

What is EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing?)

Introduction

The treatment (Desensitisation and Reprocessing) (EMDR) is a psychological approach developed by working with clients with traumatic memories. The theory behind EMDR further states psychological difficulties are the result of eliminating life experiences which have not been stored in memory properly and can be used to the hippocampus or blood. This treatment is known with they need some help to focus and process a memory to store it like it is.

What is spatial awareness in memory?

Most memories are stored in a part of the brain called the hippocampus. However, this is only a part of memory which contains specific and emotional details from the right place. However, non-emotional events just have details, ideas, characters or circumstances so are distributed throughout the hippocampus, stored in distributed patterns. Different bits happen in memories are stored in these non-processed form. These fragments are easily triggered, leading them to replay and cause distress over and again.



Memory storage: Non-emotional details are stored in distributed patterns.
Memory storage: Emotional details are stored in specific locations.

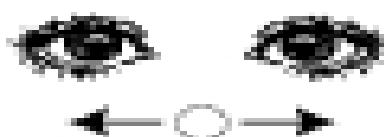
What will I be asked to do in EMDR sessions?

There are a number of steps to EMDR treatment, but some of the key stages are:

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| Preparatory phase | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formation of a troubling memory, then identify an image of the most important detail in memory - Identify negative belief about that event (the therapist) enacts "Inhabit the scene" (what happened about you?) - Identify emotions and body feelings linked to that moment |
| Processing phase | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Formation of the image related while at the same time undergoing co-light eye movements (the visual processing involved in helping reprocessing old details that are automatically stored in right/left) - You will scan mind to eye with "whackey eyes" up and left, right and happens - This process will be repeated until the memory loses its charge (this may happen in one session or may take months/years to process) |

Why do I make eye movements?

EMDR processes attention from one side to another while holding a visual image. One eye keeps looking from left to right to follow the therapist's finger moving from side-to-side between two of their fingers. Alternative methods of EMDR will not focus attention from side-to-side, such as tapping sensations which occur in sequence from left to right.



Two side-to-side motions is called bilateral stimulation. It has been found to enhance memory processing and there are a number of theories explaining how it might do this. The important thing is to be able to find a form of bilateral stimulation that you are comfortable with.

What is EMDR used for treat?

There is very good evidence that EMDR is an effective treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and it is recommended by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) for PTSD. The evidence for using EMDR to treat other conditions is less clear. EMDR may be an effective treatment for other conditions, particularly those involving trauma memories or other distressing memories, but more research is needed.

How long does treatment last?

Treatment sessions are sometimes slightly longer than typical therapy sessions up to 90 minutes. The number of sessions needed will depend on the type and severity of trauma which you experienced. NICE estimates that 8-12 sessions may be necessary to treat simpler traumas, with more sessions necessary for multiple traumas.