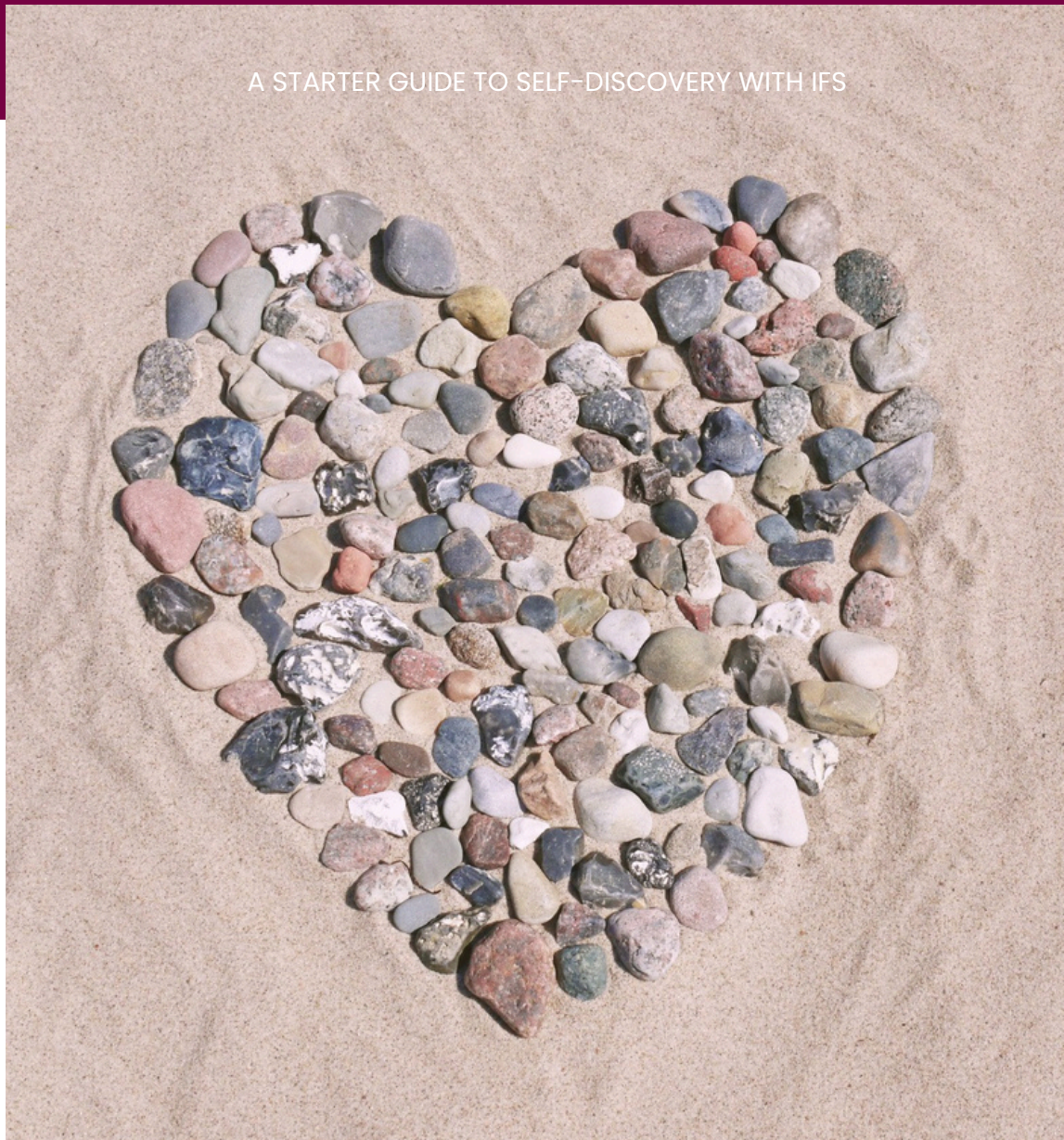


GETTING CURIOUS

ABOUT YOU

A STARTER GUIDE TO SELF-DISCOVERY WITH IFS



EMMA REDFERN



WELCOME

It's great you are here; I'm going to share some ideas to help you start recognizing some of your inner team or family.

There's no need to sit cross-legged or close your eyes in a special therapy room (unless you want to or are used to doing that already).

Instead, I'd like you to work from everyday life using the following six prompts.

For some of them, you might have ready-made answers, others might take a bit of reflection and inner curiosity. It might be an idea to record your findings somehow.

Maybe you have a favourite journal, or you like to make voice notes, whatever works best for you is fine.

ASK YOURSELF

On a good day, what do I like doing?



What do I like most about who I am?



What do I think my friends appreciate about me?



ASK YOURSELF

How about what my colleagues value about me and my work skills?



And family, what might they recognize in me?



What (or who) do I hide from colleagues, friends, or family?





Don't push yourself too far out of your comfort zone at this stage. Be gentle, there's no rush.

NOT WORKING OUT?

If you're not getting very far with the above, don't worry. Here are six more suggestions.

Remember, parts are not problems to be solved.

Getting curious was something I learned as an adult, it takes time and attention to enquire within.

LISTEN AND NOTE

Listen to and make a note of your 'self-talk' (that's the running commentary many of us have in our heads like, 'I really must go to the gym this week.' 'I'm so glad I made the effort to reach out to my friend.' 'I was miles away there.')



LISTEN AND REFLECT

Listen to what comes out of your mouth and perhaps reflect on it later ('Will you please tidy your room; I'll not tell you again!' 'Can I come round; I'm feeling a bit down with the kids back at school?')



NOTICE YOUR FEELINGS

Notice how you feel – angry, sad, jubilant, anxious, cautious, fearful, pleased, proud, and so on.



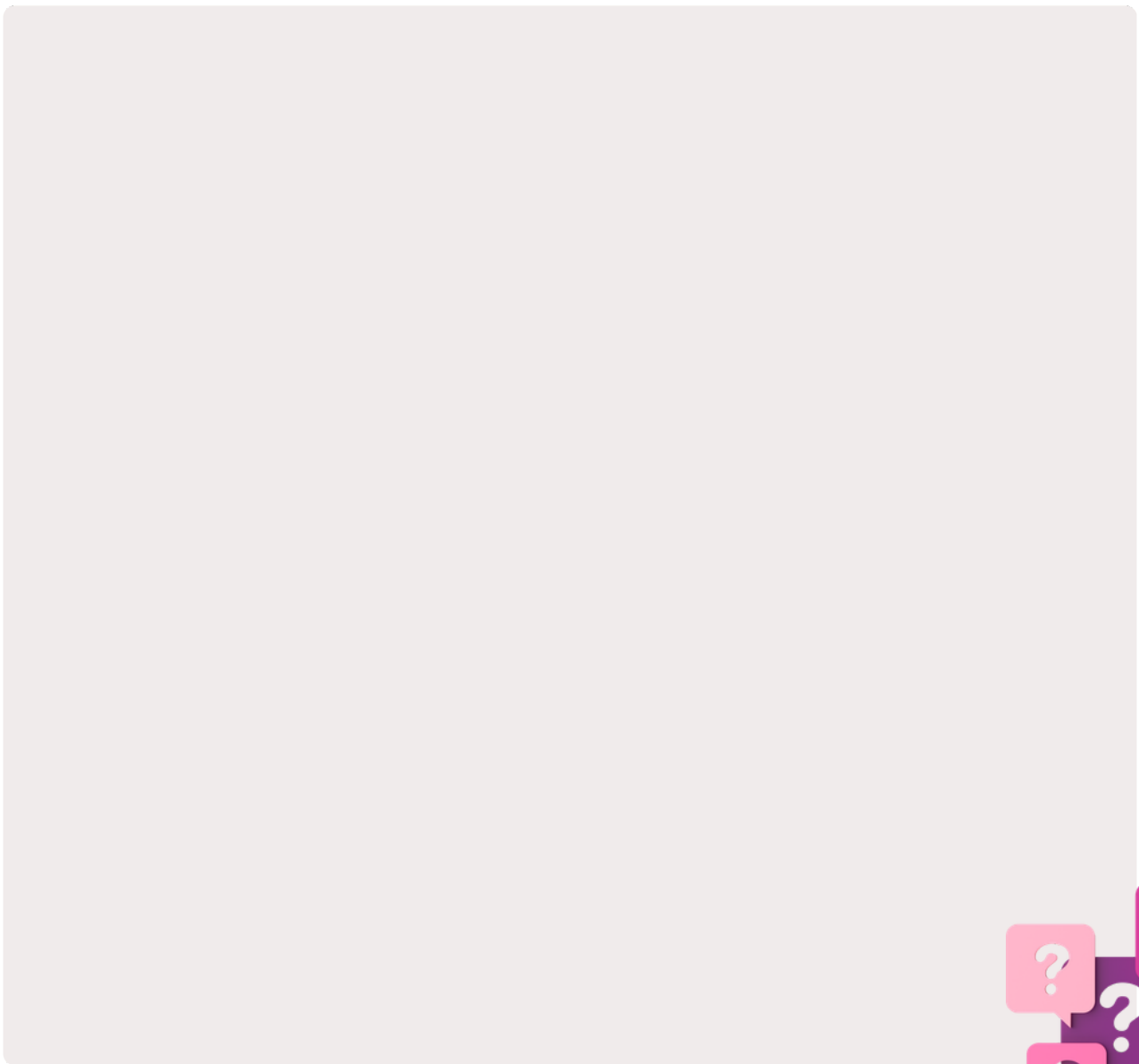
ATTEND TO YOUR BODY

Attend to your body sensations – nausea, butterflies in the stomach, a knot in the chest, tightness in the jaw, an irrepressible smile, tickly eyes from tears building up, and so on. If they had a voice, what would these sensations share with you?



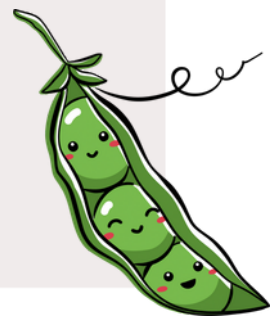
GET CURIOUS

Get curious about any automatic movements you make – holding your breath, biting down on your teeth, pressing your lips together, rubbing your hands against each other.



TRY THIS

Notice other people's behaviour, words, involuntary actions and consider if you do anything similar or want to be similar; we can often recognize ourselves in each other. ('I'm just like my mum/dad/granny/son ...' 'I'd love to be like that/do that ...')





CONGRATULATIONS!

Perhaps by using the above prompts you have already become aware of some parts inside you (maybe a Carer, a Critic or an Organizer Supreme).

Don't worry if you've not got quite that far, pacing and patience are part of getting curious too.

Before we take your discovery process to the next level, I want to take a moment to offer reassurance in case it is needed.

YES, IT'S NORMAL TO BE PLURAL!



In case you're wondering, having parts is completely normal and can be really advantageous.

Very briefly, here's how: some parts have jobs inside (while also doing our jobs outside in the world), other parts bravely hold our painful memories, usually from the past. We couldn't function without parts doing this.

IFS strongly suggests that it is helpful to think of and approach parts as people.

So, go back over your responses to the prompts from earlier and see if you can recognize any parts-as-people in whatever came up, whether that was thoughts, actions, memories, emotions, hopes or fears (or anything else).

Ask yourself, who said that? Who's there? Try and be welcoming to whoever you notice, if you can.



WHO LOOKS AFTER ALL THESE PARTS?

An excellent question. Usually, the answer through default not intention is 'No-one.'

Fortunately, IFS helps us become aware of our inner team, family members or parts (or you may prefer another term for this plurality inside).

IFS also helps us access our inner caring Self who is ideally able to relate to, look after, and heal (if necessary) parts who are up for that.



SELF, YOUR CALMLY CURIOUS INNER LEADER

Your calm inner leader, or what we call Self in IFS, can be recognized through the presence of 8 special but also everyday qualities beginning with the letter 'C':

- ★ Calm
- ★ Clarity
- ★ Courage
- ★ Curiosity
- ★ Creativity
- ★ Confidence
- ★ Compassion
- ★ Connectedness

I'm sure you will recognize these in yourself or others around you, or even in fictional characters or people in the media.

HERE ARE TWO PROMPTS YOU COULD USE TO REMIND YOURSELF OF A COUPLE OF THESE C QUALITIES

Have you been aware of your curiosity progressing through this workbook? What did it feel like in your body? Did it come with a feeling of openness and receptivity towards your parts?



Compassion is an open-hearted presence of feeling *for* (not *with*) the other. When did you last feel this for someone or something else (such as a pet)? Are you willing to feel this towards your parts as you meet them?





WHAT NEXT?

Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to get to know a part or parts. It's not as easy as getting to know another person because parts aren't 3D and visible etc. like people are, which is why knowing some IFS is helpful! If you can see parts in your mind's eye and hold a conversation with them that way, that's great.

Alternatively, you might want to create an external representation of a part, choosing an image, colour, shape or object. Additionally, you might find a temporary label to describe a part's role inside or in your life. Initially, it's like being a 'visiting anthropologist' in your own life.



But, here's the key thing; it's *the No. 1 tip* to help your Self get to know a part (and vice versa) – ask yourself, how do I feel towards this part?

If the response is welcoming, accepting and curious, or roughly equating to another C quality, that's when to meet and get to know a part.

As you spend time with an inner team/family member from a place of curiosity, compassion or any of the C qualities, the part is likely to open up to you – just like a person would that you approach with kindness, respect, and curiosity.



AND FINALLY...

Hopefully, in using this resource you have discovered more of who you are on the inside, whether parts or the experience of Self.

I have so much more to share with you, including, for example, *Making Friends with Your Inner Critic*. Self-and-part relationships are where the magic of IFS transformation lies, and we've only scratched the surface!



READY TO TAKE AN EXCITING NEXT STEP ON YOUR SELF-DISCOVERY JOURNEY?

If yes, purchase my book **Internal Family Systems: Making A Start (and Getting Curious)** now to dive deeper into understanding your parts, finding your Self and bringing Self and parts together!

The book is packed with practical tools and stories to guide your inner journey of discovery.

[Purchase YOUR COPY TODAY](#)

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Emma Redfern is a highly experienced Internal Family Systems (IFS) therapist and a passionate advocate for personal growth and self-discovery. With over a decade of experience in helping individuals and professionals navigate the transformative work of IFS, Emma is known for her compassionate, relatable approach and her ability to make complex concepts accessible for all.

Emma's [latest book](#) brings the powerful principles of IFS to a wider audience, offering practical tools and insights to help readers connect with their inner world and create meaningful change. Whether working one-to-one with clients or sharing her knowledge through writing and speaking, Emma is dedicated to empowering people to embrace every part of themselves and live with greater clarity, balance, and self-compassion.

