

Directions for Use of Container and Happy Place

These are two affect management tools that can be very useful for clients to have and a great way to introduce them to the power of bilateral stimulation (BLS).

Most clients come to me for EMDR or because someone said, "Go see Lynda" so they have some sense of what is ahead of them. Before they clients get too far into history, I make sure they know what I "do" to help clients (see *Trauma Script* in the "Forms, Protocols, Scripts" folder on my "cloud"), then I tell them:

Before we go any farther into your history, I'm going to help you create a couple of useful tools or resources that I call a Happy Place and a Container. I like to do this with all my clients for three reasons:

1) it's a nice way to learn how your brain is going to respond to a bilateral signal — something that goes back and forth, side to side;

[you can go into listing the various ways you do that — fingers, music, beeps, buzzies, lights, balls, etc]

2) it will give you a way to handle the bothersome things that can happen in the outside world so they don't add more yuck to your pile; and

3) if something gets too big while we're processing yucky stuff in here, you can say "Time out!" and use these tools to help you. Are you game?

First, we create the Container. That way, we can put the yuck away first and don't have to be as concerned that it will contaminate the creation of the Happy Place. [These scripts are on the "cloud" as *Container Imr* and *Happy Place Imr*] Once the Container is in place, we create the Happy Place.]

Next, we put them together:

Now, I'm going to teach you how to use these together, for an even more powerful effect. First, I want you to take a little something out of your container, just a minor annoyance, like a 1 or a 2 and notice what that feels like to have it out. [pause for the response]

[This is an excellent opportunity to begin to teach them body awareness if they have used disconnection from it as a dysfunctional coping tool.]

Now, send it back into your container and notice what THAT feels like. [Pause for the response. If positive you may choose to resource it with 4-8 slow round trips of BLS]

Now, take yourself to your Happy Place [you can name it] and notice what THAT feels like. [Pause for the response. If positive you may choose to resource it with 4-8 slow round trips of BLS]

Would you like to practice it again before we apply it? [If yes, repeat, if no, move to Rescript & Rehearse.]

Rescript

Now that you have these helpful tools, let's apply them to your life. Think of a time in the last week or two where it would have been helpful to have them. Now I want you to run a movie and see yourself using your Container and Happy Place. [Pause for the response. If positive you may choose to resource it with 4-8 slow round trips of BLS] Would you like to do it again with another one? [Pause for the response. If "yes," pause for the response. If positive you may choose to resource it with 4-8 slow round trips of BLS. If "no," move on to Rehearse.]

Rehearse

Now you have the tools and know how to use them. Let's rehearse how you will use them in the future. Imagine a time or situation in the next week where it would be helpful to use them. [Pause for the response.] Run the movie and see yourself using them and let me know what you think. [Pause for the response. If positive you may choose to resource it with 4-8 slow round trips of BLS]. Would you like to do it again with another one? [Pause for the response. If "yes," pause for the response. If positive you may choose to resource it with 4-8 slow round trips of BLS. If "no," move on to Practice.]

Practice

You've done a great job with this. We know that 'practice makes perfect,' so I'd like for you to practice using your Container and Happy Place several times a day, whether you need them or not, so that when you do, it will be much easier than if you only use them in here. When you come back, we'll check and see how it went. Sometimes they will work — great! Sometimes they might not work — if they don't, we'll figure out what could have and create THAT tool to add to your tool box. Sometimes, you'll forget to use them — that's why I want you to practice using them when you don't need to, so you won't be as likely to forget. Okay? Any questions?