



Movie Technique Instructions

The Movie Technique is used to work with real-life events that form the foundation of a client's current emotional or behavioural challenges. This approach minimizes the risk of retraumatization by focusing on process language and symbolic representation.

1. Identify a Real Event Connected to the Client's Problem

Minimal discussion should take place about the details of the event. Talking in depth can cause clients to associate into the experience, triggering uncomfortable emotions. Instead, use process language such as "that event" to maintain distance and safety.

2. Ask About the Duration of the Event

Therapist:

- "How long did that event occur over?"
- "How many seconds, minutes, or hours did that event occur over?"
- "Within that event, when you experienced a big emotion, how long did that last—seconds, minutes, hours?"

Aim for a short segment of the event—the shorter the better (ideally in seconds or minutes). If the event covers a long period, help the client break it down into smaller, manageable chunks.

3. Create a Symbolic Movie Title

Therapist:

- "If that event was a movie, what would be the title of it?"

This title will be used during tapping rounds. It serves as a symbolic reference to the event, keeping the client dissociated and emotionally safe.

4. Assess the Intensity of the Movie

Therapist:

- "If you were to run that movie through your mind, what would be the intensity of that movie?"

(Client gives a number from 0–10.)

5. Begin Tapping Using the Movie Title

Example Setup Phrase:

- “Even though I have this [movie title] movie problem, that happened, I deeply and completely accept myself.”

Repeat steps 4 and 5 until the intensity reduces to zero or a very low number.

6. If the Client Finds it Difficult Coming Up With a Title

If the client struggles with naming the event:

Therapist:

- “If that movie was a colour, what would that be?”

Clients can feel “put on the spot” when asked to create a title, which may suggest an underlying emotional block. By shifting to symbolic imagery, such as colour, the pressure is reduced, and the client can more easily engage with the process.