

What Is EMDR?

Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing, or EMDR, is a psychotherapy technique which has been very successful in helping people who suffer from trauma, anxiety, panic, disturbing memories, post traumatic stress and many other emotional problems. Until recently, these conditions were difficult and time-consuming to treat. EMDR is considered a breakthrough therapy because of its simplicity and the fact that it can bring quick and lasting relief for most types of emotional distress.

EMDR is an extremely effective and rapid method for healing PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) as shown by extensive scientific research studies.

The EMDR therapy uses bilateral stimulation, right/left eye movement, or tactile stimulation, which repeatedly activates the opposite sides of the brain, releasing emotional experiences that are "trapped" in the nervous system. This assists the neurophysiologic system, the basis of the mind/body connection, to free itself of blockages and reconnect itself. As troubling images and feelings are processed by the brain via the eye-movement patterns of EMDR, resolution of the issues and a more peaceful state are achieved.

How Does It Work?

The therapist works gently with the client and asks him/her to revisit the traumatic moment or incident, recalling feelings surrounding the experience, as well as any negative thoughts, feelings and memories. The therapist then holds her fingers about eighteen inches from the clients face and begins to move them back and forth like a windshield wiper. The client tracks the movements as if watching ping pong. 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.

What problems are helped by EMDR?

The studies to date show a high degree of effectiveness with the following conditions:

loss/injury of a loved one	depression
car accident	anxiety or panic
fire	phobias
assault	fears
robbery	post traumatic stress
rape	bad temper
low self-esteem	natural disaster
relationship problems	injury
brooding or worrying	illness
trouble sleeping	witness to violence
performance and test anxiety	childhood abuse/trauma
	panic attacks

The EMDR technique is most effective when used in conjunction with other traditional methods of therapy in treating these and many other emotional disorders.

What is the History of EMDR?

Since the initial medical study in 1989 positive therapeutic results with EMDR have been reported with the following populations:

- People who have witnessed or been a victim to violence or a disaster (rape, accidents, earth quakes, fires, murder, gang related violence)
- Clients suffering from PTSD (post traumatic stress disorder)
- Suffers of phobias, panic disorders and anxiety attacks
- Chemically dependent clients
- Persons exposed to excess loss (loss by death, divorce, loss of a house by fire)

For more information on EMDR, visit <http://www.emdria.org/>