



Technological Preparation for Online EMDR

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Due to COVID-19, many practitioners are looking for clear recommendations to safely and immediately shift into online service delivery. As the coronavirus speeds up, we are being called on to slow down. We hope that these recommendations help you to slow down and find your grounding as you make this transition. This recommendation sheet is based on our experiences offering online EMDR, and the recent guidelines published by EMDRIA.

To access our free video where we demonstrate how to provide visual, auditory and tactile BLS online using the technologies mentioned in this recommendations sheet, follow this link: <https://vimeo.com/398125255>

Changes to Telehealth in Response to Covid-19

- Many platforms are beyond their user capacities and are not functioning properly as a result of the current crisis.
- As of 3/17/2020 the free version of RegroupConnect and VSee are no longer be available to new users. Doxy.me has apparently increased their user capacity but many clinicians are still reporting connection problems. Please note that you cannot screen share with the free version and we recommend using the pro version.
- We are currently recommending GoToMeeting (<https://www.gotomeeting.com/>) as a HIPAA-compliant telehealth platform with BAA included, and government level security encryption. We have been impressed by the user interface and how much control the client has in adjusting things on their end (Cost is \$12 per month, billed monthly).
- HIPAA regulations have been temporarily loosened by the US Dept of Health & Human Services in response to the coronavirus: For more information, follow this link: <https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/special-topics/emergency-preparedness/notification-enforcement-discretion-telehealth/index.html>

Recommended Options for Telehealth Platforms

1. GoToMeeting (www.gotomeeting.com)
 - o \$12/mo Professional Plan
 - o HIPAA-compliant
 - o Government level security
 - o You can share your screen
2. Doxy.me (<https://doxy.me/>)
 - o Cannot share screen with free version
 - o \$35/mo Professional Plan (includes screen-sharing, payment customized waiting room)
 - o HIPAA-compliant
 - o Must ensure client is using correct browser for their device
 - o With Pro version, payment to be processed while client is in virtual waiting room (using Stripe technology)
3. GSuite's Meet (<https://gsuite.google.com/products/meet/>)
 - o Less than \$6 month
 - o Must use Chrome
 - o You get all of Google's business tools like email and drive
 - o You can share your screen
 - o Have to go through a process to be a HIPAA compliant by requesting a BAA, which extends to email use
 - o Have to schedule clients individually
4. VSee (<https://vsee.com/>)
 - o UPDATE: as of 3/17/2020 the free version is not available)
 - o Professional version is \$50 monthly
 - o HIPAA-compliant
5. Simple Practice (www.simplepractice.com/)
 - o HIPAA-compliant
 - o Has all consent forms for online work premade, plus you can customize additional forms
 - o Costs over \$50 per month for telehealth version
6. Zoom Health Care Plan (<https://zoom.us/healthcare>)
 - o Zoom for health care
 - o Can be shared by up to 10 practitioners
 - o \$200 per month

Providing Visual BLS via Telehealth

1. RemotEMDR (www.remotemdr.com/)
 - o Free
 - o Eye movement and auditory BLS
 - o Not HIPAA-compliant to use their telehealth platform
 - o **Our recommendation:** Use with an external HIPAA-compliant telehealth platform by sending an invitation link to client (copy and paste invitation link in chat box so client can click it to open RemotEMDR window,
 - o Client's RemotEMDR window is without the control panel
 - o Therapist has full control over BLS, both visual and auditory, with multiple options (speed, colour, sound) which can be modified during the session

2. EasyEMDR (<http://www.easy-emdr.com/>)
 - \$10 monthly
 - Designed for clients to control the BLS on their side (therapist cannot control the BLS functions through “remote session”)
 - Remote Session function is designed to be used in conjunction with a telehealth platform by sending an invitation link to client (copy and paste invitation link in chat box so client can click it to open Easy EMDR window)
 - Client’s window includes access to the control panel, therapist cannot see it
 - **Our recommendation:** Use screen sharing Easy EMDR to allow therapist increased ability to guide the visual BLS (starting and stopping set, speed)
 - With screen share, the client can follow the visual BLS but the audio does not come through bilaterally (only visual BLS)
 - Visually appealing and attractive layout with options to control colour and speed before beginning the session with client, but not during the session (unless you return to preferences)

3. Bilateralstimulation.io (<https://bilateralstimulation.io/>)
 - Free
 - Visual BLS (no auditory)
 - Can be used in conjunction with a telehealth platform by sending an invitation link to client (copy and paste invitation link in chat box so client can click it to open window)
 - Simple, easy and accessible technology that is intuitive to use
 - Speed and colour of visual BLS toggle/element can be controlled during session

Providing Tactile BLS via Therapist-Guided, Client-Administered Tapping:

- Use a HIPAA-compliant telehealth platform
- Introduce client to butterfly hug and bilateral “cross tapping” with arms crossed across chest (can be tapping on chest, shoulders or upper arms, or upper body so it is in view of therapist) while in preparation phase. Client can tap on knees if need be.
- Offer different choices and ways to self-tap so client can have choices in what feels most helpful to them, invite client to use pillows to prop up arms and increase comfort if need be
- Use butterfly hug in resourcing and preparation
- Fully guide the client in tapping for desensitization (guide speed and duration of sets “therapist-guided/client-administered cross tapping (modified butterfly hug for resourcing and desensitization).
- Allow client choice about what is helpful and useful for them. Use invitational language, such as, “When you are ready, go ahead and tap” “When you are ready, feel free to let your hands come back down to your sides (or back down to the pillow)”
- For more information on providing therapist-guided/client-administered cross tapping, follow the link to Jen Marchand’s training: <https://vimeo.com/ondemand/ethicalonlineemdr>

Providing Auditory BLS via Telehealth

- Use a HIPAA-compliant telehealth platform
- Do not use screen share to offer auditory BLS, it will not come through bilaterally
- Client must use headphones. Clients can use one set of headphones when using computer/laptop with web-based and downloaded files, so they can hear and see you through headphones (from the telehealth platform) **and** hear the auditory BLS.
- Therapist-managed options:
 - To fully guide the auditory BLS (starting, stopping, speed), use RemotEMDR through invitation link in chat box (do not screen share)
- **Client-managed (but therapist-guided) options:**
- Fully guide the client in self-administering BLS through by inviting client to start and stop the set, and when to make speed adjustments
- Options are:
 - Easy EMDR through invitation link in chat box (do not screen share)
 - Free websites and audio files for clients to control on their device:
 - 5-minute free audio clips of drumming beats, 2 speeds available (auditory plus tactile from vibrations):
http://www.garybrotherscounseling.com/bls-drum-therapy.html?fbclid=IwAR2V0jdT5a43B_Mseix8tFobamKgvZ48OZL5s_IQJ5ORKEPqGru9y9UEWkA#
 - 3-minute free audio sample from Mark Grant:
<https://overcomingpain.com/emdr-music-books-store/samples/> (Can be purchased by client and downloaded for longer file)
 - 3-minute free audio samples from Blue Skye Studios, 3 options available:
http://www.blueskystudios.org/emdr?fbclid=IwAR22nYawwWscfEhfiAytBFBol_MeE2qlrHfn2UnjO_Z0sAwaJrmj5tFjtsM (Can be purchased by client and downloaded for longer file)
 - 2-hour free audio clip from YouTube:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3WgBVhCvpjY&t=121s>

Providing Client-Managed (but Therapist-Guided) Programs or Apps on Separate Device

- Use a HIPAA-compliant telehealth platform
- Guide client in uploading app or program onto phone or tablet (be aware of costs)
- With eye movements, observe the range of movement to ensure that the eyes cross the center line as the client follows the BLS
- Client will need headphones to hear auditory BLS on their device, and must be able to hear therapist at the same time to be guided and contained. The client can be wearing earbuds for their device

and headphones overtop for their telehealth session from computer/laptop; or the client can wear only headphones with their device, and not use headphones for the telehealth session on their computer/laptop

- Fully guide the client in self-administering BLS through by inviting client to start and stop the set, and when to make speed adjustments (if possible, depending on program)
- Possible apps include: Anxiety Release (Auditory), EMDR Tool Kit (Auditory and Visual, uses lightbar), BSDR Player (Auditory), EMDR Therapy+ (Auditory and Visual), EMDR 101 (Auditory and Visual)

Safety Planning and Suicide Prevention

- Have a sheet for each client with their name, location, phone numbers, emergency contacts, diagnoses, etc. Test that you can reach the client by calling them in your first session.
- Have a phone next to your computer (on mute) to call immediately in the case of disconnection (Plan B).
- In the preparation phase, have your client identify someone they can contact in their immediate area in the event that reconnection is not possible (friend, loved one, professional) and ensure that the client speaks to this support person about being available during session times in case of emergency (Plan C).
- In the preparation phase, identify emergency numbers, suicide hotlines and other crisis services that the client can access any time (if possible, practice calling one of the lines together briefly to ask a question such as "Are you still open, and what are your hours in case I need to call?" so they have a positive experience of accessing the service and being attended to by a human on the other end).
- Co-create a suicide prevention plan online with your client (through screen sharing) and then email the finished copy to them so they have it on their phone or device, and can print it as well. Can use the online plan developed by Beyond Blue, website version:
<https://www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support/beyondnow-suicide-safety-planning/create-beyondnow-safety-plan>

Stable Internet

- If at all possible, do not rely on wireless internet. Plug your computer or laptop into the ethernet. You can find adapters to make the cable compatible with different ports, such as USB-c ports.
- Choose an uninterrupted location that is quiet and private (possibly use a sound machine outside of the area being used for session).

Informed Consent Information and Resources

- Person-centered tech: <https://personcenteredtech.com/>
- Informed consent recourse for informed consent:
<https://personcenteredtech.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Sample-Telemental-Health-Services-Informed-Consent.pdf>

Additional Considerations

- If the client is wearing headphones or earbuds, there may be heightened sensitivity to the noises you make, such as coughing, drinking beverages, especially if you are using a mic. You can mute your mic if you need to make noises that could be distracting or disruptive for the client.
- Comfortable seating because you will be possibly be sitting for hours
- Dress as you would in an in-person session, invite the client to do the same
- Give yourself time to login and feel comfortable with the platform
- Try to have higher speed internet (if you can stream Netflix or similar then it is probably adequate)
- Close off other applications (restart computer or device each time if possible) and verify that others are not using internet bandwidth at the same time.
- Turn off any devices that may track sounds, such as Siri or Alexa
- Try to use wired earphones with an inline/built-in microphone for privacy and less lag or delay in hearing
- Have a lamp or sunlight facing you so you are not in the shadows.
- Person-centered tech telehealth checklist:
<https://personcenteredtech.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Person-Centered-Tech-TMH-Checklists-.pdf>

We honor your courage as you navigate this transition and respond to the needs of your clients in this uncertain and dynamic time!

Sincerely,

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