



# Safety & EMDR Training

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"Safety is the intervention."  
Stephen Porges

## Safety and EMDR Training

- *A safe therapeutic relationship is the most important variable in treatment.*
- *There is little emphasis placed on the role of safety in the EMDR model.*
- *There is little emphasis placed on safety when it comes to holding academic spaces for learning.*
- *Creating safe spaces for learning starts with the trainer who sets:*
  - *The vibe*
  - *A standard amongst the team*
  - *Training culture*
  - *A container for learning*





## The role of safety in learning

- *Receiving and perceiving cues of safety is necessary for bonding and pro-social behaviors.*
- *Why would the academic space be immune to this neurobiological truth?*
- *Safety allows us to:*
  - *Access our window of tolerance*
    - *Be curious, vulnerable, and open to new things.*
    - *Consolidate learning and increase retention.*
    - *Build confidence and practice EMDR with a sense of curiosity, versus fear and rigidity.*
- *A lack of safety leads to:*
  - *Activation of defenses and stress responses*
    - *Diminish our creativity and curiosity.*
    - *Impede memory storage.*
    - *Protect and disconnect.*
    - *Leads to a fear of EMDR and the consequences of "doing it wrong."*
    - *Hurts your business.*





# How to create safe spaces for learning

## *It starts with the trainer.*

- *Check your ego.*
- *Be humble.*
- *Have a beginner's mind.*
- *Recognize the power and influence you hold.*
- *Conduct a self inventory.*
  - *How do I send signs of safety throughout all domains of my business?*
  - *What are the specific ways I create a culture of safety?*
  - *What are the consequences for not creating enough safety?*
  - *What are 1 or 2 things I can do to increase safety for my trainees?*
- *Creating safe spaces is not a "to-do." It's an ongoing process and commitment to a standard of learning.*
- *It's time for the field of academia to catch up with neuroscience.*





## Examples

- *Lead and teach with a well-regulated nervous system.*
- *Show up as an embodied human and teacher. "Be your message" Gandhi.*
- *Create context for training with clear, concise, easy to follow emails and instructions.*
- *Create a culture of support, shared vulnerability, and curiosity amongst your training team.*
- *Track your trainees' nervous systems and offer breaks in line with the groups' process and needs.*
- *Teach with an air of humility:*
  - *Tell stories of your hard learned lessons and mistakes.*
  - *Show videos of you making mistakes.*
  - *Set the expectation to make mistakes in practicum.*
- *Be accountable to trainees and team members. Say you're sorry when you mess up, do what you say you'll do, be on time, be consistent, be responsible, lead with integrity.*
- *Teach your team to provide feedback that focuses on strengths and celebrates the learning process. Offer feedback in a shame-free manner.*
- *Create safe and supportive methods for giving feedback to your team.*
- *Include case vignettes and videos of clients from an array of backgrounds and identities.*
- *Refrain from "gossipy" behavior about trainees. Recognize everyone is doing their best. View "challenging" trainees from a place of compassion, remaining curious about their neurobiological process.*
- *Use play to teach and regulate the group.*
- *Stick to the schedule and respect peoples' time.*
- *Train your administrative team to embody compassion and kindness in their communication with customers.*
- *Hold yourself to a standard higher than anyone else in your business.*