

Parts and Emotions

When working with someone who is DID, parts with negative emotions get the most attention in ministry and in the discussions among practitioners. This is understandable, because when a hurting part is up front, they will destabilize the whole person.

This blog is dedicated to the other extreme. There are parts who can't feel certain emotions. When I think I am dealing with a part that is older than three, I will gently test for capacity to feel positive emotions. Rarely can a part express any desire to go to a positive place. They can usually agree that it would be good to get out of where they are, since it is cold and dark and lonely, but they don't have a worldview for anything better.

With deeply hurting little ones, the objective is simply pain relief and integration. We discuss this in detail in the Tools for Freedom album noted at the bottom of the blog. But for the older ones, I try to give them some dignity before integration, and dignity is an emotion.

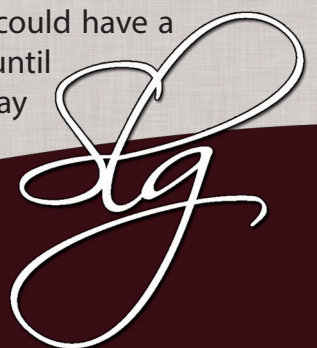
Here are two scenarios from recently. One of my survivors got slammed by a really nasty critter. We circled around it and found out that there was a part whose job was to open the "door" whenever a particular "knock" was given.

Once we figured that out, I told the demon that Sally trumped the "permission" it gained and I sent it packing. Then we had to engage the part. I started by complimenting the part for being dependable and diligent. I pointed out that it had received those orders many years ago and had remembered the code and been on standby for a long, long time. I commented on how much I like dependable people and people who don't need reminders of what their job is.

In short, I celebrated everything I could about that part's essence even though I was furious over the results of the "good job" it did.

Once I gave dignity and tried to build a safe place for the conversation, I explained that there had been a changing of the guard. The human being who gave it instructions on doing this task was no longer in charge of Sally and I was. So I had the right to create new jobs. The part was surprised but obedient – obedience was deeply ingrained into the part.

So in a situation like that, I have the option of exploring rapid integration so it could have a rest and didn't have to do hard jobs any more, or assigning a new temporary job until integration was acceptable. But however the story line ends up, I want to stay away



from a “naughty part” narrative and expose the part to an emotion it had never faced before – dignity. I know the part had no place on the shelf for that emotion. I put it out there anyway and let it just hang in the air for consideration after I left the part.

A second situation recently was a part that blocked pain. Sally went through a tough patch years ago where everything hurt. This part was not under the control of the perp. It was formed for self-preservation. When the pain was about to become overwhelming, it was able to step into the “driver’s seat” and cause Sally to go completely numb, not feeling anything in body or soul.

Again, I complimented the part on playing an important role in survival. I explored the fact that it had some exceptional skills for dealing with the biology of the body. To be able to completely block massive biological pain is quite a significant skill set. I praised the part for being such a specialist.

Then I pointed out that Sally has been on a great growth curve for years and has not had that severe pain for a long, long time, therefore, all of the skill this part has is more or less wasted. It agreed.

I asked if it could consider a new task. In theory it could.

After a few days of negotiation, I set the part to work healing a portion of Sally’s biology that is still subpar. Obviously I want to move toward integration, but the part is older and is not overly receptive to the idea quite yet. It will probably be a week of watching other parts being integrated before it asks about it.

Meanwhile, it did an amazing job. Within 24 hours of taking on the task of expediting healing instead of blocking pain, there was noticeable change in that portion of Sally’s body. I celebrated that for the part. The part was so trained to shut off emotions that it was not able to enjoy success. That software just did not exist. So I modeled pleasure for the part, and honored it for a job well done.

Ultimately, the part is not going to feel high emotions in the positive sense until it is integrated. That is still the major objective. However, along the way, I am investing in modeling emotions for parts that are on their way to integration.

Parts were created and established in a very negative environment. I am fiercely intentional about creating a positive emotional environment that affirms their essence while moving them toward the long term solution which is integration.

Tools for Freedom album

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From the Hub

