

Inner Conflict Resolution Worksheet

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Step 1 – Recognition

The most important aspect of resolving an Inner Conflict is recognizing that you are having one in the first place! Inner Conflicts begin with physical, emotional and mental signals. Something is going wrong. You don't feel normal. Your body, emotions or thoughts become immobilized by lack of activity, indecision, or a constant, heated Inner Conversation that remains unresolved. "Automatic" mental thoughts or body sensations seem to be taking place on their own without a definable cause; such as:

- Racing thoughts
- Thinking constantly about the same situation
- Inability to sleep
- Sudden hunger/overeating
- Feeling overly tired
- Queasy stomach
- Sensation of fear or apprehension
- Reluctance to do something you normally enjoy
- A sudden cold or unexpected illness
- Inability to make what seems like a simple decision
- Pressure headaches

AS SOON AS YOU recognize these symptoms and realize there might be an Inner Conflict in the making, start writing out what you hear in your head. You MUST get it "out of your head" ASAP and "onto the page."

If you have written it ALL out, and subsequently you still "hear" more on that topic in a corner of your head, then write that out as well! (See additional pages.)

Step 2 – Write out your Inner Conflict exactly as you hear it. (Use the sheet at the end. Make copies if you need more pages. However, any regular page will work.) The point is to get writing as soon as you pick up the Inner Conflict.

For this step it's not important to know which side is which. As you write what you hear inside your mind you will definitely notice the "one part of me wants something and another part of me wants something else" phenomena. Just write one voice as best you can on the Left side of the paper and the other voice in a Right column format. Drop down one line each time you hear the voice change, as when you are writing out your sessions.

Your Inner Conflict may occasionally be resolved at this point once everything's written on paper. If not, continue to Step 3.

Step 3 – List the specific needs of each Inner Self.

The goal now is to list the needs of both selves in separate columns. Upon writing out your raw inner conflict objectively on the page, you will be able to read through what you wrote and clearly differentiate the voice of each self.

IF NOT, bring your Inner Conflict to read out loud to your Self-Parenting group, for example. Or you could show it to just about anyone, and since they are objective, they will easily see the conflict between the two sides. And they will easily know which voice is "emotional" and which is "rational."

Now that you know which side is which use the next sheet to write what each self wants.

(Put each of the conflicting or opposing needs across from each other, if possible.) Note: If there is not a definite "conflict of needs," then this is not an Inner Conflict. You might find there is not actually a conflict, but that the two selves simply have different needs in the situation. Or worse, you are just doing an "inner bashing."

See if you can separate the needs of each self into physical, emotional, mental or social needs (not necessary, but useful). (You may want to review the Inner Child's Needs section in Chapter 6 on pp. 146-181 of *The Self-Parenting Program*.)

Step 4 – Both Inner Selves mutually agree to resolve this situation with a Win/Win solution.

What both selves need to understand is that *THEY ARE BOTH GOING TO WIN.*

We pledge to work towards a Win/Win Solution!

Inner Parent's Signature

Inner Child's Signature

Step 5 - Both Inner Selves brainstorm potential solutions to the Inner Conflict.

Creatively think of as many solutions as possible. These don't have to be final answers, just think of as many potential ideas as you can to get the creative juices flowing. List any solution from either self, even if it sounds crazy, impractical, or goes against the other self; the more solutions the merrier. This is what energizes both selves to solve the conflict. Once you have listed all your ideas and exhausted all your options, move on to the next step.

Step 6 – Agree on a mutually acceptable solution

Now circle the possible solutions on the brainstorm page which might work for both Inner Parent and Inner Child. There may be an obvious answer that both selves endorse instantly. There may be some new research required or further information to be known. Ask your Inner Child if it's happy with this idea or that idea.

Be willing to do whatever it takes to find answers and potential solutions for the needs of both selves. If nothing is ultimately conclusive, ask for outside advice from friends or your support group. A good way to do this is to read your conflict out loud to a trusted person/group.

Step 7 – Put the solution in motion

This should be the easy part since both selves had a hand in evolving the solution and are optimistic about the outcome. However, you want to make sure that neither self lags if there are some specific tasks to be done that have been agreed upon. Many times the solution will require both selves to follow through on specific duties.

Step 6 represents a commitment to action that must be followed through in Step 7. It's often the weak Inner Parent who drops the ball at this stage. In which case, you will start hearing about it soon enough from your Inner Child.

Step 8 – Evaluate and Repeat as Needed

This is a crucial step and one you must be careful about. Let me explain. If all goes well, you'll create a win/win solution; everything flows and the problem is over and done with.

More often, especially if it is a deep or a long-standing issue, you may subtly begin to hear more "inner conversations" about this exact same situation again (and again). Now, from your increasing experience, you will quickly realize that something is not resolved about this situation and begin the 8 Steps all over again.

DON'T WORRY, THIS IS VERY NORMAL. And it's absolutely part of TRULY resolving Inner Conflicts.

Sometimes a solution doesn't work the way both selves hoped it would or the outside circumstances change due to unforeseen influences. Sometimes applying the solution creates new problems (always fun).

For complex issues, you may have to rework the 8 Steps five or six times before your situation ultimately resolves for both parties (however, this would be unusual). Don't despair if this occurs. It only shows how tricky the problem was in the first place. Sometimes a "simple" Inner Conflict can open up an entire life-changing Pandora's box of issues, but thankfully not typically.

In my experience a practitioner has to go through this 8-step process about 20-30 times before they perceive an extraordinary level of cooperation occurring between the Inner Parent and Inner Child. Once you reach this stage, your Inner Conflicts will be few and far between and you will resolve them very quickly, sometimes instantaneously once you realize that's what you have.

The problem being, you'll have to struggle through this process many many times before it becomes secondary to your way of being with your Inner Child. It takes lots of practice before your Inner Child learns to trust and really depend on you, the Inner Parent, to do the right thing in a conflict situation.

Whatever the case, keep digging for that Win/Win solution. The rewards will be well worth it!

Step 2 – Write Out Your Inner Conflict EXACTLY As You Hear It

One Part of Me Says:	The Other Part of Me Says:

One Part of Me Says: (Cont.)

The Other Part of Me Says: (Cont.)

Step 3 – List The Specific Needs of Each Inner Self

My Inner Parent wants to:	My Inner Child wants to:
Physically	Physically
Emotionally	Emotionally
Mentally	Mentally
Socially	Socially

Step 5 - Brainstorm Potential Solutions	
Inner Parent's Potential Solutions	Inner Child's Potential Solutions

Additional Research per Inner Parent	Additional Research per Inner Child

Step 6 - Agree On a Mutually Acceptable Solution

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Step 7 - Put the Solution In Motion

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Step 8 - Evaluate and Repeat As Needed

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