**Role Induction Script No. 1: The REM SCRIPT**

**Therapist:** So, what brings you here today?

**Client:** I just haven’t been myself lately. I think I might be getting depressed. A friend of mine said he had the same problem and did this thing called EMDR that he said helped him a lot and it was fast. It only took a few months. I saw that you do EMDR, so I made an appointment.

It sounds a little weird.

**Therapist:** Yea, it is different. During EMDR there is little talking. All the healing happens in your own head, you are not healed by talking. EMDR is not about talking, you just process what is already in your head. You are not healed by saying words from your mouth to my ears. You have the answer to the problem I don’t. Together we will get to the bottom of your problem. It’s pretty easy to do. To start we usually pick a troubling image and pair it with a negative belief about oneself. For example, if your spouse left you that might be a memory top work on and the thought might be “I’m not good enough.” We ask you to keep that memory and thought in your minds eye while we start the eye movement and then free associate, letting your mind go where ever it wants to go. That’s briefly what is involved. I’ll explain more as we get closer to our first EMDR session.

**Client:** How does it work?

**Therapist:** Actually, we are not exactly sure how it works. There many hypotheses that have been and continue to be research that seem to explain it. One of the hypotheses is related to the REM stage of sleep. Are you familiar with REM stage of sleep?

**Client:** Yea sure, I’ve heard of REM.

**Therapist:** REM takes events of the day and processes unnecessary parts of the memory for us. For example, let’s say someone pulled in front of you today on your way here almost causing an accident. You were shaken up, but you’re okay. So, your heart is probably racing, and you might be a little shaken, maybe start to feel angry and scared. You might look around make sure everyone is okay. Tomorrow if you tell the story to someone about what happened, you won’t feel the experience all over again, you’ll just think of it as something that happen not much different than what you bought at the grocery store yesterday. When you think of it, it is just something that happen yesterday. The theory is that REM processes the experiential part of the memory and leaves us with only the part of the event that we need to remember it. EMDR seems to do the same thing. Traumatic events or just normal life stressors can cause REM to breakdown. It can’t handle some of the overwhelming experiences and the information does not move to where it is supposed be. This leaves parts of the memory available to interfere with our mood and our life. This breakdown causes trouble. EMDR is like REM on steroids. EMDR moves information that REM seems unable to move. EMDR does the same thing that REM does. It takes vividness and emotionality out of a memory, leaving only a detached memory of the event much like what REM does.

You should be aware that EMDR can cause significant changes that cannot be undone. For example, some people have the belief that “they do not matter”. They put everyone else’s needs ahead of their own, because “they do not matter”, everyone else does. EMDR can change that to “I do matter” thus changing the way the person see’s themselves, how they see others, it can also change how they react to the world and how they allow the world to engage them. Once this shift happens, the person has value and will not allow themselves to be treated as if they do not have value. This can be a dramatic change that upsets family, friends and even the client. This change cannot be undone. The insight cannot be removed.

Do you understand?

## **Role Induction Script No. 2: AIPM Script**

**The Adaptive Information Processing Model Script**

**Therapist:** So, what brings you here today?

**Client:** I just haven’t been myself lately. I think I might be getting depressed. A friend of mine said he had the same problem and did this thing called EMDR that he said helped him a lot. It only took a few months. I saw that you do EMDR so I made an appointment.

It sounded a little weird when he was trying to describe it to me. How does it work?

**Therapist:** Actually, we are not exactly sure. There many hypotheses that have been, and continue to be, researched that seem to explain it. One of the hypotheses is called the adaptive information processing model. It’s not as complicated as it sounds.

When we experience a traumatic event, it can overwhelm our brain and information gets stuck in the wrong part of the brain where it can be triggered. It is like a veteran who has flashbacks. Flashbacks are an example of information that is stored in the emotional centers of the brain. The information is stored inappropriately where new information cannot be integrated with the event. Like, “The war is over and I’m safe now. I survived.” These logical thoughts are blocked from being accepted. EMDR Therapy has a way to infiltrate this flashback and complete the processing giving the veteran with the flashback relief. After EMDR his memory system has new adaptive perceptions, which in turn reduces or even eliminates the distress the flashbacks were causing. He accepts and knows the war is over and he is safe.

When we have a distressing experience that doesn’t overwhelm our brain, we usually learn from it. For example, let’s say you get pulled over by a police officer for speeding.

When you see those flashing lights you will experience thoughts, feelings, images, memories and body sensations. You are having an uncomfortable experience.

You might think, “I’m in trouble, I’m stupid, this is a speed trap. This is unfair.” You will probably feel nervous, scared and angry. You may have images of writing a check to pay the last ticket. You may recall taking the online traffic course from your last ticket. You will have body sensations like a racing heart, you might start to sweat a little and feel some tension in your body.

The discomfort of getting a ticket teaches you to not speed and be more careful driving. The result an improved driving record and no more tickets.

Does that make sense?

**Client:** Yes it makes sense.

**Therapist continues:** There is research to show that back and forth eye movements are related to REM sleep. REM processes information of the day. It takes what was experienced, all the feelings, body sensations and turns them into just his thing that happened yesterday. After a good night’s sleep, we don’t feel the entire experience of the traffic stop every time we talk about it. Only the intellectual memory remains that does not really upset us anymore. We think that REM removes the body and emotional content of the experience and just leaves the intellectual memory of what happened. With trauma, REM cannot do its job. The event was too powerful, and the system breaks down. EMDR therapy seems to jump start the memory.

**Therapist Continues**: With traumatic memory, there is often an over-reaction to something in the present that is related to the experience associated with the traumatic experience. For example, veterans with PTSD avoid the smell of diesel fuel because it can cause a flashback, a re-experience of the war. Similarly, with the emotional distress you are experiencing that’s interfering with your life may be related to an old experience. Unfortunately, with traumatic memories the information is stored in fragments, we usually only get emotions and body sensations without the context as to why we are feeling this way. EMDR therapy connects these old fragments with new information that is integrated thus reducing any distress the fragmented memories were causing.

**Therapist:** Before we start EMDR we will install a safe place, or some people prefer to call it a peaceful place as well as teach grounding skills, emotional containment, and breathing skills for relaxation. This is necessary just in case you need to manage distressing emotions in the process. It’s a way to stop safely if you feel like you would like to stop before the process is complete.

EMDR Therapy can activate thoughts, feelings, images, memories and body sensation. Sometimes this can happen quickly, and people are sometimes surprised so they want to stop. It’s okay to stop. The safe place and other skills are ways for you to get to a calm place if you are upset and need to stop. It is a precaution. I like to think of these resources as a spare tire. We do not often need them but when you do it’s important to have them. We will talk more about them at our next session and we will practice them together.

Do you have any questions?

**Client:** No not at this point.

You should be aware that EMDR can cause significant changes that cannot be undone. For example, some people have the bleif that “they do not matter”. They put everyone else’s needs ahead of their own, because “they do not matter”, everyone else does. EMDR can change that to “I do matter” thus changing the way the person see’s themselves, how they see others, it can also change how they react to the world and how they allow the world to engage them. Once this shift happens, the person has value and will not allow themselves to be treated as if they do not have value. This can be a dramatic change that upsets family, friends and even the client. This change cannot be undone. The insight cannot be removed. Understand

## **Role Induction Script No. 3: A Simple Explanation**

**Therapist:** So, what brings you here today?

**Client:** I just haven’t been myself lately. I think I might be getting depressed. A friend of mine said he had the same problem and did this thing called EMDR that he said helped him a lot. It only took a few months. I saw that you do EMDR, so I made an appointment.

It sounded a little weird when he was trying to describe it to me. How does it work?

**Therapist:** Actually, we are not exactly sure. There many hypotheses that have been, and continue to be, researched that seem to explain it. It’s not too difficult to understand. Our mind and our body have some similarities. Let’s say you fell and broke your arm. You know you arm is broken because it is sticking out of your skin. Now, your arm can take quite a beating before it breaks. All you have to do is watch a football game or a boxing match to know it takes a lot of punishment to break a bone. But bones reach a point where they break when encountering a powerful force. Right?

**Client**: Yes of course.

**Therapist:** Well, your mind and emotional life is much like other parts of are body. Like an arm, your emotions can also tolerate a great deal of distress, but emotions also have a breaking point. When the distress is too much, then our psyche sends a message that the emotional system is breaking. These messages are usually things like depression, panic attacks, anxiety, sleep problems, etc. People don’t think that our emotions can break, but they can, just like your arm. EMDR sets the emotions back on track and provides an environment here in my office for them to heal. EMDR is the fast way I know to heal emotional wounds.

You should be aware that EMDR can cause significant changes that cannot be undone. For example, some people have the bleif that “they do not matter”. They put everyone else’s needs ahead of their own, because “they do not matter”, everyone else does. EMDR can change that to “I do matter” thus changing the way the person see’s themselves, how they see others, it can also change how they react to the world and how they allow the world to engage them. Once this shift happens, the person has value and will not allow themselves to be treated as if they do not have value. This can be a dramatic change that upsets family, friends and even the client. This change cannot be undone. The insight cannot be removed.

Do you understand?

## **Role Induction Script No. 4: The Shapiro Script**

Disturbing events can be stored in the brain in an isolated memory network. This prevents learning from taking place. The old material just keeps getting triggered over and over again. In another part of your brain, in a separate network, is most of the information you need to resolve it. It’s just prevented from linking up to the old stuff. Once we start professing with EMDR, the two networks can link up. New information can come to mind and resolve the old problems.

As we process the information and digest the old events, pictures, sensation, or emotions may arise, but your job is just to notice them, just to let them happen. Imagine that you are on a train and the scenery is passing by. Just notice the scenery without trying to grab hold of it or make it significant. Remember, if you need to take a rest, just hold up your hand.

We will start by asking you to focus on the target. Then I will ask you to follow my fingers with your eyes. After we do that for a while we will stop and talk about anything that comes up. You can’t keep a picture steady while the eye movements are going on so don’t try. When we talk, you just need to give me feedback on what is happening. Sometimes things will change and sometimes they won’t. I may ask if something else comes up; sometimes it will and sometimes it won’t. There are no “suppose tos” in this process. So just tell me what is happening, without judging whether it should be happening or not. Just let whatever happens to happen. Any questions? (Shapiro, 2018)