



**Love Summit 2014**  
**Dick Schwartz with Linda Kroll**

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Linda: I am so happy to introduce our next speaker this morning on Valentine's Day weekend. Dick Schwartz is a Family Therapist who has developed *Internal Family Systems*, which is a method of doing and therapy and also communicating that brings out the best, the highest self, in each person, in any relationship that you're in.

He began his career as a Systemic Family Therapist and an Academic at the University of Illinois and at Northwestern University. He was grounded in assistance thinking but then he developed IFS, which is Internal Family Systems in response to his client's descriptions of various parts within themselves. In 2000, he founded the Center for Self-Leadership, which offers three levels of training and workshops in IFS for professions and also for the general public, both in this country and now all around the world.

He is a ceaseless traveler and speaker all over the world. He speaks with warmth, sensitivity, clarity and humor. When I first heard him speak over 20 years ago about self and parts, I felt that I understood myself for the first time. For the last 20 years, he has been my teacher, my mentor and I am very happy to say my dear friend. He shares himself and his theories with thousands of people which such humility and generosity that he allows the system and the practice to expand to cover all dimensions.

Everything I do now, both in practice and in my life, has been infused with the IFS principles. I am so grateful for all that you have taught me, Dick. I am so thrilled that you are here with us today. Welcome Dr. Richard Swartz.

Richard: Thank you, Linda, what a sweet introduction. It has been a great experience to know you all these years.

Linda: Thanks. I know that the difficulty for me today, number one, will be to control my effusive parts, the ones that are so excited, both about *The Love Summit* and also having so many of my personal teachers that are part of the speakers this whole weekend.

You are the one that started me first. You are the one that 20 years ago I first came to. All that you've taught me and all that I bring both to individual's counseling and couple's counseling and divorce mediation and to my parenting and to the way I show up as a friend; all of that is infused with IFS and coming from my highest self.



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Can you give people a general overview of IFS, Internal Family Systems, what it means?

Richard: I can try. I really don't have the elevator speech down quite yet. I'll do my best. As you said, I was a family therapist and then I had clients and they started talking about what they call these "parts" of them. I was looking at bulimia at the time, they would talk about this critical part who attacked them. That would bring up very young, empty, lonely part. That was terribly distressing to feel. Then the binge would come in to the rescue and take them out of that, the emptiness. The critic would come back and attack them and then that would bring back that empty, raw, young part.

So as a family therapist I got interested in how all these parts related to each other inside, almost like a mirror family. As I learned from clients, because I hadn't studied the intrapsychic process, I didn't come with a lot of pre-assumptions. I had to really listen to what clients were saying about that.

What they ultimately had to say was that we all have them. It is my belief, we're all multi-personalities in a sense. We all have these different parts; what we call thinking is often just their interacting with each other in different ways. They are all good, which is hard to believe, because some of them seem so destructive. In particular, in intimate relationships, they can get in our way in a big way. But it turns out that they all have good intentions and they actually have a lot of talents and resources to give to us that is the nature of mind to have them.

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But because of what happens in our lives especially the hurts and injuries and humiliations, so on, they become quite extreme. They leave their naturally valuable states and take on roles inside of us that are anachronistic in a way because they are kind of frozen in the past and they don't realize, they are not updated about how life isn't quite as scary as it once was.

They can play out in our relationships in a number of different ways. One basic assumption is that we all have these parts; they are valuable. They are forced out of their naturally valuable states by traumas and hurts. They play a big role in our relationships.

The second big assumption is that sort of behind all of them or beneath all of that is what I call the Self.



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Linda: What's the Self? When people are listening and they're listening from the perspective of how does this relate to me? How does relate to my partner? How does relate to my being in the world? What is the concept of Self for them to hear?

Richard: It's a tough one for a lot of people because if I were to describe it many people would say, "Well there's nobody like that inside of me." It is what people meditate to get to often. It is this sort of essence in us that is a core of valuable qualities. Oddly enough, all of them begin with the letter C, I discovered. Things like calm, compassion, courage, clarity, connectedness, confidence and so on because I can't think of the rest right now.

Linda: Courage.

Richard: Yeah, I said courage. Creativity. Did I say confidence?

Linda: It's calmness, curiosity, clarity, compassion, confidence, creativity, courage and connectedness.

Richard: Right, thank you Linda.

Linda: I was reading off the website.

Richard: What I found was just in helping clients with these parts, if I could get them to relax a little bit, which I could early on, this state would kind of pop up in them and they would suddenly seem like a different person who now seemed very centered.

Because I was a family therapist, I was trying to help them interact with these parts inside. Earlier they might have been afraid of the part or angry at it. Suddenly, they would say, "I just feel kind of curious about why it's doing what it's doing." They were calm and confident and when I asked what part that was they'd say, "Well that's not really a part like these others. It's more who I am myself."

That's why we call it the Self. It turns now having done this 30 years, thousands of people, as you said, all over the world are doing this. That that state is just beneath the surface of these parts and when they agree to relax inside and separate a little bit, that comes naturally; kind of spontaneously in everybody.



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The big discovery in IFS is that you don't really have to meditate 20 years to get to it. It's universal so everybody has it in them. It's sort of by birthright and that it can't be damaged by trauma. If you apply all this to relationships, then ideally we're going to relate to our partner from that place that I just described as Self.

What we try to do when we look at couples is to foster Self-to-Self communication but most the time we don't because our intimate partner like no one else has a way to trigger these very vulnerable parts in us that are stuck in hurt times in the past. Then that will trigger the parts of us that want to protect us and those parts are the ones when we get into conflict that usually are doing the talking with our partner.

Linda: Just to paraphrase what you were saying because I know on the website where I was finding all the list of C's that I have on my board in my office, it's kind of like, we are this oceanic Self when we're connected to that divine space of who we are. We are also the wave when our egos come into play and our traumas from the past that we've pushed aside or the managers or protectors that we seek to defend ourselves with are often what the couple is really engaged in.

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But when you get to the place of Self, you're coming from a oneness which is bigger than and more inclusive of all your parts, but with a lot of love and compassion. Right?

Richard: Yeah, right. And curiosity. When you're in that state you're not defensive. You're just open. You want to know what's going on with your partner. You're not trying to change or control them. You're wanting to know so that you can show your love to that person because that's part of the inborn desire, this place of Self is to connect in a loving way to Self in another person or Self actually in your own parts.

My take on it is that what we might call God subdivided and there's that drop in each of us and it wants to connect the dots, it wants to come back into unity and one way to do that is for us relate to somebody else Self-to-Self. That's what we're here to do. That's what we're here to learn how to do.

Linda: Our partners past and present help us do that, right? Because you talk about our mentors sometimes being our tormentors and even when there's conflict, there's something to learn if we're curious rather than judgmental. Right?



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Richard: Yeah. Most of us have been taught and actually want our partners to be our soul mates and never upset us and only make us feel good about ourselves. In fact, we're kind of socialized to believe that that person is out there and if we just look hard enough, we're going to find that person.

My take is we are here to heal all of the stuff in ourselves that I've been talking about. Your soul mate doesn't really exist and if he did it wouldn't really be helpful because he wouldn't know about the stuff you need to heal.

Our partners should trigger us and be our, like you said, tor-mentor. In doing that, there is lots of access to those parts of us that are hurting and are stuck in scenes from our childhood often that actually need our attention and need us to heal. As we can do that, then our relationships get better and better because we're not such a mind field.

I like this metaphor of "Most of us come out of our family with what we think of as invisible bone bruises," where we don't even see them but there's this deep bruise inside so that when our partner even inadvertently in communicating with us touches one of those, it is like a big explosion of emotion inside and we don't realize – we don't understand why react so hard because it's invisible and our partner is blown away by our reaction.

If you stay with that and followed it back, asked the part where it's stuck in the past, you will often see a scene where you were hurt in some way in your family or with peers or in school or something. There's a process to actually retrieve that part of where it's stuck in the past and help it feel much better and unload the pain or fear or shame that it still carries.

Our tor-mentors are in our life to try and help us realize this is what we have to work on. As we do heal that then there aren't so many mines in the minefield and our Self is much better able to stay connected to our partners.

Linda: Fabulous. For instance, if we have an experience in our childhood where one or more parents are caretakers and was not giving us what we needed. We felt unloved or abandoned or neglected and we just kind of exiled those feelings and don't deal with them and decide we're going to manage and find somebody to connect with. The minute they don't call us when they say they will or they are not giving us the attention that we need, we're not just dealing in the present with what's happening, we are going back to the minefield of the pain in the past and needing to take care of that inner child and reclaim him or her in a way that allows us to stay present with our partner.



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Richard: Yeah, that's a nice summary. When our partner doesn't call, like you said, and it takes us back into that time when we were so hurt by the neglect of a parent. Then another part of us says, "Well okay, that's not the right partner anymore." We have to go find somebody else or we'll decide well we've got to change this person make them aware of how hurtful they are and how they have to call us a lot more than they are. We'll come with that kind of energy to our partner to make them change.

Or another protector might say, "It's really because you're so needy." So we have to lock up that exile even more so that you don't feel bothered by things like this which, never really works. When our partner doesn't act the way they are supposed to, in terms of being our redeemer, because those what we call exile parts, you just mentioned, that are stuck back when we were neglected or hurt somehow are looking for someone who resembles the person who hurt us in the first place.

Because when we were young, we thought we were going to die if we were neglected. It was so scary to have somebody act as if we're not valued. That with that sense of not being valuable or being worthless comes with survival terror. Like, "I'm not going to make it." With that comes the drive for redeemer and often the focus is on getting the person who said you weren't initially when you were young that you weren't valuable to change their mind or someone who resembled that person.

A lot of the time we'll go looking for someone who actually resembles one of our caretakers expecting that they're going to change and actually finally let us know we are valuable, but we wind up picking somebody who does resemble our caretaker who does the same thing basically. That's part of the dilemma in relationships that we're looking for somebody to take care of these hurt exiled parts of us and make us feel valuable. That person can't do it for one. Second, often has qualities that will hurt us again.

Linda: You're saying the three things that we do are either to work really hard to try to change the other person, which can come off as judging or blaming or judgmental or critical. Or we decide we want to leave and physically do or the third way you said is to protect ourselves.



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Often as we're protecting ourselves, what we do is either put a wall up to keep ourselves from being hurt but it also keeps us from the intimacy and connection that we're feeling. Then when we're looking at our partners from that side of the wall, we're looking at them through a filter that says, "You're always or you're never" and so you're longer connected or present and the relationship is in conflict, right?

Richard: Yeah, and then that will trigger your partner's protective parts. When I work with couples, it's often parts work. It's none of this nice Self energy we've talked about in the office at all. A lot of the beginning of the work is simply getting everybody to drop their weapons and then to do what I call a U-turn in their focus. Sp that they instead of being focused and changing the other person they begin to look at the stuff that's coming up in their relationship inside of themselves and start to commit to trying to heal that.

So, they are then using their partner as their tor'mentor in the way I've been talking about. In the process of doing that, the goal become to help each partner become what I call the "primary caretaker" of their own exiled parts, which then frees the other from the secondary caretaker of those parts.

Most of us have it reversed. We want our partner to be the primary caretaker of our parts that feel so worthless or empty or lonely. That's a setup. That's kind of the cruel joke of relationships is that we all expect that but then we can never get it that way. We have to have a loving relationship with those parts of us first and then as you said, if we have our partner in that role, then we're having to control that person all the time because it's delicate.

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They have to either not do certain things that will trigger or do certain things that are going to reassure and our partner feels very bombarded by all these control messages. My goal is to free each partner up to have what I call courageous love. Where their love isn't so conditional. It's just Self-led love of this other person. Even if the person gets distant or even decides that the relationship isn't the best that you can still stay connected and stay in this open, loving way.

In relationships where that's achieved, partners talk about the relief of not having to take care of these little kids in the other person.

Linda: Exactly, and when I do a lot of divorce mediation, people come in with parts flailing all over the place. I see them angry and judgmental and when we talk a



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little bit about their family of origin and we find out how they dealt with their pain and sadness, how they reacted and they can often point out their partner's parts much more easily than they can part out their own.

But when they allow themselves to connect to their heart and connect to the Self inside of them, they then can have more compassion for those exiled, hurt and sad feelings in their partner. Even going through a divorce, they can come from a much more Self led perspective because they have empathy, first for themselves and then for each other. It's a beautiful sight to teach.

Richard: Yeah, that's really true the way you feel toward parts of you will play out in how you relate to your partner when your partner acts like those parts of you.

Linda: Okay, so *You Are the One You've Been Waiting For*, that's the book that you wrote. It's beautiful. I reread it. I read it several years ago. Could you tell us more about *You Are The One You've Been Waiting For*?

Richard: *You Are The One You've Been Waiting For*? It's the theme I've been trying to develop that we are all waiting for this external person to take care of these parts of us but that in fact they can't and in fact, you can, even though most of us don't realize that.

This process I've developed called IFS is designed to help people focus inside and notice the pain or the fear or the shame or the anger, whatever the emotion is and actually get into what now is being called mindful, in that mindful place relative to that.

Most people often if they're fighting with their partner and they start with their anger, I have them focus on it and I'll say, "How do you feel toward that anger?"

Linda: Can we take a minute and have people actually do this with you because I'm sure as our listeners are listening in, they can identify that there's somebody that they are angry at. Just tell them what you would tell them if you're in their office and talk to them directly. They're going to see what it's like to feel IFS in action and I'm going to do it too. Okay?

Richard: All right. I'll do it with you and then they can play along. How about that?

Linda: Okay, do I have to tell who I'm dealing with or I can keep that private?

Richard: No, we can do this. Linda think of a person who –





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Linda: Everybody else with Linda. So you're all doing your own work while I'm doing it with you online, okay everybody? Go ahead, Dick, we're ready.

Richard: Think of a person in your current life or past life who seemed to really trigger you, maybe you've closed your heart to or maybe you're trying to connect with but you have trouble; somebody who triggers these protective parts of you. Linda, just tell me when you have somebody in mind?

Linda: I've got somebody and I'm going to offer people that if they don't have anybody currently, they probably have somebody in their past. You can even do some healing with somebody that you're not even in contact with anymore but it's kind of just out there. So, yes I have somebody. Thank you.

[00:25:00]

Richard: Okay. Put that person in a room by him or herself; a contained room. You're outside the room looking at -- is it a him?

Linda: Yes.

Richard: You are looking at him through a window.

Linda: Okay.

Richard: Now, from outside the room, have the person do the thing that triggers you and see what happens as you watch that. What happens in your body?

Linda: My heart constricts. My breathing intensifies. I get all the symptoms of stress. I get shallow breathing. I get constricted. My jaw tightens.

Richard: So that's happening right now?

Linda: Yes.

Richard: Okay. As you notice your jaw and your breathing, do you have a sense of what part of you that is? Is that anger or what is the feeling that's coming?

Linda: There might be some anger. There might be some resentment. There might be some fear. There might be the wall that I've learned to put up or the filter that I keep seeing him from.



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Richard: All right. Those would be different parts. Is there one of those that you want to work with, with this exercise?

Linda: Maybe the wall.

Richard: All right. As you notice that your physical experience with the wall, what's that like?

Linda: It's like a shut down, a numbing.

Richard: You feel numbing in your body.

Linda: Yeah.

Richard: Is that centered anywhere in particular?

Linda: Probably around my heart and stomach. My core.

Richard: As you notice it there, just get a real sense of the impact it has on your body for a second.

Linda: Okay.

Richard: Tell this wall internally that you're not going to go into the room right now with this guy.

Linda: Okay.

Richard: It's safe for it to relax a little bit. Just see if you can notice it beginning to separate from you. See if it's willing.

Linda: It's willing.

Richard: Okay.

Linda: But fortunately, I've done a lot of work with you with this. For people who are listening, if your wall isn't willing to separate, you're just going to love it. Dick is going to show you how to be with that too because we want people who are listening don't want to give up their walls because they are afraid that if do they're going to be vulnerable and hurt.



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Richard: In this exercise, we are not going into the room so the walls can relax a little bit.

Linda: Right. Okay. It's willing.

Richard: Okay, how do you feel toward this wall as you notice it?

Linda: I like it because it's been keeping me safe.

Richard: Okay, so let it know that. Let it know you value how it has protected you and just see how it reacts to your appreciation.

Linda: It likes being acknowledged and appreciated and seen.

Richard: Yeah, and how do you notice that? It said that or are you just notice a shift of some kind?

Linda: It just relaxes.

Richard: It relaxes more.

Linda: Yes. It's like, "Finally, somebody's here. I don't have to be the dam anymore."

Richard: Right. Just ask it what it's afraid would happen if it didn't come up so big with this person?

Linda: That I would be hurt or would be taken advantage or something would be said that would make me feel vulnerable. Even more so, something would be triggered that would make me go back into old co-dependent behavior and I'd be working overtime to please.

Richard: Okay. It could be a whole variety of things?

Linda: Right.

Richard: Either it's protecting – standing in front of parts that could be hurt by this person by something you might say?

Linda: Or have been hurt by.



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Richard: And have in the past or it's kind of holding back parts that could be sucked back in?

Linda: Yes, and that's probably the bigger one for me.

Richard: Take care of him, yeah. Does that make sense to you, Linda? That it would be doing that?

Linda: Yes.

Richard: Okay, so if you can, thank it for its service.

Linda: Thank you for your service.

Richard: Now the next steps for this, I don't know if you want to do it, would be, because you thought the co-dependent part was the bigger one, what be to actually see if this wall would let us try to help that part not be so vulnerable to that?

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Linda: Sure. Everybody with me? So what we are doing is just for those listeners, what you're doing is you're just working with a part of you that has been protecting you from your partner, whether it's your wall or your anger or your resentment or your detachment or your withdrawal or your sarcasm. You're willing to say, "Okay, I know I'm using this wall to protect me and keep me distant"

For this exercise, for now, I'm willing to put down my wall and see what's underneath and who is behind it that the wall is protecting. For me, it might be some anger. It might be some resentment. It might be some hurt. It might be some pain but it's also some fear that if I don't keep my wall up, I might go back into the old dynamic of just co-dependently trying to be nice and pleasing and caretaking and lose myself again.

That's my update and I would like everybody to just take a moment and just go inside and breathe. Everybody just take a deep breath. Every time you breathe you kind reboot into your heart, into your higher self, into Self and then we're going to let Dick continue as we go even deeper to see who and what is behind the walls that we have built with our partner's past or present. Okay Dick, I'm ready.

Richard: All right. Ask the wall if we have permission to go to the part that does want to please this person, this guy?



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Linda: The wall is also aware that we're talking to thousands of people and I'm about to go deeper into some vulnerability here. I just need to name what the wall is afraid will happen but I trust you and all the people that are listening.

Richard: We can honor that fear and not do it.

Linda: No, I'm going with you. I want him out of there because we're all afraid to do this. We're all afraid that if we go to the soft exiles, those inner children, we're just going to be flooded or we're going to be shamed or we're going to be embarrassed or we are never going to come out. Fortunately, I've had 20 years of this, so I know that on the other side there is freedom and liberation and compassion and more connection and more passion and more joy. I'm ready. Okay. Here we go.

Richard: I think I want to say to the listeners that like you've said you do have experience with this and if they don't it's probably better to not do this until they have somebody who can guide them more.

Linda: Okay and I'll tell them that in the guiding of that just because it's coming up, the seven-week program that I'm doing after this session is over that's part of the Gold Pass will be actually practicing what we're doing here so that they can learn to do it with themselves. They can listen now and practice later. Or they can find an IFS therapist in their community at [selfleadership.org](http://selfleadership.org) and we'll tell you more about that later. Okay, here we go.

Richard: Great. All right Linda. Focus on the part that might want to take care of him again or please him somehow and see where you find that one in your body.

Linda: Kind of all over.

Richard: How do you feel toward this one?

Linda: I like her, she's a pretty nice woman; pretty co-dependent but nice.

Richard: The parts of you that judge her as co-dependent, let's get them to step back in there.

Linda: Oh, those okay. I wasn't coming from myself?

Richard: Right.



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- Linda: Those self-critics show up. Okay. Ready. I like the part of me that's the co-dependent part because she's done a really good job of many things in my life. She has managed my life very well.
- Richard: Let her know that. See how she reacts to your appreciation.
- Linda: She's a little skeptical but she's okay.
- Richard: Do you see her or do you just sense her in there?
- Linda: I see her. I have a picture of myself from 20 years ago. I see her well.
- Richard: Okay. Let's just see what she wants you to know about why she might want to take care of this guy again.
- Linda: Because she wants to be loved, she wants to be connected. She wants to feel safe. She wants to be happy. She wants the world to be happy.
- Richard: She just wants to take care of everybody so everybody's happy with her?
- Linda: Yes.
- [00:35:00]
- Richard: Is there something still with this guy in particular? Ask her that?
- Linda: Probably, yes.
- Richard: Ask her what's she afraid would happen if she didn't get him to like her again or take care of him?
- Linda: That she'd be abandoned. Her dreams would be quashed and the happily ever after wouldn't happen.
- Richard: That sort of happened with this guy? I get the impression already.
- Linda: We are not naming names.
- Richard: I'm sorry.



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- Linda: A thousand of my closest friends are listening in. I hope I'm speaking for everybody. We all have people that we love that we have conflicts with that we wish had different relationships currently. Like Dick says, it's a matter of going inside and doing our own work and releasing ourselves from our exiled feelings and the way we've managed and just to find ways to be more loving. So that's what we're doing but I'm doing the u-turn and the way Dick spells it is the U-turn turn is youturn so I'm turning inward and just loving my part through this. Here we go okay.
- Richard: You want to keep going?
- Linda: Sure.
- Richard: Let her know you get that she's got this ideal of getting everybody to love each other and her and that she's afraid that she'd have to give up the dream of this guy.
- Linda: Okay.
- Richard: Just ask.
- Linda: She heard you.
- Richard: She did?
- Linda: Yeah.
- Richard: Just ask if there's anything she wants to know about the past, where she might be stuck?
- Linda: Maybe because I've done enough of this work or maybe because next to my 44-year old I have a picture of my four year old. I know that there's an inner child who at the age two-and-a-half even when I have this wonderful family; loving mother, father, brother, but when my mother went to the hospital to have my brother, it was many years ago. She was gone for two weeks and my father worked for two weeks. They put me with an aunt and uncle who didn't really want to take care of me. Many days I was left outside to play on my own at the age of two-and-a-half. I felt very abandoned and alone and remember myself being in that crib at two years old thinking, "I'm always going to be nice so everybody will love me and nobody will ever leave me again."



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Richard: Okay.

Linda: It jumped right into that exile.

Richard: Did that come up, Linda, or is that what you think it might be?

Linda: That's what I think it might be.

Richard: Go back. It might be that but go back to the pleasing part. Ask it if that's right or if there's some other place?

Linda: There may be some other place. Only for the sake of people listening in who don't want to get too far into my story, but are into theirs, why don't we generically take this so that they can see where we're headed. Talk us through where you would take me and only because I feel so gifted to have the time but I don't want to make this all about me, even though I hope people are learning from me that you would have me do what, have me talk to my...

Richard: If you were that two year old that you mentioned, I would have you focus on it and I'd get you to the point where you were caring of it, let it know that. At some point, I would ask you to go into the scene and be there with that child in the way she needed somebody during those two weeks.

Linda: What I have done because I have been gifted, not only to study with you, but Susan McConnell, Tony Blank and so many of the other gifted IFS therapists. I have had the opportunity and I'm going to invite everybody listening to take this opportunity that wherever your exiled pain started. Again, we don't have to go to far into it but what you can do is take a deep breath and connect to that Self, that higher Self, oceanic Self, that you are, that's related to your essence and you divine being and your deepest knowing.

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Just go back and I'm going to take that little girl out of the crib. I'm going to hold her in my arms. I'm going to take her back with me to keep her safe and I'm going to remind her that I'm here now, that I don't need to be co-dependent. I don't need my wall to protect me, that I can stay loving to her and keep her safe. I can stay loving to him and wish him well and at the same time spread more compassion all around because I'm coming from Self because you taught me well.





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Richard: You should only do that if you do become the primary caretaker of that little 2-year-old. Take her out of the dreadful place, that scene in the past to a safe place.

Linda: And once we do that what I've learned to do because I have done this work so long both on both sides as someone who's having the therapy and also offering this therapy is I also have a great deal of compassion for his inner child. I have a great deal of respect for anything that happened to his past. Anything that happened to him, anything that happened in our relationship, anything that I knowingly or unknowingly did to hurt him. In my heart and in many ways have asked for forgiveness and forgiven him.

Even though forgiveness is a daily practice, sometimes and gratitude as well, IFS has really helped not only shift my perspective of how people can relate after relationships end, but also infuse it into my work of helping people either mediate or get divorced from a place where they can be grateful for what each of them brought to the relationship and be grateful for what they've learned from the tormenting that the partners have brought and also show up to be more loving and open and spacious and connected even with appropriate boundaries.

Richard: Yeah, that's a nice summary of some of the goals. What you find is that in addition to those C words we talked about, this place of Self has a kind of natural forgiveness because when you're in that place, it's like you have x-ray vision. You see past the protectors of your partner to their exiles, to their parts. You can have compassion even in the face of their protectors.

Too often too many systems try to force premature forgiveness. They try to say if you're a good person you'll forgive this person but the act of doing that then means you have to push more and more the parts of you that are hurt out of your consciousness which only makes them feel abandoned more.

Linda: All that you've taught about Self and the first time I saw you, you did a Self up the mountain where we can separate from the parts of us that are judgmental, hurt and angry, reactive, sad, scared and anxious and just come from that place of peace and calm and compassion. After studying with you, I was studying at the Chopra Center and saw how much they connected in terms of that oceanic Self, that oneness.

You talked on the website about being a wave and an ocean. Our egos, the way we manage our feelings create the ego or the persona or the mask or the managers, the protectors that we put on in the world. But when we quiet our minds, and you mentioned meditating, you can get to the stillness inside which is



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that soul or that essence or that Self. Then when you relate to the other person from Self, you are no longer in that fight flight response that causes you to be sarcastic or withholding, but allows you to really create a solution to any problem that you have from a higher perspective than the level of the problem. You're really doing it from a Self-to-Self perspective.

It's a great way to connect and it's also a great way to learn to love yourself because I said in the video that love is the answer and it starts with loving yourself. Most people don't enough so can you talk a little bit more about self-love and how that adds more passion, connection and fun to your life?

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Richard: Most people don't because we are not taught how to. We are given the message that we should love ourselves but to do that you have to help all the parts that don't love each other and don't love you to feel connected and appreciated by you. That takes some skill. It's not something you can just will. A lot of the IFS process is that very concretely doing that and learning how to do it on your own is a little bit of a skill.

As we are speaking, as you do that, not only can you lead your life more often from these C word qualities but also as you can heal the parts of you that were hurt in relationships, they have more access to you and they transform from being bundles of pain or shame or rage or hurt to get to being, like you said, sort of playful, happy, loving, creative, spontaneous, trusting, innocent, childlike parts of you that they were originally.

Now, you have access to them because you haven't locked them away. Before you did lock them away because you didn't want to be around them because they could pull you into all of their pain. Now you love having them around because they spice up your life so much.

Unfortunately, the process in our society of going through life involves locking away more and more of our juice because it got hurt and this is a way to bring it back and heal it. We can bring all of those joyful qualities into our life and have more fun.

Linda: That's terrific and when I talk to people about getting to their feelings and I know Susan McConnell does a lot of work and a lot of therapists do with somatic IFS, how we embody the pain, how we get hurt as children and keep that pain in our



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body, and then go into our heads and figure out how to manage. What we can't manage we do extreme things to kind of numb us.

When I go to that place where I can find that inner child and even taking that 2-year-old of the crib at my aunt and uncle's house, and taking her to a safe place, holding her in my arms and having her feel my presence and my unconditional love that if she wants to be sad and if she wants to be angry and if she wants to be scared, I'm going to be here for her. As she learns to trust me then I'm who shows up in her future relationships.

The other piece that often do is when I'm holding my inner child in my arms, I allow myself to kind of fall back for me in the hands of God. So whether it's a God or oneness or higher power or spirit or universal self, I allow myself to open to receive unconditional love from God and the universe. I then open my heart to and channel that love and unconditional support to that younger part of myself that needs it and it's not an obligation. It's not one more thing for my codependent part to take care of, but it allows me to channel in that infinite love that's there and just be a vessel to receive, which a lot of people can't do, but to receive and just allow it to flow through me to those parts of me that need it.

Then as I fill up with that love and compassion, just envision it going out from my body into the world into all the relationships that I have with my children and my family and hopefully the world. The IFS process teaches people how to do that. It's a beautiful, beautiful system Dick.

You've spent 30 years creating it and the way that you have put it out there. I know you did it in a way that took great courage because it wasn't mainstream 30 years ago. I remember you speaking in a room to very interested people but now you speak before hundreds all over the world, thousands all over the world at Esalen, Kripalu,

They can go to your website [selfleadership.org](http://selfleadership.org) and see all the different places that you're going to be. I think there's one, *Was the Buddha an IFS Therapist?* Great title because I really think that's true. I think when we are talking Self we're talking that Buddha nature, that compassionate heart that's in all of us and it's just you're vernacular for helping us get there. Don't you think?

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Richard: I do, yeah. I think I've kind of repackaged some Perennialism and Emerson had a line. It goes something like, "He was frustrated because he found that..." I've lost



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the line. I've totally lost the line. I can't believe it. But anyway, he was frustrated because all of his wisdom had been found before by the agents.

Linda: Exactly. I think we are all teaching the same thing, which is love. How do you become more loving which is the whole reason for the Summit and the whole reason that I'm so thrilled. Because I've said before that I sit in the classes and the workshops that I've been so gifted to be able to take and listen to you and Davidji and Sark and so many others and then feel like we're all channels.

We're all these funnels taking in the sum of our experience and our wisdom and our knowledge and our Dharma and our purpose. If we can get our egos out of the way to quit worrying about what people think of us or if we can do it or how to do it or whatever and just allow ourselves to embody that Self leadership, Self soul, spirit essence and just live from that, it changes everything. Doesn't it?

Richard: Yeah. It was, "His best ideas have been stolen by the ancients." That's what it was.

Linda: There you go. Exactly. This is Vedic Wisdom from 5,000 years old. That's why when I heard Deepak Chopra talk and I thought, "He and Dick should get together. They're talking the same thing in the vernacular."

The other thing I realized when I was learning meditation is the reason a lot of people can't meditate, is because they haven't done the IFS work.

Richard: A lot of mediation teachers are combining it with IFS.

Linda: Right, because if you don't heal your parts' burdens and nobody's damaged out here. A lot of people talk about baggage or broken or any pejorative that they use for themselves. Nobody's broken. You are all divine beings of light and love. Things happened in your past that covered your light and what IFS does is just help you with a great deal of love and compassion. Go back and unburden those burdens. So you are already in touch with the divine life that's already inside of you. It does it in such a way that as you unburden, you're left with the joy that's your natural birthright.

You're automatically more loving and compassionate and present. Of course as far as passion goes, when you learn to put your walls down with your partner, guess what happens? Passion comes back. It's just all constricted.



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I think IFS should be taught in schools because I've actually had children of families come in, even when they are eight years old. I have this board that I have with Self listed with its eight qualities and a list of exiles and managers and extreme parts. Eight year old children can learn that when they see their parent angry, they're really feeling hurt or the child can learn not to act out but to talk for their sadness or their fear.

You learn how to be a better parent. You learn how to be a better child to your parents because you can again see the inner child that they were and how they were parented, and have compassion that they really did the best they knew how to do with you, even if it wasn't everything you needed. It leads to more forgiveness of your parents even if they are not still here. You forgive them.

I think IFS should be taught in every workplace so that people could relate Self-to-Self with everyone that they work with, with their friends and their families. I know that there's a new Foundation. Tell us about the Foundation that has been started with IFS to kind of spread the word and get it out there.

Richard: It's called the Foundation for Self Leadership and the goal is to raise money for research so that we can do some of the things you've been talking about. There is interest in bringing it into education and also into corporations. All of that is in the works but it takes being able to document its effectiveness. That's what we're trying to raise money for.

Linda: I see something on the website that IFS is shown to reduce pain and depression and improve physical function for rheumatoid arthritis patients.

Richard: That's one outcome study we've done so far. It was done at the Harvard Hospital out here in Boston.

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We had really, really valuable, positive results. It's published in the *Journal of Rheumatology*. It was a really well done study and I'm very proud of that with not just psychological variables but also the pain process, the disease process. It's measured by a blinded physician. We want to do more of that kind of stuff through the foundation.

Linda: With meditation, like you said, you didn't have to meditate for 20 years but when you start to meditate, if you haven't healed the burdens from your past and the energy of them is still locked in your body, when you sit down to meditate and



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you're not busy anymore or you're not doing anything addictive or extreme to kind of numb you, and you're sitting with the feelings that you haven't processed, it makes it difficult to meditate.

If you take the time to learn about self-leadership and what it means to speak for your parts, instead of from your parts and what it means to go inside and love yourself unconditionally as you stay curious as to what role your parts have, how you've exiled them, how you've managed, how you get extreme and also because you are looking from a higher Self perspective, to learn to be empathetic even when your partner is acting out in a way that you think is extreme.

You can know that underneath their behavior that they're showing you is a protective mechanism that's really protecting a wonderful little child inside and if you see it from that perspective, you're going to shift into self leadership even when there's a part of you that's really angry or really reactive. Right Dick?

Richard: Right, well said.

Linda: It helps to be courageous because when you're courageous you show up willing to be vulnerable, willing to talk about the part that you've exiled. You talk about your fear and you talk about your sadness. You talk about your hurt. For some people who have exiled it, they need to talk about their anger too but a lot of times people go around angry because they are not willing to talk about their sadness. But as you learn how to speak for those exiles, you don't need the walls, you don't need the anger or resentment.

You really come from love, even if the boundaries that you need to set with somebody means that you can no longer be with them. You have to end the relationship, but you can even end a relationship from Self and have a Self led divorce if you need to and compassionately mediate and create a new dynamic with your restructured family that's really Self led.

It covers past relationships; relationships with people who are no longer here. It covers the relationships with yourself and it does so in a way that really infuses a holistic perspective where you tune into your body, you let go of the limiting beliefs that you've taken on from your caretakers or your past or the ways you've managed. You really connect to the spiritual essence of who you are and you relate to each other from your highest and best self.



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It's a beautiful process of compassionate communication. It's one that I have studied for 20 years and actually will be speaking next about compassionate communication and how it leads to more peace and love and joy.

But first tell us a little bit more before we have to go about what you're excited about, Dick, and how people can reach you.

Richard: As you said, the website is [selfleadership.org](http://selfleadership.org) and I could be reached that way. Mainly we train therapists, but we do retreats for the public. I do it in very nice settings a couple, three times a year, which people can follow off the website. We have an annual conference that the public is welcome to come to. This year it's in Providence, Rhode Island in November.

Otherwise, we are trying to design a program for the public called Self Leadership Training, I think. I am currently working on the curriculum for that. That's a very exciting prospect for me to make this more widespread and maybe influence a culture a little bit with it.

Linda: That's fabulous. While that's being created they can get the Gold Pass for the seven weeks which will incorporate a great deal of IFS. We start with IFS and how you bring Self-leadership into your own Self-love and your love of the people in your life.

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You let go of limiting beliefs and feel more forgiving and expansive and speak your truth and connect your intuition and relate from your highest Self.

The other piece is in terms of going to the site [selfleadership.org](http://selfleadership.org), they have a blog there and they also have a way to find a therapist. There are hundreds of therapists all over the world and each and every one is Self-led and loving, compassionate and very skilled in these techniques. If anything has been triggered in this call or this weekend that you want to go deeper, than go to [selfleadership.org](http://selfleadership.org) where you can find a therapist.

If you sign up to create a page for yourself or to create a connection with them, I think Dick is offering a free gift of your first chapter of the book. Right Dick?

Richard: Yeah, ideally if we can work it out in a week to get it set up. None of us are that technically inclined but I would like to.



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Linda: Okay. We will figure out how to get them the first chapter in a Pdf format because *You Are The One That You've Been Waiting For* is a wonderful book that you can order online. Even in the first chapter, it outlines the things that Dick has talked about. The youturn, the courageous love, what it means to be in Self and speak for your parts, to come from your heart, to come with compassion and to also have faith that your partner was put into your life to teach you a lot of the things that you were meant to learn.

In learning it, you can go deeper into more intimacy. You can go deeper into more compassion, which leads to more passion, which leads to more connection, which leads to more fun and that can start just by knowing that you know how to do it and you can learn how to do it.

You've learned a great deal from listening. You quoted Pema Chodron in your book Dick that other people trigger us to trigger the karma that we haven't worked out. They mirror us and give us the chance to befriend all that ancient stuff that we carry around like a backpack full of boulders. The idea of karma is that you continually get the teachings you need to have in order to open your heart.

What we are doing this weekend and all the time is opening our hearts to all parts of ourselves, opening our hearts of all partners, past and future, and to be a channel of love to ourselves, to our families, to our communities and ultimately to the world. All of this can be found. There is so much information on [selfleadership.org](http://selfleadership.org).

Dick, I thank you so much for being here. I thank you so much for the 20 years plus; the 30 years total. I've only been part for 20 years but you are a gift to this world and have been true personal gift to me. Thank you.

Richard: Thank you, Linda. It's been great to have you in our community and to have you supporting IFS this way. This project is an exciting one. I'm very happy to invite you to be a part of that.

Linda: I couldn't have done it without you. Thank you and thank you all for listening. Come back soon because I'm going to continue this conversation on what we started and talk about compassionate communication bringing more peace, love and joy. So thank you so much Dick. Sending a lot of love to you and a lot of love to everybody. I'll talk to you soon. Bye-bye.

Richard: Bye-bye.