



# The Grove Psychology Practice

## The Nurturing, Protective, and Wise Figures in EMDR

In EMDR therapy, we sometimes use guided imagery to help you connect with inner resources that bring comfort, safety, and guidance.

Three of the most common are the Nurturing Figure, the Protective Figure, and the Wise Figure. These figures are unique to you — they can be real people, animals, characters from stories, or completely imaginary.



### The Nurturing Figure

Description: Someone or something who offers warmth, care, and kindness. They help you feel comforted and soothed.

Examples:

- A loving grandparent
- A gentle friend
- A wise animal
- A fictional character like Mary Poppins

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### The Protective Figure

Description: A figure who keeps you safe and helps you feel strong. They stand between you and anything that feels too much.

Examples:

- A superhero
- A fierce animal



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- A trusted friend
  - A strong guardian figure.
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## The Wise Figure

Description: A figure who offers perspective and understanding, helping you see the bigger picture.

Examples:

- A wise elder
  - A spiritual guide
  - A character like Gandalf
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## Why We Use These Figures

Sometimes, the comfort, safety, or wisdom we needed in the past wasn't available.

These figures help us build that support now, so we can feel steadier and more resourced when facing challenges.

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## Where This Approach Comes From

This way of working has been shaped by the ideas and research of:

- Dr. Laurel Parnell – Author of *Tapping In*
- Shirley Jean Schmidt – Creator of the Developmental Needs Meeting Strategy (DNMS)