

Imagine your mind as a garden. Before planting delicate flowers or tackling stubborn weeds, you need to prepare the soil, water it, and make sure it's ready for growth. EMDR resourcing is like tending to your mental garden before doing the trauma work. It's like ensuring your garden has strong roots, sturdy fences, and a reliable watering system. During resourcing in your EMDR sessions, we aim to nurture these mental "tools." This way, when you start addressing past trauma memories, your garden is ready to grow. Just like a well-tended garden can weather any storm, resourcing helps you feel resilient and strong during EMDR therapy.

How could this tool help me?

In EMDR, there are many different types of resourcing! We learn about techniques such as the Calm Safe Space and the Container Exercise! Another EMDR resource is called "Nurturing and Protective Figures." Nurturing and Protective Figures are symbolic representations of qualities of support and safety. These figures are imagined or remembered during EMDR to provide a sense of comfort and protection.

How should I use it?

Important points to understand about Nurturing and Protective Figures in EMDR:

Symbolic Representation: Nurturing and Protective Figures don't have to be real people from your life. They are symbolic representations of qualities and relationships that bring comfort and support.

Imagined Figures: You are encouraged to imagine or remember people who created a strong sense of safety, love, and protection. They can be real people from your past or present. They can be fictional characters (such as a superhero!), or even spiritual or symbolic entities.

Purpose: The inclusion of Nurturing and Protective Figures serves various purposes in EMDR therapy:

- **Emotional Regulation:** Imagining these figures can help regulate emotions. It can provide a sense of safety during the processing of traumatic memories.
- **Resource Development:** These figures serve as internal resources that you can use during EMDR. They contribute to your overall resilience and coping skills.

Integration with Trauma Processing: I may guide you to bring these figures into the trauma processing. This integration helps increase feelings of safety and support when the reprocessing of distressing experiences.

Creation of a Safe Space: Nurturing and Protective Figures contribute to creating a mental safe space within the therapeutic process. This safe space helps you cope with trauma and PTSD symptoms.

Adult Self: The adult self can be a protector figure. You can tap into your present, mature, and empowered state.



"Nurturing and Protective Figures" Exercise

1. Set the Scene: Find a quiet and comfortable space where you won't be disturbed. Take a few deep breaths to center yourself.
2. Reflect on Nurturing Figures: Think about someone in your life who has been nurturing and supportive. It could be a family member, friend, mentor, or even a fictional character. Picture them in your mind.
What qualities make them nurturing?
How do they make you feel safe and cared for?
In this image: What do you see? What do you hear? What do you smell? What do you feel in your body?
3. Journal Your Reflections: Open a journal or notebook and write down your reflections on the nurturing figure. Describe the specific qualities or actions that make them supportive. Consider how their presence affects your emotions and well-being.
4. Explore Protective Figures: Now, shift your focus to identifying protective figures in your life. These are individuals who make you feel safe and secure.
5. Journal Your Protective Figure Reflections: In your journal, write down the characteristics of the protective figure. What actions or qualities create a shield of safety around you? How does their presence create to a sense of security and protection?
6. Combine Nurturing and Protective Qualities: Envision a blend of both nurturing and protective qualities in a single figure. This could be a real person or a symbolic representation. Imagine this figure providing unconditional support, care, and protection. How does their presence make you feel? What does it look like when they are with you in challenging situations?
7. Creative Expression: Consider expressing these images creatively. You can draw, write a poem, or create a collage representing your nurturing and protective figures. Allow your imagination to guide you in capturing the essence of these supportive influences.
8. Reflection and Self-Compassion: Take a moment to reflect on the exercise. Recognize the strength and resilience within you. Practice self-compassion.

Acknowledge that you have the ability to use these sources of support whenever needed.