

FAITH BASED EMDR RESOURCING TEMPLATE

In EMDR, "Resourcing" is an essential phase helping the client build a "toolbox" of internal coping skills. These skills help the client develop a sense of safety and strength before and during the processing of difficult memories. For those wanting to incorporate their personal faith, these resourcing skills can be a beautiful opportunity to help foster a sense of security and connection with the presence of Christ. These exercises are designed from a Biblical worldview inspired by traditional EMDR resourcing skills. These skills are intended to help calm the nervous system, increase emotional resilience, and ground one's identity in being "fearfully and wonderfully made." (Psalm 139:14). The following skills can be utilized to further incorporate the Christian faith and values with the full consent of the client and trained EMDR providers.

SAFE SPACE (THE SACRED SPACE)

A spiritual upgrade to the "Safe Space" exercise, where you visualize a sanctuary of peace in the presence of the God.

THE PROTECTIVE FIGURE (THE GOOD SHEPHERD)

Moving from imaginary helpers to the biblical reality of Christ's protection and the Holy Spirit's comfort.

THE CONTAINER (THE ALTAR)

A prayerful way to "cast your cares" by placing unprocessed distress in God's hands between sessions.

SCRIPTURE ANCHORING

Using specific Bible verses as "Positive Cognitions" to replace the lies of trauma with the truth of the Gospel.

THE SACRED SPACE

In the resourcing phase, the safe space allows the individual to create a sense of safety within their environment. providers can take this a step further by guiding the Christian client to develop a Sacred Space. This is done by welcoming and including the presence of God.

1. The Invitation (Introduction) "As we work together, it is important to identify a mental and spiritual 'safe space.' This tool is designed to help you not feel alone in this journey of processing the hard life experiences and trauma you have endured. Instead it is a place designed to be aware of God's specific presence, peace, and protection. It is your 'Sacred Place' with God mentioned in Psalm 91." - Please read Psalm 91 for the client.

2. Identifying the Space

- Prompt: "Let's start by closing your eyes or looking off into the distance, what ever you feel comfortable doing. Allow your brain to find a place where you feel most connected to the Lord. It could be a real place you've visited (like a specific garden or beach), a place from your childhood, or a purely imagined place (like sitting in a meadow with Jesus)."
- Refining the Image: "As you visit this place, what do you notice around you? What are the colors? What does the weather feel like? Are there any sounds, like birds, running water, laughter, wind?"

3. Noticing the Presence

- Prompt: "Now in your Sacred Space, where is the Lord? You might find Him sitting next to you, walking right next to you, or perhaps you just feel His Spirit. What is it like to have His presence here?"

4. Enhancing the Sensation

- Prompt: "While focusing on your connection with God, where do you feel that peace in your body? Notice the sensations. Is it a lightness in your chest? A relaxation in your shoulders? Focus on that physical feeling of peace."
- Installation: [Perform short, slow sets of bilateral stimulation/tapping] "Just notice that... stay with that feeling of His presence."

THE SACRED SPACE WORKSHEET (CLIENT TEMPLATE)

I. Description of the Sanctuary

- Location: _____
- Sensory Details (Sight, Sound, Smell):

- The Presence (Where is Jesus/The Holy Spirit?):

II. Biblical Grounding

- Choose a "Key Verse" for this space:
 - Example: "He will cover you with His feathers..." (Psalm 91)
 - Your Verse: _____

III. The Cue Word

Select a word or short phrase that summarizes this feeling of sacred peace (e.g., "Fortress, Safety, Seen, Calm Accepted, Truth, etc.").

- My Cue Word: _____

IV. Physical Anchor

When you focus on this space and say your cue word, where do you feel the peace in your body?

- Location of sensation: _____

THE GOOD SHEPHERD

The Protective Figure a tool developed from resourcing figures. One's protective figure is someone that displays boundaries or defends the individual in their time of need. In standard EMDR, a protective figure is often a superhero, a wise grandparent, or role model. For the Christian, we are tapping into the Biblical reality of the Good Shepherd who is "the same yesterday, today, and forever."

1. Moving from Concept to Presence

During this resourcing tool, guide the client to move beyond the idea that Jesus is a "concept" to Jesus as a Protective Figure in the here and now.

- The Look: "As you start to visualize God, notice the expression in His eyes. Is it one of fierce protection? Tenderness? Calm authority?"
- The Stance: "Is He standing in front of you, shielding you from the memory? Or is He beside you, with His hand on your shoulder?"

2. The Tools of Protection

Biblical imagery provides "sensory hooks" that strengthen the neural network of safety:

- The Staff (Guidance): To pull the client back if they wander into "flooding" or dissociation.
- The Rod (Defense): To ward off the "wolves" of shame, lies, or spiritual attack.
- The Voice: "My sheep hear my voice." What is the one truth He is speaking to you right now?

DEVELOPING YOUR PROTECTIVE FIGURE WORKSHEET

Scripture Focus

"Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me."

(Psalm 23:4)

- Visualizing the Protector: Describe the presence of God. What do you notice about His strength?
- The Shielding: If a difficult memory were to try and arise, how will God respond to protect you?
- The Felt Sense: When you realize God has the capability to stand between you and your past pain, what do you notice within your body?
- Installation Phrase: Pair the image with a short truth, such as "He is my Shield" or "I am Guarded."

THE ALTAR

The container was developed in EMDR to assist the client in stabilization in between sessions. Utilizing this tool helps the client feel as if the trauma they are working on does not intrude into their daily life. In this faith-based approach, we transition this concept into The Altar, moving beyond mere containment and toward a powerful act of surrender and spiritual peace, by placing the intrusion at Alter.

Step 1: Visualizing the Altar

Describe what the Altar looks like in your mind. Is it a simple stone altar in a field? A golden altar in a cathedral? Is it the foot of the Cross?

- My Altar looks like: _____

Step 2: Identifying the Burden If we haven't finished processing a memory today, what "parts" remain heavy? (e.g., a specific image, a tight feeling in the throat, or a lingering fear).

- What I am surrendering today: _____

Step 3: The Act of Surrender

Imagine yourself physically placing those fragments on the Altar. Notice the movement of your hands letting go.

- The Prayer of the Hands: As you visualize this, say: "Lord, I am not strong enough to carry this today, but You are. I leave this in Your keeping until we meet again."

Step 4: The Seal of Peace

How does the Lord respond as you leave the burden there? Does He cover it? Does He look at you with peace?

- The sensation of letting go: _____

THE SCRIPTURAL ANCHORING PROTOCOL

Leading up to the processing phase, the client and provider begin working together in identifying the root negative cognition. Next the provider helps the client identify a positive cognition in which they would like to utilize to replace the negative cognition. Scripture Anchoring is a tool where the Word of God is the root source of the positive cognitions. Instead of a client trying to convince themselves they are "good enough," they anchor their identity in what God has already declared to be true.

1. Identifying the "Root Lie"

Trauma often creates lies about one's self known as a "cognitive distortion".

Common cognitive distortions include:

- "I am powerless."
- "I am shameful."
- "I am alone."

2. Selecting the "Anchor Verse"

For every lie, there is a specific Gospel truth. Help the client identify a verse that anchor's the client in truth and love.

The Negative Lie (NC)	The Scriptural Anchor (PC)	Biblical Reference
"I am unlovable."	"I am deeply loved by God."	Romans 8:38-39
"I am in danger."	"The Lord is my shield and my fortress."	Psalms 18:2
"It was my fault/I am dirty."	"I am washed clean and forgiven."	1 John 1:9
"I have no control."	"God is sovereign and I am in His hands."	Psalms 31:15
"I am a mistake."	"I am fearfully and wonderfully made."	Psalms 139:14

THE SCRIPTURE ANCHOR WORKSHEET

The Lie - Negative Cognition The Lie:

(e.g., "I am abandoned," "I am broken beyond repair," "I must be perfect to be loved.")

Scripture Anchor - Positive Cognition The Truth:

(e.g., "I am a new creation," "I am never alone," "His grace is sufficient for me.") The Anchor Verse:

(Scripture reference and text)

(VOC)

When you hold the memory in your mind and then look at this Verse, how true does the Verse feel in your physical body/heart?

1 --- 2 --- 3 --- 4 --- 5 --- 6 --- 7

(1 = Feels like a total lie; 7 = I feel it is 100% true in my soul)

Sensory Installation

Write it out: (Handwriting helps the brain "digest" the truth)

The Body Check: As you read your handwriting, what do you notice in your body? (e.g., a release in the jaw, a warm feeling, deeper breathing).