



two chair dialogue sequence



'cooking tips' (c.t): normally put 'critical self' into 'other' chair. the descriptive labels (e.g. critic & experiencer) can be altered if, on discussion, this feels appropriate (e.g. bully, disciplinarian or perfectionist self v's victim, child or demoralized self)

c.t: it may be easier initially to work with an external (& visualized) critic

the 'critical self' voices harsh criticism

'experiencing self' voices how they feel with this criticism

c.t: note the shift from maladaptive secondary emotions to adaptive primary emotions

c.t: these standards and values are often valid, but typically are wrapped up in destructive and unhelpful contempt

the 'critic' may want to elaborate & make criticisms more specific

the 'experiencer' may 'unpack' their mix of feeling responses

'critic' states the standards and values that they are demanding

p 'experiencer' states their wants and needs

c.t: the critic may transmute to 'a worried, angry mother' style

'critic' often 'softens' here to compassion & anxiety

'experiencer' & 'critic' may begin to negotiate

p c.t: with partial resolution, the 2 parts have each clearly stated their needs/wishes

f c.t: with full resolution the initially competing feelings, needs & wishes are understood, accommodated and reconciled

f further negotiation leading to integration

c.t: if the therapist positions their chair equidistantly from each chair of the dialogue, this is likely to encourage respect for what both of the chairs represent