

DEVELOPMENT OF EMDR

In 1987, psychologist Dr. Francine Shapiro made the chance discovery that eye movements can reduce the intensity of disturbing thoughts, under certain conditions. Dr. Shapiro studied this effect scientifically, and in a 1989 issue of the Journal of Traumatic Stress, she reported success using EMDR to treat survivors of trauma. Since then, EMDR has developed and evolved through the contributions of therapists and researchers all over the world. Today, EMDR is a set of standardized protocols that integrates elements from various treatment approaches.

MECHANISMS OF EMDR

No one knows how any form of psychotherapy works in the brain. However, we do know that when a person is very upset or stressed, their brain cannot process information as it does normally. A traumatic event or a moment can become “frozen in time,” and remembering that moment or event may feel as bad as going through it for the first time. This is because the images, sounds, smells, and feelings connected to the trauma have not changed. Such memories have a lasting negative effect that interferes with the way a person sees the world and the way they relate to other people.

EMDR seems to have a direct effect on the way that the brain processes information. Normal information processing is restarted, so following a successful and complete EMDR session; a person no longer relives the images, sounds, and feelings when the event is brought to mind. You still remember what happened, but it is less upsetting and/or disturbing. Many types of therapy have similar goals. However, EMDR appears to be similar to what occurs naturally during REM sleep (dreaming stage of normal sleep). Hence, EMDR can be considered as a physiologically-based therapy that helps an individual see and recollect disturbing material in a new and less distressing way.

ANATOMY OF EMDR SESSIONS

During EMDR, the therapist works with the client to identify a specific problem as the focus of the treatment session. The client calls to mind the disturbing issue or event, what was seen, felt, heard, thought, etc., and what thoughts and beliefs are currently held about that event. The therapist facilitates the directional movement of the eyes or other dual attention stimulation of the brain, while the client focuses on the disturbing material, and the client just notices whatever comes to mind without making any effort to control direction or content. Each person will process information uniquely, based on personal experiences and values. Sets of eye movements are continued until the memory becomes less disturbing and is associated with positive thoughts and beliefs about the individual; for example, “I did the best I could,” or “I am a survivor.” During EMDR, the client may experience intense emotions, but by the end of the session, most people report a great reduction in the level of disturbance.

LENGTH OF EMDR

One or more sessions are necessary for the therapist to understand the nature of the problem and to decide whether EMDR is an appropriate treatment for you. The therapist will also discuss EMDR more fully and provide an opportunity to answer questions about the method. Once therapist and client have agreed that EMDR is appropriate for a specific problem, the actual EMDR therapy may begin.

A typical EMDR session lasts from 60 to 90 minutes. The type of problem, life situations, and the amount of previous trauma will determine the number of treatment sessions needed to adequately process the problem at hand. EMDR may be used within a standard “talking” therapy, as an adjunctive therapy with a separate therapist, or as a treatment all by itself.

EFFICACY OF EMDR

Approximately 20 controlled studies have investigated the effects and efficacy of EMDR. These studies have consistently found that EMDR effectively decreases or completely eliminates the symptoms of post traumatic stress for the majority of clients. Clients often report improvement in other associated symptoms such as anxiety. The current treatment guidelines of the American Psychiatric Association and the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies designate EMDR as an effective treatment for post traumatic stress. EMDR was also found effective by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense, the United Kingdom Department of Health, the Israeli National Council for Mental Health, and many other international health and governmental agencies.



EMDR AT FITZPATRICK CONSULTATION AND TREATMENT, LLC

Dr. Crystal J. Fitzpatrick has been trained in the latest and the state-of-the-art EMDR techniques with the protocol designed by the founder of EMDR, Dr. Francine Shapiro. She received her EMDR training by the EMDR Institute, Inc.

Dr. Fitzpatrick uses, not only the eye movement method, but also is skilled at using EMDR related advanced technology to better fit your brain's information procession needs. For more information or to make an appointment, please call or email us.

WHAT IS EMDR?

Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) therapy is an intense and effective method of psychotherapy. To date, EMDR has helped an estimated two million people of all ages relieve many types of psychological distress.



Scientific research has established EMDR as a powerful treatment modality for alleviating the most disturbing symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Since its conception, research and clinicians have reported success using EMDR in treatment of following conditions:

- Panic attacks
- Anxiety
- Performance anxiety
- Personality disorders
- Complicated grief
- Dissociative disorders
- Disturbing memories
- Phobias
- Pain disorders
- Eating disorders
- Stress reduction
- Addiction
- Sexual and/or physical abuse
- Body dysmorphic disorders



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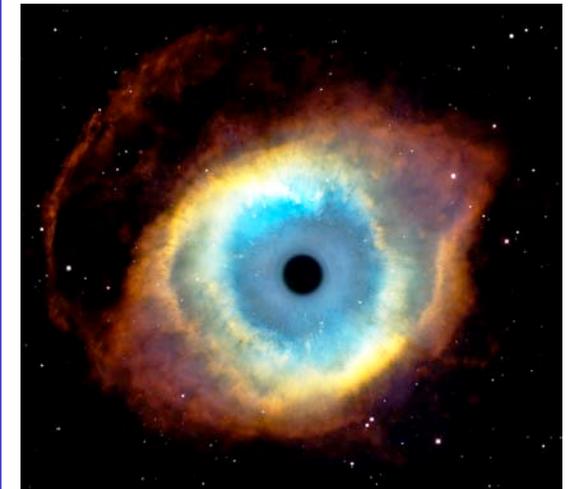
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EMDR

Eye Movement Desensitization
and Reprocessing

Powerful Treatment for Anxiety, Grief,
Stress, Disturbing Memories, and other
Psychological Distress



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