

EMDR – Eight Phase Protocol in Brief

PHASE 1 - CLIENT HISTORY & TREATMENT PLANNING:

Assessment of personal stability and current life constraints – can they physically cope with the treatment? Look for client's resilience, resourcing, support networks, stability and suitability of client. How have they managed their anxieties in the past?

PHASE 2 – PREPARATION

Build therapeutic alliance, explain the EMDR process, agree and practice the safe/calm place, prepare for intense emotions, identify relaxation and safety techniques, test eye movements and technology, prepare for Zoom, identify secondary gains. (use *window of tolerance* here – breathwork, yoga, B/B, movement, cold water, meditation, lightstream technique, imaginal team, absorption technique, psychoeducation, mindfulness, container work. Use mixture of internal and external resources)

PHASE 3 – ASSESSMENT

Identify clear memory of target, choose appropriate:

- Image of worst moment
- Negative cognition
- Positive cognition
- VOC
- Emotions
- SUDS
- Body sensations and location “do you feel that anywhere inside?”

(Follow this sequence exactly)

PHASE 4 – DESENSITISATION

SUDS <0 or <1 for ecologically valid - “just go with that”, “it’s just old stuff, keep going” use voice more if dissociation – “you haven’t left the room, you’re still here with me”, grounding exercises

PHASE 5 – INSTALLATION

Increase strength of the PC, rating the cognition based on client's “gut feel” at the time

PHASE 6 – BODY SCAN

Client to scan body mentally from top to bottom whilst holding the target event in mind plus the PC to identify any remaining tension

PHASE 7 – CLOSURE

Client returned to state of emotional equilibrium whether processing completed or not. Notice what comes up between sessions. Never activate the memory unless processing

PHASE 8 – RE-EVALUATION

Re-assess previously processed targets and review client responses for any residual tensions (SUDS). Don't reassess the whole thing. Keep it general eg “let's go back to what we worked on last week – is that still active for you? Is there a different starting point today? what's most clear for you now?”