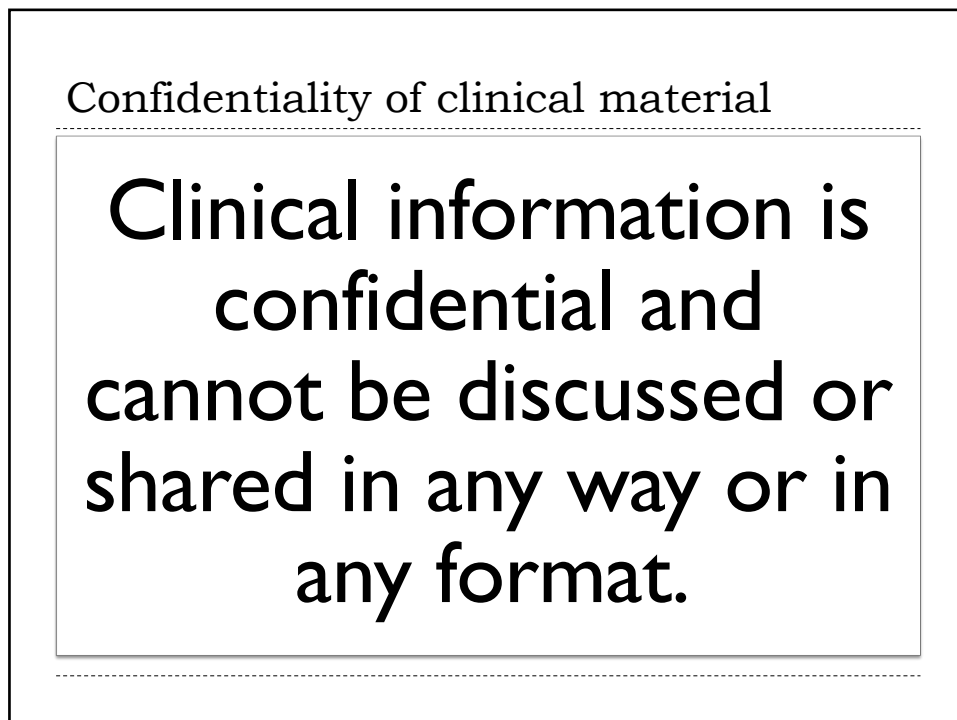
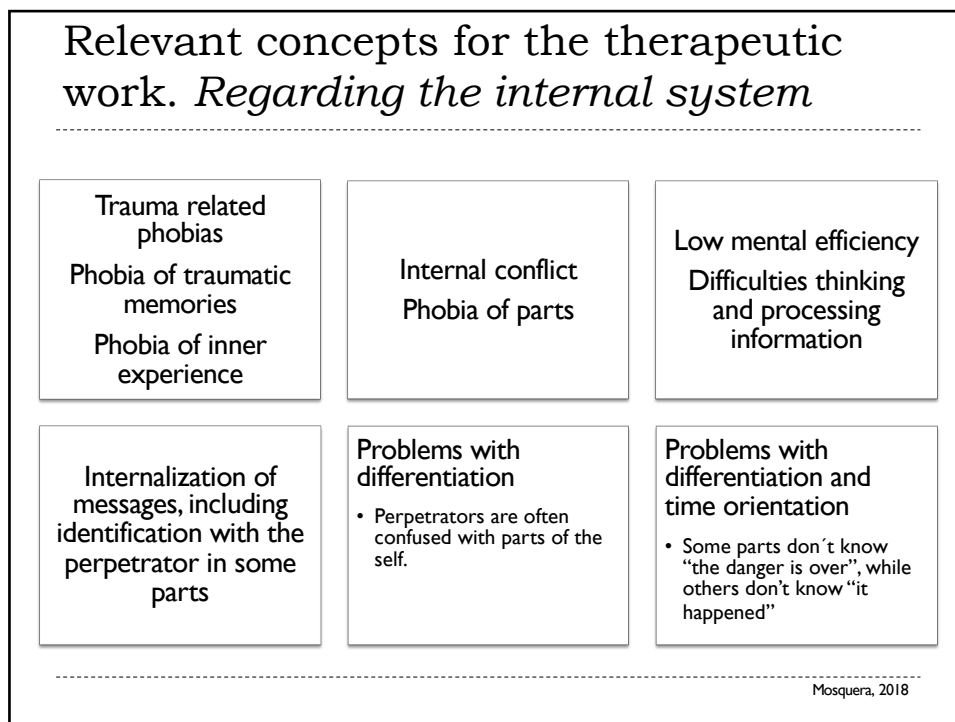


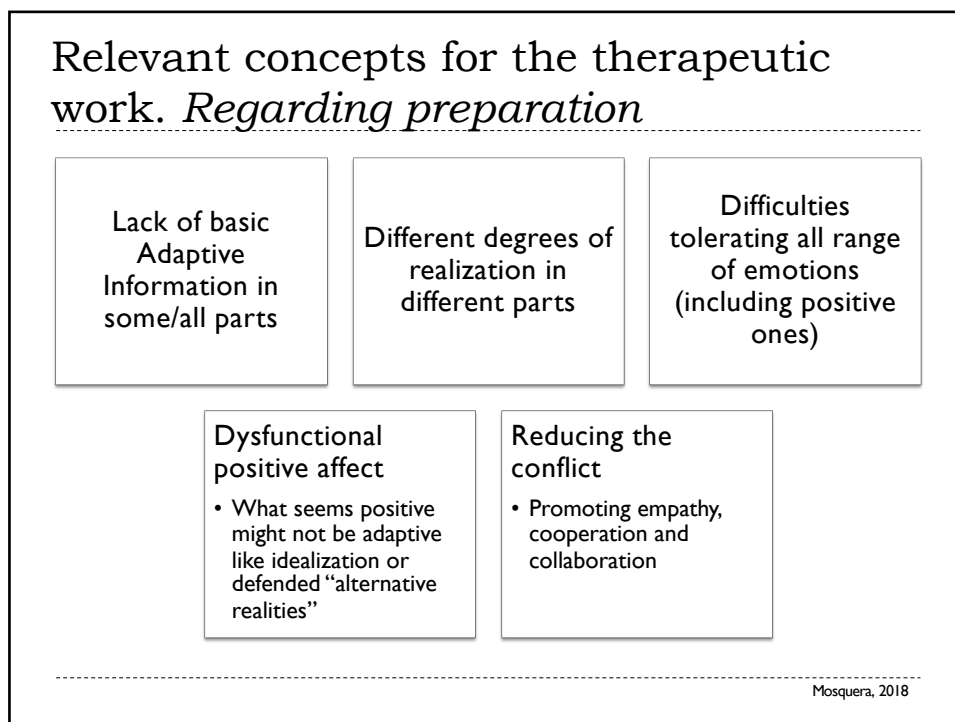
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4

Relevant concepts for the therapeutic work. *Regarding processing*

Different view or meanings of the traumatic event/s and different experiences in parts Often in conflict-hence, can block processing	Which parts can be present or want to be present but need help Which parts don't want to be present or cannot Sometimes as simple as validating that it is voluntary	Stop signal for different parts Safe places for different parts ONLY IF NEEDED, not as a general rule	Difficulties to notice the body and/or tolerate body sensations in some parts Sensations from other parts can be experienced with overwhelm	Difficulties maintaining dual attention / dual awareness Some parts have more difficulties to stay present or interfere with the capacity of other parts
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Mosquera, 2018

5

Useful interventions for Complex PTSD

- Developing basic trust
- Managing impulse control, traumatic triggers
- Tools for depersonalization and checking out
- Maintaining dual attention
 - Clients might need help staying present during trauma work
 - Grounding techniques
- Differentiation between present and past
 - Knowing that the danger is over – involving time orientation
 - What was useful then is not useful or needed now – involving adaptive functions
- Psychoeducation about trauma responses
 - Flight, fight, freeze, faint, etc.

6

Mosquera, 2010


6

Based on the book (2019):

Working with Voices and Dissociative Parts

A trauma-informed approach

Dolores Mosquera



Section One: Laying the foundation

Section Two: The building blocks

Section Three: Challenging parts and voices

Section Four: Differentiation, Co-Consciousness, and Integration

Section Five: Clinical Case Examples, conceptualization

7

Important aspects in the development of the Adult Self

8

The Adult Self

- ▶ In the Progressive Approach (Gonzalez & Mosquera, 2012) clinicians are encouraged to do the work through the Adult Self.
 - ▶ The Adult Self represents an emergent set of self-capacities not yet developed in any part of the personality.
-



9

The Adult Self

- ▶ The concept of the Adult Self is based both on the Future Self developed by Korn and Leeds (2002) and the Healthy Adult from Schema Therapy (Young, Klosko & Weishaar, 2003).
 - ▶ Initially, the therapist serves as the Healthy Adult whenever the client is incapable of doing so (Young, Klosko, & Weishaar, 2003).
 - ▶ During the course of treatment, clients internalize the behavior of the therapist as part of their own Healthy Adult mode.
-

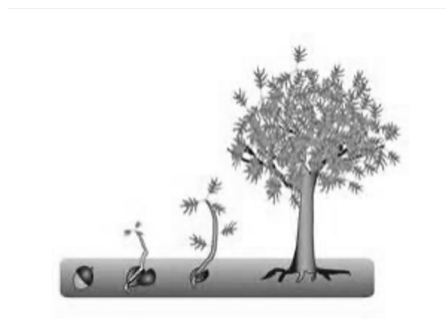
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The Adult Self

- ▶ Most adult clients have some version of the Healthy Adult mode, but there are tremendous variations among individuals in regard to its effectiveness.
 - ▶ Logically, higher functioning clients have healthier adult modes than lower functioning individuals, but the underlying idea is that, to some extent, **all clients have this capacity.**
-

11

The Adult Self: A seed



- ▶ We proceed from the implicit understanding that the future self is already present, as a seed.
 - ▶ We are confident in the client's possibilities of improving.
-

12

The Adult Self

One of our main goals is to show the client how to talk and communicate with all the different voices and parts.

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The Adult Self: Empowering the client

- ▶ When possible, we avoid talking directly to the parts.
 - ▶ One of our main goals is to show the client how to talk and communicate with all the different parts.
- ▶ The therapist models a new way of relating to them
 - ▶ We help the Adult Self learn how to understand what they need, how they feel and how to take care of them.



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Key aspects in the development of the Adult Self (Mosquera, 2019)

Keep the whole
system in mind

Always be
respectful

Develop healthy
curiosity through
modeling

Validate all parts

Be compassionate

Promote dialogue,
communication
and understanding

It's all about
teamwork

15

Keep the whole system in mind

- ▶ When we explore the internal system of parts, we must think of the whole picture and try to include all parts and voices.
 - ▶ It is important to always help clients understand that the different parts represent the various aspects of a person, but **are not different people**.
 - ▶ This may be difficult to understand for some clients since parts at times model after people that they knew from childhood.
 - ▶ It is common for some parts to take after their abusers, imitating their behavior, tone of voice, and expressions, which makes clients sometimes believe that the part may truly be the abuser.
-

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Keep the whole system in mind

- ▶ We should keep in mind that there will be parts that are not easily identified.
 - ▶ Some parts may be ignored by the client, such as the hostile ones because they can be terrifying
 - ▶ We should make a point of not ignoring them ourselves.
-

17

Always be respectful

- ▶ Respect is of utmost importance in helping us explore the internal system of parts.
 - ▶ We must show profound respect both for our clients and for every one of their parts.
 - ▶ This will serve as an example after which clients can start to model their own behaviors and attitudes toward themselves and their parts.
 - ▶ In order to convey respect, our attitudes and behaviors must be guided by the following principles:
-

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Always be respectful

Accept how the client experiences what happens, even if we do not agree with it.	Respect the feelings and thoughts of every part, and do not take sides	Use the language preferred by the client to talk about their inner world
Avoid name-calling and dismissive comments	Respect the timing of the different parts	Encourage clients to make decisions
Avoid interpreting as much as possible		

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Accept how the client experiences what happens, even if we do not agree with it.

Examples

I understand why you see it that way, it has to be very scary to have a voice that keeps telling you to hurt your self, but it's possible that it might be repeating what it learned to say	I see why you feel that way, it sounds very confusing, but I wonder if there are other reasons behind that behaviour	Sure, that is not the best way to help you right now but the part might not know how to do it differently yet. I think it can learn
---	--	---

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Respect the feelings and thoughts of every part, and do not take sides		
Examples		
<p>Don't worry if the part says those things about me. Maybe it did not understand what I was trying to explain. Can we be curious about why it thinks that?</p>	<p>I am glad that the different parts can express what they think and feel; that is very important for therapy.</p>	<p>I understand it is confusing to notice all those different needs and goals inside. I think they are all valid and we can find a way to understand them and have them met. How about we take turns to listen and work with each one?</p>

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Develop healthy curiosity through modeling
Respect and curiosity feed off each other
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ By expressing curiosity about why the parts behave the way they do, we model a new and more respectful way of looking at them<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Which will in turn increase curiosity in the client. and other parts.▶ Once the client can listen to the voice and start to understand the needs or motives of the different parts, they become more attuned<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ The attitude towards the parts begins to change.

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Develop healthy curiosity through modeling
Useful questions:

- ▶ What is the part trying to achieve?
 - ▶ What is the part concerned about?
 - ▶ Is the part trying to help in some way?
 - ▶ What does the part think would happen if you did X?
 - ▶ How would it (part) feel after that?
-

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Validate

- ▶ Validation is perhaps one of the most important tools to be used throughout the therapeutic process.
 - ▶ We should always validate any effort the client makes to understand the system of parts, and any effort parts make to be understood.
 - ▶ A person with a conflicted system is not used receiving validation, noticing positive attitudes or cooperation, or having anyone model a respectful way of interacting.
-

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Validate

- ▶ We must always validate the entire system, the protective intentions of the different parts
 - ▶ Whether the actual attempt is functional or not in the present
 - ▶ We can validate the aspects that are working, and any resources that the parts may bring to the system.
 - ▶ This is a crucial aspect that helps the therapist model a new way of looking at parts and voices, from which the different parts can observe and learn.
 - ▶ This new way of relating can only be internalized through practice and new experience.
-

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Be compassionate

- ▶ Once clients are able to start being curious and respectful toward the different parts of the system, they can begin to understand why the system became organized in such a way.
 - ▶ Understanding gives way to compassion and empathy, which is a necessary step to create an inner environment where communication and cooperation can take place.
 - ▶ For some clients, this can be a real challenge.
-

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Be compassionate

- ▶ Most people can easily feel compassionate toward the suffering of a child.
 - ▶ However, if they think of themselves as children, they become unable to feel compassion and instead may blame themselves.
 - ▶ Clients may say things such as:
 - ▶ “I can do that with other people but not me,”
 - ▶ “If I think of any little girl, I can understand what you mean, but if I think of the girl in me, I can’t.”
-

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Promote dialogue, communication and understanding of the intention of help

- ▶ One of the main difficulties in the work with parts is related to the lack of dialogue and effective communication.
 - ▶ We cannot say that there is no communication, but we can definitely say that there is no effective communication.
 - ▶ It is common for voices to keep stating repetitive messages that are frightening or threatening, or just difficult to understand.
 - ▶ Helping clients realize the amount of **mental energy that is spent** trying to avoid parts will be necessary.
-

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It's all about teamwork

- ▶ Introducing the idea of teamwork from the beginning is crucial for the development of a more integrated self.
 - ▶ When clients are able to understand how parts have been trying to help and can feel compassion for them, it becomes easier to see that they were initially designed to work **as a survival team**.
 - ▶ Therefore, the team can begin to function as a true team.
-

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Scheme to explore the internal
system and understand the conflict

30

Lack of integration and the internal conflict

- ▶ Many of our clients live in a constant battle with themselves and their inner experience is not easily understood.
 - ▶ Working with dissociative disorders requires an understanding of their internal structure on the part of both therapist and client.
 - ▶ Learning to understand these parts of the self and their function is a crucial aspect of treatment.
-

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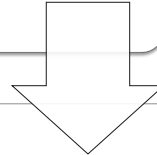
History taking in these cases

In addition to taking a clinical history,
learning to pay **attention to the parts** of the self and **understanding the function and meaning** behind their disruptive behaviors becomes a crucial aspect of treatment

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An example

A client says: the
part does not want
me to feel better



What do we do
with this
statement?

33

Possible answers

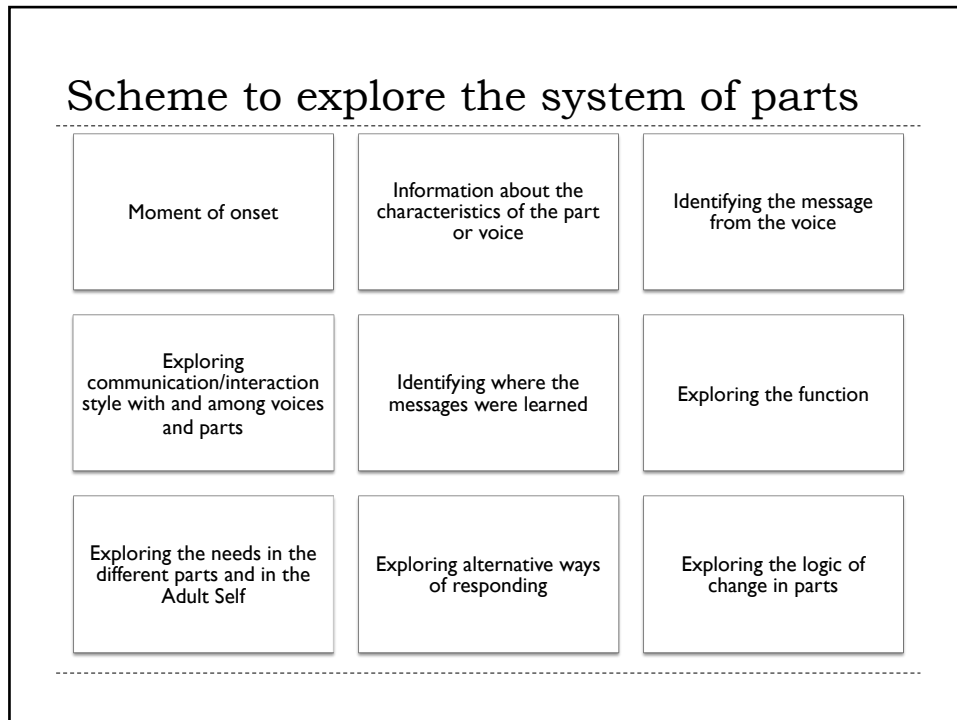
T: So **you think** the part doesn't want you to
think that you can feel better.

T: Can we try to understand why the part might
think that?

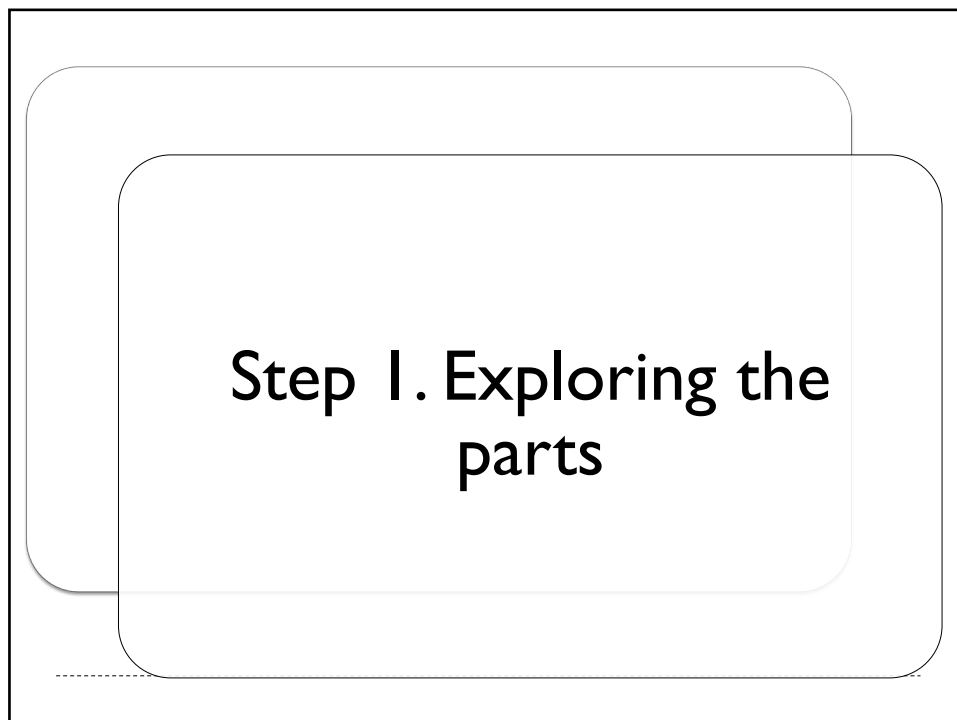
T: What is the part concerned about?

T: What does the part think could happen if you
were to feel better?

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Step 1. Exploring the internal system of parts

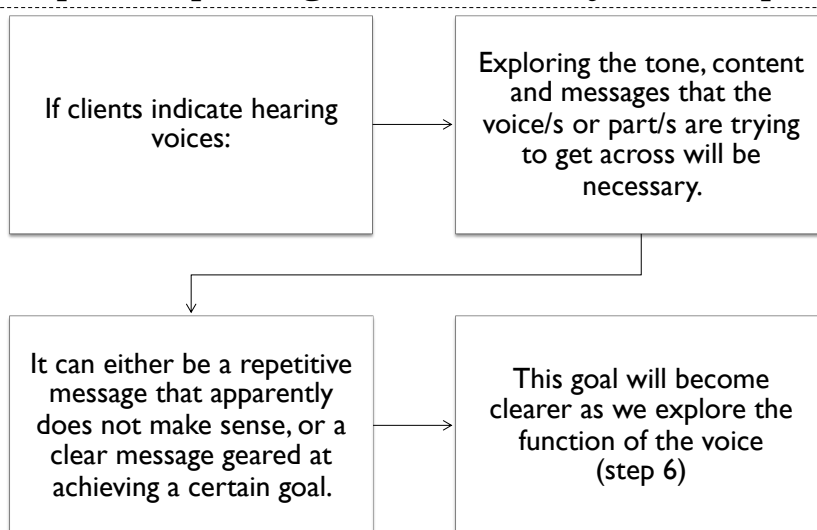
- ▶ The first step is geared at getting **an idea** of the **internal representation** of the parts and how clients make sense of what happens inside.
- ▶ Without forcing anything or getting into too many details in the more complex cases.



Mosquera, 2017, 2018

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Step 1. Exploring the internal system of parts



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Step 1. Exploring the internal system of parts

When exploring voices and parts we can also ask how old does the voice seem to be and any other details that might help us get an idea of this internal representation.



We may also explore the moment of onset and when voices appear or show up in the present moment (related to exploring triggers, step 3).

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**Step 2. Encouraging
clients to listen to
the voices and/or pay
more attention to
the parts**

40

Step 2. Encouraging clients to listen to the voices and/or pay more attention to the parts

- ▶ To gather the information in the previous step, we also need to help clients become more curious and interested in their inner world.



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Step 2. Encouraging clients to listen to the voices and/or pay more attention to the parts

Would you be willing to try to understand what the part is trying to say?

Can we explore those voices that show up sometimes?

Can we try to be curious about what might be underneath those messages?

I know it's difficult but can we try to be curious about what is happening with the little girl part?

Is it possible to try to notice what that part might be feeling?

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Step 2. Encouraging clients to listen to the voices and/or pay more attention to the parts

Promoting curiosity may be a relatively easy task with certain types of parts.

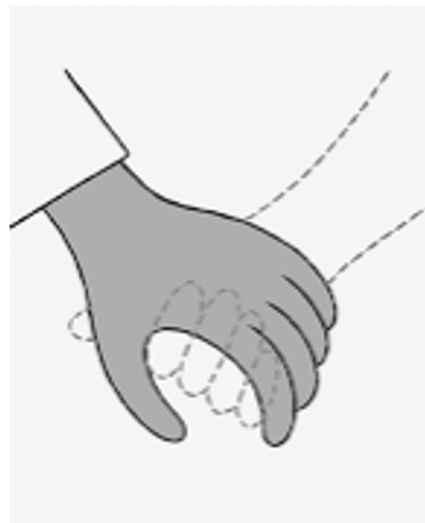
However, it becomes more complicated – and for that same reason, much more crucial – with challenging parts.

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Step 2. Encouraging clients to listen to the voices and/or pay more attention to the parts

Helping clients understand that the voices and parts are actually trying to help will be one of the main ingredients towards developing curiosity.



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Step 3. Exploring triggers

- ▶ The third step towards the beginning of the work must include exploring when voices or parts show up.
- ▶ This is related to the triggers and therefore, the function.

Trauma Triggers...

ON

OFF

Ideas on how to better manage your triggers

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Step 3. Exploring triggers

The best way to explore triggers
is to explore **what was
happening when the parts
showed up.**

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Step 3. Exploring triggers

Most of the time parts and voices get
triggered when the client feels bad, frightened,
or concerned or needs something that seems
unacceptable (comfort, closeness, etc.)

Also when something happens that reminds
them of the past, especially those voices who
are still stuck in trauma time.

There are some exceptions; for example,
when clients have been punished for feeling
good, parts will also get triggered when in
pleasant or enjoyable situations.

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Step 4. Exploring and processing dissociative phobias

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Step 4. Exploring and processing dissociative phobias

- ▶ Phobias among parts are one of the main obstacles that prevent the natural flow of treatment.
- ▶ We should always check how the different parts and the Adult Self feel towards each other .



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Step 4. Exploring and processing
dissociative phobias

For therapist trained in EMDR:

When emotions are dysfunctional, such as when one part is frightened of another part, or feels disgusted or ashamed, we can use the **processing phobias procedure**, a tool developed to reduce the phobia.

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Step 4. Exploring and processing
dissociative phobias

Exploring the phobias is also a way to organize the work, since depending on the information we obtain on the phobias between parts, we will be able to identify whether it is necessary to start processing them before we continue with the next step.

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Step 5. Assessing the degree of differentiation and time orientation in client and parts

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Step 5. Assessing the degree of differentiation and time orientation in client and parts

- ▶ Distinguishing between internal and external elements is not easy for clients with complex traumatization.



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Step 5. Assessing the degree of differentiation and time orientation in client and parts

Sometimes problems with differentiation are related to boundaries

Not knowing what they are supposed to tolerate from others and how far they can go with others

They may also include having difficulties separating what others think or feel from how clients think and feel

Or have difficulties distinguishing the messages they have internalized from what is real.

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Step 5. Assessing the degree of differentiation and time orientation in client and parts

A crucial issue with differentiation is related to separating *what is happening now* from *what was happening then*.

Parts and voices might be stuck in trauma time

Frequently not knowing the danger is over

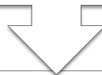
Therefore, they continuously respond as if the danger was still happening

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Step 5. Assessing the degree of differentiation and time orientation in client and parts

Assessing time orientation in different moments of the work will be
needed.



As well as helping clients be oriented to the safety of the present
moment when they lose dual attention.



This is especially important when there are parts that never had dual
attention and still need to learn that they are safe now –or at least
start to consider the possibility that this may be the case

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Step 6. Exploring and validating the function of the part/s.

58

Step 6. Exploring and validating the
function of the part/s

**Parts are there for a reason
Finding out what they are
really trying to achieve
is a core aspect of
treatment.**

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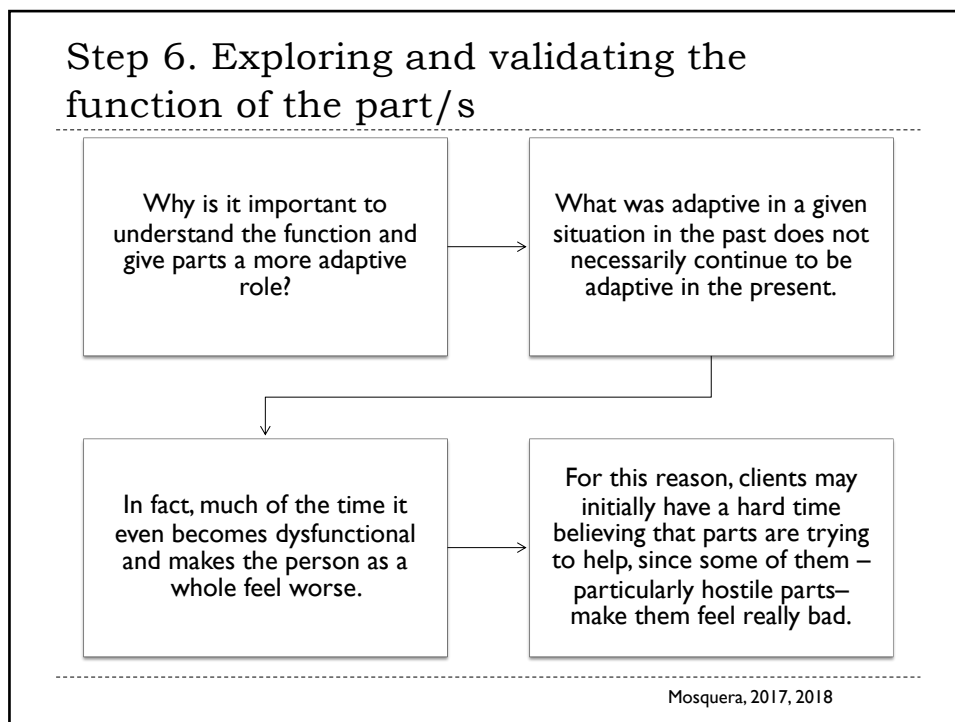
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Step 6. Exploring and validating the
function of the part/s

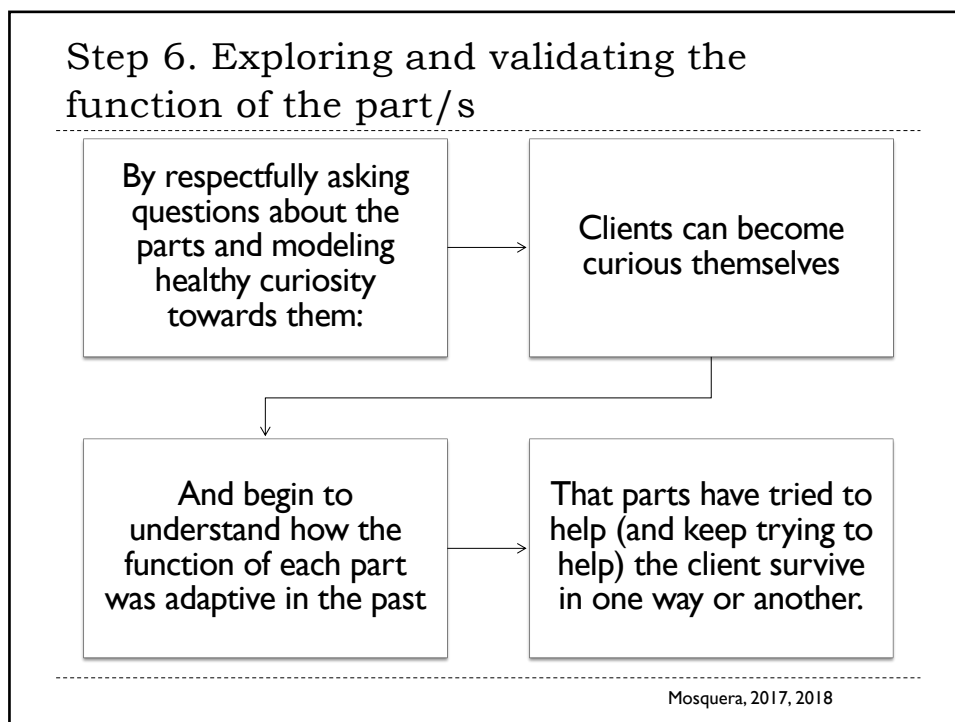
- ▶ Each part has its reasons for doing what they are doing and we must always validate these reasons
 - ▶ Whether or not they are adaptive in the present
- ▶ Remember that they were initially created to perform a certain role
 - ▶ And they have helped clients survive what they had to go through in their earlier years.

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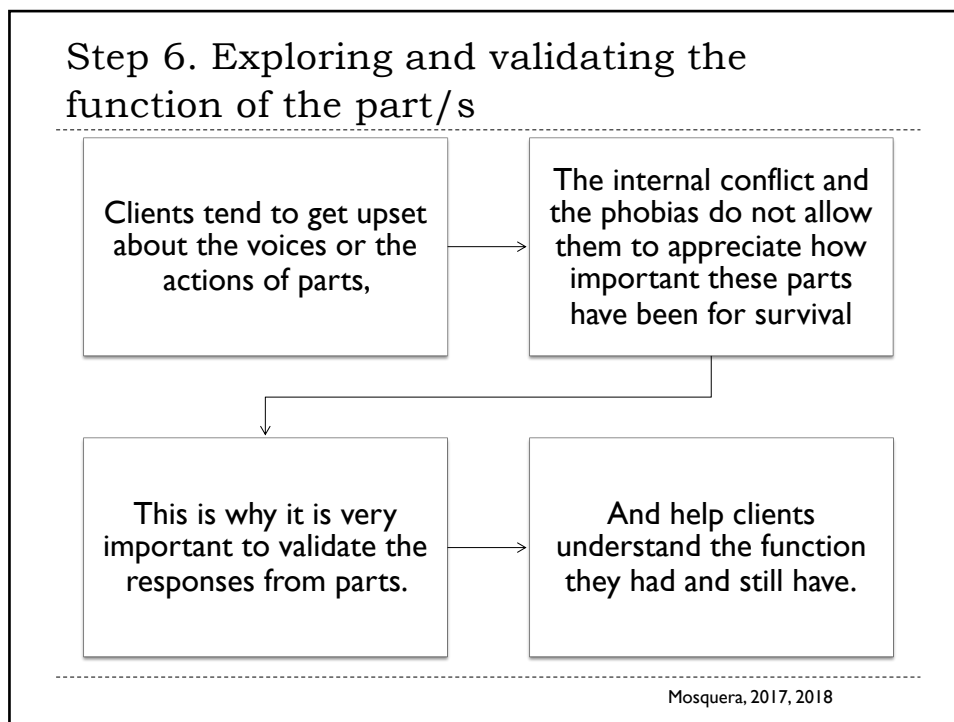
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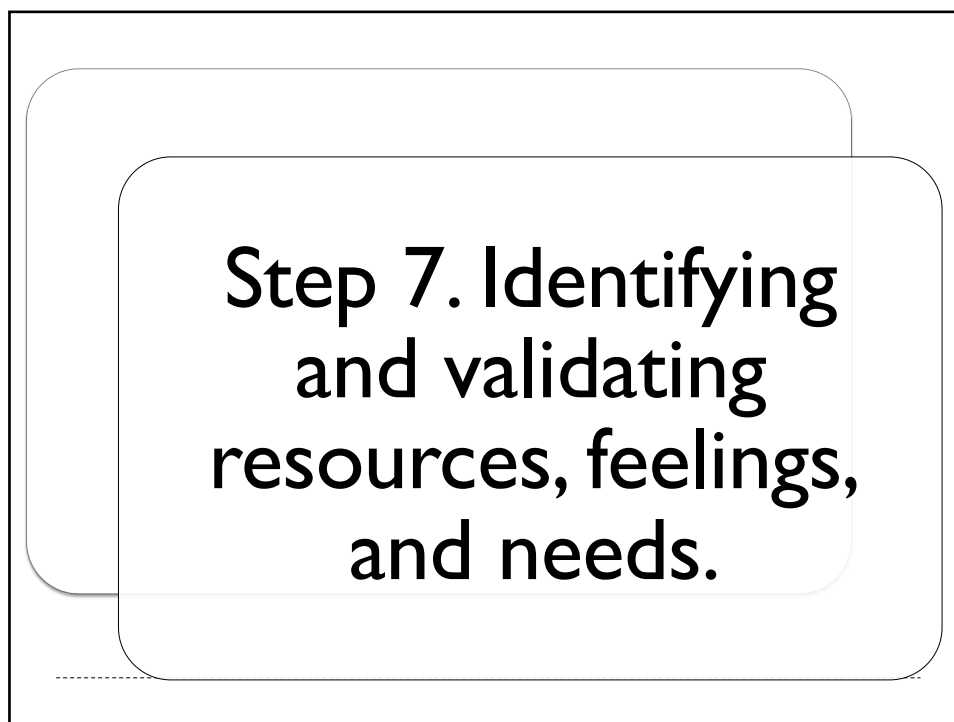
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Step 7. Identifying and validating resources, feelings, and needs.

- ▶ Clients with different parts and voices, often have mixed and even opposite feelings.
- ▶ The same goes for their needs; one part may have needs that could be in direct conflict with the needs from another part.



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Step 7. Identifying and validating resources, feelings, and needs.

- ▶ Identifying and validating feelings and needs is a crucial part of the work .
- ▶ it can help all of the different voices and parts to feel heard and understood, which tends to be a missing experience for these clients.



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Step 7. Identifying and validating resources, feelings, and needs.

- ▶ The key in this type of validation is to make sure we *accept all the different emotions and needs* and help both clients and the system of parts to understand them and accept them as well .



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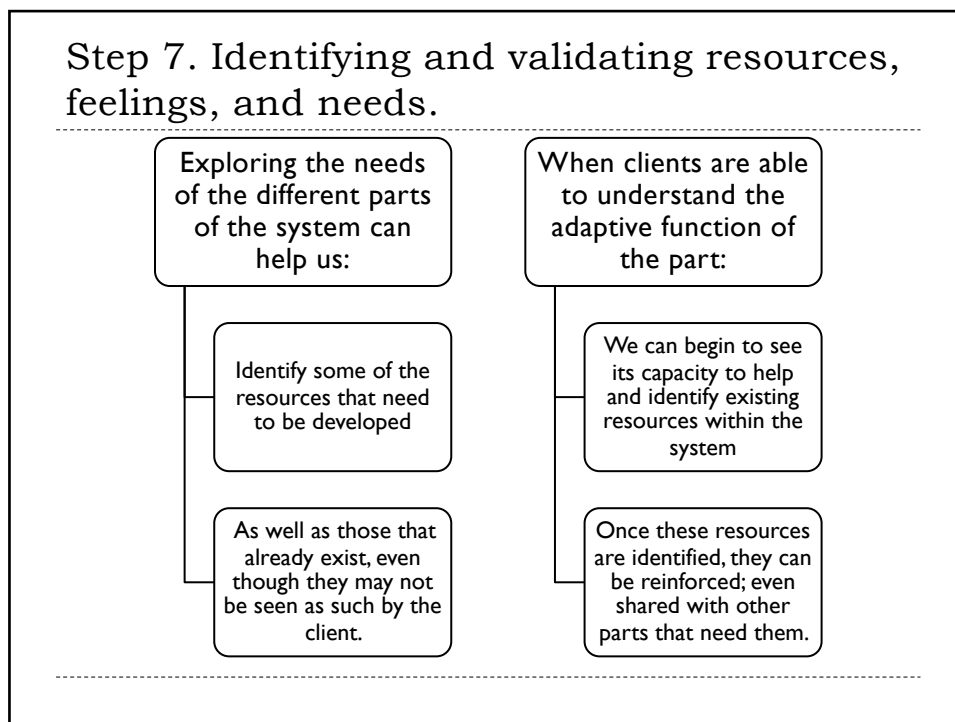
Step 7. Identifying and validating resources, feelings, and needs.

- ▶ To internalize a new way of responding to their feelings and needs, parts need to experience a completely new attitude
 - ▶ Which is done through modeling, so it can end up sinking in.

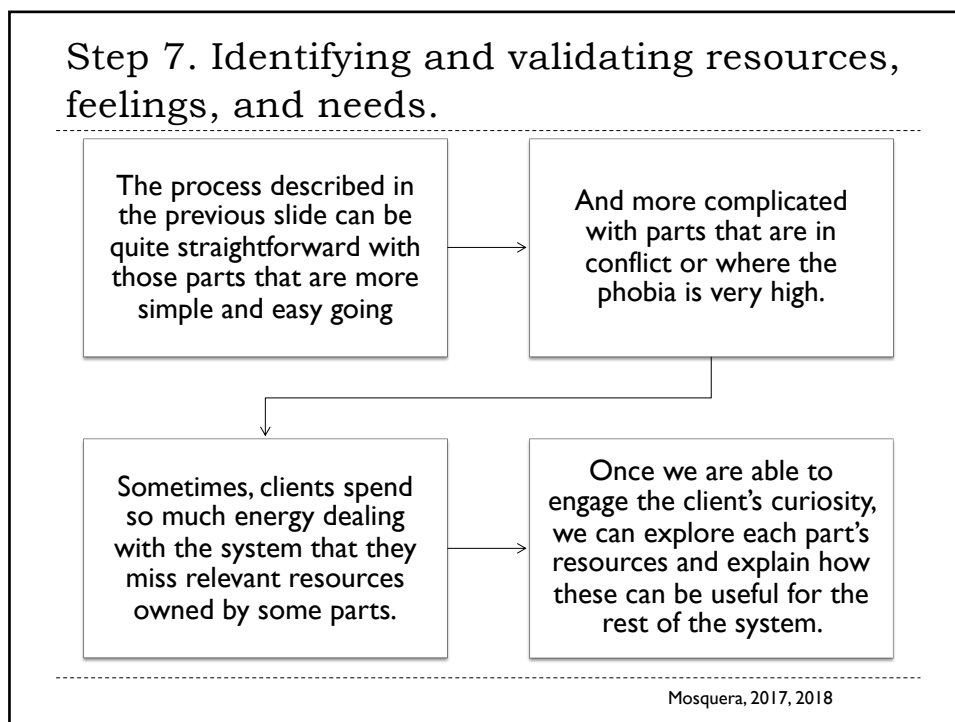


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Step 7. Identifying and validating resources,
feelings, and needs.

For example, one voice might have the capacity to help defend the system, another to identify possible danger, and a third to be playful and enjoy life.

Exploring these resources will reinforce curiosity and pave the way for cooperation and teamwork.

This will lead to a more integrated Self, where each voice represents something that is useful for better functioning.

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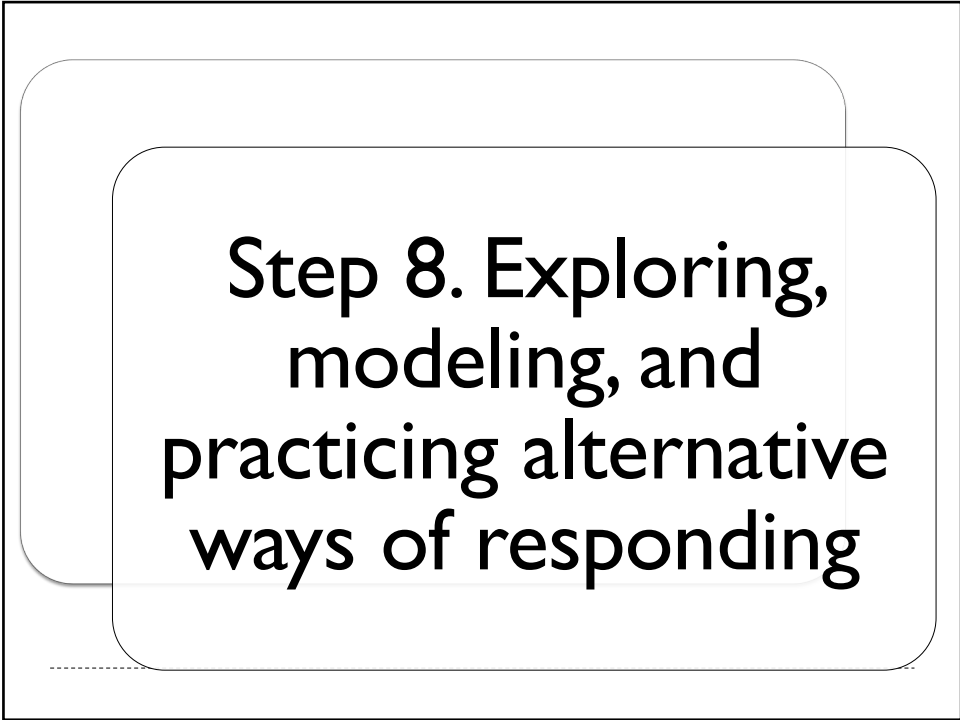
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Step 7. Identifying and validating resources,
feelings, and needs.

If the therapist is trained in EMDR Therapy, resources can also be installed when needed, as a way to reinforce any relevant *insight* that the client and the system of parts achieve as a result of the work.

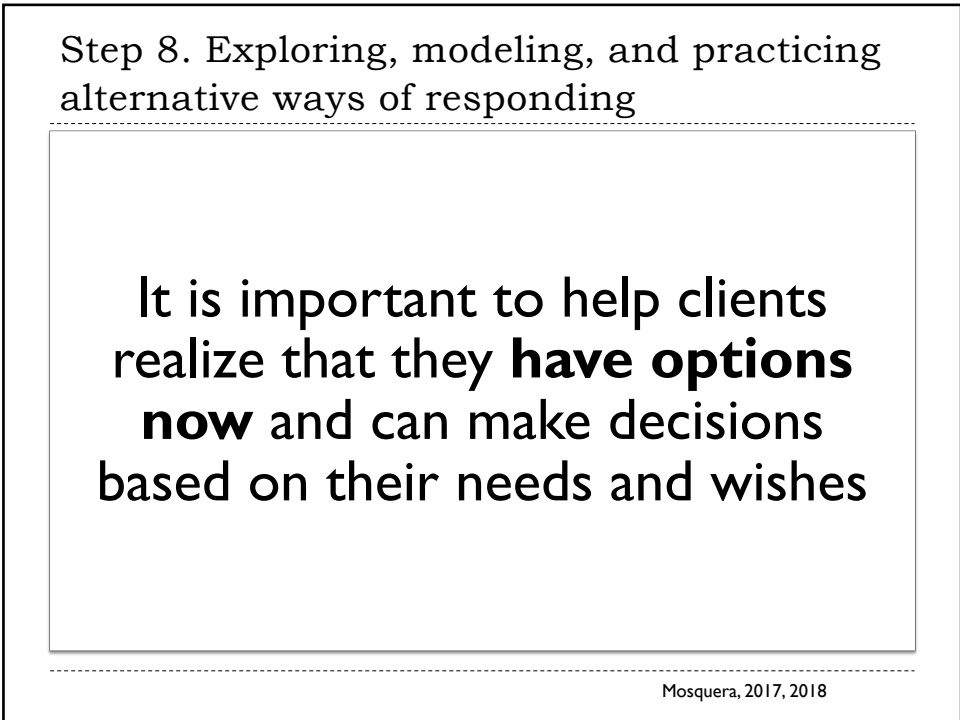
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**Step 8. Exploring,
modeling, and
practicing alternative
ways of responding**

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Step 8. Exploring, modeling, and practicing
alternative ways of responding

It is important to help clients
realize that they **have options
now** and can make decisions
based on their needs and wishes

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Step 8. Exploring, modeling, and practicing alternative ways of responding

Whenever any of the current strategies used by any of the parts or voices is really not working in helping the client feel better:

We should help the system to think of alternative responses

And suggest more useful or adaptive ways in which the voice can truly help the person

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Step 8. Exploring, modeling, and practicing alternative ways of responding

Most of the time, voices or parts are not aware of the effect their comments have on the rest of the system

Or of the fact that their behavior is not currently adaptive

Encouraging clients to communicate with them about comments or behaviors that are frightening or bothersome is a key aspect in the progress towards better functioning.

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Step 8. Exploring, modeling, and practicing alternative ways of responding

- ▶ Sometimes the simple fact of checking in with the voice will have a positive effect
- ▶ They are not used to having anyone check in with them .



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Step 8. Exploring, modeling, and practicing alternative ways of responding

When clients are able to communicate what works and what does not work for them, voices and parts can modify their way of responding.

Initially this has to be done with the therapist's help, using questions aimed at helping them realize this:

Does this part know how much this upsets you?

Is this voice aware of how frightened you become when he says those things?

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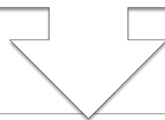
Step 8. Exploring, modeling, and practicing
alternative ways of responding

- ▶ Most of the time clients will say something like:
 - ▶ *“Of course it knows, it just doesn’t care”*
 - ▶ But this is just an automatic reply
 - ▶ That reflects the way the system is used to functioning .
 - ▶ In these cases, it is important to say something such as:
 - ▶ *I understand you see it this way, but could you please check if this voice really knows how upsetting this is?*
-

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Step 8. Exploring, modeling, and practicing
alternative ways of responding

Psychoeducation can be useful but won't
be enough with some of the parts.

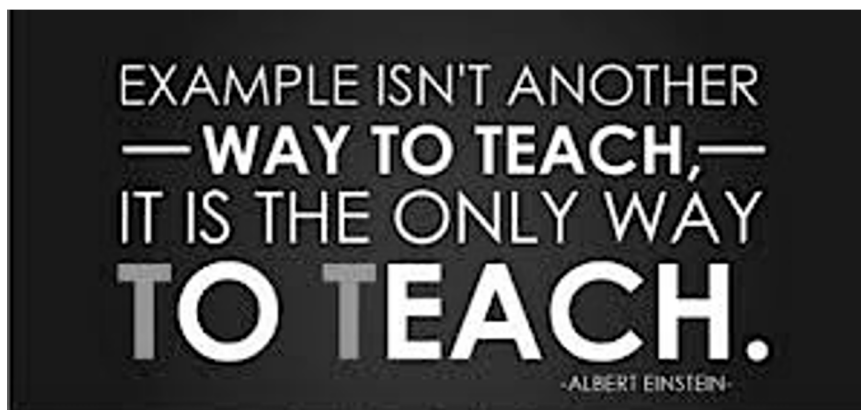


The best way for the new attitude to
really sink into the system of parts will
take place through modeling (consistently).

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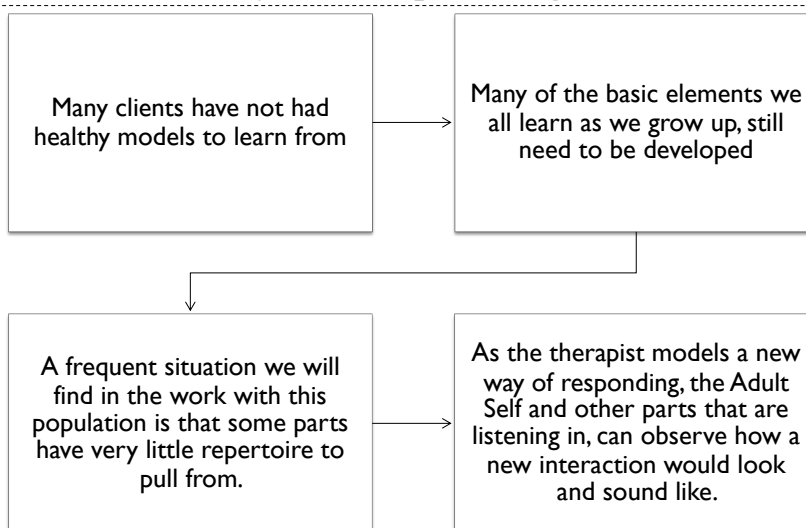
Step 8. Exploring, modeling, and practicing alternative ways of responding



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Step 8. Exploring, modeling, and practicing alternative ways of responding



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Step 9. Identifying and exploring missing pieces

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Step 9. Identifying and exploring missing pieces

Another aspect that can be relevant is to explore the missing pieces.

For instance, clients that never get angry or sad would be communicating a need in a very indirect way.

Sometimes it is obvious that there are missing pieces, other times, we find out later on in therapy, as we get to know the client and the system of parts.

Helpful to use BASK model to explore what might be missing.

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Step 9. Identifying and exploring missing pieces

When something does not fit it is important to point it out and check if there are any other parts or voices. This can be done in a general way:

“Is there any other part or aspect that is difficult for you to talk about?”

Or introduce it while using some of the exploration tools such as the meeting place

“Do you think we should leave any empty chairs for other parts that might be more difficult for you to look at?”

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Step 9. Identifying and exploring missing pieces

Clients might also tell us about missing pieces when they draw their inner system:

→

Foggy areas or shades that do not allow to see what is underneath would be some of the frequent examples.

↓

Some clients might say things like:

→

“A lot of people are shouting underneath the fog” or “There is something dark that I can’t even look at, all the parts are hiding from it too”.

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Step 9. Identifying and exploring missing pieces

Often clients do not speak about some parts or voices due to fear, or because they are so used to censoring those aspects that it's unthinkable to even bring them up.



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Step 10. Reaching agreements, developing cooperation and teamwork

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Step 10. Reaching agreements, developing cooperation and teamwork

- ▶ As a last step, the system must reach agreements or compromises that all voices can accept, for the benefit of the entire system/person.
- ▶ This step is one of the final steps but we can begin introducing this idea with the previous aspects.
- ▶ This is why it is so important to model ways in which the system of parts in general can work together, so they can eventually learn to cooperate in a joined way towards achieving these goals.

Mosquera, 2017, 2018

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These steps are meant as a guide, not a
rigid way of exploring

**All of the previous steps are geared
towards promoting understanding
and empathy between client and
voices.**

**Increased understanding leads to
greater compassion and empathy,
which in turn allow for cooperation.**

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GENERAL STRUCTURE OF A CLINICAL SESSION (CS)

1. Explore the effects of the work done in the previous session

- CS #1.1. Explore how the client and the parts/voices left the previous session
- CS #1.2. Check how the week has been for the entire system
- CS #1.3. Explore whether during the week the client has followed the indications offered in the previous session

2. Work on issues that came up during the week or come up during the session

- CS #2.1. Explore if the voices and parts were active or not during the week. Check how the parts are doing
- CS #2.2. If the voices appeared during the week or during the session, we must explore what triggered the voices
- CS #2.3. Explore the reaction of the system towards the voices or parts
- CS #2.4. Address any issues or difficulties as they appear
- CS #2.5. After any intervention, check how the rest of the parts feel about what just happened
- CS #2.6. Check whether learned messages or behaviors continue to take place after the voice or part has started practicing new adaptive behaviors

3. Closure for the session.

- CS #3.1. Reinforce the work done throughout the session and validate the efforts made by each part of the system that was active/participated during the work
- CS #3.2. Check on the usefulness of the interventions applied during the session
- CS #3.3. Check that the client is stable and grounded, oriented in time
- CS #3.4. Summarize what has been learned in order to help clients organize the work done during the session and to set goals for future sessions. Enhance realization
- CS #3.5. Anticipate potential obstacles and problems to prepare clients for future difficulties

Reference: Working with voices and dissociative parts. A trauma-informed approach. Mosquera, 2019

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Thank you for your attention and time!



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