLENDING PARTS in Couples Therapy

**PURPOSE:** Support couples in learning to unblend parts by externalizing them.

**SUPPLIES:** Individual sheets of paper, markers.

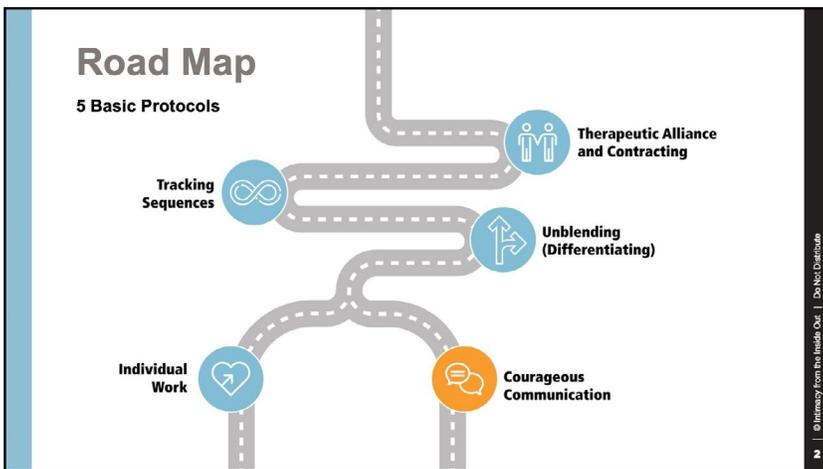
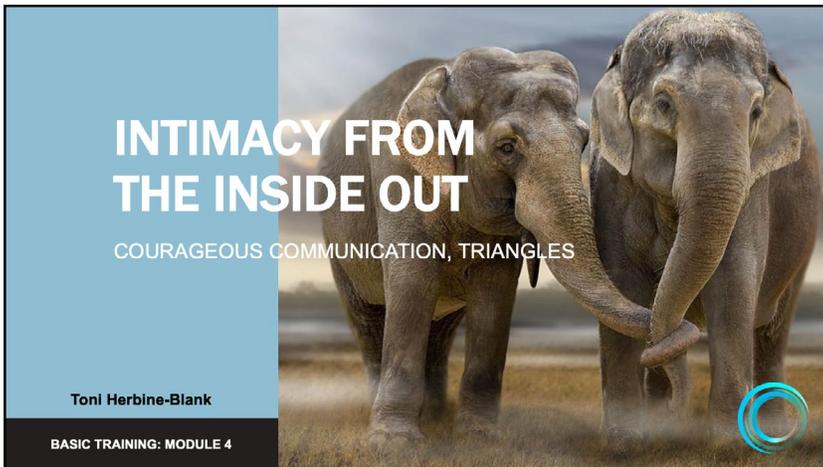
1. Contract with couple. Let them know you will be listening for “feelings,” “thoughts,” and “experiences” which may represent different **Parts** of them. You will be writing them down as you notice them.
2. Begin by asking each partner to speak to the issue they have identified.
3. You, the therapist, listens and writes on individual pieces of paper, each feeling or **Part** you might hear.
4. Beginning with one partner, let them see the **Parts** you think you have identified. Carefully check your assumption and begin laying out the pieces of paper on the floor near the person.
5. As it feels right, facilitate as you would in any IFS session to help client notice where in the body the **Parts** are, what they are saying, how the client feels toward them etc.
6. Repeat steps 4 and 5 with the other partner.
7. Once step 6 is complete, with you, have them look at their own **Parts** and the other’s, noticing the polarities within themselves and with each other.
8. Normalize the struggle, invite curiosity.
9. Share an invitation for the couple to begin learning to speak for these **Parts**.  
“Is there a **Part** here you would be willing to introduce to your partner?”
10. Contract with other partner to listen from Self and contain reactions. If at any time, **Parts** cannot relax, remind them you, the therapist, are there to help.
11. Move to **SPEAKING FOR PARTS**, if regulated.



INTIMACY FROM THE INSIDE OUT  
BASIC TRAINING

# MODULE FOUR

COURAGEOUS COMMUNICATION,  
TRIANGLES



**How** do you communicate?  
What works and what does not?  
**Not all** relationships struggle with communication.  
It is important to **ask**, not **tell** the clients.  
What areas of communication do the clients need help with?

Module 4 | Courageous Communication, Triangles

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

3



## Courageous Communication

Unblending and speaking on behalf of parts from Self

Responsible, non-harmful self-disclosure

Allowing impact. Growing empathy.

Module 4 | Courageous Communication, Triangles

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

4

### Help couples learn to do what is difficult

- >> Unblend to affect regulation
- >> Hold on to reactive parts that want to attack or withdraw
- >> Learn to build empathy which in turn leads to:
  - Rewiring the brain
  - Breaking patterns of reactivity
  - Ability to share vulnerably



Module 4 | Courageous Communication, Triangles

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

5



## The Effect



- A less shaming way to support individuals to take responsibility for feelings and actions
- Helps people safely move from protection to vulnerability
- Takes the onus of wounding or healing off the partner(s)
- Learn effective ways to get needs met

Module 4 | Courageous Communication, Triangles

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

6



## The Dilemma

Our Parts **desperately want to be heard and understood** but believe the only way to get needs met is to **bully, manipulate, demand or threaten.**

Module 4 | Courageous Communication, Triangles

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

7



## Our Goal



**Self-regulation**  
(Self to Part)



**Co-regulation**  
(Self to Part, Self to Self)

*"You are not a threat to my survival.  
It takes time to learn, it's not automatic."*

Module 4 | Courageous Communication, Triangles

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

8



## In the Beginning We Don't Dialogue

We help partners learn a new skill:

- > Speaking and listening consciously and courageously by unblending

Module 4 | Courageous Communication, Triangles

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

9

 **Facilitating the Process**

**1**

- Describe the process
- Contract to be a Parts detector
- Determine who will speak and who will listen

Module 4 | Courageous Communication, Triangles

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

10

 **Work With the Listener**

**2**

**UNBLENDING IS CRUCIAL**

- Validate: *listening can be challenging*
- Body scan: check for Parts that might struggle
- Address fears

**REMINDERS**

- *You're listening to your partner's experience—not the truth about you.*
- *I'm here to help you*

Module 4 | Courageous Communication, Triangles

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

11

 **Support the Speaker**

**3**

- Unblend (affect regulation)
- Attention to intention
- Speak on behalf of Parts

Module 4 | Courageous Communication, Triangles

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

12

## Shame and the Importance of Responding

- > When someone self-discloses and is not met with kindness, attunement or understanding, it will likely evoke shame and then a protective response.
- > The therapist must supply that if the partner(s) do not.



13 13



## Triangles

14 14



## Triangles: Staying in Self in Three



Module 4 | Courageous Communication, Triangles

15 15



**Dyads Are Unstable**

Couples struggle with **closeness and distance**

It can be a challenge to balance needs for **togetherness** and **autonomy**

Module 4 | Courageous Communication, Triangles

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

16



Psychiatrist Murray Bowen had a theory that may not apply to everyone. The next slides talk about his theory.

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

17



Bowen taught that the triangle is a basic **building block** in any **emotional system**

This third person relieves **anxiety and tension** in the dyad

This results in **two insiders** and **one outsider**

Module 4 | Courageous Communication, Triangles

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

18

↑

## Dys-Regulated Dyad



© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

19

↑



A triangulated third will (temporarily) ease the tension in the dyad

Module 4 | Courageous Communication, Triangles

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

20

↑

## The Therapeutic Task: Self-leadership

The more **differentiated** (Self-led) each individual is, the less likely they will need to triangulate

The more **emotionally reactive** (responding from Parts) the more likely to triangulate

Your couple may try to **induct you** into a triangle to take sides

Module 4 | Courageous Communication, Triangles

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

21



IFIO goes beyond stabilization to lasting connection through the U-turn

Internal differentiation facilitates the Re-turn leading to safety and authenticity

Module 4 | Courageous Communication, Triangles

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

22



As a therapist, who are You in a Triangle?

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

23



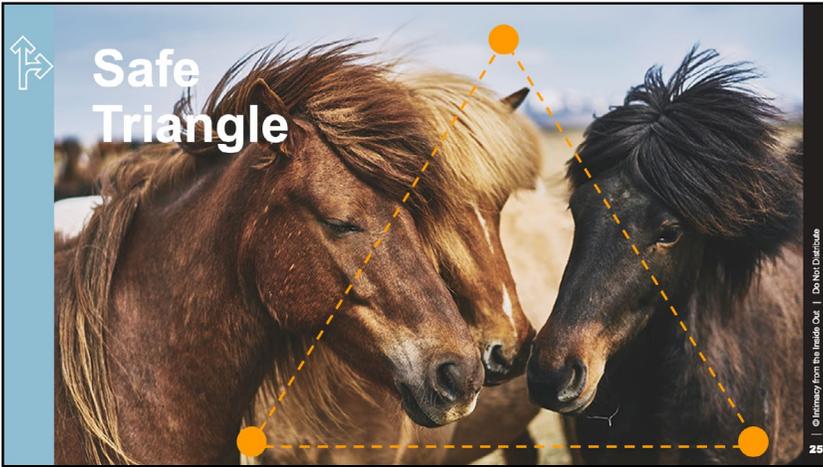
If you are not aware of your role(s) in your family of origin, your parts may adopt those roles with a couple in treatment.

As you bring awareness to these Parts, you will more easily manifest Self-energy in the therapeutic triangle.

Module 4 | Courageous Communication, Triangles

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

24



25



26



# Road Map for Introducing Courageous Communication

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of Courageous Communication is to:

- > Help couples move from content to process
- > Relax Managers and Firefighters
- > Speak for vulnerable Parts

1. Listen, track sequences, make an invitation to help them talk about difficult issues in a different way.
2. Contract to be a Parts detector
3. Determine listener and speaker
4. Coach listener to UNBLEND
  - > Soften Protectors
  - > Track
5. Coach speaker to UNBLEND and speak for Parts

**HINTS:**

- > Encourage each person to stay in relationship with their own Parts.
- > Do not get caught in content or helping them find solutions.
- > You may need to gently ask the listener to wait while you help the speaker unblend and speak for Parts.
- > Validate feelings of both.

6. Help speaker move to vulnerable feelings.
7. Help listener to understand, unblend and speak for Parts or from Self.



# Courageous Communication

## THE ART OF MINDFUL SPEAKING AND LISTENING

### FACILITATING THE PROCESS

#### 1. The therapist, as much as possible, will:

- a. Contract to be their Parts detector
- b. Hold Self-leadership
- c. Attune to both parties and the energy between them.
- d. Maintain the goal of helping them access Self-energy which facilitates empathy, connection and clarity. This will likely prevent attachment re-wounding and facilitate a sense of well-being.
- e. Model Self-led communication: authenticity

#### 2. Listening from Self

- a. Check for Protectors, especially around the heart.
- b. Validate the difficulty some of us have in listening.
- c. Remind the listener they are listening to the experience of the other person and not the truth about themselves. Can they be curious?
- d. Remind the client that you, the therapist, are there to help, and will interrupt if necessary. Encourage the listener to let you know if they are having trouble staying present.

#### 3. Speaking for Parts:

- a. Encourage the speaker to take a minute to go inside and clarify the intention. *"What outcome do you want?"*
- b. Ask them to bring attention to what feelings or Parts are most present.
- c. Begin with awareness and unblending: What needs to happen inside to be able to speak for Parts instead of from them?
- d. Remind the client that you, the therapist, are there to help, support and guide. Clarify contract to interrupt them if necessary.



## Courageous Communication (contd)

### THE ART OF MINDFUL SPEAKING AND LISTENING

WHEN SOMEONE SELF DISCLOSES, AND IS NOT MET WITH UNDERSTANDING, MIRRORING OR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT, IT OFTEN EVOKES A RESPONSE OF DEEP SHAME PERHAPS FOLLOWED BY A PROTECTIVE ADAPTIVE REACTION.

(SEIGEL 2003)

#### 4. Responding:

Ask listener to reflect the essence of what they are hearing. (CARL ROGERS)

**OR**

"Does any of this information make sense?" "If so, what?"

**OR**

"Can you respond from your heart?"

If the partner is unavailable, therapist takes this step.

*For example:*

*"The essence of what I'm hearing is..."*

*"What makes perfect sense to me is..."*

#### 5. Switch and repeat with partner, if there is time.

- a. Ask partner to notice what is coming up inside them.
- b. Help them respond by speaking for their Parts.



# Triangles and Parts of the IFIO Couples Therapist

*Developed by Michele Bograd, Ph.D. | mbogradphd@gmail.com*

**1. Remember a triangle you were involved in as a child with two other members of your family.**

- a. Who was involved in that triangle?
- b. How old were you?
- c. What was your role in that triangle?  
(examples: peacemaker, Protector, defender, interpreter, bridge, distractor, troublemaker, clown?)

**2. Think of your role as a Part.**

- a. How did the Part act in that role?
- b. What are its primary feelings and beliefs?
- c. What was its goal or intention?
- d. What rested on your Part's success in its "job" in that triangle?
- e. What did that part fear would happen to you or to your family if it didn't fulfill its role?
- f. What were the costs to you of your Part's commitment to its role?
- g. What were the benefits?

**3. How does that familiar role in a triangle come in to play for you as an IFIO couples therapist?**

- a. When that Part from your family-of-origin appears in a couples meeting, what might be its weaknesses or blind spots?
- b. What skills or wisdom does that part bring you as an IFIO couples therapist?



## Talking About Hard Things

When there is fear and trepidation about having a particular conversation it can be helpful to begin by having a conversation ABOUT the conversation.



### **FIRST INTERNAL INQUIRY:**

When you think about having this hard conversation what comes up inside?

- > What do you notice happens in your body?
- > Who are the Parts?
- > What are their concerns?

Speak FOR what you notice. (For Parts)



### **SECOND INTERNAL INQUIRY:**

What has been the cost of NOT being able to speak or having this conversation successfully?

Speak FOR what you heard inside. (For Parts)



### **THIRD INTERNAL INQUIRY:**

How have your Parts impacted your partner?

Speak for your awareness from Self.



### **FOURTH INTERNAL INQUIRY:**

Your intention in having this conversation; for yourself, the other, your relationship?

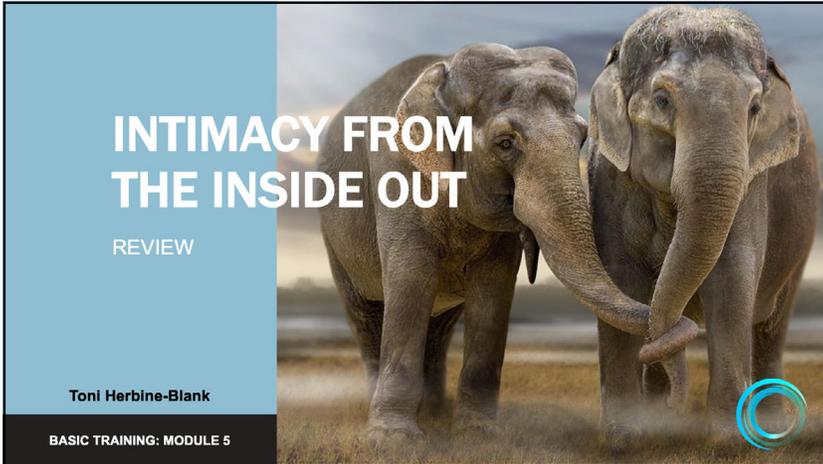
Speak to these.



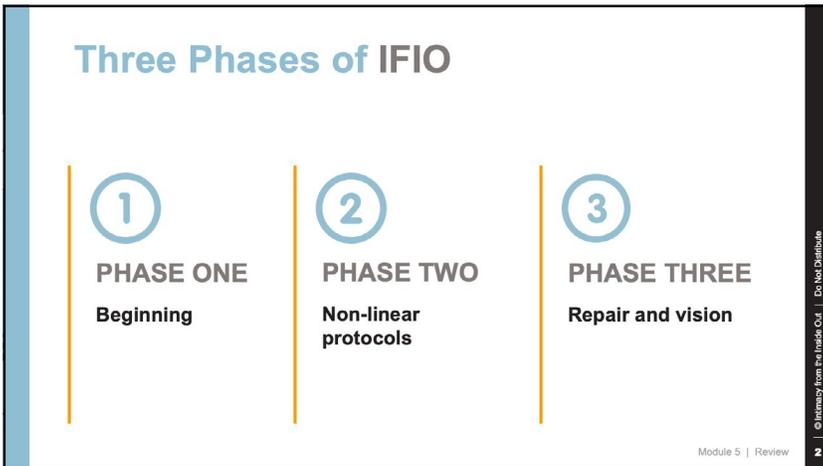
INTIMACY FROM THE INSIDE OUT  
BASIC TRAINING

# MODULE FIVE

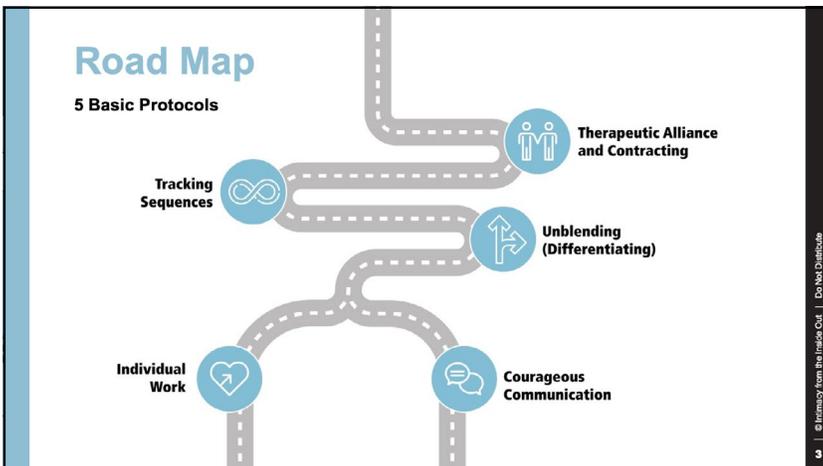
REVIEW



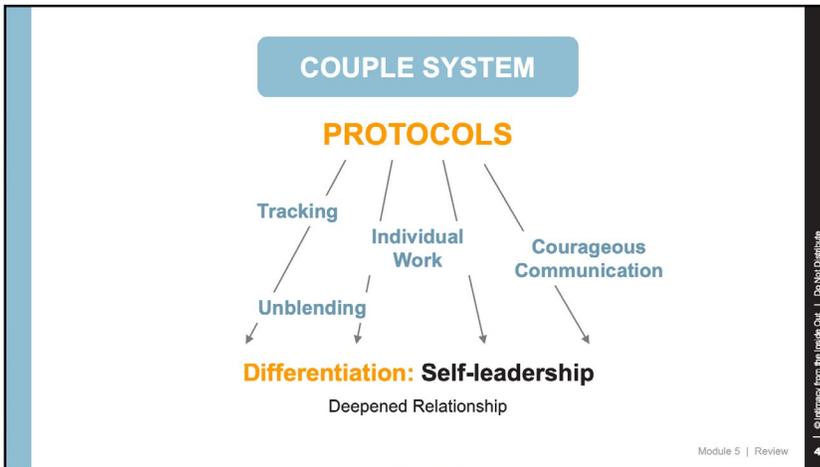
1



2



3



4



5



# Reminders for Working with Couples: INTIMACY FROM THE INSIDE OUT<sup>®</sup>

## 1. PARTS LANGUAGE

As often as possible use Parts language. [example: "There's a Part of you that the feels angry" ...]

## 2. PROTECTORS

When working with Protectors use the phrase: "And then what" until the person begins to follow their own trailhead and you begin to sense or hear about vulnerability.

## 3. PART TO SELF

Try not to describe the Part in detail, but focus on clients Self to Part relationship. Talk with the Part, not about the Part.

## 4. PURPOSE OF TRACKING

Tracking sequences is about naming Parts and helping them unblend.

## 5. CONTRACT

Be specific about the contract and the agreement for work.

## 6. BE COURAGEOUS.

## 7. REGULATION

Slow them down. (And your system, too.)

## 8. WHY AM I NOT TALKING?

## 9. INTERPRETATION

Watch YOUR Parts that tend toward interpretive language. This is very difficult as you make a paradigm shift.

## 10. COUNTER TRANSFERENCE

Always and forever, pay attention to your Parts and counter transference reactions.

## 11. INVITE EXPLORATION

Experiment with inviting people to explore how they feel instead of telling them how they must feel given the circumstances.

## 12. PRESENT MOMENT

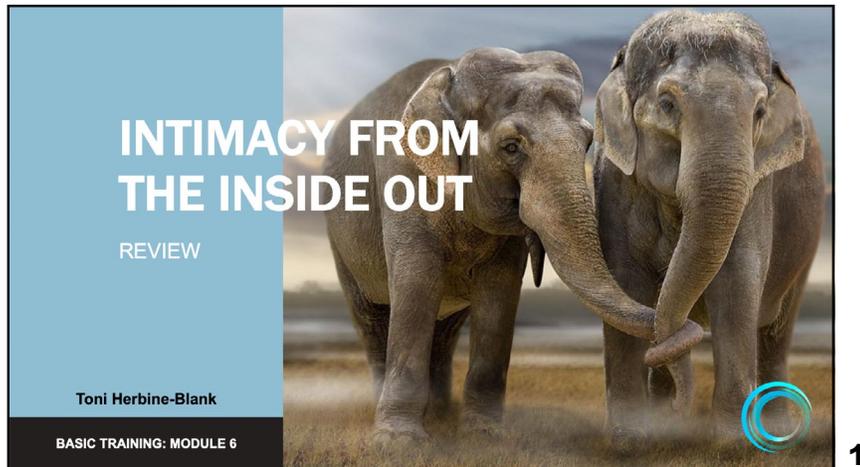
Work in the present moment when the opportunity presents itself. The cycle will inevitably show up in your office. Grab it and run...



INTIMACY FROM THE INSIDE OUT  
BASIC TRAINING

# MODULE SIX

REVIEW



# INTIMACY FROM THE INSIDE OUT

REVIEW

Toni Herbine-Blank

BASIC TRAINING: MODULE 6

1

## IFIO is a Model of Differentiation



- > Attached and individuated, inside and out
- > Can I be myself and be loved by you?
- > Separate and connected
- > A dance of parts and self in relationship, inside and out

Module 6 | IFIO Basic Review

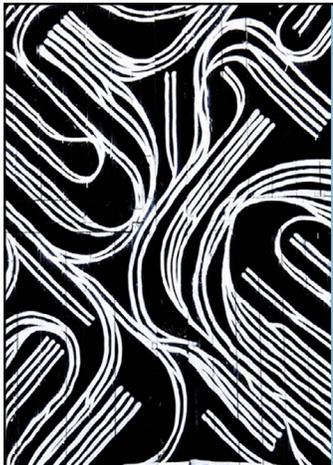
2

## Goals of IFIO

<b>Decrease reactivity and increase self-empowerment, choice, open-hearted connection</b>	<b>A change in conversation will change a relationship</b>
<b>Create a vision for a new way of relating</b>	<b>Develop a deepened relationship</b>

Module 6 | IFIO Basic Review

3



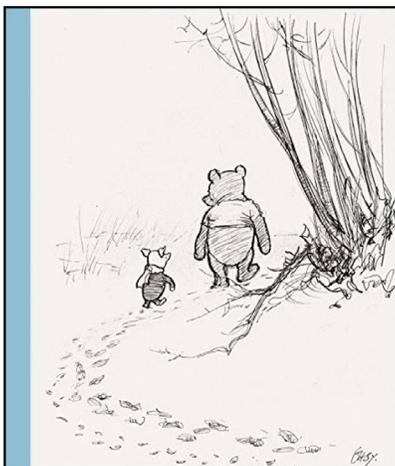
### Basic Non-Linear Protocols

- > Safety and trust
- > Tracking cycles of conflict
- > Unblending
- > Intra-psychic work in the presence of the other(s)
- > Courageous Communication
  - We promote safe, conscious conversations
  - Speaking and listening well, responding with empathy and understanding

Module 6 | IFIO Basic Review

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

4



Piglet sidled up to Pooh from behind.

“Pooh” he whispered.

“Yes, Piglet?”

“Nothing” said Piglet taking Pooh’s paw.

“I just wanted to be sure of you.”

Module 6 | IFIO Basic Review

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

5



### Techniques for un-blending

- > Skillful negotiation with the protective system
  - The paradox: inner separation equals more connectedness
- > Validate protectors without condoning behavior
- > Promote internal differentiation by externalizing parts
- > Breath and focus on the body can be a resource for un-blending
- > Direct access

Module 6 | IFIO Basic Review

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

6



### In the beginning:

Regardless of who we are working with we hold some universals:

- > People have differences, seen and unseen
- > Everyone has a self and everyone is multiplied naturally

How we communicate this may differ based on gender, religious beliefs, sexuality, political beliefs, disabilities, culture and legacy burdens

Module 6 | IFIO Basic Review

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

7

### Despite differences we convey these messages to everyone:

- We are not afraid of your parts.
- We will not prioritize the safety of one person to the detriment of another.
- We are therapists not judges. We will not take sides.  
We may give opinions and recommendations depending on circumstances.
- We will be open and curious about each person's perspective.
- We will hold each person with respect and curiosity, recognizing the validity of their experiences and the vulnerability that drives protectors to extremes.

Module 6 | IFIO Basic Review

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

8

### IFIO can be introduced

**Experientially**



**Or by teaching the model**



Module 6 | IFIO Basic Review

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

9

## Regardless of how we introduce the model, we want to convey the following to our clients:

No single feeling or experience represents all of any one person.

Parts are aspects of a larger whole.

Self is a powerful inner resource.

Some parts take on protective roles to ward off vulnerability, others are vulnerable and burdened, and still others have not been affected by wounding.

IFIO is collaborative. Our contract depends on your wishes and desires, which may change during the course of treatment.

You are free to challenge us, and express yourselves continually. Your parts may need time to trust this invitation.

We start where you are, often by understanding the parts who get caught in relational tangles.

Module 6 | IFIO Basic Review

10

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute



## Courageous Communication re-visited

### Responsible self-disclosure

- Start with a U-turn
- Experiment with speaking for your own experience

### Attuned listening

- We begin in the body
- Address protector fears
- Learn, over time, to listen from the heart
- Learn to witness and summarize the other's experience
- Tune in and extend empathy or compassion

Module 6 | IFIO Basic Review

11

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute



## In the Beginning We Don't Dialogue

WE EXPERIMENT WITH:

- > UNBLENDING AND SPEAKING FOR PARTS
- > LISTENING FROM SELF

Module 6 | IFIO Basic Review

12

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

**It can be hard in the beginning because:**

- Protectors stick with their stories of right and wrong
- Blaming is temporarily more comfortable than doing a u-turn
- Old patterns are hardwired
- Protecting against current wounding overrides expressing vulnerability



Module 6 | IFIO Basic Review

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

13

**NOW**

**BEFORE**

bone bruises

**CHILDHOOD WOUNDS:**  
trauma  
neglect  
mis-attunement

**We want to help people in intimate relationships move from blaming each other to speaking and listening to...**

↓

What is underneath the surface?

What hurts?

What are the fears?

What are the emotional needs?

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

14



**Intimacy from the Inside Out®**

ToniHerbineBlank.com

15



INTIMACY FROM THE INSIDE OUT  
BASIC TRAINING

# MODULE SEVEN

ANGER AND NEEDS,  
TRANSITIONS FROM ONE  
PROTOCOL TO ANOTHER



**INTIMACY FROM THE INSIDE OUT**

ANGER AND NEEDS,  
TRANSITIONS FROM ONE  
PROTOCOL TO ANOTHER

Toni Herbine-Blank

BASIC TRAINING: MODULE 7

1



**Anger and Needs**

Module 7 | Anger and Needs, Transitions from One Protocol to Another

2

**When Angry or Frustrated we Respond from:**

**EXILES** who wish things were different  
(the primary need for love and connection)

OR

**PROTECTORS** who are trying in vain to get those needs met by  
demanding, bullying, manipulating, etc. (secondary emotion, anger)

Module 7 | Anger and Needs, Transitions from One Protocol to Another

3

Is anyone listening?



Module 7 | Anger and Needs, Transitions from One Protocol to Another

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

4

## A Choice in Every Moment

- Access the angry or frustrated Part(s)
- Listen to the dilemma
- Find out the childhood history
- Understand the need of the vulnerable Exile, provide an attuned inner experience
- Practice courageously speaking for the exile
- Learn to ask to have a need met from self

Module 7 | Anger and Needs, Transitions from One Protocol to Another

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

5

## Listen for the Core Need

- Love
- Connection
- To be seen and known
- Empathy or compassion
- Attunement
- To know I'm not alone



Module 7 | Anger and Needs, Transitions from One Protocol to Another

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

6



## No One Person Can Meet All Your Needs

How in the World Shall I Ever SURVIVE?

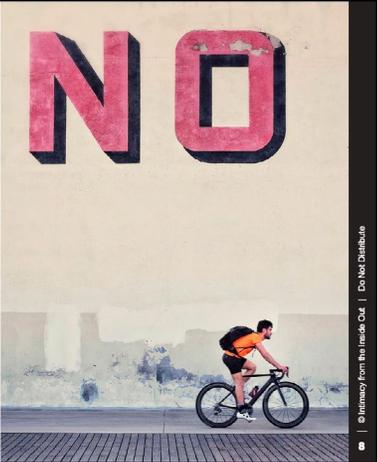
Module 7 | Anger and Needs, Transitions from One Protocol to Another

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

7

## How do we Help a Couple be with “No”?

- 1 Unblend
- 2 Explore trailheads
- 3 Learn about gentle, malleable boundaries



© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

8



## Transitions

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

9



## Transitions

The IFIO therapist must cultivate the ability to be flexible enough to move easily between non-linear protocols

Module 7 | Anger and Needs, Transitions from One Protocol to Another

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

10



## Sometimes it's as simple as asking:

- > We offer alternatives
- > “We could do this, or that? Or how about this?”
- > “I have a suggestion...”

Module 7 | Anger and Needs, Transitions from One Protocol to Another

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

11



## When moving from tracking to courageous communication we pay attention to the following signals:

- > How un-blended are protectors?
- > Is there willingness for individuals to listen?
- > Can you sense warmth and good will?
- > Is genuine curiosity between people evident?
- > Is there less impulse to blame and shame within the system?

Module 7 | Anger and Needs, Transitions from One Protocol to Another

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

12



**When moving from tracking to individual work we look for the following:**

- > All parties recognize that there is enough safety in the system for one person to work vertically
- > The therapist is able to maintain safety
  - Safe triangle (if working with a dyad)
  - The therapist is able to stay connected to both people while one person does exile work (when working with a couple)
  - Protectors are unblended
  - The witnessing person(s) are available and able to remain present

Module 7 | Anger and Needs, Transitions from One Protocol to Another

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

13



**If things go askew...**

- > Change directions. Sometimes we do this many times in any one session
- > Do not become attached to your brilliant ideas
- > If you are stuck, ask your client(s) what they think, feel, sense, want
- > Trust the process, circle back to the beginning

Module 7 | Anger and Needs, Transitions from One Protocol to Another

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

14



**Intimacy from the Inside Out®**

ToniHerbineBlank.com

15



# A Choice in Every Moment<sup>©</sup> Meditation

- > Close your eyes, take a few deep breaths, and turn your focus inward.
- > Bring to mind a person in your life with whom you have an intimate connection and with whom you can feel triggered to anger or frustration.
- > Bring that person into your mind's eye and invite them to do or say the thing they do or say that triggers your parts
- > As you observe yourself notice:
  - > What happens inside
  - > What happens in your body
  - > What do you hear yourself saying to yourself?
  - > What feelings are you aware of?
- > How do you normally react when angry and frustrated?
- > Can you recognize this as a "Part" of yourself?
- > Let the image of your partner float away and invite your reactive Part to turn toward you
- > Begin a gentle inquiry:
  - > What is your role?
  - > What are you concerned would happen if you didn't react in this way?
  - > Who inside are you protecting? Is there vulnerability?
- > What was or were the childhood incident(s) that began this pattern? Relax and listen. No pushing or rushing for an answer. Allow the information to come from these Parts.
- > What did the young you need at that time from an adult that they didn't get? Listen for core needs....
- > Are you available to meet a need internally right now? Can you be available and be present to that child in the here and now?



**TO THE FACILITATOR:**  
ALLOW SOME SPACE FOR STUDENTS TO BE PRESENT INTERNALLY

- > Thank YOUR parts for any and all information. No matter how much or how little, check in with the reactive Part.
- > Inquiry: What would it be like if you could speak for your needs, instead of from the reactive place to your partner or to people close to you? Ponder this for a moment...



# **A Choice in Every Moment<sup>©</sup>**

## **ANGER AND NEEDS**

Focusing my attention on the frustration, what do I notice about it? What words do I hear?

What is my normal or knee-jerk response when I am frustrated?

**What Parts of me react?**

e.g. controlling, angry, impatient, manipulative, submissive, analyzing, etc.

What response does my reaction elicit in my partner?



## **A Choice in Every Moment<sup>®</sup> (CONTD)**

### **ANGER AND NEEDS**

**What happens INSIDE ME when I get this response from my partner's Parts?**  
e.g. angry, sad, happy, excited, anxious

**What did I notice about the cycle of reacting and counter-reacting protective Parts between my partner and me?**

**If I listen closely to my frustrated Protector, is there a vulnerable Part underneath?**  
**What do I see, feel, or sense about this Part?**

**What is the childhood incident/pattern that caused the original wounding?**

**What did that young Part of me need that it didn't get?**  
Examples of core needs are: To be heard, noticed, loved. To be witnessed, held, understood. To know I am not alone.



INTIMACY FROM THE INSIDE OUT  
BASIC TRAINING

# MODULE EIGHT

AUTONOMIC NERVOUS SYSTEM  
+ CO-REGULATION



**INTIMACY FROM THE INSIDE OUT**

AUTONOMIC NERVOUS SYSTEM AND CO-REGULATION

Toni Herbine-Blank

BASIC TRAINING: MODULE 8

1



### Why the autonomic nervous system (ANS) in couple therapy?

- The ANS signals "first responding" Protectors
- Emotion is contagious as is the activation of the ANS. This is relevant to the therapeutic relationship as well as a couple's level of activation
- When we have a greater understanding of the ANS we can intervene accordingly

Module 8 | ANS & Co-Regulation

3

**Sympathetic Nervous System (SNS)**  
 MOBILIZE: Fight or flight, high emotion, high sensation.  
 In IFS we see these as a set of threatened Protectors

Regulated

**Parasympathetic Nervous System (PNS)**  
 IMMOBILIZE: Shut down, freeze, withdraw.  
 In IFS we see these as a set of threatened Protectors  
 "When all else fails"

Module 8 | ANS & Co-Regulation

4

## Arousal: Window of tolerance

**WINDOW OF TOLERANCE**

A wider window  
of tolerance  
is better

Module 8 | ANS & Co-Regulation

5

## Interventions

**TOP DOWN**

FOR SOMEONE STUCK IN A  
SYMPATHETIC RESPONSE:

**DANGER • DANGER • DANGER**

- Meet them on a cognitive level first  
Match their energy
- Validate their experience, make sense of history, help them put feelings into words. Move from the cognitive to feelings and then to sensation.
- Direct access

**BOTTOM UP**

FOR SOMEONE STUCK IN A  
PARASYMPATHETIC RESPONSE:

**LIFE THREATENING**

- Begin gently and with the body
- Eye contact
- Lots of time and space
- Direct access

Module 8 | ANS & Co-Regulation

6

- > **Social animals seek safety**

---

- > **What we experience, real or perceived, affects the ANS**

---

- > **The fluctuations of the ANS affect the body, the mind and behavior**  
this is the body's brilliant response to challenge

Module 8 | ANS & Co-Regulation

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

7

## The Polyvagal Theory

—STEPHEN PORGES

The theory suggest 2 branches of the PNS

1. **The dorsal vagal branch (most primitive)**
2. **The ventral vagal branch**
  - Most readily accessed with eye contact, gaze, voice tone, pace and rhythm of speech, safe touch
  - The body's natural ability to calm and regulate
  - It quiets protective responses so we can move from habitual patterns of protection to connected responses



Module 8 | ANS & Co-Regulation

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

8

## Are Self-energy and Ventral Vagus Activation the Same?



© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

9



## Neuroception

Detection without conscious awareness

Module 8 | ANS & Co-Regulation

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

10

## Misattuned Neuroception

- A look, a critical statement, misattuned interactions can evoke a sense of unsafety
- It takes the amygdala, a core part of our fear circuitry, 100 milliseconds to process an event. The incident has been processed and reprocessed by Exiles and Protectors long before it registers in conscious awareness.
- This activates implicit memory and triggers childhood patterns of coping
- The stories of protectors becomes the “truth”
- Explicit memory goes offline

Module 8 | ANS & Co-Regulation

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

11

> Heartfelt connection is lost.  
The ability to negotiate or validate Self or other based on present day circumstances is impossible.



Module 8 | ANS & Co-Regulation

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

12



### Protector Interactions Signal the ANS

Once the **old brain** is triggered, memory about the **current event** is lost

ANS operates as though **danger is real** and present

The choice to **respond** instead of **react** is limited

Module 8 | ANS & Co-Regulation

13 | © Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

13

When **Exiles** resonate with **Exiles** (without the Self or the pre-frontal cortex available) their sense of fear and isolation increases.

**Protectors** then become more frantic and take more action. **Exiles** are further exiled. This causes a destructive looping inside and out.



Module 8 | ANS & Co-Regulation

14 | © Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

14

> When we are chronically disconnected, we carry distress in the ANS (as well as other structures in the brain)



Module 8 | ANS & Co-Regulation

15 | © Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

15

## Our Goal is a Flexible Nervous System

- We can learn to map our nervous system. And we can learn to understand it's fluctuations without being taken over by it.
- We can help re-shape a nervous system that is on chronic alert.



16

## The Path

- > Unblend to affect regulation
- > Expand the window of tolerance
- > Shift patterns of reactivity



Module 8 | ANS & Co-Regulation

17

## How?

### Self-regulation (IFS)

### Co-regulation

Self to Self, Self to Part in relationship



18



Human beings instinctively turn toward each other seeking connection



19 | © Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

19

### Ventral Vagus Activation IN COUPLE THERAPY



When accessed, human beings can offer each other:

- Agenda-less attention
- Receptivity
- A sense of being safely connected
- Reciprocity and repair
- Safe touch

Module 8 | ANS & Co-Regulation

20 | © Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

20

### Co-Regulation

- A process between two social animals in which there becomes an oscillating pattern of emotion that maintains an optimal state of regulation
- A communication between two nervous systems
- ANS states are contagious
- Self and the activation of Parts are contagious
- **We can help each other**



21 | © Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

21

## How Can We Support Partners?



### Good IFIO Therapy:

- Education
- Unblending
- Courageous Communication
- Play
- Eye contact
- Safe touch
- Reciprocity and repair

Module 8 | ANS & Co-Regulation

22 | © Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

22



Module 8 | ANS & Co-Regulation

23 | © Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

23



  
ToniHerbineBlank.com

24



INTIMACY FROM THE INSIDE OUT  
BASIC TRAINING

# MODULE NINE

SHAME +  
REACTIVE PARTS



**INTIMACY FROM THE INSIDE OUT**  
SHAME + REACTIVE PARTS

Toni Herbine-Blank

BASIC TRAINING: MODULE 9

1

**Shame across cultures**

- > Of course cultures are different and handle issues of shamefulness differently
- > Some theories believe in the universality of shame though contexts and challenges may differ
- > As always we ask, don't tell. We help people become curious and listen to what their parts tell them. Then we follow.



Module 9 | Shame and Reactivity

2

**Shame and Reactivity in Couple Therapy**

**TAKE AWAYS:**

- > How shame and shaming shows up in intimate relationships
- > A working definition
- > Shame as a verb, not a noun
- > Recognize that a negative identity reinforced over time can be present with "BIG T" or "little t" events
- > Ideas of how we work with it in IFIO

Module 9 | Shame and Reactivity

3



### A working definition of shame:

- > A global sense of un-worthiness
- > Universal
- > Becomes toxic
- > Repairable
- > A bad thing happened = I am bad=I am alone

Module 9 | Shame and Reactivity

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

4



### Shame and the Autonomic Nervous System

Shame and shaming in relationship can create chronic feelings of unsafety which leads to chronic ANS dys-regulation

Module 9 | Shame and Reactivity

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

5

### When exiles get a voice they say:

- > "I am worthless and unlovable"
- > How do they know?
  - Someone told them
    - Who told them?
    - Someone else
- > And then what happened?



Module 9 | Shame and Reactivity

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

6

## Exiles and Protectors

Exiles accept the message and Protectors turn inward to continue the cycle of shaming

- Shame and shaming originates interpersonally in childhood
- Shaming ourselves quickly becomes a strategy to reduce shameful feelings from getting bigger and more intense
- Shaming others to mitigate shameful feelings follows



© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

**7**



## The Cycle

What was done to me,  
I do to myself

What I do to myself,  
I do to others

Module 9 | Shame and Reactivity

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

**8**

## The IFIO perspective

Shame is not a “thing”

Shame is an “action”



© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

**9**



When people are in a loop of shame and shaming, their protectors become:

- > Self-focused
- > Prone to disconnect
- > Apt to become relationally dangerous

Module 9 | Shame and Reactivity

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

10

The language of shame in relationship:



TOO MUCH

NOT ENOUGH

Module 9 | Shame and Reactivity

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

11

Behaviors of some common shame protectors

- Anger, blame and, shame
- Withdrawing or avoiding
- Perfectionistic
- Chronic criticism (self and other)
- Over-doing (substances, work, etc)
- Caretaking and attempts to rescue
- Can you think of more?



Module 9 | Shame and Reactivity

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

12



### When protectors feel safe, they say:

- > I have failed where once I succeeded
- > Everyone hates me
- > I have to live in the shadows
- > I am in a life and death situation

Module 9 | Shame and Reactivity

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

13

### OUR GOAL

In IFIO therapy we can reverse the message

**FROM:**  
"I AM BAD"



**TO:**  
"A BAD THING HAPPENED"

### WE DO THIS BY:

- > Slowing down
- > Working first with affect regulation to create some safety
- > Help couples understand how the ANS works related to shame and shaming
- > Practice unblending
- > Get to know the protective system relationally
- > Link vulnerability with protection
- > Name and work with current trauma, cultural and legacy burdens
- > Encourage people to find safe community to self-disclose outside of therapy

Module 9 | Shame and Reactivity

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

14

### Shame Regulation

- > Shame and shaming begets shame and shaming
- > Compassion, self-compassion, self-forgiveness is the antidote
- > Therefore IFIO can provide significant healing



Module 9 | Shame and Reactivity

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

15



“The process, in which we hold in **tenderness, respect and compassion** a person’s **suffering** and **help them** access a **mindful, self-compassionate** stance **toward themselves** is the paradigm in IFIO that makes **deep healing** possible inside and out”

—TONI HERBINE-BLANK, MSN, RN  
and MARTHA SWEEZY

Module 9 | Shame and Reactivity

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

16

**Healing is facilitated when:**

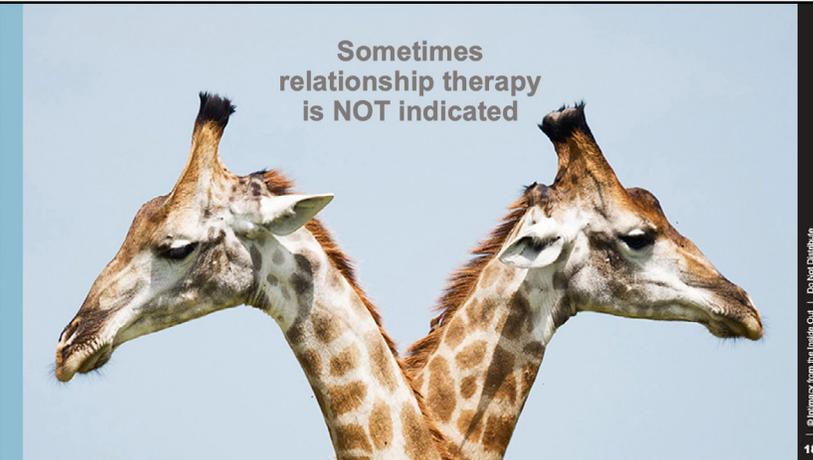
- > The therapist’s sensitivity and courage to name the cycle
- > Inviting shame into conscious awareness; differentiation of disowned parts
- > Internal security, listening and witnessing to the stories of exiles and protectors
- > Unburdening; individual, cultural and systemic
- > Self-compassion, self-forgiveness
- > Safe self-disclosure

Module 9 | Shame and Reactivity

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

17

Sometimes  
relationship therapy  
is NOT indicated



© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

18



### Countertransference

WHAT PARTS OF THE THERAPIST EASILY BLOCK THE PROCESS OF HEALING THE CYCLE OF SHAME?

- > Rescuers and caretakers  
—If I name your shame, you will feel more shame
- > Anxious parts that bypass or try to hurry the process
- > Too hard to sit with the shame of others

© Intimacy from the Inside Out | Do Not Distribute

Module 9 | Shame and Reactivity 19

19



ToniHerbineBlank.com

20



## WORKING WITH AN ANGRY, BLENDED PROTECTOR USING Direct Access

1

### **VALIDATION:**

Reflect, understand, make sense of the experience

*i.e. I hear you...or your feelings make sense to me. Or given what is happening in your relationship, I understand this.*

This way the Part feels met by you, the therapist. There is no fight or resistance coming toward the Part.

TIP: You are validating the **feelings**, not the **behavior** of the Part.

2

### **CONFRONT THE BEHAVIOR:**

Challenge the behavior of the Part.

*i.e. You have something very important to communicate. If you continue in this way your partner will most likely need to continue to protect him or herself.*

3

### **ADDRESS THE UNDERLYING NEED:**

*i.e. I imagine that you are trying to get a need met? Do you know what this is?*

4

### **OFFER YOUR ASSISTANCE:**

In this way we offer them possibilities while at the same time offering help.

*i.e. Will you let me help you do this differently?*



# Takeaways: Reactive Couples

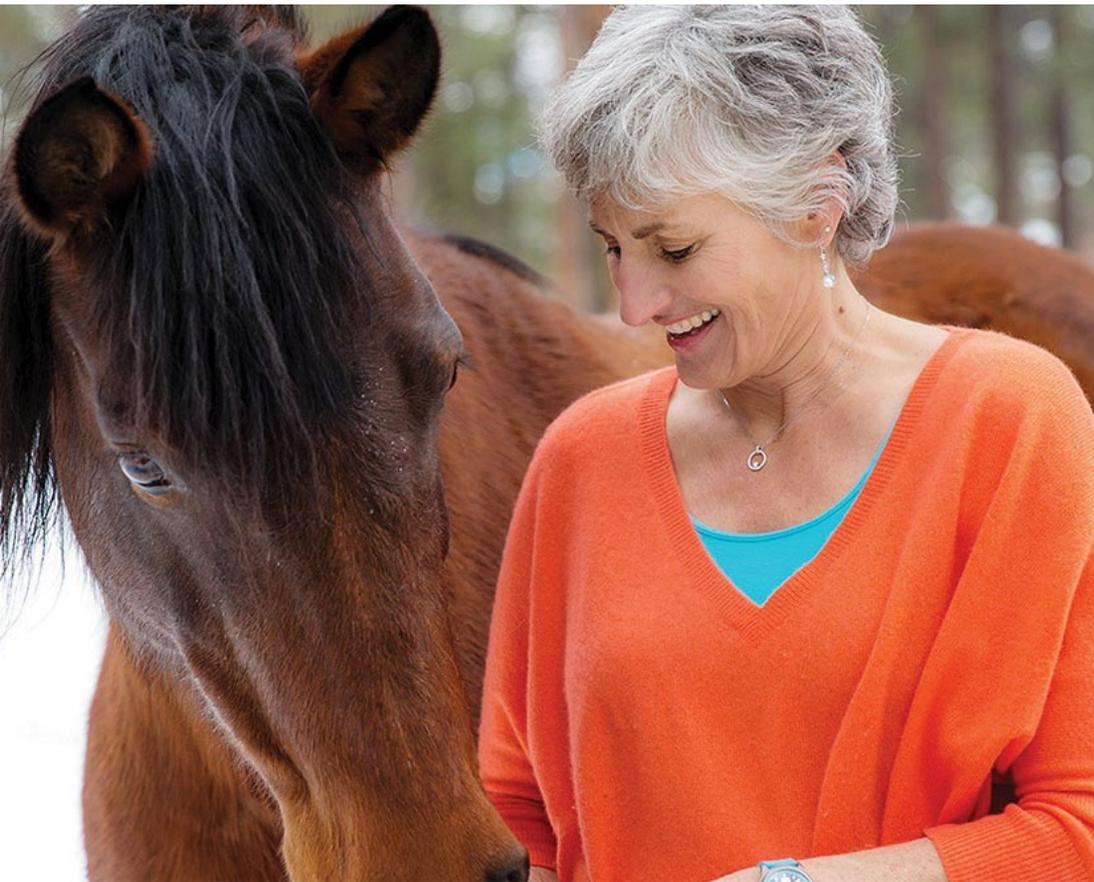
- > Use your **voice and body** with a reactive couple.  
Help them feel **safer** with **calm, kind containment**.
- > One can be **Self-led and strong** simultaneously.
- > Not much has to happen in the session for it to be successful.  
Helping a couple make a **minor change is profound!**
- > Remember **Exiles are under Protectors!**
- > **Fewer words** are more effective than many words!
- > Have individuals **speak to the therapist**, not each other.
- > **Slower** is faster.
- > Heighten awareness of **positive moments**. Pause at the moments of **connection**.
- > Get permission to **interrupt**. Time out.
- > **Too much/not enough**. Listen for and attend to **shame**.
- > **Validate feelings, not behavior**.  
Protectors draw the opposite of what they hope to get.



# Intimacy from the Inside Out®

[ToniHerbineBlank.com](http://ToniHerbineBlank.com)

V2.2021



WE HOPE  
TO SEE YOU  
IN THE  
ADVANCED  
TRAINING