

What is EMDR Therapy?

When we go through stressful or traumatic experiences, our brains can store these memories with intense emotions, vivid images, sounds, and physical sensations. Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) therapy is a powerful technique that helps to reactivate these stored parts of disturbing memories, allowing the brain to process and heal from the experience.

In EMDR therapy, bilateral stimulation—alternately stimulating the left and right sides of your brain—is used to help reprocess how these memories are stored. This stimulation might involve guided eye movements, tapping, or auditory tones. The amazing part is that it's your brain's natural ability to heal that does all the work. You remain in control throughout the process, and as the memories are reprocessed, they gradually lose their emotional intensity until they no longer feel disturbed. By the end of the therapy, the memories are simply a story of what happened without the distress. The goal of EMDR is to reduce the emotional charge of these memories and replace negative beliefs with more helpful, positive ones.

A Guide to EMDR Therapy

How Does It Work?

While the exact mechanisms behind EMDR's effectiveness are not fully understood, it is believed that the bilateral stimulation used during the therapy places a demand on your working memory. When you activate a memory while engaging in bilateral stimulation, your working memory becomes overloaded with information, which can lead to significant changes in how you perceive and feel about that memory.

As a result of EMDR therapy, three key things typically happen:

1. **The Memory Becomes More Distant:** The vividness and intensity of the memory tend to fade, making it feel less immediate and overwhelming.
2. **Emotional Distress is Reduced:** The emotional charge attached to the memory diminishes, allowing you to recall the event without the same level of distress.
3. **New Adaptive Information Emerges:** As the memory is reprocessed, you may find that new, more positive and adaptive thoughts and beliefs emerge.

Moreover, EMDR helps to create connections between the emotional and logical parts of your brain, leading to a shift in your perspective on memory. This shift results in the memory having a much less negative impact on you.

What to Expect During EMDR Therapy

As you engage in EMDR therapy and work through your memories or issues, you can expect a gradual decrease in trauma-related symptoms. At the same time, you may notice the emergence of more flexible and positive thought patterns, which can lead to meaningful changes in your reactions and behaviours.

These changes happen because EMDR addresses issues at a deep, core level rather than just managing symptoms on the surface.

EMDR therapy is a journey of healing that taps into your brain's natural ability to recover and grow. It's not just about reducing symptoms—it's about transforming your relationship with past experiences and empowering you to move forward with a greater sense of peace and well-being.

If you have any questions or need further information about EMDR, please feel free to contact us.

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