

EMDR INFORMATION LEAFLET

EMDR Information Leaflet for clients

Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing, usually known as EMDR, is a powerful psychotherapy technique which has been successful in helping people who suffer from trauma, anxiety, panic, disturbing memories, post-traumatic stress and many other emotional problems. EMDR is a relatively rapid type of therapy, which can provide lasting relief, and is one of the treatments of choice for PTSD in the NICE guidelines (2005).

When would we suggest EMDR for you?

After a distressing or traumatic event, you may feel overwhelmed, which may lead to your memory network becomes 'stuck' or 'frozen' on a neurological level. This can mean that when you recall the event or situation, you can feel as if you are re-experiencing what you saw, heard, smelled, tasted or felt, and these sensations can be very intense. Sometimes people will do almost anything to avoid experiencing the painful memory, sometimes people are reminded or 'triggered' by something into remembering, and sometimes people are subjected to involuntary intrusive thoughts, in 'flashbacks' or dreams. If any of these symptoms persist, they can cause significant emotional distress for you.

What are the symptoms that can be helped by EMDR?

- High anxiety and lack of motivation
- Memories of a traumatic experience
- Fear of being alone
- Unrealistic feelings of guilt and shame
- Poor and disrupted sleep
- Difficulty in trusting others
- Relationship problems

How does EMDR work?

The psychotherapist will work gently with you, and ask you to revisit the traumatic moment or incident, recalling feelings surrounding the experience, as well as any negative thoughts, feelings and memories. This will be contained by the psychotherapist, and manageable for you: you will go at your own pace.

The therapist then holds their fingers/hand, depending on your preference, about eighteen inches from your face and begins to move them back and forth like a windscreen wiper. You track the movements as if watching ping pong. The more intensely you focus on the memory, the easier it becomes for the memory to come to life. As quick and vibrant images arise during the therapy session, they are processed by the eye movements, resulting in painful feelings being exchanged for more peaceful, loving and resolved feelings. Some psychotherapists use other methods of bi-lateral stimulation such as tapping on alternate hands.

In the process the distressing memories seem to lose their intensity, so that the memories are less disturbing and seem more like 'ordinary' memories. The effect is believed to be similar to that which occurs naturally during REM sleep (Rapid Eye

Movement) when your eyes rapidly move from side to side. EMDR helps reduce the distress of all the different kinds of memories, whether it was what you saw, heard, smelt, tasted, felt or thought.

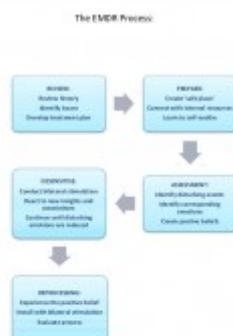
EMDR is not a form of hypnosis. You will remain conscious and in control at all times.

EMDR cannot be done against your will.

What to expect after your session of EMDR

- Clients are often tired after an EMDR session. It's a good idea to rest after a session, if this is possible
- The processing may or may not continue after the session. If new insights, thoughts, memories and dreams occur, you will be encouraged to make a note of them, and bring them to your next session
- You are encouraged to use your relaxation exercise daily during your course of EMDR
- Many clients feel better very quickly, and experience a reduction in their troubling post-traumatic symptoms

The EMDR Process



EMDR Association

When a person is involved in a distressing event, they may feel overwhelmed and their brain may be unable to process the information like a normal memory. The distressing memory seems to become frozen on a neurological level. When a person recalls the distressing memory, the person can re-experience what they saw, heard, smelt, tasted or felt, and this can be quite intense. Sometimes the memories are so distressing, the person tries to avoid thinking about the distressing event to avoid experiencing the distressing feelings.

Some find that the distressing memories come to mind when something reminds them of the distressing event, or sometimes the memories just seem to just pop into

mind. The alternating left-right stimulation of the brain with eye movements, sounds or taps during EMDR, seems to stimulate the frozen or blocked information processing system.

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