



8 Phases of EMDR

Phase 1 Client History

In this phase, the therapist gets to know the client, what the client wants to address and change in their life and what has contributed to their current beliefs about themselves.

Phase 2 Preparation

Here, we establish a sense of safety and stability for the client as we prepare to process difficult experiences in the client's life. We identify imagery and activities that the client finds soothing and comforting and strengthen them.

Phase 3 Assessment (Access and Activate)

We identify what the client wants to target for processing and activate the network in the brain in order to process it.

Phase 4 Desensitization

In this phase, we add BLS (Bilateral Stimulation) to decrease the distress. Guided by the therapist, the client uses eye movements in a rhythmic left-right pattern while simultaneously focusing on and processing the distressing memories. As a result, the level of distress related to the negative belief and memory are reduced

Phase 5 Installation

In this phase, we are continuing to use BLS. However, we are strengthening the positive belief that the client would prefer to believe about themselves.

Phase 6 Body Scan

Here, the client assesses their body to see if there is any remaining stress, as the body is the last place to let go of trauma. BLS is used to address any of the lingering stress.

Phase 7 Closure

We have reached the end of processing and are now wrapping things up, either because the client has fully finished processing the target or because the session has ended. If processing is incomplete, we utilize skills developed in phase 2 to close the processing and return to a peaceful or calm state, as needed.

Phase 8 Re-evaluation

Finally, we review what has been processed and determine if there are additional areas to be addressed related to the negative belief. Additionally, the client is encouraged to integrate what they've learned into their life.