DANDELION HEARTS

Growing Your EMDR Practice: 10 Tips to consider

If you're like most of us working with EMDR, you've probably encountered some bumps along the way. Here's a friendly guide to help you navigate common challenges we all face.

Planning Your Client's Journey

1. Keeping Things Organised. Sometimes we're so eager to help that we dive right in! Take a moment to:
   - Map out your client's full journey - past, present, and future
   - Create a clear plan that makes sense for your client's needs

2. Getting Specific
   Ever notice how working with general memories can feel like trying to catch clouds? Help your clients by:
   - Finding those specific moments that stand out
   - Breaking down big experiences into smaller, workable pieces

3. Looking at the Bigger Picture
   When clients come in struggling with recent events, remember to:
   - Look for earlier experiences that might be connected
   - Think about whether older memories need attention first

Making Sessions Flow Better

4. Keeping Your Client Present
   It's like a dance - you want your clients to be:
   - Connected enough to the memory to process it
   - Grounded enough in the present to feel safe
   Finding that balance takes practice!

5. Managing the Conversation
   We all have clients who love to talk! Gently help them understand:
   - Their mind can process things without saying everything out loud
   - Brief check-ins between sets work best
   - Less talking often means deeper processing

6. When Things Get Stuck
   If the processing slows down or stops:
   - Try changing up your approach
   - Check in about thoughts, images, feelings, and body sensations
   - Use gentle questions to help move things along

DANDELION HEARTS

Working with Complex Situations

7. Understanding Protective Behaviours
   Sometimes parts of us try to protect us from change. Remember to:
   - Notice when your client seems hesitant
   - Honour these protective instincts
   - Work gently and respectfully with any resistance

8. Spotting Signs of Disassociation
   Some clients might disconnect from their experiences during sessions:
   - Keep learning about the signs
   - Ask for help when you need it
   - Put safety first

Taking Care of the Basics

9. Building Strength and Skills
   Sometimes clients need extra support:
   - Help them build coping skills
   - Practice handling future situations
   - Teach new ways of managing challenges

10. Taking Care of Yourself
    This work affects us too! Remember to:
    - Talk with other therapists
    - Notice your own reactions
    - Keep up with your own self-care

A Gentle Reminder

When you're not sure what to do:
- Your trusty EMDR Manual
- Francine Shapiro's excellent guide (EMDR Therapy: Basic Principles, Protocols, and Procedures, 3rd ed., 2018, The Guilford Press)

Remember, every therapist faces these challenges. We're all learning and growing together. Be patient with yourself as you develop your EMDR skills! Need more support? Reach out to your consultant or EMDR community. We're here to help each other grow!

Adapted from work by Patricia Bianca Torres, LMFT, AC (www.empowered.com)