

How to Uncover the Root of Self-Sabotage

Is there a part of you that subconsciously feels guilty or fearful about success, not good enough to pursue your dream, or unworthy of being loved and respected by someone?

If so, that part of you may be what's keeping you stuck in sabotaging patterns.

What are parts?

- Parts are aspects of our personality that interact internally similarly to the way people interact externally.
- Parts may be experienced as thoughts, feelings, sensations, and more.
- We're born with parts. Parts are not created by life experiences, but life experiences can activate a part causing it to take on an extreme role.
- Much like external families, parts develop a complex system of internal interactions, sometimes creating opposing viewpoints, shaming, ostracizing, and the like.
- Parts can take on burdens from life experiences (including inherited & cultural), such as shame, extreme beliefs, and fear.
- A great example of parts in action is the Pixar movie, ***Inside Out***.

Examples of common parts that can keep us stuck in sabotaging patterns:

- A part of you that needs to be in control
 - A part that feels hopeless and makes small tasks overwhelming
 - A part that often flashes worst-case scenarios
 - A part that needs everything to be perfect
 - A part that has an underlying sense of incompetence
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Exercise: Getting to know a sabotaging part

- Take a few deep breaths, and focus your attention within.
 - Focus on any thought, feeling, sensation, or impulse (a part) that causes you to feel unworthy, untrusting, unmotivated, overwhelmed, or any other sabotaging behavior. List the part or parts below.
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- Try to focus only on one part (a thought, feeling, sensation, or impulse), and notice if you can locate it in or around your body. Pick one and list it. Ex. I feel anxiety in my gut
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- How do you feel about it? Do you dislike it? Does it annoy you? Do you wish you were rid of it? Do you depend on it?
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- Now try to *get curious* about that part of you. Observe it and get to know it.

- If you feel anything other than an openness or curiosity toward it, try to separate your feelings from it, as if you're a neutral observer. If you can't get curious about it, that's okay. You can get to know the parts of you that don't want you to get to know the part you focused on.
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- If you were able to get curious about the part you focused on, ask the part if there's something it wants you to know. Don't think of an answer, just get still and wait for an answer to come.
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- If you get an answer, a follow-up question is to ask what is that part of you afraid would happen if it didn't do this inside of you. If it answers, you likely learned how it's trying to protect you.
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- You can thank the part for trying to keep you safe in some way (even if it's misguided) and notice how it reacts to your appreciation.
- You can also ask this part what it needs from you in the future.

In this exercise, you may have noticed that by becoming a neutral observer of a part, you were able to separate from the part and view *it rather than be it.*

There was a separate “you” observing the part. That “you” is not a part. It’s your Core Self or Higher Self underneath your parts. The Core Self is in everyone, cannot be damaged, and doesn’t have to be developed.

It is your internal wisdom, source of intuition, and inner strength.

If you were able to get curious and separate from your parts, you likely felt a shift into a more calm space, allowing your Core Self to come forward.

*This exercise is based on the Internal Family Systems (IFS) model developed by Dr. Richard Schwartz. Check out the book, **No Bad Parts** by Dr. Schwartz and visit www.ifs-institute.com for more info.*

If you’d like to dive deeper into what’s keeping you stuck or want more information about parts work, head over to www.jackiejreid.com to schedule a FREE no-obligation chat with me.