

THERAPEUTIC APPROACHES

Internal Family Systems

IFS works with the mind as a system of parts.

Protective parts that criticise, numb, please or control are understood as having taken on a role to manage pain carried by younger, more vulnerable parts. The work builds the client's capacity to relate to those parts from a settled, compassionate place rather than being run by them.

BEST SUITED TO

- Harsh inner criticism, shame, and the sense of being at war with oneself
- Ambivalence that stalls change, where one part wants something and another blocks it
- Trauma where the client is not yet ready for direct exposure or reprocessing
- Dissociative presentations, and clients who describe feeling like different people in different contexts
- Clients who find cognitive approaches too top down and want something more experiential

TYPICAL COURSE

Medium to longer term, and often blended with Schema Therapy, which shares a similar map of internal modes.

INDICATIVE DIAGNOSES

PTSD and complex PTSD; dissociative disorders, including dissociative identity disorder and depersonalisation or derealisation disorder; major depressive disorder; generalised anxiety disorder; eating disorders; substance use disorders; and borderline personality disorder.

This list is indicative rather than exhaustive. Diagnosis guides the choice of approach but does not determine it on its own.