

Questionnaire for Assessing Blocking Beliefs (BBQ) , Jim Knipe, Ph.D.

Sometimes a client's blocking belief will be right out there and apparent to both client and therapist, and it can be useful to ask some version of the question, "Even though you believe that you could never get over this problem, would it be all right with you if you did?" If the client says "yes", then "stay with that" and EM.

But sometimes there is a blocking belief hidden from view, and so with clients who are stuck for no apparent reason, I have found it useful to ask the person to fill out the attached questionnaire (which was also printed in the EMDRIA newsletter, Winter, 1998). The client is asked to give a VOC to each statement. Many clients will figure out the block just in filling out the questionnaire.

Once the blocking belief has been identified, there are many options. Borrowing from the EMDR set-up, the therapist can ask, "What would you prefer to think about yourself, with regard to this problem?" Or, if that is not a possibility, the therapist can "install", with EM, a positive cognition that expresses self-acceptance in spite of the presence of the blocking belief. Surprisingly, and counter-intuitively, this sometimes gets past the block. For example, a man was working on a childhood incident of emotional deprivation by his parents, and was blocked in resolving his anger by the belief (which was a "6") of "This is a problem that can only be resolved by my parents" (i.e. making up for or apologizing for their neglect, which in his case was not likely). I asked him to say out loud, several times, with EM, the following statement, " I am willing to be loyal to myself, and completely accept myself, even though this is a problem that can only be solved by my parents." The repetition of this statement, out loud, typically is necessary for the self-acceptance idea to begin to "sink in." He then was able to go back to target and with more sets of EM, get to zero disturbance on an initially painful memory. This procedure borrows from the "reversal correction" of thought field therapy, though without the theoretical assumptions that are hard to reconcile with the EMDR information processing model. In the case of this man, anger was a defense against more basic feelings of abandonment and shame, and the installed positive cognition brought the shame issue into consciousness where it could be resolved. The basic idea is to ask the client to repeat, with EM, "I accept (love, am loyal to) myself even though... (*blocking belief*)", and then go back to target to see if unblocked processing can resume.

Blocking Belief Questionnaire (Knipe)

Please give a number from 1 (feels completely untrue) to 7 (feels completely true) for each statement.

- _____ I'm embarrassed that I have this problem.
- _____ I will never get over this problem.
- _____ I'm not sure I want to get over this problem.
- _____ If I solve this problem, I will feel deprived.
- _____ I don't have the strength or the will power to solve this problem.
- _____ If I really talk about this problem, something bad will happen.
- _____ This is a problem that can only be solved by someone else.
- _____ If I ever solve this problem, I will lose a part of who I really am.
- _____ I don't want to think about this problem any more.
- _____ I should solve this problem, but I don't always do what I should.
- _____ I like people who have this problem better than people who don't..
- _____ It could be dangerous for me to get over this problem.
- _____ When I try to think about this problem, I can't keep my mind on it.
- _____ I say I want to solve this problem, but I never do.
- _____ It could be bad for someone else for me to get over this problem.
- _____ If I get over this problem, I can never go back to having it again.
- _____ I don't deserve to get over this problem.
- _____ This problem is bigger than I am.
- _____ If I got over this problem, it would go against my values.
- _____ Someone in my life hates this problem.
- _____ There are some good things about having this problem.
- _____ I don't have a problem.
- _____ I've had this problem so long, I could never completely solve it.
- _____ I have to wait to solve this problem.
- _____ If I solve this problem, I could lose a lot.
- _____ If I solve this problem, it will be mainly for someone else.