



Self-coaching method to help expat partners gain clarity

The inner conference

Based on the method „Inner Team“ developed by Friedemann Schulz von Thun as well as the description by Nicole Alps at „Zeit zu Leben“.

Before going on an international assignment, it is important that both partners make a conscious decision stand wholeheartedly behind their choice. This self-coaching method will help you to find clarity for you.

What is an „inner conference“?

The "inner conference" is held by your "inner team" and consists of your "inner voices".

Do you have "inner voices"? I'm sure you know them, too. Most certainly.

When something within you thinks or says:

"Of course I will follow my husband to China for his career. The offer is very appealing and after all, I have moved countries before and know how it goes."

Another part of you, however, sees the situation from a completely different angle and answers:

"Oh dear, that's going to be exhausting. Once again this will be a huge change for me and the kids and I have to deal with all the transition stress. I long for not having to move anymore and reorganizing everything over and over again."

The inner team and the team members are metaphors for parts of your personality. The "inner voices" have their origin in your life experiences.

Thus, a soothing inner voice can become extremely loud when someone has experienced severe blows in their lives. She may make themselves felt by saying, "Don't get too excited, otherwise you will be disappointed again."

Other "inner voices" reflect what we often heard as children. For example: "Be careful, otherwise something might happen to you."

Give each one of your inner voices enough space to express itself. This is how you get into conversation with your inner voices. This way it's easier to find out what you really want and what a good solution or decision can look like. Or what you have to consider to take good care of yourself.

This is easier than you might think. Because the "inner voices" like to be invited to a joint conversation. Much like a team session or conference.

Try these 9 simple steps to gain more clarity

What do you need to get started? A little time for yourself, a few sheets of paper and a pen. And then it would be good if you still had a few square feet of open space.

1

Phrase your topic, write down your question, your problem

What is it all about? On which topic do you feel an indecision, inner turmoil, a back and forth or lots of pros and cons?

Write down the topic, question or problem on a sheet of paper.

2

Invite your „inner voices“ to the conversation

Now you open the conference or conversation with your inner voices. Sit on a chair or stand so that you have a few square feet of space in front of you. Now you invite your inner voices to say something about the topic of this conversation.

3

Listen to what the voices have to say

Listen carefully to what the voices are saying. Maybe it is best to take some notes about the statements that come up.

4

Give your voices „names“

Which voices can you hear loud and clear? Listen to how they speak, their tone of voice. Maybe they remind you of someone. At first, try to give your voices names. You can write them down on the attached template.

Be sure to use a personalized name for your voice. Don't use "complaining", "confidence" or "anger". Instead try for example: "The grumbler", "Mrs. Confidence", "The loving partner", "Mr. Independence", etc. Other possible voices: The person that needs security, the mother's heart, the faithful partner, the cosmopolitan, the pragmatic, the stranger, the homesick, the foreign, the never a quitter, etc.

Write down each team member, each voice on a separate sheet of paper.

If more voices come up later, you can always add them as you go along.

5

Spread your voices on the floor in front of you

Now take the sheets with your „inner voices“ and spread them on the floor in front of you.

3

6

Listen to your voices

Now sit in your chair or stand in front of the your notes, whichever way feels best for you. You start by saying your question, your problem, your topic out loud. "The grumbler" may say, "Such a nonsense. The question is totally stupid."

Now go to the sheet with the voice you are focusing on. Stand on this sheet. Listen to what it says.

If you like, you can say out loud what you perceive. But you can also stay in your thoughts if you find talking to yourself too awkward.

If the voices do not come up by themselves, stand on the sheet of paper and ask directly, "What do you have to say about the topic, Mrs. Confidence?".

4

7

Follow the conversation between your voices

In most cases, a dialogue develops between the individual voices. You then go from one piece of paper to the next, and listen to yourself.

Sometimes a voice speaks up for which you have not yet prepared a sheet. Then you add that voice on a new piece of paper and include it in the round.

If you realize that some of the voices have been very silent, ask them in a gentle tone of voice "Hey, Mrs. Introvert, what do you think about it?" for example.

8

End the conversation

If you have the impression that every voice has said what they wanted to say, when nothing new comes up, then end the session. Stand or sit down in front of your notes and thank everyone for their comments. You could say something like "Thank you for telling me about your point of view."

9

Draw a conclusion

Now find a different place to sit down. By doing this you leave the space where your "inner conference" to place. This makes it easier for you to look at the conversation with a little distance.

Draw a conclusion of your conference and write down your findings and experiences:

Which ideas for a solution came up?

What has become clear for you?

What is the benefit of having an „inner conference“?

It...

- ➔ helps you to **find clarity** and generates solutions, even when you were totally blocked. "Yes, that's the way it works. I did not see that possibility at all!"
- ➔ provides **aha experiences**, when you didn't expect any new insights anymore: "Oh, that's why I do it this way and not the other."
- ➔ helps to **feel yourself** on a deeper level: "I wasn't aware how happy this makes me. It feels great."
- ➔ enables you to **connect with yourself**: "I may still not have a solution to the problem, but now I know exactly why I think the way I think and what's really important to me in this situation."

5

In any case, this method takes you one step further because you become aware of what is hidden within you. You understand yourself better, realize what's important to you, and will come up with unexpected solutions.

If you realize that self-coaching is not your thing or if you get stuck at a certain stage, I will be happy to help you with an individual coaching session (face-to-face or virtual). I will be very glad to guide you through your inner clarification!

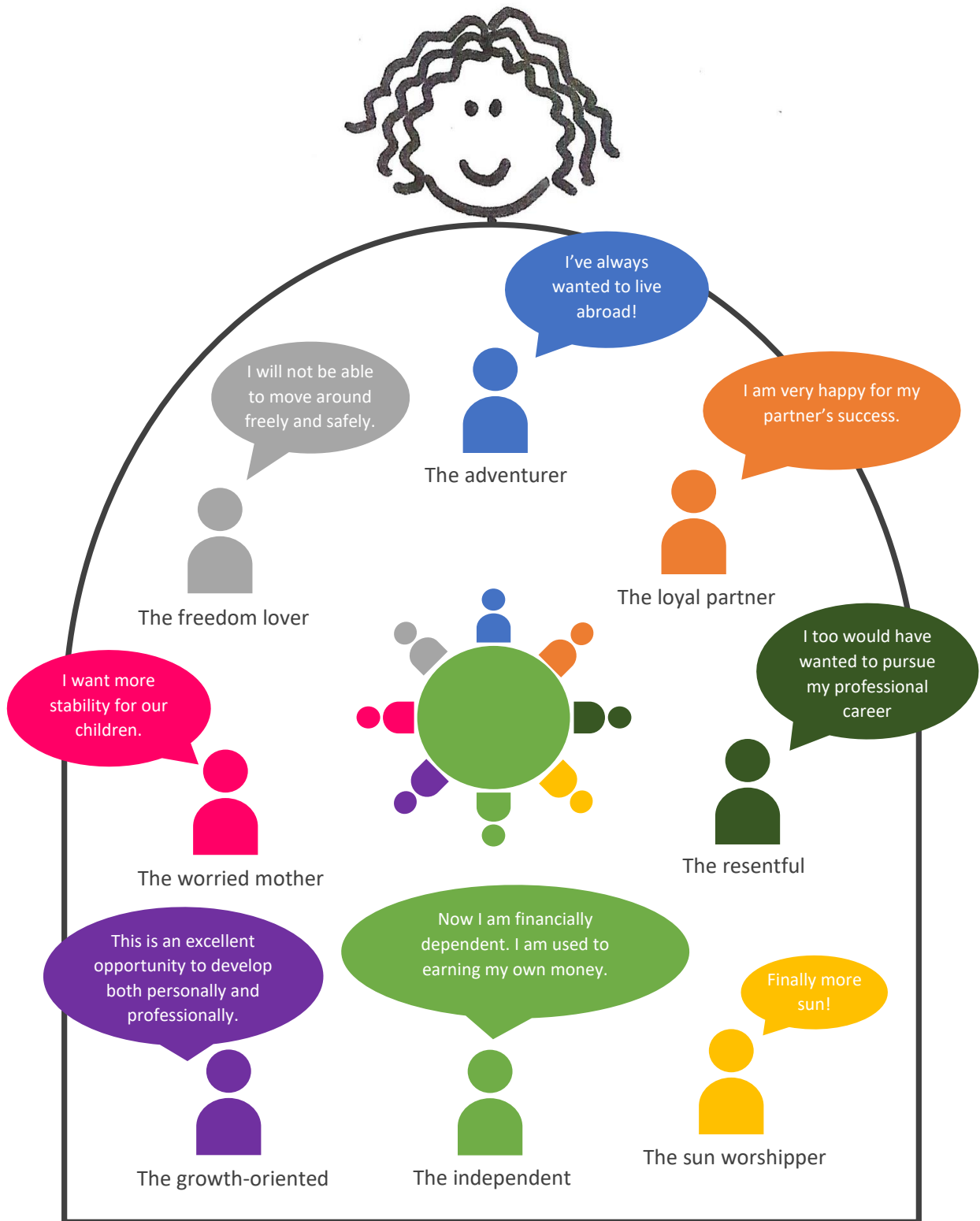
Have fun and feel free to write me your feedback!

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Example



Template

