

BACK OF THE HEAD SCALE

A tool by Jim Knipe (2015)

What is it?

- It is a tool to assess a client's level of dissociation and to help them stay grounded. Introduce in preparation phase 2, for use in phase 4 if needed.

How do you use it?

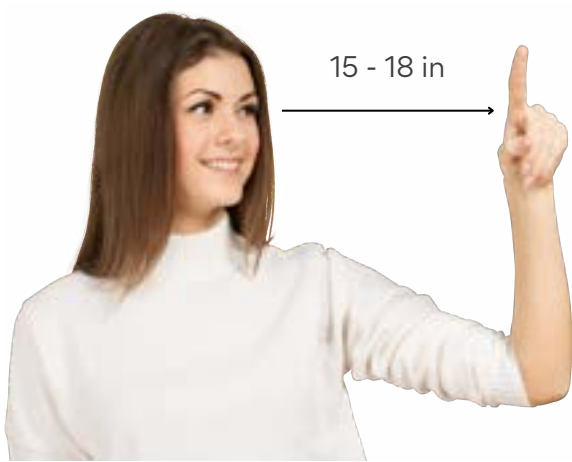
- Ask you client to imagine a line from the back of their head to... 15 to 18 inches in front of their face (fully present) where your client can comfortably focus on their finger.

The point in front of their face means that they are fully present. If your client feels like they are stuck in the back of their head then they are too much in the memory, distracted by thoughts or disturbing feelings.

Ask the clients to show you with their hand where they are at, at any time through processing.

Ideally from just in front of their nose to 15 to 18 inches ahead is where you want to keep them, if moving too far back, pause and use grounding (CIPOS) before proceeding.

To help ground clients, use other resources in this pack, or use throwing and catching this is very effective, if online ask your client to screw up a couple of pieces of paper and throw them in the air one at a time and catch them, increasing difficulty as needed. Make this fun and light-hearted, doing it with them can be helpful showing that we don't catch them all!



Then re-evaluate the back of the head scale, if they are now a couple of inches in front of their nose to the outstretched hand, continue with trauma focussed work. Re-evaluating as and when you think necessary.



CONSTANT INSTALLATION OF PRESENT ORIENTATION SAFETY (CIPOS)

Back of the head scale and CIPOS

→ These two often go together.

What is CIPOS?

→ This stand for 'Constant Installation of Present Orientation and Safety'.

This procedure involves obtaining the clients permission to work on a disturbing memory and then orienting the client to the safety your office or online space.

To strengthen orientation in the present moment ask questions like:

“Where are you right now?”

“How many pictures are in the room?”

“What colours do you notice?”

“Notice 3 things that you haven't noticed for a while?”

Then say go with that and do a short set of Bilateral Stimulation (BLS).

Use a soft object or a scrunched-up piece of paper can also be thrown to each other if in person. If online both client and therapist can throw and catch in their own space.

(For therapists – don't be perfect and catch them all! Like juggling the scrunched-up paper, drop them! Laugh! It doesn't all have to be serious).

Playing catch will reorientate someone quickly as catching requires orientation to the present. This is very useful when used with Back of the Head Scale.

When a person is orientated to the present, the client can be asked if they are willing to go into the target memory for a very short period of time for example 2-10 seconds.

CONSTANT INSTALLATION OF PRESENT ORIENTATION SAFETY (CIPOS)

Orientate to present safety (use Back of the Head Scale) to check. Once orientated add BLS.



2 - 10 seconds in the trauma memory.
No BLS



Orientate to present safety + BLS



2 - 10 seconds in trauma.
No BLS

Continue to repeat until the client can stay 10-20 seconds in the memory, then normal EMDR sets can be resumed in Phase 4.