

Exercise 18, On the Path to an Exile

Instructions for this exercise:

-Think of a recent experience when you felt (or began to feel) a slightly uncomfortable emotion that you didn't want to feel.

For example, you notice that everyone else is getting their food at the restaurant before you are and you are beginning to feel impatient and annoyed. The emotion is preventing you from staying present.

-Briefly (take no more than one or two minutes) describe or journal about the experience and what you did to manage feeling what you felt.

For example, you initially pushed down the words that wanted to be spoken but after a few more seconds, you voiced your frustration to the wait staff.

If you used more than one strategy to manage the discomfort, pick one of the strategies for this exercise. The part that influenced this strategy will be your target part.

-How do you feel toward the part that provides this strategy?

Coaching Note: If you feel anything other than curiosity, compassion, or other qualities of Self, ask the concerned part or parts if they are willing to relax for the next few minutes so you can learn about the target part. Offer a separate room, a comfortable chair, a clipboard to take notes, something to drink, a television to watch, etc. so they can relax.

If the concerned part cannot relax, make the concerned part your target part. Otherwise, continue with the original target part and ask the following questions.

1. Ask the part: What are you trying to accomplish?
2. Ask the part: What do you do to accomplish this?
3. Ask the part: What are you afraid will happen if you don't do this?
4. Ask the part: And then, if this happens, what are afraid will happen?
5. Ask the part: How long have you been doing your job?
6. Now that you have this understanding, how do you feel toward the protector?
7. Given the fears of the protector, does their strategy make sense to you? (let the protector know that it makes sense to you)
8. What do you appreciate about what you have learned about the protector?
9. Express your appreciation to this protector so it can feel seen, understood and appreciated.

You have learned some things about one protector. The exile that is being protected may have other protectors as well. Before attempting to connect directly with the exile, spend time with all protectors using this exercise or a more extensive one to see, understand, and appreciate the protector.