

Psychodynamic therapy

Exploring an Expectation That Keeps Returning

Adults | 10 to 15 minutes

A response in the present may feel familiar from other relationships, but familiarity does not prove a single cause. This page invites curiosity about a repeated expectation. You can stay with a recent example and discuss possible connections only if you choose.

Use a manageable interaction. Write what you expected, what actually occurred, and a question rather than a conclusion about your history.

Observe the present first

Describe the other person's observable action and what you anticipated. Notice your response without treating the expectation as either foolish or automatically accurate.

Hold connections lightly

If a similar situation comes to mind, note the resemblance and the differences. A therapist can help explore patterns without requiring memories or deciding hidden meanings for you.

1. What did I expect another person would do?**2. What actually happened, and how did I respond?****3. Where, if anywhere, does this feel familiar, and what is different now?****4. What tentative question would I like to explore with my therapist?****Clinical use and adaptation**

Avoid suggestion, recovered-memory techniques, certainty about unconscious motives, or causal conclusions from one event. Keep exploration consensual and adapt for dissociation, trauma, psychosis, and current safety. This is not a substitute for clinical formulation.