

## “5 Steps to “Unblending”

When we are triggered by something and our traumatized parts get activated, their feelings flood the body with intense and overwhelming feelings and impulses to act or react in ways that are not "us" or who we intend to be. That experience is called "blending." To find our adult selves again, we need to "unblend," to mindfully separate from the intense reactions of the parts until we have a felt sense of "I'm here" and also "he or she is still here, too." Here are the five steps to unblending:

- 1 First, assume that any and all upsetting or overwhelming feelings and thoughts are a communication from parts—and try to make that assumption even if you are not sure it is true.
- 2 Describe the feelings and thoughts as "their" reaction: "They are upset—they are having a hard time—they are overwhelmed." See what happens when you speak for the parts by talking about "their" feelings.
- 3 Create a little more separation from them, just enough so you can feel their feelings less intensely and you can feel yourself, too. Change your position, lengthen your spine, engage your core, or sit back. Keep repeating, "They \_\_\_\_\_ are \_\_\_\_\_ feeling \_\_\_\_\_."
- 4 Use your wise grownup mind, the part of you that is a compassionate friend or organized professional, to have a reassuring conversation with whomever is upset. Acknowledge that the part or parts are afraid, overwhelmed, ashamed, or sad. Imagine: if these were the fears of your colleagues, clients, or friends, how would you respond? What would you tell them? Ask them what they need from you to be a little less afraid.
- 5 Get their feedback and opinions: Is what you are doing helping even a little? What do they need right in this moment to feel a little less alone, a little less afraid, a little less angry? Do they like it when you listen and show concern? Promise them that you will check in with them, make more of an effort to remember they are in distress, or be more protective,

The key to the success of this technique is consistency, repetition, and a willingness to keep using it even if you have days when it does not work.