

# WHEN SAFE PLACE DOESN'T WORK

*Adapted tool by Shapiro*

Firstly, use the container exercise to safely contain any disturbing material. To find out more about this exercise, read '10 of the best resources' from our Etsy shop.

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## **Would it be ok to feel safe when you are safe, when nothing bad is happening, like right now?**

We can never be sure what's going to happen in the next few minutes.

We don't need to be curiously vigilant in order to be ready for whatever might happen our amygdala is on duty 24/7, with the ability to respond in half a millisecond, that's a million times faster than our conscious mind.

In order to feel safe when we are safe, we first need to be sure everything still needing to be reviewed or sorted through is in the container just focus on the image of your container and let everything you need to be set aside go in.

When confirmed continue.



Just notice, with curiosity, how your body feels.

Add bilateral stimulation (knee tapping/butterfly hug or other BLS of choice).

Monitor physiology, checking when relaxation has occurred.

Continue BL S until they reach a state of relaxed awareness, our neutral state when no danger is present.



As you focus on what you're feeling now, what word or words come to mind? I want you to have a way to quickly call back this feeling. Hold that word in mind while you focus on the feeling and add BLS for about 30 seconds. Ask:

Did the word stay or change?

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## **If it stayed:**

You will need to practise using this in conjunction with your container so your body will develop the habit of feeling safe when you are safe instead of being on guard.

Ask the client to practice using the container and safe state word. Shapiro suggests not adding BLS to the client's own practice because of the risk of opening up material before we are ready to process.

A potential problem is that the body won't settle into a relaxed state. Notice the feeling that is in the body, put that feeling in the container.

If emotional distress comes up, let that go in your container for now and we will come back to it.

Distress will not go in the container or comes back two times; something may be ready for processing.

Decide together whether to target it today, next session or where it fits in the treatment plan.

## **If it changed:**

Add BLS until the word or phrase feels right for the client.