**[iBE Story: How Bowen and EMDR Brought an Adoptee a Breakthrough](http://comprehensivetherapyapproach.com/emdr-articles/ibe-story-bowen-emdr-brought-adoptee-breakthrough/" \o "Permalink to iBE Story:  How Bowen and EMDR Brought an Adoptee a Breakthrough)**

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**A “pioneer” attended my very first iBE Group**

A woman in her 50’s participated in my very first offering of the comprehensive Integrative Bowen and EMDR Group iBE group protocol for 3 days.

Incidentally, she was adopted at 3 days old. It was a transracial adoption. Her adoptive parents didn’t know she was biracial until she was 9 months old and it became more clear.

**This woman expressed enthusiasm about her gains from the Group iBE work** where she had addressed Bowen’s 4 anxiety binding mechanisms of conflict distance, triangling and reciprocity.

In her group experience, she addressed 3 memories in each of these 4 categories — a total of 12 memories that remained distressing until her iBE group workshop.

**Requesting more individual iBE therapy**

Afterward, she told me she had a few more memories she wanted to process, and asked to do added individual Bowen and EMDR (iBE) work.

She was still troubled by 3 particularly intense conflict incidents regarding bosses, due to the way they were abusive or fired her.  In all cases, she was performing at a very high level.  AND she received objective validating feedback about that from the boss as well as other observers.  She found it strange that this pattern should continue to happen when she has a high confidence level, high success, and has really enjoyed each job she had.   Twice she got fired just as her success was shining the strongest.  In fact one boss said with a hostile tone, “I am in your shadow.”  The only reason for this was she had cultivated great relationships with the rest of the staff and the boss had not cultivated relationships with anyone except the person to whom she had delegated all management responsibilities — and my client.

In one of these cases, she brought a law suit for wrongful termination and won.

**A Ha! Moment**

As we completed the 3rd memory, she opened her eyes wide and realized that this pattern (of rejection) *belonged to her birth mother*. It was not a part of her at all.  She felt a sense of outrage, anger, “how dare you slime me with your pattern!” This helped her declare, “I’m standing my ground and my boundaries.” She commented later that she knows she can now speak up for herself promptly when mistreated.

“Now I’m going to unzip the ‘skin’ my mother slimed up through birth, and toss it into the ocean so it can melt. It doesn’t belong to me.”  The birth mother had received the community’s rejecting shame and blame, plus suffered the loss of her child. My client who felt impacted by her birth mother’s trauma said, “that’s why there was such slime on me —but it wasn’t mine.”

**iBE Breakthrough**

Afterwards she felt cleansed and free of the pattern. At the close of processing she felt no blame on child or birth mother.  “It’s just what was.” She also felt at peace about the future because she knew she could calmly stand her ground with any boss’s emotional negativity.  She felt this break-through could not have happened without the continued focus on Bowen’s pattern of conflict with EMDR.

This kind of objectivity and neutral mind frame is one explicit goal of Bowen Theory. In my experience in my personal work, and my clients in their work, it generally takes months and years of effort to practice and attain objectivity using Bowen theory plus the mantra “try to be as neutral as possible, set your expectations of others as close to zero as possible.” It took my client one weekend workshop and 3 follow-up sessions. Why? Because EMDR activated her brain’s Adaptive Information Processing system bringing her to greater emotional maturity and well-being rapidly.

This potential of the Integrative Bowen and EMDR (iBE) Group and individual protocols is absolutely thrilling to me.