EMDR: After-Care Instructions

Thank you for allowing me to work with you through the EMDR process. Following your sessions, it's important to care for yourself as your brain continues to process the material. Please review these aftercare guidelines to support your healing journey:

After an EMDR session, processing will continue as your brain absorbs and makes sense of the information. As a result, clients report a variety of responses, including:

- Feeling tired for the rest of the day
- Feeling energized
- Experiencing physical reactions, such as headaches
- A "cotton wool" sensation in the head
- A sense that "a weight has been lifted"
- Feeling that something has changed, but unsure what
- Short-term difficulty concentrating, with a feeling of slow motion in the brain
- "Echoes" of the memory worked on, or faint reminders of parts of the incident
- Increased emotional responses
- Surfacing of other related or seemingly unrelated memories
- Experiencing new insights as processing continues
- More vivid dreams

Remember, these reactions are normal and a positive sign. Most people manage these responses well, but if you experience significant distress try:

1. View the memories, related thoughts, emotions, and body sensations like a movie passing by, allowing your brain to process them naturally and as intended.
2. Use your container—your mental space where you can temporarily store distressing thoughts, emotions, and memories.
3. Use your "Calm Place" to help you stay grounded.
4. Engage any other resources or techniques that help you feel more centered and supported.

If significant distress persists, please contact the office and schedule a follow up appointment as soon as possible. The goal is to never leave you in distress for prolonged periods of time, as this can interrupt processing in the future. Following up with an additional session when needed is an important part of the trauma and EMDR process.

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