



Conscious Life presents

TRAUMA SUPER CONFERENCE

Trust in your Self with Internal Family Systems

Guest: Dr Richard Schwartz

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[00:00:10] Meagen Gibson

Welcome to this interview. I'm Meagen Gibson, co-host of the Trauma Super Conference.

Today I'm delighted to be speaking with Dr Richard Schwartz. He began his career as a systemic family therapist and an academic. Dr Schwartz discovered that family therapy alone did not achieve full symptom relief. And in asking his patients why, he learned that they were plagued by what they called parts.

These patients became his teachers as they described how their parts formed networks of inner relationships that resembled the families he had been working with. He also found that as they focused on, and thereby separated, from these parts, they would shift into a state characterized by qualities like curiosity, calm, confidence and compassion. He called that inner essence the Self.

From these early explorations, the Internal Family Systems model, or IFS, was born in the early 1980s. IFS is now evidence based and has become a widely used form of psychotherapy, particularly with trauma. It provides a non-pathologizing, optimistic and empowering perspective and a practical and effective set of techniques for working with individuals, couples, families and, more recently, corporations in classrooms.

Dr Richard Schwartz, thank you so much for being with us today.

Dr Richard Schwartz

Thank you, Meagen. It's a treat to be with you.

Meagen Gibson

So I want to start, we talked about it just briefly in your intro, but I definitely want to ask you, what is the Internal Family Systems methodology and what inspired you to create it?

Dr Richard Schwartz

Maybe I'll take the second part of that question first. So as you mentioned in the intro, this goes back about, I think it'll be 40 years next year, that I started on this journey. And as you also said in the intro, simply listening to my clients at the time talk about why they weren't getting better from straight family therapy.

[00:02:08]

And this was a group of bulimic kids that I was doing an outcome study with and they started talking this language of parts and they'd say some version of if I ever get triggered, this critic starts to attack me inside and call me terrible names. And then that brings up a part that can make me feel totally worthless and alone and lonely and empty. And that feeling is so dreadful that the binge comes in to get me away from it. But then the binge brings back the critic who's calling me a pig on top of the other names and I'm in this vicious circle for days.

And so I was just really interested as a systems thinker not just about each part, but about how they all interacted as a system inside. And got curious about that and long story short, learned that none of them are what they seem, that our field and our culture has really mistaken the part for the role it's in. And thought the critic is just an inner critic who maybe carries some of your parent's energy, but basically that's all it is. And the binge is an out of control impulse.

And when you think of them that way, it makes sense to argue with the critic or try to control the binge which is basically what our culture and psychotherapy has been trying to do for decades. But as I listened to them, I learned that they really didn't like their roles and that they would love to get out of those roles if they thought it was safe, but they didn't think it was safe.

And as I explored that more, because I initially would fight with them but then I learned that they weren't what they seemed, so I started getting clients to ask them questions and just get curious about them. And that's when I started learning all this and in the process learned that they just weren't living in the present either. They were all frozen in traumas, in traumatic times in the clients, often childhood. And to the point where if my client asked how old they thought my client was, it was almost always a single digit.

And I was just shocked to learn that. Most of my clients were in their twenties at that time. So by just staying curious, and I was lucky that I was a family therapist and I didn't have much intrapsychic training so I came to this with a blank slate, I just had to get curious and not assume things about these parts and so that was a big advantage. Just by helping my clients ask these open-ended questions, we learned, as I said, that they aren't what they seem, that they're stuck in these roles they don't like.

They're frozen. The role started back in the trauma time and they carry what I'm going to call burdens, which are extreme beliefs and emotions that came into them from the trauma, like a virus that drives the way they operate. As I learned all that I became curious about how we can change all this, how can we use some systems thinking to actually help these parts out of these roles?

And as I did that, I would find they would immediately transform into what turns out to be who they're naturally designed to be. So from all that exploration, I started to conclude, and this is a basic assumption of the model, first of all, that we're all multiple personalities in the sense that we all have these parts that, in my mind, we're born with them, either manifest or dormant.

It's good to have them because they all have valuable qualities and resources to help us in our lives. But they're forced out of those naturally valuable states by trauma, by attachment injuries, by the slings and arrows into roles they don't like and don't think it's safe to leave because they're frozen in time and they carry these extreme beliefs and emotions. So that's the short version, very short version of IFS.

[00:06:44] Meagen Gibson

The short version of 40 years of history. Right?

Dr Richard Schwartz

Right. I didn't even get to what you introduced as the Self yet.

Meagen Gibson

Well, yeah, let's put a pin in it, because I want to come back to a couple of things that you said. It occurs to me while you're talking that had you not been dealing with young people and young adults, do you think they would have been as vulnerable and as open about these parts of themselves that were speaking up?

Because I just imagine adults, they don't want to admit that there's these multiple personalities in their brains and in their emotions because of the way they think it might sound, especially from a psychological perspective, if they have any knowledge. So what role do you think that the vulnerability of their age had to do with you learning about this?

Dr Richard Schwartz

I think it had to do with that and also, there's something about people with eating disorders who know their parts intimately and don't mind talking about them. And I think it's because they stand out in such bold relief in there, like the critic is just right in their face constantly. And then they do know about what I call the exile, little young part that carries all that worthlessness and so on.

And I was lucky that I just had a couple of clients who were very articulate about the phenomenon and I think it is in part their age but also sort of their desperation for help and their acquaintance with these parts because they stand out in such bold relief.

Meagen Gibson

Yeah. And I know you mentioned, obviously this is a trauma conference and you mentioned trauma, but one of the things that I loved is in your book, you said parts are not the result of trauma, they're the result of being human. So, why do we develop these parts? And how might it be different from the experience for someone who has experienced trauma as opposed to someone who hasn't experienced trauma?

Dr Richard Schwartz

Yeah, so in my mind, we don't develop them. They come with us into this world, we're born with them. But what develops are the extreme roles they're forced into. And, you know, this is different because most models of trauma that do think about parts, are aware of parts, see them as fragments of the unitary personality that was blown apart by the trauma, which for me is a pathologizing view because they're seen as a product of the explosion of what should be one.

And the goal then becomes to get humpty dumpty back into one. So my goal instead is just to help them all be able to transform into their naturally valuable states and also start to get along with each other and then trust what I came to call the Self as the leader. Because they're all pretty

young, even the big critics and all the ones who are trying to get you achievements in life and seem so adult-like.

[00:09:56]

They're mainly what I call, in family therapy we call, parentified children in families, they're little kids who have had to take on a parental role. And that's true for all these parts. So the goal is for them to realize there's somebody else in there who can actually lead your life in a much healthier way.

Meagen Gibson

And so that brings me to a really good point about the Self as you're describing it. And in my notes, I always write it with a big S. Self. And so the eight C's that you describe are the characteristics of the Self and how do they relate to the IFS?

Dr Richard Schwartz

Yeah. So as I was trying to get my clients to listen to these parts rather than fight with them, it was challenging because maybe I'd have you trying to get you to listen to your critic and as you did that, you would suddenly become angry at the critic, and the critic would be defensive in there, and then things would break down. And it reminded me of family sessions where maybe I'm having two family members talk to each other, and I'm trying to have them listen to each other, and one of them suddenly gets angry at the other.

And we were taught to look around the room and see if somebody else in the room isn't covertly siding with the one who's angry. Often we found that person and got them out of their eye view in the room, improved the boundary around the original two, and they settled down and had a good conversation. And it occurred to me, maybe the same thing is happening in this inner system. As I'm having you talk to your critic, maybe a part that hates the critic has jumped in.

So I began asking, I would ask you, could you see if that one who hates the critic could just relax for a little while longer, so we can just get to know the critic more, maybe pull its energy out for a second. And to my amazement, clients could do that. And when they did it, suddenly they would shift from I hate you to I'm just kind of interested in why you call me names all day. Curious, calm, confident, even compassionate.

And in that state, the critic would relax and would share its secret history of how it got forced into that role, in some trauma. And my client would even open their heart even more to it. And we could actually extend an even appreciation for trying to keep my clients safe, even if it's tearing her down and thinking if it doesn't tear her down and she takes risks, she's going to get hurt again, so I better do that.

So that's just one example of the common positive intentions that these parts have. And so we could extend that appreciation to your critic, and it would relax, and then we could even negotiate permission to go to what it protects in there, which would be one of these, usually one of these, very vulnerable, inner children parts that got hurt or terrified or shamed and is still stuck back there.

[00:13:10]

And there's a process by which we could get it out of there and help it unburden, and it would also turn into a happy little inner kid. And then the critic could see, well, I guess I don't have to do this job anymore, and would transform itself.

But back to the Self, as I was trying that with other clients, just getting some of the extreme parts to open space inside, it's like the same person popped out with the same C word qualities of calm, curiosity, confidence, compassion, and then others like clarity, courage, creativity, and connectedness. So at some point, I concluded that that's in everybody. It can't be damaged and it's just beneath the surface of these parts such that when they open space, it does emerge spontaneously and it knows how to heal both in the inner world and in the outer world.

And that's a big deal. That's the big deal about IFS. That's easy to access in most people quickly, you can get into some degree of that state and then in that state, they can begin to heal themselves. So I called it Self because when I get you there, I might say, Meagen, what part of you is that? You'd likely answer, that's not exactly like these other parts. That's more me, or myself. That's why I call it the Self and capitalize the S, just to distinguish it from the ordinary use of the word self.

Meagen Gibson

And I love the whole process of it, and I encourage anybody who picks up your book to also listen to the audiobook, because listening to you go through these exercises with people is fantastic and adds something, I think, that just, you can read it, but when you're hearing you go through it, it's really instrumental to understanding the process.

But just this process, especially for people who have experienced trauma, of first understanding we all have parts, right? And then the permission, the permissive aspect of like, okay, who needs to speak up? And can I have your permission to either step aside so I can talk to a different aspect of this person or, step aside because I can only deal with one of you at a time.

I imagine a toddler teacher, like a nursery school teacher like, okay, I can only deal with one person at a time. I will get to you, I promise. Which is asking permission and just honoring the protective nature. Just how much that what's true about you and all those wonderful qualities. And I don't know if anybody who's watching can relate to that but curiosity and calm and creativity and connectedness, those are all the things that dwindle in me when I am in some sort of activation or trigger or I'm having difficulty, I'm living kind of in history and not in the present, those are the first things to go, and they're the first things that make me feel most like myself.

And I think a lot of people can relate to that. And so having a process that you can go through where you're going to understand, give permission, talk through, and then unburden, as you call it, that part from the job it's taken on instead of the job it was meant to do, is just beautiful.

Dr Richard Schwartz

Thank you.

Meagen Gibson

That's not a question. More like a reflection.

[00:16:59] Dr Richard Schwartz

It's beautiful. Every time I do it with somebody, it is.

Meagen Gibson

So with unhealed trauma, can you take me through, we've talked about parts, but you also have names for these parts, and the high level view. Take me through the main labels of these parts and how they show up in trauma as kind of parts exiled, and their burdens.

Dr Richard Schwartz

Yeah. Again, as I'm learning about all these parts inside of clients, I was a bit overwhelmed, but as a systems person, I thought, I'll just do what I do in families, where we would map the different patterns in the family. And so I started to look for distinctions among the parts. And the main distinction that leaped out immediately was between parts that were very vulnerable and it turned out before they were hurt or terrified or ashamed, we would call them these delightful inner children who could lend us all kinds of joy and curiosity about the world and innocence and creativity and so on.

But once they get hurt, and they're the ones that get hurt the most because they're the most vulnerable, they now take in those burdens of worthlessness or terror or emotional pain and so on. And now they have the power to overwhelm us with those feelings and make us feel all that, so that's why we never feel again. And so we almost naturally and everybody around us tells us to just lock all that up inside.

And so when we succeed, then those young parts who, just by dint of getting hurt, become what I call exiles. So for them, it's an insult to injury. The injury was the trauma. And now the insult is being abandoned by you. And you don't even know you're doing it because you think you're just moving on from the memories or the emotions of the trauma, not realizing you're locking away your juice, your most precious qualities, just because they got hurt.

So those I came to call exiles. And when you have a lot of exiles, you feel a lot more delicate. The world seems a lot more dangerous because so many things can trigger them. And when they get triggered, it's like an explosion of flames of emotion that consumes you and takes you back into those scenes and so on. So to deal with that, to keep those exiles contained and not triggered and not hurt, there's a bunch of parts that leave their naturally valuable state and enter the protector role.

And there are two classes of those. So some become preemptive protectors who are trying to manage your life so that nothing triggers those exiles. So they make sure you don't get too close to anybody, or they make sure you look great all the time, so nobody rejects you. Or they make you achieve a lot so that you get a lot of accolades to counter the worthlessness. Or maybe they make you take care of everybody, so they depend on you and never let you take care of yourself, of course.

Or they become these inner critics who are just trying to get you to do better, try harder, look better, or trying to tear down your confidence so you don't take risks, and so on and so on. There's a lot of different common manager roles. These are what we call manager protectors, because they manage your body so that you don't feel too much. They can numb you out or take you out,

keep you a little bit separate from your body, keep you in your head. Sometimes there are these intellectual thinking protectors.

[00:21:18]

So anyway, there's a lot of those. And despite their best efforts, the world still has a way of triggering your exiles. And when that happens, it's a big emergency because it's these flames of emotion. So there's another set of parts who immediately go into action to deal with that emergency. And they'll do it either by dousing the flames with some substance, or getting you higher than the flames until they burn themselves out, or distracting you until they burn themselves out.

And so we call those firefighters. They're fighting the fire of exile pain. And most of us have a kind of hierarchy of them. So if the first one doesn't work, you go to the next, and so on. And so in contrast to the managers who are trying to keep you in control and please people usually, these firefighters are very impulsive. They don't care about the collateral damage to your relationships or your body.

They just got to get you away from that fire or you're going to die. That's their belief often. And so a lot of the addictions are about that. A lot of dissociating, the sort of immediate dissociation kinds of reactions and so on and so on. So suicide is the top of the hierarchy for most people. It's just if it gets too hot, there's this escape route. So we call them firefighters.

So the map is very simple. There are protectors, one class of which is managers, the other class is firefighters. They're both doing their best to contain and protect the exiles. And they often polarize with each other because, like I said, the managers want to keep you in control, the firefighters take you out of control. So that's the map. And it's held up really well these 40 years.

Meagen Gibson

And I think it also really helps explain to people who either suffer high anxiety from a result of experience of trauma or they have high levels of trauma how they can be so high functioning. That's how it kind of all made sense to me. I was like, oh, they've just got excellent managers. And then when you hit a tipping point where those managers are overburdened, then a firefighter comes in with either substance, or outside distractions.

Those can be people, like you get into a tumultuous love affair or something like that. It can be a new job as a distraction. It can be all kinds of things that you're going to go towards that aren't really going to serve your capitalized Self that you're using to kind of distract yourself or get yourself away from that discomfort.

Dr Richard Schwartz

Yeah, well said.

Meagen Gibson

And one of the things that I really resonated with that you said in the book is that when you listen to your parts and your body, your exiles don't have to use your body to get your attention.

[00:24:27] Dr Richard Schwartz

Yeah, that's an aspect we haven't mentioned yet but many, many physical symptoms are the product of your not listening to your exiles and if you don't listen to them, they'll find whatever they've got. They haven't got that many ways to try to get your attention, but they do know about whatever genetic predispositions you have for different diseases. And they know how to give you pain, physical pain and so on. And they'll do that. And then medicine is designed to kill the messenger rather than listen to the message, as is psychiatry. So there's a lot of killing of these messengers happening, rather than listening to the message and trying to help the part.

Meagen Gibson

And I have a ton of sympathy for people who go with those modes of treatment. They're often the quickest, they're often the easiest to incorporate into your life. So I have a ton of empathy and sympathy, for that matter, for people that go that route.

At a certain point, though, there is a law of diminishing returns, and you've got to get a little bit more curious and dig a little deeper to find the source of the exacerbation of your inflammation or depression or mental health issues or digestion, all kinds of ways that it can show up in your body if you're not treating the underlying factors.

Dr Richard Schwartz

Yeah, exactly right. And I don't mean to imply that all medical symptoms are the product of parts because that's not true, but you'd be surprised at how many are. Or the reaction against it or the fear of the symptom are parts you can deal with too.

Meagen Gibson

Absolutely. One of the ways that I was really validated in your work as well was in the way that you talk about the traps of meditation and spiritual bypassing and obviously we're in kind of a self development circle here, trauma conference, we have lots of breathwork and meditation and things like that. So I'm not in any way trying to take away from the benefits of those methodologies.

However, in talking about a parts work framework, how do people sometimes use spirituality or meditation or things like that to kind of bypass what we're talking about? It's yet another coping mechanism.

Dr Richard Schwartz

Yes, so many of those practices and polyvagal stuff and all that can be useful in terms of accessing what I call Self sometimes, and meditation as well, and are used to, quote unquote, regulate your system. But by that it often means it's a way to either get away from or calm down your exiles, which is needed so you can function a lot of time, but it doesn't heal them. It doesn't really do much for them other than placate them.

And that's true for mindfulness too. So that's at best, and at worst, a lot of those practices can be used to bypass and really stay away from, as far as possible, the exiles. Actually at this conference I mentioned, I just had a debate with Marianne Williamson about this because she's all about go to the light, don't go to the darkness. And that message just keeps a lot of parts exiled I think. In the light, you can feel really good in the light and you can function better.

[00:28:14]

I did TM as a kid and it was very helpful to me. I was much more focused and I could operate better in the world and I really thought this was it. But it didn't heal any of my parts, it didn't heal my exiles. It just helped me stay above them. So my message is, yes, meditate, do that, but don't do it as a way to stay away from this stuff. Do it as a way to bring that state, that self state to the pain or the shame or the terror and help it heal, rather than do it as a way to stay away from that.

Meagen Gibson

Yeah, absolutely. And as somebody who has been practicing meditation off and on for 20 years but didn't start trauma work until five or six years ago, I can attest that a lot of people with trauma find it really difficult to do mindfulness and meditation exercises because the minute you quiet down, a lot of parts get really loud. And so I just want to really validate people's experiences.

And it doesn't mean that there's not a ton of usefulness, and all the science backs it up, but if you're not incorporating something like parts work into it, then that can be a really scary proposition. And then you feel twice as bad because you've got trauma and you also can't meditate. So let's find other methods to incorporate that, get curious, get safe, get permission, listen and learn.

Dr Richard Schwartz

Yeah, I do. I just want to reiterate that there's a lot of value in a lot of that, as long as it's not being used to keep away from the parts that need your love.

Meagen Gibson

Yeah. And some of the traditional methodologies or spiritual traditions just don't incorporate this stuff yet. I think we're coming into an age where they're going to start and that is being acknowledged in a lot of spiritual traditions, this idea of the self and even the ego not being something we need to get rid of, but something we need to make healthy. But traditionally, especially anybody of a certain age, that certainly wasn't the case 20 or 40 years ago.

Dr Richard Schwartz

No, and there is this attitude that spiritual traditions have about the ego. And so I'm a big champion of the ego as just a cluster of little protectors trying their best to keep you alive and safe and not something to be dissolved or demeaned, but in fact, something to be honored and appreciated and then helped, like you said, out of the pressured role it has to try and run your whole life. It's a bunch of little kids who are trying their best.

Meagen Gibson

Absolutely. I love that visual. A bunch of little kids trying their best. Let's give them a mentor, somebody to keep them safe.

Dr Richard Schwartz

That's right.

[00:31:10] Meagen Gibson

And that actually kind of leads into my next question, which is about the Self. So, you emphasize in the book that the point of all this, getting to know your managers, your exiles, your firefighters, and giving them different jobs is so that you can communicate with them. That the Self, your big Self, big S Self, with all of this curiosity and creativity and calm is going to take care of them and that they can trust the Self. Right? Can you say a little bit about that?

Dr Richard Schwartz

Yeah. So when you were hurt as a kid, that's when these parts jumped into these roles and then they stay in those roles for the rest of your life and they don't even know about you as a Self, what I'm calling your Self. They just think, I mean, they're literally frozen back there. They live as if the world is still as dangerous now as it was back then. And there isn't anybody, because when you were a kid, you didn't have the brain or the body to actually protect yourself. So they're stuck back in those scenes.

So there are four main goals of IFS. One is, I've already talked about, the transformation of these parts to liberate them from the roles they're stuck in, so they can be where they're designed to be. But the second one is exactly what you're talking about, which is to help restore the trust they lost back when Self couldn't protect the system. In Self, help them get to know there is this other person in there who isn't five years old and can actually lead the system in a healthy way.

And sometimes that takes quite a bit of work because they really don't believe in Self or, where were you and I needed you, message. And then the third goal is then, often with Self as a leader, to help these parts get to know each other and harmonize with each other and stop being so polarized, and get the whole team to work together with Self as a leader.

And then the fourth goal is to become what we call more Self lead in the outside world. So that in your relationships with other people you speak from these C word qualities and you also start to be more of a social activist, usually people do, or to just deal with what they see in their lives as inequities and injustices. Because Self has courage and clarity and confidence.

It's all part of a grand scheme of mine to bring more Self to the world and to try to, and this being election day, it's very meaningful, that the world really needs it. And so those are the goals of IFS. And as you were saying, this idea of getting the parts to trust and know this inner leader so they can relax more and become advisors, rather than the bus drivers. So, that's a big part of this.

Meagen Gibson

It's interesting you say that because I'm reminded of, I have elementary school children who are shifting into those middle years, and one of the things that I've gotten advice on recently from parents of older children is that I'm now moving into a consultant role. I'm not the manager of their behavior and learning. I'm moving into more of a consultant.

And so if these parts are trapped in their kind of childhood roles and defenses, it makes sense that you would, in making them safe, you're like, okay, I'm moving into more of a consultant role. And I just want to acknowledge also that something I hadn't brought up yet that you reminded me of is just that this book isn't just about making you secure in yourself. It's also because when we all do

this work, the interconnectedness of all of us in our big S selves is really evident and you're not able to ignore it anymore, right?

[00:35:34] Dr Richard Schwartz

That's right. Yeah. You become much more aware of how other people in this country or people around the world are suffering, then it's going to affect you in some way. So that C word connectedness is a kind of intuitive feeling that you have that you can't just take care of your little circle but you have to extend your compassion. And the good news is that what we call self energy is contagious. So even in the middle of a crisis of some kind, if I can be in Self, that will pull for the Selves of everybody else. And then you have a very different experience of whatever the crisis is.

Meagen Gibson

You lead me perfectly into my next question, which is around, you know, I know that there's many books about IFS and guides and there's even a little card deck that I own, I think I've got it right here, little interactive card deck that I love. But one of the things that I appreciated most is how you emphasize that you should find a guide or a support person who can stay in self, big S Self, for themselves while you're having emotions. And so why is that? And why is that guidance so important?

Dr Richard Schwartz

Yeah, so that guide ideally would be a trained IFS therapist and part of the training is helping the therapists get to know their parts and, in particular, get to know the parts of them that might be triggered by parts of their clients. Because if I'm with you and you go to one of your exiles and you're very emotional and sad and crying and I don't have a good relationship with my own exiles, then I'm going to try and cheer you up right away, or distract you out of that. Even unconsciously.

It's going to be very hard for me to stay present with you while you're in that level of emotion. Or if suddenly you're angry, you're angry at me and I have a lot of fear of my own anger or my own critic or any of that, then I'm going to dissociate somehow or something. So the point being that how you relate to your own parts will have a big impact on how you can be with people when they resemble your parts. And if you can be in Self, even when somebody's in some extreme part, they feel that safety. They feel that they're not alone in it. They feel witnessed and cared about in a way they don't if you get triggered too.

Meagen Gibson

Absolutely. And I think we've all had experiences of that both on the receiving end of I feel like that person hasn't witnessed me and is really missing me and has gone somewhere, even if they're right in front of us, they've gone off somewhere. They're not here anymore. Or they're should-ing me out of what I'm experiencing. They're giving me phrases like, well at least...

Dr Richard Schwartz

Getting real intellectual and interpreting it. Right. Yeah.

[00:38:55] Meagen Gibson

Instead of just being able to witness and be in their real Self. And also, I'm sure everybody can also imagine and remember moments where they've done that to someone else because they were uncomfortable and their parts were relating to what the other person was experiencing. And so they had to dissociate or shame or shut down or just really miss what the person was saying. So it really helps us just more deeply relate to other people when they're experiencing things.

Dr Richard Schwartz

Yeah, I mean, I've apologized many times to my kids because I didn't know what the hell I was doing. My parts were pretty extreme back in those days.

Meagen Gibson

Well, that's I think the most important lesson of parenting, right? Learning how to apologize.

Dr Richard Schwartz

Totally.

Meagen Gibson

Everybody expects people to, especially on the self development path, to be perfect parents. And I'm like, oh no, no, I just know how to apologize really well.

Dr Richard Schwartz

It's a good one for marriage, too.

Meagen Gibson

Yeah, absolutely. Yeah. Any relationship, as it was. Well, I want to be respectful of your time, I could talk to you forever, but if people want to know more about you, about IFS, how to find IFS support, how can they do that?

Dr Richard Schwartz

Well, the website is [IFS-institute.com](https://www.ifs-institute.com), and on it they'll find we do run a lot of training programs. Unfortunately, or fortunately, they're very, very popular now, so they're hard to get into. And in the meantime, we have a program called the Online Circle Program, where people get most of the content, and then there are lots of books and other kinds of resources. Yes, that's just a good starter.

Meagen Gibson

It is.

[00:40:43] Dr Richard Schwartz

I want to mention that there's an IFS, it's called [The Foundation for Self Leadership](#) if anybody wants to donate. I don't, but the foundation does research and a lot of other things, so people can check that out too.

Meagen Gibson

Fantastic. Dick Schwarz, thank you so much for being with us today.

Dr Richard Schwartz

Thank you, Meagen. It's a treat to get to know you.