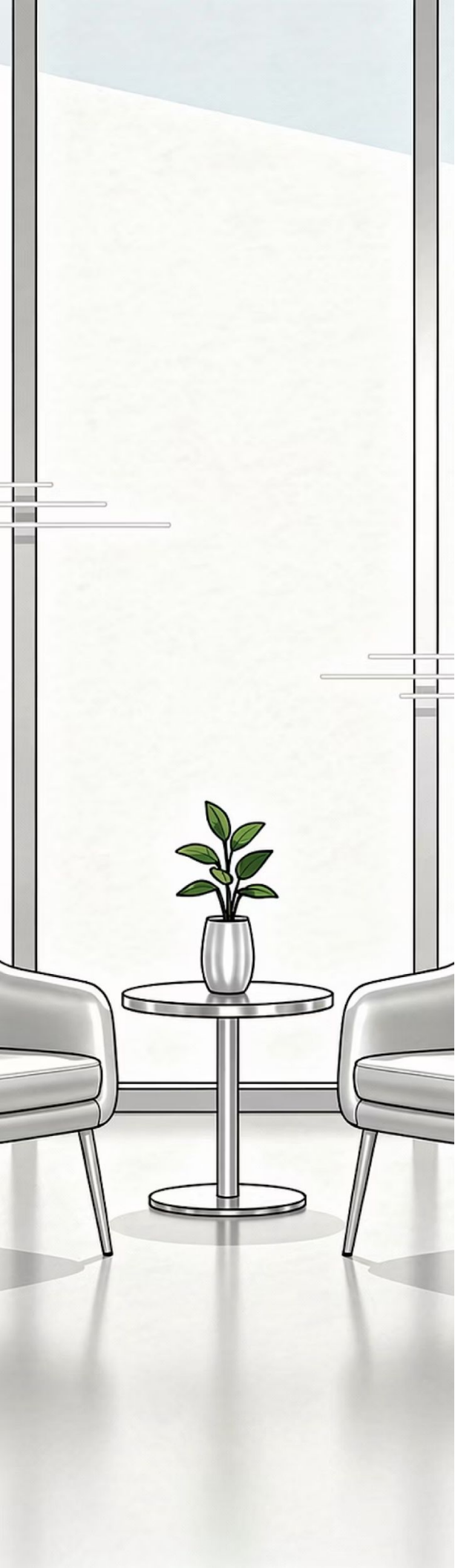


Creating a Container

Deborah Kennard, MS

Personal Transformation Institute (PTI) – 6-Day EMDR
Training Practice Handout

- 📄 This is a practice sheet. Fill in the blanks and spaces provided with your own information as you work through the exercises.



Creating a Container – Steps 1–6

1

Notice and Offer Container

So we are nearing the end of our time and I would like to be sure you have all of the time you need to feel complete and safe when you leave the office today. Would you be interested in a containing resource to help with this?

2

Specify What Needs to be Contained

First, let us decide what it is you feel the need to contain?

Notes: _____

3

Mindfully Invite and Offer Menu

Okay, so just allow the perfect container to come to mind that will be big enough and strong enough to hold your [name entry point]. It could be as small as this coffee cup or as large as Mother Earth, or anything in between.

Container chosen: _____

4

Enhance / Deepen

Great. So imagine that [name container] and how does it go in?

Notes: _____

5

Mindfully Deepen

So just allow it to enter [name container] from that [name entry point] and let me know when you feel it is all inside.

6

Sealing Container

Would you like to [close the door, put a lid on it], or have you already done that?

Creating a Container – Steps 7–11

7

Somatic Linking

"So just sense the ____ being contained in the (name container), and what do you notice in your body now?"

Body sensations noticed: _____

8

Extra Layers / Menu

Great. Now just see if there is anything else you need to feel that is safe and contained. You could put a lock on a door, have a special being as the guard, you could put it into a cave in a mountain...

Additional layers added: _____

9

Deepen / Check for Completion

Great. So really sense the ____ inside the (describe container). And what are you noticing in your body now?

Body sensations: _____

10

Spiritual / Energy Resource

Would you like to invite healing or spiritual energy or light to penetrate the (container) to help heal the ____ ?

11

Enhance / Deepen / Complete

Just allow that ____ (energy/light) to penetrate that ____ and let me know when it feels complete.

"The Answer"

The first information we want to get is regarding your strengths and what you do under stress. This information will help us in the preparation phase for you. We will see what you are really good at doing and also what is less developed for you. This information will be useful as we continue the EMDR treatment process.

- As you answer the following questions, there is no need to read into them too much. Whatever comes to mind first will be fine.**

Questions

What are you most proud of?

What is difficult for you to do?

What do you do when under stress?

How do you handle extreme pressure?

How are you with deadlines?

How do you get your "way"?

Is it easy for you to say "no"?

Do you cry easily?

What do you do when you are upset?

Do you cry in front of others?

Would you call yourself a "rule follower"?

How do you deal with conflict?

In an emergency situation what are you likely to do?

Is it easy for you to ask for help?

Is it difficult for you to accept help?

How convincing are you?

What are you likely to do when someone tells you "no"?

How do you handle negative feedback or criticism?

Therapist may take a moment to look for patterns, then take a guess: So it sounds like you are good at ____, and it is harder for you to ____. When you get close to pain I wonder if you will ____ (Looking for what is over and under developed for the client).

The Answer Patterns

What patterns am I seeing in the Answer Questions? (These are not necessarily discussed with client, this just helps you formulate your understanding.)

How do they regulate affect?

Notes:

What else do I feel curious about?

Notes:

What do I notice about the client's posture, voice, and the way they answered the questions?

Notes:

What are the current resources? (What does the client do well?)

Notes:

What is under developed for the client?

Notes:

What character types are you seeing in the client and why?

Notes:

What resources are you seeing as a possibility?

Notes:

Character Types

Character Type	Possible Negative Belief	Over-Developed	Under-Developed	Needed to Hear
The Invisible One	I'm in danger. I'm going to die.	Disappearing, Survival Defenses, Sensitivity	Safety, Grounding, Feeling Emotions	"You are welcome here." "You are safe now."
The Emotional One	I'm in danger. It's not safe to feel safe.	Merging into another person. Knowing how others feel. Sensitivity	Boundaries, ability to self sooth	"It is okay to feel safe when you are safe."
The Nice/Nonthreatening One	I'm helpless. I'm powerless.	Getting pity. Being a victim.	Personal power. Self-soothing	"I'm here for you." "You can get your needs met."
The Independent One	I'm alone.	Competency, Ability to take control	Asking for help. Trusting others to help.	"You can get support." "It's okay to ask for help."
The Rock	I don't matter. My needs don't matter.	Being dependable, Tolerating negative, Enduring suffering	Knowing what they want, Asking for what they want, Action	"What you want matters."
The Chameleon	I'm not enough	Adaptation to environment, Ability to manipulate and adapt	Being honest, Knowing who they are, Being straight forward	"It's okay to just be you." "You matter"
The Hero	I'm not safe, I'm powerless	Setting firm boundaries, Withstanding pain	Being vulnerable. Connecting with authentic emotions.	"It's safe to connect."
The Doer	I need to be perfect, I'm not enough	Energy, working hard, taking action	Play, Connection, Self Care	"You don't have to work so hard" "It's okay to play"
The Life of the Party	I don't matter	Energy, fun, action	Rest, being grounded and authentic	"You matter," "You don't have to work to be noticed."

These are examples of possible answers. At one time these were needed adaptations for the person to other stay safe or maintain a connection to a caregiver, then become a pattern of relating to others. All people have multiple character types. Each character type has a strength in it. The goal is to help create balance and more choices so the authentic self can be present. The possible negative belief is just an example and there may be many other options. *"Inspired by Ron Kurtz, 1990 and Pat Ogden, 2002"*



Strengths Assessment

In the next section we are looking at various areas of strengths. I will be taking a guess about where you are in each of these areas. My guess will be based on the answers to The Answer questions. It is very helpful to have you correct me after I guess. We will then decide on a resource to practice.

Boundaries

Good at being firm ↔ Good at being flexible

Ability to freely give and receive. Clear about personal rights and rights of others.

Ability to choose.

Therapist guess: _____ *Client*

correction: _____ *Resource to practice:* _____

Affect Regulation

Good at calming yourself alone ↔ Good at reaching out for comfort

Ability to regulate affect alone or with others.

Therapist guess: _____ *Client*

correction: _____ *Resource to practice:* _____

Personal Power

Good at making things happen ↔ Good at going with the flow

Clear about wants and needs. Clear about choices. Aware of effect they have on others.

Therapist guess: _____ *Client*

correction: _____ *Resource to practice:* _____

Verbal Expression

Good at verbal expression ↔ Good at listening

Able to put words to feelings. A balance of listening and expressing.

Therapist guess: _____ *Client*

correction: _____ *Resource to practice:* _____

Influence

Good at convincing ↔ Good at noticing what others want

Ability to reach out for help. Ability to ask for what you want. Doesn't take advantage or get taken advantage of.

Therapist guess: _____ *Client*

correction: _____ *Resource to practice:* _____

Pendulation Exercise

Adapted from Peter

Levine

This is a way to allow the client to practice changing state by noticing a mild disturbance and then going from that to a place of calm or relaxation. This needs to be done very slowly and mindfully so the person can tolerate the experience. The therapist is slowly guiding the client through the experience of noticing this contraction and expansion.

1

Invite Mild Disturbance

"I'd like to invite you to bring up something that is mildly disturbing, maybe some recent irritation, and focus on how you are experiencing that in the present moment. If we were to scale the hardest thing at a 10 and the easiest thing at a 0, it may be something like a 3 on the disturbance level."

2

Slow and Gentle

"I'd like you to do this very slowly and gently and notice how you are experiencing this in your body. If this is too big or overwhelming, just notice the edges of the sensation in your body."

3

Feel Into the Experience

"I would like to invite you to gently feel into this experience of disturbing noticing whatever is here... physical sensations like tension, pain, tingling, heaviness... or emotions like sadness, grief, anger... or energy like tingling, pulsating or vibrating..."

4

Welcome What Is Here

"Whatever is here, I'd like to invite you to welcome it by saying (sadness, pain, etc) you are welcome here, you are welcome here." Invite them to repeat this a few times.

5

Notice What Changes

"Notice what changes as you welcome what is here." "You may notice sensations like hot, cold, tingling tightness" "You may notice visual images like colors, shapes, or images" "You may notice a motion or a direction" "You may notice textures like rough, smooth or jagged" "Here is a list of words that may help: foggy, frozen, heavy, crushing, light, contracted, piercing, stagnant, empty.."



Clinician notes on client response:

Pendulation Exercise – Continued

6

Name the Experience

"If you would like you can come up with a word that describes this experience, if so, what would that word be?"

Word chosen: _____

7

Truth of the Moment

"Focus on what is happening now in the present moment. If you can, be really honest with yourself about what is here and the true sensation of each moment, observing it moving or shifting. If possible, observe it with curiosity as if you are watching water move through a stream."

8

Finding the Oasis

"Now I would like to invite you to notice a place in your body that feels totally different, a part that is not experiencing the disturbance, that feels calm, neutral, peaceful, settled, grounded, connected, comfortable or any different more pleasant experience." "Spend some time feeling into this part of your body, even if it is only a tiny spot on the tip of your toe or nose." "Begin noticing the felt sense of experience with this part of your body and sense into this part as you did with the activation." "Here is a list of words that may help: calm, relaxed, peaceful, content, neutral, warm, light, still, expansive, flowing..."
Location in body: _____

9

Name the Sensation

"If you would like, you can choose a name for this sensation or experience, like 'Calm' or 'Peace:'"

Name chosen: _____

10

Pendulate Between the Two

"Now I would like to invite you to go between those two places using the name to connect to them if that works for you." (Allow them to spend some time going from one to the other.) "If it works for you, slowly move your awareness back and forth between those areas of..... and (If they reported the name you can use it here ie. 'Fear and Calm')" "Pay attention to what happens" "Notice if your body automatically has a release like a breath or a movement or any other change."

The clinician is noticing any physiological changes that are happening and encouraging the client to "notice" and encouraging the slow gentle pacing. When the clinician appears to be complete the clinician may say something like: "Good, I notice your breathing is slowing down and you appear more relaxed. What are you noticing?" The client can then report the experience.

Clinician observations: _____ Client report: _____

Virtual EMDR Mechanics

Teletherapy appears to be here to stay. There are many ways that the traditional S.A.F.E. EMDR practices and procedures can be used in the virtual environment. This document will give specific instructions for use in teletherapy.

Overview

1. Preparation phase in teletherapy checklist.
2. Instructions for Virtual EMDR Script

♥ Preparation Phase Checklist

- Assure the client is properly prepared for reprocessing. Mechanics should be completed the session prior to first reprocessing.
- Experiment with gallery vs. speaker view, screen distance, and positioning.
- Instruct client to pin your video in Zoom (3 dots beside picture → "pin video").
- Practice eye movements with clinician's face in view and out of view. Which is preferred?
- Tapping options: a. Arms crossed, tap sides. b. Tap knees or table. c. Clinician alternately slaps desk (Sound/Tapping).
- Check client privacy. Can be used as a boundary experiment.
- Plan for disconnection/reconnection. Predict screen freezing; have a plan B (text/call). If disconnected, explore the experience after reconnecting.

Setup notes / preferences observed: _____

Script for Mechanics in Virtual EMDR

Practicing the Mechanics: This is preparing for doing Phases 3 and 4. It is not to be done on the first day with clients unless there is a plan to reprocess on the 2nd session.

Initial Set Up

Check screen comfort: distance, sound, gallery vs. speaker view. Instruct client to pin video in Zoom to prevent switching during reprocessing.

Preferences noted: _____

Eye Movements Distance

Ensure client's eyes move past the center line. Use landscape mode or different device if needed.

Practice on the device they'll use for reprocessing.

"We'll practice eye movements – first with just my hand, then hand and face. You decide which you prefer."

Speed: "I'll start fast and slow down if needed. You don't need to focus hard – just let your eyes follow."

Directions: "May I practice diagonal movements?"

Start top-left, then top-right.

Client preference (hand only / hand + face):

Tapping

"Would you like to practice tapping? Options: (1)

Cross arms and tap sides, (2) tap knees, (3) tap desk or book. Which fits best?"

Client preferred tapping option: _____

Sound / Tapping

"Another option is for me to tap on my desk or knees so you can hear and see it." Therapist alternates hands on a surface with large, visible movements.

Reminder Instructions

"EMDR brings balance to your system. Disturbing experiences stored with original images, thoughts, and body sensations can feel like over-reactions when activated – that's just unprocessed memory. Notice your experience and give honest feedback. I'll do eye movements, then stop and ask what you notice – just give a snapshot.

Whatever you experience is okay."

Dual Awareness metaphor: "Some use the metaphor of watching experience pass like a train window or a video screen. Would one feel useful?"

Metaphor chosen: _____

Stop Signal

"If you'd like to stop at any time, that's okay. Would you prefer to raise your hand or use a time-out signal?" Therapist demonstrates both; client practices.

Stop signal chosen: _____