

Move Against

PART 1: Meeting Our Battling Parts

We all have different “parts” within us. Some parts we tend to welcome and move toward (our intellectual part, our achieving part), while others we tend to battle and move against. Think about a part of yourself that you frequently move against: one that you fight, criticize, judge, or wish would disappear. This might be:

- Your anxious part that worries constantly
- Your enraged part that flares up unexpectedly
- Your people-pleasing part that can't say no
- Your critical part that judges others
- Your withdrawn part that avoids connection
- Your perfectionist part that's never satisfied

Write it down: Which part of yourself do you tend to battle with the most?

PART 2: Mapping the War

Reflect on how you typically respond to this unwanted part of yourself. For example:

- Exhibiting harsh self-criticism and negative self-talk
- Engaging in self-shame and self-punishment
- Trying to suppress or ignore the feelings/behaviors
- Comparing yourself unfavorably to others
- Setting unrealistic standards for “fixing” yourself
- Avoiding situations where this trait might show up

Notice: How does it feel in your body when you move against your unwanted part in these ways? Tense? Exhausted? Heavy? Stressed?

What this part is feeling or doing may not be “good.” Yet, after months or years of fighting this part of yourself, what has the result been?

- Has the criticism made you feel better or worse about yourself?
- Has fighting this trait made it stronger or weaker?
- How much energy have you spent on this internal battle?

- What opportunities for growth or connection have you missed while focused on this inner battle?

PART 3: What We Resist Persists

Consider this: When you tell yourself, “Don’t think about a pink elephant,” what happens? The very act of resistance often amplifies what we’re trying to avoid.

- How might self-criticism actually be feeding the very thing you want to change?
- In what ways has fighting this aspect of yourself become another source of suffering on top of the original issue?
- Can you identify times when you were gentler with yourself and actually saw more positive change?

PART 4: Laying Down Arms

For the next few minutes, try a different approach. Instead of fighting this aspect of yourself, imagine greeting it like an old, familiar friend.

1. Take three deep breaths and soften your body.
2. Bring this disliked part of yourself to mind.
3. Instead of pushing it away, imagine kindly saying, "Oh, there you are again. I see you."
4. Notice: What happens when you stop fighting and just acknowledge its presence?

Curiosity Over Condemnation

What this part of you is feeling or doing may not be "good," positive, or helpful at all. But see what happens when you offer it genuine curiosity rather than judgment. Ask this part of you:

- Is there anything you might be trying to protect me from, or any pain from my earlier life that you are carrying?
- What was happening in my life when you first started feeling this way or doing this thing?
- How have you served me at some point in my life?

- How does it feel to receive a little of my curiosity and compassion?

PART 5: Daily Practice

Change often happens through relationship, not rancor. When parts regularly feel seen and valued, they naturally begin to soften their extreme roles and work together more collaboratively.

This week, try:

- Noticing your parts with curiosity instead of criticism
- Asking parts what they need instead of trying to force them to go away
- Observing how your parts may be trying to help, even when their methods are problematic

In the next chapters, we will learn more about how this practice lays the groundwork for helping difficult parts transform out of their painful roles and reveal their naturally positive states. For now, see what it's like to notice that when we gently welcome all parts of ourselves, we can decrease our suffering by reducing the battle within.