



SAFE EMDR

ANSWER CHARACTERS

Answer Characters in SAFE EMDR: How Therapist Patterns Can Interfere With Healing

- ❑ This is a great extension of the **Answer characters**, especially for training clinicians in **SAFE EMDR**.

Organized into a clear chart similar to the relationship one, but focused on **how therapist Answers can interfere with therapy**.

Answer Characters in SAFE EMDR: Therapist Patterns & Their Impact on Healing

Each therapist character type carries a core belief and an over-developed strength that shapes the clinical relationship and can inadvertently interfere with the healing process.

Character Type	Core Belief	Over-Developed Strength	How It Shows Up	How It Can Interfere With Healing
The Invisible One	"I'm in danger."	Sensitivity, hyper-attunement	Avoids challenging, hesitant to guide.	Therapy may lack direction or containment. Clients may feel uncertain about therapist leadership.
The Emotional One	"It's not safe to feel."	Emotional attunement	Absorbs emotions, struggles to stay grounded.	Therapist may become dysregulated, merge with client experience, or move too quickly to stop feelings.
The Nice / Non-Threatening One	"I'm powerless."	Gentleness, kindness	Avoids confrontation, overly validates.	Important patterns go unnamed. Therapy becomes supportive but not transformative.
The Independent One	"I'm alone."	Competence, self-reliance	Relies heavily on technique, avoids consultation.	Therapist may become isolated and rigid, missing opportunities for collaboration and learning.
The Rock	"My needs don't matter."	Stability, endurance	Holds space for trauma without showing impact.	Therapist burnout can develop because needs are ignored. Clients may feel emotional distance.
The Chameleon	"I'm not enough."	Adaptability, flexibility	Adjusts style to please client, avoids authority.	Therapy may lose clarity or direction as the therapist over-adapts to the client.
The Hero	"I'm not safe."	Protection, strong boundaries	Tries to rescue or fix clients quickly.	Therapist may override pacing, push interventions too fast, or feel responsible for outcomes.
The Doer	"I must be perfect."	Productivity, action orientation	Focuses heavily on technique/interventions.	Therapist may rush the process, prioritize doing over presence, and miss relational attunement.
The Life of the Party	"I don't matter."	Energy, warmth	Uses humor or lightness to regulate.	Difficult material may be avoided or minimized, preventing deeper processing.