

Post-EMDR Session Guidelines

EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing) is a powerful therapy that helps process distressing memories and emotions. After a session, it's normal to experience continued processing. Below are some guidelines to help you take care of yourself:

1. Be Gentle with Yourself

- Your brain may continue processing for hours or even days after your session. You might notice new thoughts, emotions, or physical sensations emerging. This is normal.
- Give yourself grace and avoid self-judgment as you navigate these changes.

2. Practice Self-Care

- Engage in activities that bring you comfort, such as taking a warm bath, listening to soothing music, practicing deep breathing, or going for a walk.
- Get plenty of rest, stay hydrated, and nourish your body with healthy food.

3. Expect Possible Emotional or Physical Responses

- You may feel more emotional or physically tired after a session. Some people experience vivid dreams, mood swings, or heightened sensitivity.
- If you feel overwhelmed, grounding techniques like deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, or mindfulness can help.

4. Journal or Note Changes

- Keeping a journal can help track thoughts, emotions, and body sensations that arise post-session.
- Writing down any insights or memories can be useful for future sessions.

5. Use Coping Skills

- If distressing emotions arise, use grounding exercises such as:
 - 5-4-3-2-1 technique (identify 5 things you see, 4 things you feel, 3 things you hear, 2 things you smell, and 1 thing you taste).
 - Bilateral stimulation techniques like tapping your shoulders or alternating foot movements.
 - Positive affirmations and self-soothing statements.

6. Limit Overstimulation

- Avoid excessive social media, news, or high-intensity conversations immediately after a session.
- If possible, give yourself space to rest and recharge.

7. Reach Out for Support

- If you need emotional support, talk to a trusted friend, partner, or family member (without overanalyzing the session).
- If distress persists beyond a few days, reach out to your therapist for guidance.

8. Schedule Quiet Time

- Allow time for reflection and integration between sessions.
- Avoid scheduling highly stressful events immediately after your session if possible.

When to Contact Your Therapist

- If distressing emotions persist or intensify beyond what feels manageable.
- If you experience significant disturbances in sleep, appetite, or daily functioning.
- If you have thoughts of self-harm or feel unsafe. In this case, seek immediate support from a crisis line or emergency services.

Remember: The processing that happens after EMDR is a sign of healing. Trust the process and take care of yourself.

If you have any concerns, don't hesitate to reach out.