Tips for maintaining the therapeutic relationship in EMDR Therapy

**COMMUNICATE LOGISTICS**
- Informed consent is key
- Prepare a plan for what if the connection drops
- Ensure client feels they have a safe and private spot for therapy
- Address how the addition of a screen can affect the relationship

**EASE INTO ONLINE THERAPY**
- Allow time for trust to build in ‘new’ environment
- Consider extra time in Phase 2 preparation to facilitate secure relationship
- Review resourcing and safe place exercises to aid client in adjustment

**ESTABLISH SAFETY**
- Give tips to help client create safe therapy place
- Suggest having a favorite drink or comfortable seat for session
- Use voice, eye contact, and presence to create a calming environment

**NORMALIZE STRESS**
- Creating new routines can cause anxiety, discomfort
- Anxiety is the body’s way of trying to protect itself
- Work with the brain and body to bring the stress response down
- Use grounding techniques

**THERAPEUTIC ALLIANCE**
- Built on hope, empathy and trust
- Collaboration on goals and needs
- Mutual understanding and flexibility
- Genuine curiosity and respect

**ASSESS BEFORE REPROCESSING**
- Assess appropriateness of client for reprocessing
- Explore client’s preferred method of BLS/DAS in online setting
- Prepare a plan for what if the connection drops during reprocessing
- Consider beginning with stabilization before accessing past memory networks

**GROUND**
- Discuss ways for client to feel safe after session
- Ask if client is prepared to reconnect with day to day life
- Suggest client have a routine to transition back to normal life

**INSTALL HOPE**
- Let the client know you truly care about the work you do together:
  - “Trust the process.”
  - “You can get better.”
  - “We are in this together.”

**CONTINUE TO EVALUATE**
- Check in with the client on ways to improve experience
- Ask client what they like or dislike about online therapy