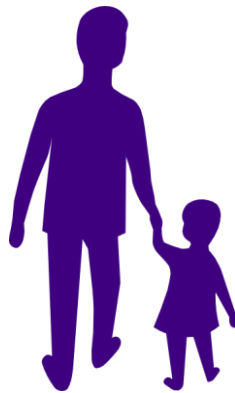


## Inner Critic Exploration

***Let's get to know our Inner Critics a little better today. Inner Critic or "parts work" is sensitive work that you can continue to explore with your individual therapist. This is also a focus in Internal Family Systems therapy.***

- 1) What or who does your inner critic sound like? Who does it sound like - whose voice do you hear? Does it have a name?
- 2) How old is your inner critic – when was it born?
- 3) What types of things does your inner critic say to you?
- 4) What or who do you think your inner critic is concerned about or afraid of, and trying to protect you from?
- 5) How might you ease its fears?



### Reframing Our Inner Critic - Imagine it as –

- ***Your "Checker"*** – who is constantly scanning your environment for danger
- ***"The well-intentioned bumbler"*** – someone who is trying to help, annoying, off the mark, over the top
- ***A silly character from a movie or show*** – Who would you choose? (Jar Jar Binks, Bart Simpson, Sponge Bob)
- ***The Pompous Judge*** – some old, self-righteous, absolutely certain, imposing judge with a flowing black robe sitting high up on a podium looking down at you

### Befriending Our Inner Critic –

- 1) **Become aware** – be aware that we all have a voice that acts like an inner critic
- 2) **Give it space** – give space to your inner critic – end the war of trying to fight with it or ignore it
- 3) **Engage in a dialogue** – “Tell me what you have in mind. So you’d like me to ....?” Instead of getting angry, appreciate and thank this part - your Inner Protector – for keeping you safe.
- 4) **Negotiate** - “I hear you telling me to \_\_\_\_\_. How about if I do it like this instead (a little differently)?” Keep on changing and reducing over time until the demands can be eliminated.
- 5) **Invite collaboration** – your inner critic has a long history of looking out for you and it does have some good advice, so why not just work together?