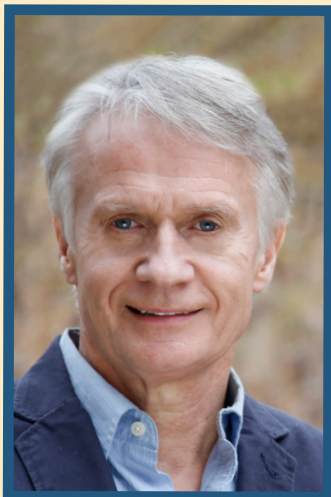


INNER JOURNEY

Welcome to the Voices In Your Head!



Michael Schiesser
Creator, Inner Journey

"You've been criticizing yourself for years and it hasn't worked. Try approving yourself and see what happens." Louise L. Hay

Did you see "Inside Out"? Disney produced a movie that has incredible relevance to every human being. They made a movie about the voices in our head.

My name is Michael Schiesser and I have personally worked with thousands of people, in individual and group settings, for over 35 years. What I've observed is that 80% of our human suffering is caused by what happens between our own ears – in the form of self-criticism. You and I actually suffer more from inner self-imposed judgment and rejection than from external rejection and judgment – from the voices in our heads.

What we commonly call a 'thought' is actually more like a narration or a voice that is sometimes connected with visual images. Right now you might be thinking, "I don't have voices in my head." Tune within and be curious, and you can discover that this 'thought' is actually more like a 'voice'! The voice within has many 'flavors' or 'facets,' as if you had different 'people' living in your mind. That's what Pixar tried to show with the different cartoon characters. In certain situations the voices sound like people we know, like our mother or father.

The different voices in our head aren't bad. In fact, they came into existence when we were little to help us make sense of the world, to warn us of danger, or to provide us with valuable feedback.

The problem is that these voices in your head never stop, and they often have very different thoughts about what you should be doing, or saying, or thinking. Each of these thoughts has a unique role - to protect you in some way. And if you can understand and work **with** these voices, just like in the Disney movie, "Inside Out," you can have a much happier life.

This idea might be shocking to you. Yet, I invite you to listen within, and verify this for yourself.





INNER JOURNEY

The Supreme Court Protectors

In a way, these inner voices figuratively look over your shoulder and sometimes approve, and mostly disapprove, of you. There are two casts of inner characters, or voices, making up the mind. Because “Inside Out” is primarily a children’s movie, Pixar focused on the characters or voices that we call the ‘Inner Children’. For most adults, this set of voices don’t live in the foreground. They have been pushed aside by another set of voices which we call the “Supreme Court Protectors” because they constantly comment, criticize, judge, push and moralize your life.

If you’re still thinking, “there aren’t voices in my head”, I invite you to try an experiment. Close your eyes and say “hello” inside your mind as loudly as you can. Shout it out, right now, in your mind!

Did you hear that? The “hello” was coming from a voice in your head, and the part you that heard the “hello” is what we call the Aware Self. Of course, most of the time, we don’t go around saying “hello” to ourselves, so we aren’t aware of just how active these thoughts are. There is an inner narration going on all day long, which we commonly describe as ‘thinking,’ and even at night when we try to sleep, this process continues as we process the events of our day.



Once you realize that these voices exist, you may become alarmed.

Let me assure you that you do not have multiple personalities! All of us have these voices and images that we call ‘thoughts.’ So the question becomes, what do we do with them? Naturally, once we realize they are there, we may want to push them away. But it’s not possible for them to go away. They are part of you, just like your skin, your eyes, and your feet. And, if you try to push them away, they will just get louder.

The most important thing to understand is that these inner voices have one primary PURPOSE. They are actually in place to **PROTECT** you. They are formed in your childhood to keep you **SAFE!**



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The Supreme Court Protectors

This can be difficult to understand, particularly if you have suffered under the judgments of a voice inside your head that accuses you of being stupid, lazy, incompetent, or worthless. And, learning to *become aware* of these voices is the first step to true freedom. So, let's meet the cast of inner voices that we call the Supreme Court Protectors. Just like everything in life, your inner voices have a good side and a challenging side, which is important to keep in mind.



We now present you with a summary of the Supreme Court Protectors. By the way, this is not an exclusive list, and our work in the Inner Journey Intensive explores these, and the other protectors, in much more detail.

The Critic Protector:

This voice is the most painful one for most people because it constantly comments on our failures and often speaks to us in very accusatory language.

"Whatever you do, it's never right"

"You're so stupid, fat, ugly, worthless, lazy, incompetent...."

The Pusher Protector:

We often describe this character as 'Made in America' because it is the favorite voice of our culture. It is worshipped in our culture.

"You need to do more, faster, better"

"Tick off EVERY item on that TO DO LIST!"

"You should be able to juggle everything all the time!"



INNER JOURNEY

The Supreme Court Protectors



Perfectionist Protector:

The Perfectionist Protector is the obsessive-compulsive part of the mind. Everything has to be perfect – body, house, kids, job....

This part is “worshiped” in the Swiss / German culture.

Of course, the challenge is that nothing is perfect on this planet, and so you can never achieve the goal of perfection.

And, if you do get close, the bar goes higher, so you will never win with the inner Perfectionist.

"You've got to get it absolutely perfect..just right"

"What? You only got a 95%?"

"This is not good enough!"

Moral Judge Protector:

Its exact message of this voice will depend on the culture or religion you grew up in. What is a morally acceptable is different according to our culture and religion. We each have our own version of what's good/bad, right/wrong based on our upbringing.

"This is bad, stop it, this is a sin". "

You will have to pay for this". "You are bad".

Protector Controller:

Whereas the other judges are easy to recognize by their criticism, this protector tries to protect you by sending messages like the ones below. This Protector shows up whenever you are facing a new situation – a job interview, a date, a new task, etc. It is trying to make sense out of this information and whether this is helpful or threatening to your sense of physical and emotional well-being.

"Don't let him/her get too close, they will hurt you", "Don't trust women/men/etc."

"Don't try, you might fail", "Don't open your heart you might get hurt..."



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Exercise #1



Exercise #1:

We all have these voices, yet usually 2 or 3 are more active in us than the others.

Reflect on an average day in your life and identify which 2 or 3 of these voices seem to be the most active.

Identify what each voices' main message is to you and write it down.

Most Active Voice:

Main Message:

Exercise #2:

To deepen your inquiry, reflect on these main messages and see from whom are they taken.

Whose messages are these...parents, early caregivers, siblings, teachers and other authority figures, peer group members?

Remember, you were NOT born with specific beliefs and message, all this came later based on your environment.

Message From Whom:



INNER JOURNEY

Our Inner Children



Now, let's turn your attention to the second set of voices or inner characters which are exemplified in the voices of "Inside Out" heroine Riley.

In our Inner Journey work, we name her 'Joy, Anger & Disgust' voices as Inner Child parts. It is these Inner Child parts that usually carry our painful emotions. And they are the ones the Supreme Court Protectors are trying to protect us from.

Child parts hold pain from your past and are pushed away by Protectors in order to protect you from feeling pain and hurt.

It may sound strange, yet these child parts are often stuck in a particular time in childhood, at a specific age. They are emotionally two years old, or five, or seven, and they exist in a situation from that time in your life. They are frozen at that time because something difficult or traumatic happened then, and you didn't have the inner resources or the external support to handle it.

For example, you can have a child part that is frozen in fear at the age of two, when the child felt abandoned. Another child part is needy for love because at age three the parents separated, or one of the parents died. Or, a child part can be frozen even in the womb if something traumatic happened during that period.

Usually a difficult situation was overwhelming and the fallout couldn't be processed and metabolized. Then there will be a child part (perhaps more than one) that experienced this painful event and is stuck there.

If a situation continued over a number of years, or throughout childhood, then the child parts are not stuck in a single place but in a time period.

Child parts often take on the beliefs or the feeling tone of your family.

Whatever the cause, child parts can exhibit a wide variety of painful emotions:

- | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| -lonely | -ashamed of themselves | -survival is at stake / terrified of dying |
| -abandoned | -afraid or panicked | - powerless / intruded upon |
| -abused / betrayed | -being taken over by others | - fear (of a person, situation, or outcome) |



INNER JOURNEY

Our Inner Children

In addition to feelings, your inner Child parts very often have negative beliefs about you and the world, for example: intrinsically unlovable, not good enough, the world is dangerous, etc.



It is important to understand that a child part is usually caught in its own little world and is unaware that you have grown up and developed the capacity to take care of yourself, make friends and be independent.

This is the reason why so many people live emotionally in the past because we literally are often frozen in time in our inner world.

Yet this isn't all.

Your inner children parts are also your source of JOY, like for Riley. They are the source of your playfulness, curiosity, your capacity to 'wonder,' to be in awe, to be touched. In a way, all the feelings that make your life fulfilling and rich are connected to your Inner Children parts.

In our programs and in our personal coaching work, we help our participants and clients to free up the wonderful qualities connected to the Inner Children parts. We invite you on a journey of Transformation with us by learning how to become aware of, to understand, and to make friends with, your Inner Protector and heal your Inner Children parts.

In the last core teaching of this report I want to introduce to you to a poem called "The Guest House" written by the world famous Persian poet and mystic Rumi.

The Guest House

This being human is a guest house. Every morning a new arrival:

A joy, a depression, a meanness, some momentary awareness comes as an unexpected visitor.

Welcome and entertain them all! Even if they are a crowd of sorrows who violently sweep your house empty of its furniture, still, treat each guest honorably.

He may be clearing you out for some new delight. The dark thought, the shame, the malice, meet them at the door laughing and invite them in. Be grateful for whatever comes, because each has been sent as a guide from beyond.

Rumi



INNER JOURNEY

The Aware Self

Rumi calls all the different inner characters or voices 'guests'. He uses the metaphor of a 'Guest House' to describe the space in which 'thinking' (a.k.a. 'the voices') occur. He teaches from his experience that who we truly are is NOT the guests, the parts, or the voices, but the *space* in which all that happens, which he calls the 'Guest House'. That part that heard you say "hello" when you shouted it in your mind.

Being able to shift into your aware self is one of the keys to unlocking a new kind of relationship with the voices in your head, and a new freedom for your life.

When you shift your attention from the thinking or narrating, away from the guests, and shift our attention ONTO the presence, the 'Guest House' that is aware of the thinking and narrating, **then** you become present to an inner reality that is spacious, open, and unbound. It is amazing to discover that this reality is always there, yet your consciousness gets hijacked by the voices and becomes unaware of it.

What is difficult for the human mind to understand is that who we truly are, is *formless*. We are consciousness or 'presence'. The Buddha called it 'Witnessing consciousness.' Mystical Christianity speaks of the 'Divine Indweller,' and at our times the word often used for this 'Presence' is 'True Self' or 'Higher Self'.

In the Inner Journey body of work we primarily use the term *Presence* or *Aware Self*.

The Aware Self is actually always present, in the same way as the 'blue sky' is always present. Just like the blue sky gets covered up by clouds and other weather conditions, in a similar manner, the Aware Self gets covered up by the 'thinking aka narrating mind', or the voices in our head.

We introduce this 'metaphor' (the Aware Self) to you as a deeper way to engage with the inner voices because this 'presence' is the actual healing agent to help you to deal with your innermost characters or voices. Our work in the Inner Journey Intensive explores this more fully and allows you to connect with and heal the inner most parts of yourself.

From the bottom of our hearts, we wish you freedom and love and invite you to explore more at:
<http://www.innerjourneyinstitute.com/programs/inner-journey-intensive-2/>

