

SELF-AWARENESS

Small

“I’m not enough.”

In the book: Chapter 1 · Gede the Gecko

WHAT IS UNDERNEATH — AN IFS VIEW

A young part that once got compared to someone bigger and decided it was safer to shrink. It is not low confidence — it is a part protecting the child from being measured and found wanting.

TRY THIS, RIGHT NOW

Name one thing your body did well today.

FOR THE CHILD

Stand up, put both feet flat, and feel how much floor is under you. Say your own name out loud once.

FOR A PARENT

Resist “but you’re great at…”. Praise contradicts the part and it digs in. Try: “Something in you feels small right now. I’d like to hear about it.”

FOR AN EDUCATOR

Give this child a task with a visible outcome and no audience — handing out materials, watering a plant. Competence lands before compliments do.

DRAW OR WRITE — WHEN DID YOU FEEL THIS?

A feeling is not the whole child. It is a part of them doing a job. Meet the part, and the child has more room.



RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

Unseen

“Nobody notices me.”

In the book: Chapter 2 · The Golden-Eyed Guardian

WHAT IS UNDERNEATH — AN IFS VIEW

A part that has given up asking. Being overlooked hurt, so it made invisibility the plan — you cannot be rejected if you were never in the room.

TRY THIS, RIGHT NOW

Tell one person one true thing about your day.

FOR THE CHILD

Choose one person and say one true sentence to them. It doesn’t have to be big. “I got picked last today” counts.

FOR A PARENT

Notice something specific and unrelated to achievement: “You took your shoes off quietly so the baby stayed asleep.” Being seen for who they are, not what they did.

FOR AN EDUCATOR

Use their name in the first five minutes of the lesson, in a neutral sentence. Quiet children can go whole days unnamed.

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RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

Lonely

“I don’t have anyone.”

In the book: Chapter 3 · A New Friend

WHAT IS UNDERNEATH — AN IFS VIEW

An exile — the tender part that holds “I am on the outside”. Protectors often cover it with boredom, clinginess or “I don’t care about them anyway”.

TRY THIS, RIGHT NOW

Draw someone you’d like to sit beside tomorrow.

FOR THE CHILD

Draw the person you’d like to sit next to. Drawing them makes tomorrow feel possible.

FOR A PARENT

Sit beside them without talking for two minutes. Company is the medicine; conversation is optional.

FOR AN EDUCATOR

Engineer proximity, not friendship — a shared job with one other child. Forced play dates fail; shared tasks work.

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SELF-MANAGEMENT

Nervous

“My tummy feels fluttery.”

In the book: Chapter 4 · Putri

WHAT IS UNDERNEATH — AN IFS VIEW

A firefighter part scanning for danger. The flutter is mobilised energy with nowhere to go — the body preparing, not malfunctioning.

TRY THIS, RIGHT NOW

Breathe in for 4, out for 6, three times.

FOR THE CHILD

Long slow out-breath, longer than the in-breath. Blow like you’re cooling soup, three times.

FOR A PARENT

Regulate first, talk second. Your slow breathing is contagious across the room; reassurance said in a fast voice is not.

FOR AN EDUCATOR

Give a movement job before the demand — carry the box, wipe the board. Discharged energy makes the next instruction audible.

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SELF-AWARENESS

Hiding something

“I can’t say it out loud.”

In the book: Chapter 5 · Gede's Secret

WHAT IS UNDERNEATH — AN IFS VIEW

A manager part holding a secret to prevent shame. It is loyal, not deceitful — it believes the relationship survives only if nobody knows.

TRY THIS, RIGHT NOW

Whisper it to a toy first, then to a grown-up.

FOR THE CHILD

Say it to a toy, or into a cushion, first. The second time is always easier than the first.

FOR A PARENT

Thank the hiding before you ask for the truth: “Part of you was scared to tell me. That makes sense.” Then leave a silence.

FOR AN EDUCATOR

Offer a non-verbal channel — a note in a box, a slip on the desk. Never require public disclosure.

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RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING

Unsure

“What if it goes wrong?”

In the book: Chapter 6 · The Dance of Trust

WHAT IS UNDERNEATH — AN IFS VIEW

A part that has been let down and now wants a guarantee before it moves. Hesitation is a risk assessment, not stubbornness.

TRY THIS, RIGHT NOW

Name one thing that has held you before.

FOR THE CHILD

Name one thing that has held you before — a branch, a hand, a chair. Trust remembers evidence.

FOR A PARENT

Don’t sell the outcome. Shrink the step: “You don’t have to go in. Just stand at the door with me.”

FOR AN EDUCATOR

Give the choice between two safe options rather than one open question. Agency reduces threat.

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SELF-MANAGEMENT

Quiet inside

“My words got stuck.”

In the book: Chapter 7 · Finding His Voice

WHAT IS UNDERNEATH — AN IFS VIEW

A protector that learned speaking up costs something. The silence is a door being held shut from the inside, not an absence of thought.

TRY THIS, RIGHT NOW

Say your sentence to the mirror once.

FOR THE CHILD

Say the sentence once to the mirror. Your voice practising is still your voice.

FOR A PARENT

Never answer for them, and never fill the pause. Count ten seconds silently; most children speak by seven.

FOR AN EDUCATOR

Let them write the answer, or say it to one peer first. Whole-class speaking is the last step, not the first.

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RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

Pushed

“I didn’t want that.”

In the book: Chapter 8 · Standing Strong

WHAT IS UNDERNEATH — AN IFS VIEW

A boundary part waking up. Often mislabelled defiance — it is the first healthy “no” of a child who has been going along with things.

TRY THIS, RIGHT NOW

Practise: “No thank you, I don’t like that.”

FOR THE CHILD

Practise the sentence out loud when nothing is happening: “No thank you, I don’t like that.” Words are easier when they’re rehearsed.

FOR A PARENT

Let them say no to you sometimes, in small safe things. A “no” that is never allowed at home cannot be found at school.

FOR AN EDUCATOR

Back the boundary in public, handle the behaviour in private. Otherwise the child learns saying no gets them in trouble.

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SELF-AWARENESS

Playful

“I feel light!”

In the book: Chapter 9 · The Courage to Play

WHAT IS UNDERNEATH — AN IFS VIEW

This is Self, not a part — the settled, curious, connected state everything else is trying to protect. Worth naming so children can find their way back to it.

TRY THIS, RIGHT NOW

Do the silliest movement you can for 10 seconds.

FOR THE CHILD

Do the silliest movement you can for ten seconds. Notice what your face does.

FOR A PARENT

Join it for sixty seconds rather than watching it. Shared play builds more safety than any conversation about feelings.

FOR AN EDUCATOR

Protect unstructured time. Play is where the regulation practised in a lesson actually gets used.

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SELF-MANAGEMENT

Impatient

“It’s taking too long.”

In the book: Chapter 10 · The Strength in Patience

WHAT IS UNDERNEATH — AN IFS VIEW

A part that finds waiting unbearable because waiting once meant being forgotten. The urgency is about uncertainty, not the queue.

TRY THIS, RIGHT NOW

Count ten slow breaths and watch something move.

FOR THE CHILD

Pick something slow — a cloud, an ant, a shadow — and watch it for ten breaths.

FOR A PARENT

Give the shape of the wait, not a lecture about patience: “Two more songs, then we go.” Time made visible is time made bearable.

FOR AN EDUCATOR

Use a visible timer. Children who cannot wait can almost always wait when the end is shown.

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SELF-MANAGEMENT

Scared of change

“I want it to stay the same.”

In the book: Chapter 11 · The Courage to Change

WHAT IS UNDERNEATH — AN IFS VIEW

A part guarding the known. Change costs energy the nervous system may not currently have — the resistance is a budget, not a preference.

TRY THIS, RIGHT NOW

Name one thing that stays the same no matter what.

FOR THE CHILD

Name one thing that stays the same no matter what: your name, your bed, the person who picks you up.

FOR A PARENT

Keep three small things identical through any big change — same cup, same bedtime song, same seat. Anchors do the work.

FOR AN EDUCATOR

Pre-teach transitions. “In five minutes we stop” is not a courtesy; it is the intervention.

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SELF-MANAGEMENT

Overwhelmed

“Everything is too loud.”

In the book: Chapter 12 · The Gift of Stillness

WHAT IS UNDERNEATH — AN IFS VIEW

The system has gone past capacity and a firefighter takes over — shutdown, tears or an explosion. Nothing said in this state is being stored.

TRY THIS, RIGHT NOW

Find a quiet corner and put both hands on your chest.

FOR THE CHILD

Both hands flat on your chest. Feel the weight of them and let your shoulders drop.

FOR A PARENT

Stop teaching. Lower your voice, reduce the input, wait. Debrief tomorrow, never during.

FOR AN EDUCATOR

Have a named, permission-free exit — a calm corner they can use without asking. Asking is impossible in that state.

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SELF-AWARENESS

Proud

“I did that myself.”

In the book: Chapter 13 · Inner Light

WHAT IS UNDERNEATH — AN IFS VIEW

Self energy again — competence felt from the inside. Fragile at first, because parts are quick to swap it for “was it good enough?”.

TRY THIS, RIGHT NOW

Tell someone what the hard part was.

FOR THE CHILD

Tell someone what the hard part was, not just that you did it. That’s the bit that belongs to you.

FOR A PARENT

Reflect the effort rather than the result: “You kept going after it fell over twice.”

FOR AN EDUCATOR

Ask the child to teach the step to someone else. Pride becomes durable when it is used.

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SELF-MANAGEMENT

Rushed

“Hurry, hurry, hurry.”

In the book: Chapter 14 · Moving Slow with Wisdom

WHAT IS UNDERNEATH — AN IFS VIEW

Often a borrowed part — the household’s pace living inside the child. It hurries so that nobody gets annoyed with them.

TRY THIS, RIGHT NOW

Walk to the door as slowly as an elephant.

FOR THE CHILD

Walk to the door as slowly as an elephant. Count your steps.

FOR A PARENT

Slow your own hands and voice before you ask them to slow down. Children match rhythm, not instructions.

FOR AN EDUCATOR

Reward finishing well over finishing first. Speed praise creates rushed children.

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SELF-AWARENESS

Sad

“My eyes want to rain.”

In the book: Chapter 15 · The Rain

WHAT IS UNDERNEATH — AN IFS VIEW

An exile finally allowed through. Sadness that is witnessed completes; sadness that is interrupted goes back underground and returns as behaviour.

TRY THIS, RIGHT NOW

Let the tears come — they finish on their own.

FOR THE CHILD

Let the tears come. They stop by themselves, like rain does.

FOR A PARENT

Stay, be quiet, and don’t cheer them up. “I’m here, take your time” is the whole intervention.

FOR AN EDUCATOR

Allow tears without an audience and without sending them away alone. Presence, not the corridor.

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SOCIAL AWARENESS

Safe

“I feel like me again.”

In the book: Chapter 16 · Coming Home

WHAT IS UNDERNEATH — AN IFS VIEW

Parts have stepped back and Self is leading — curious, calm, connected. This is the state to name and map so a child can find the road back to it.

TRY THIS, RIGHT NOW

Notice where in your body “safe” lives.

FOR THE CHILD

Find where “safe” lives in your body. Put your hand there and remember the spot.

FOR A PARENT

Name it out loud when it happens: “This — right now — this is what calm feels like in you.”

FOR AN EDUCATOR

Anchor the class in it at the end of a session, so the felt sense of safety is what they carry out of the room.

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