

Phase 2: preparation and stabilization

Clinicians | Stabilization and Resourcing | Phase 2

Awaiting qualified clinical review. Not a stand-alone protocol, clinical training, supervision, or individualized treatment.

Explain the treatment, establish shared control, and develop resources the client can actually use.

Preparation may take several sessions and may be revisited.

UNDERSTAND

Context and choices

DISCUSS

Collaborate and monitor

ADAPT

Review what helps

Purpose and context

Knowing how to pause, orient, and obtain support helps the client and clinician monitor tolerability.

Client-facing explanation

Preparation gives us time to find what helps you feel present and supported. You do not have to visualize a peaceful place or feel completely calm to participate in the discussion.

Clinician reference

Provide an understandable rationale, discuss consent and alternatives, agree on pause signals, assess dual attention and resource tolerability, and plan between-session support. Select and adapt resources collaboratively; no technique is mandatory for every client.

General sequence / checklist

1. Explain phases, options, limits, and possible distress; invite questions and revisit consent.
2. Agree on stop signals and rehearse stopping the tool without activating a trauma memory.
3. Explore resources using neutral or mildly pleasant material; notice whether each helps, does little, or increases discomfort.
4. Assess present orientation, signs of activation or disconnection, and how the person regains connection.
5. Agree on closure time, practical support, contact boundaries, and the next readiness discussion.

Example / documentation consideration

A client may prefer looking around the room to imagery. Record the preferred support in the practice record and check it again later.

Scope and cautions

Resources are not proof of readiness or a guarantee against distress. Adapt or stop exercises that increase discomfort; use training and consultation for dissociative presentations.

Selected references (framework; not validation of every exercise)

EMDRIA: The Eight Phases of EMDR Therapy

No qualified review date recorded. Accessible written counterpart: emdrdot.com/resources/preparation/phase-2-preparation