

PROTOCOL FOR DEPTH DIVE TECHNIQUE TO EXPLORE CHILDHOOD ROOTS OF CURRENT ISSUES

Point of Entry

- Begin at a moment of strong emotions or inappropriate/unconstructive behavior evoked by something that happened in the session.
- Have patient close eyes.

Depth Dive, Exploration, and Resurfacing

- “Focus on the strong feeling, and on the situation that triggers it.”
- “Allow image of present situation (or provocative person) to dissolve, and in its place a scene from the past that evoked similar feelings to emerge.”
- “What elements are the same in the past as in the present?” (The point of similarity is what calls forth a transference reaction.)
- “What in the present scene is different, and therefore opens up new possibilities?”
- Focus extensively on the different and more positive elements in the present situation, including ways in which the patient now is more mature and therefore has broader options.

Debriefing

- Have patient open eyes, and discuss the experience.
- Clarify that the reaction in the present session is one that probably made sense given the realities in the original situation; it just is less than optimal in the present circumstances.
- Practice new response options that might be more effective in the present situation.