

The Richard C. Schwartz Research Fellowship An Invitation for Sponsorship from the Foundation for Self Leadership

For nearly 40 years, Richard C. Schwartz, PhD, has persistently fostered deep emotional healing in our world. He did so by promoting a psychotherapy modality, which he methodically developed (or, as he preferred to say, discovered through empirical observations).

Dr. Schwartz's lifelong commitment to disseminate his model and refine it has reportedly had a very broad, lasting and positive impact on the quality of practice and life for so many psychotherapists, help professionals, other practitioners, and their clients. His efforts noticeably and remarkably stand out.

In recognition of his unflinching endeavors and invaluable contributions, with appreciation for his deep care and humble nature, and as a symbolic gesture to honor his lifelong work, the not-for-profit Foundation for Self Leadership is naming a newly established postdoctoral research fellowship after him. (The Foundation does so of its own accord.)

The Richard C. Schwartz Research Fellowship will be quasi-endowed for 10 years and, through an extensive biennial search, bestowed every two years upon a highly qualified researcher in psychology, psychiatry or related fields. The named Fellow, to be housed at a reputable research institution in the US or elsewhere (starting at the Cambridge Health Alliance), will be expected to carry independent, rigorous and empirical examination of the IFS modality—which has the potential to heighten the validity of the model and sustain its growth (and healing through it) for decades to come.

The Foundation is inviting (again by its own decision) Dick's colleagues, friends, family, and all those who wish to applaud him or feel that their lives—or our lives collectively—were much improved because of him to contribute financially (see below) and make this new and significant undertaking a reality.

If you are willing to contribute, please make your donation in his honor through www.FoundationIFS.org/Research-Fellowship or contact Toufic Hakim (Toufic@FoundationIFS.org) or Barbara Perkins (Barbara@FoundatioIFS.org) for additional information.

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Below: About IFS

Dr. Schwartz's Professional Legacy About the Foundation for Self Leadership

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ABOUT IFS. Internal Family Systems (IFS), as Dr. Schwartz named it, goes far beyond a clinical protocol. It offers a new lens and a user-friendly language through which one might better understand the human psyche and one's own psychological makeup.

IFS is a non-pathologizing, trauma-informed, introspective and active approach to inner-personal, relational and societal wellness and healing.

The model posits that our psyche consists of a multitude of discrete "parts," all well-intentioned and seeking to protect us from pain that we have carried through developmental and life's trauma. Some of



these parts take on different personas to hide away the pain (not unlike the way bodyguards do it!); the stronger the pain, the more extreme the parts. And yet, it is the presence of an inherent, abundant source of wisdom (our core human essence or “Self,” as the model refers to it), that could lead the way to intrinsic harmony. Self does so by creating trust in our system, loosening the parts’ firm grip on us, allowing for the “pain” to be acknowledged and brought out in the open (in a safe setting) and cared for. Nurturing access to this Self resource through a guided practice could then facilitate the integration of parts into an effective, highly functional and healthier system. This is, according to IFS, what Self leadership looks like!

Clinical protocol aside, however, this paradigm as a thought process is generally seen as intuitive and intimately familiar. Exposure to it promises to be self-empowering. It generates hope that resilience and healing are possible and within reach. It reminds us that we have what it takes to face adversity and invites us onto a path of self-reliance, integration and transformation.

Notably, such features differentiate IFS from other modalities: it’s a philosophy of practice, a self-guided personal growth and inner-fulfillment process, and an approach for achieving deeper relational connections. Our peace of mind, the theory goes, may generate a more positive outlook on life and a more robust peace in our circles and, ideally, our world.

And so it has for tens of thousands of individuals who have experienced the model and encountered their own personal system of parts and Self. They have done so either in clinical psychotherapy settings (as a treatment for PTSD, depression, anxiety, substance dependency, and eating irregularities, among other concerns) or across a myriad of other domains—from mediation law to business and executive coaching, and from medicine and chaplaincy to parenting and school education. IFS is commonly said to expand one’s view and achieve serenity within. They learned about it from diverse venues over the years, be it informally, in short doses or formally through extensive training.

And the journey toward healing continues.

Dr. SCHWARTZ’S PROFESSIONAL LEGACY. From a spark of an idea in the mid 80’s, Dick’s steady efforts led to a spiking demand for IFS trainings in the US and across most continents. Today, there is a growing, diverse training faculty and an expanding community of practice, through which a hundredfold more individuals have experienced the model and its outcomes.

With the assistance of many associates and the leadership of Jon Schwartz, MA, who built the IFS Institute (initially called The Center for Self Leadership), which is now led by Katie Nelson, MBA, the Institute is now the global center for IFS training and certification. Through it, extensive IFS training curricula and programs (in-person and online) have been designed and formalized, from introductory workshops to experiential immersions leading to certification. This family of programs has also been supplemented by an annual conference and a large suite of multimedia resources.

Dr. Schwartz remains highly active and productive to this day. Over the span of his prolific work on IFS, he has authored and co-authored several professional and popular books on IFS, which inspired numerous books by others on various applications of the model, as well as numerous book chapters and journal articles. He has presented keynote addresses and served on panels at leading international summits and symposia—too many to count. And he has hosted weeklong retreats at various venues in the US and around the world for professionals with ranging interests and people from all walks of life seeking personal growth.



One might refer to his engagement perhaps more aptly as a cause to which he has dedicated his life. A cause for helping individuals nurture their own capacity for achieving inner health and well-being. This is tantamount to true peacemaking since, in turn, inner peace could help develop one's qualities of calm and fortitude in crises; courage to stand up for what is humane, fair and just; and compassion toward self and others. In turn, this inner disposition could lead to more constructive interactions in one's household, workplace, and neighborhood.

A possible cumulative effect of it all: a desired and highly sought-after social harmony in our communities.

This in a nutshell is what Dick's efforts are all about and why the Foundation has decided to honor him and help sustain the model by sponsoring independent researchers and research.

ABOUT THE FOUNDATION FOR SELF LEADERSHIP. Established by Dr. Schwartz in 2002 as an independent entity and activated in 2013, the Foundation has since pursued a vision of greater emotional, relational and societal healing and wellbeing for a world in need by strategically advancing the IFS paradigm and the practice of Self leadership.

Over the last decade, with generous philanthropic support from the IFS community, the Foundation has accomplished much in its focus areas: 1) adding to the scientific literature about IFS by funding independent research; 2) catalyzing access to IFS by broadening applications in various settings (especially in underserved and traumatized communities); and 3) expanding the visibility of IFS within academia and government agencies.

The first research study ever funded by the Foundation was just recently published in a peer-reviewed journal. Conducted at the Justice Resource Institute Trauma Center in Boston (Massachusetts, USA), this 2014-15 study provided evidence that IFS therapy had significantly positive effects on adults with PTSD. Notably, at the one-month follow-up assessment, 92% of participants no longer met criteria for PTSD. The resulting paper was published in the *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma* in 2021.

The largest research project funded to date is a randomized clinical trial (RCT) that is studying IFS as a treatment for PTSD, as well as with opioid use. The study is being conducted at a community mental health center, led by Zev Schuman-Olivier, MD, Director for the Center for Mindfulness and Compassion, Medical Director for Addictions at Cambridge Health Alliance and faculty member in Harvard Medical School Department of Psychiatry. A pilot study conducted in 2021-22 to examine the effects of the IFS protocol in treating individuals experiencing complex PTSD yielded promising findings. The Phase II RCT study is now underway and the first Richard C. Schwartz Research Fellow will participate in this study beginning September 2023.

Learn more through [this piece in the Foundation's PARTS & SELF magazine](#).

The Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit incorporated in Illinois remains independent and distinct from the IFS Institute, with its separate legal, financial and governance systems (www.FoundationIFS.org).