

Experiencing EMDR as a Client.

You are in control

There is no correct way to do EMDR; there are no 'oughts' or 'shoulds'. It is important for you to know that you are the one in control and all I need from you is accurate feedback about what is happening during the treatment. If you need to stop at any time just let me know, otherwise simply tell me what is happening.

Old unpleasant or traumatic events

Just as you are able to create for yourself a positive state of mind, so you can create negative states of mind using your bank of life experiences and old unhelpful memories.

Often, when something unpleasant or traumatic happens, it seems to get locked in the memory bank with its original picture, sounds, thoughts and feelings and even consequent patterns of behaviour. The memory, or just the associated negative emotional and psychological state, can return unexpectedly whenever something happens to trigger it. The memory continues to be the repository of negative emotions, such as fear, helplessness, and a general discomfort that we don't understand or seem to be able to control.

In order to protect us from emotional and psychological pain, the brain stores disturbing events in a memory network which isolates it and prevents it from connecting with more useful information and resources held in other parts of the brain. This in turn inhibits learning, resolution and completion from taking place.

To put it another way, this old material just keeps being triggered over and over again within a memory network which is housed in its own part of the brain. There is, however, another memory network in another part of the brain containing information and resources which would be useful and which you need to use in order to resolve the problem. The question is how to connect the two memory networks. Once we start the EMDR process, neural pathways are formed that assist the linking of the two networks; appropriate information then 'comes to mind' and flows into and 'casts a new light' on the old problem.

The EMDR method is unique

The structured way in which we work is partly what makes EMDR so effective. This includes;

1. Taking a careful history & Treatment Planning.
2. Developing emotional Self-management.
3. Understanding and using EMDR.
4. Identifying and processing the problem memory.
5. Installing new positive self beliefs.
6. Creating new patterns of behaviour.

The EMDR process

The treatment involves eye movements (or other bi-lateral hemispheric stimulation of the brain) that seems to unlock the nervous system and allows your brain to process the old unpleasant memory. Some practitioners believe that this is what is happening in REM, (dream sleep), when eye movements are involved in processing material held in the subconscious mind.

When this old disturbing material is unlocked and processed, negative emotions are also released together with the limiting self-beliefs that inhibit creative and fruitful living.

As we do the sets of eye movements, all you need to do is to remember that we are only working with old stuff. Should the target memory become uncomfortable for you during processing, you can ask to stop and take a breath. The memory may *feel* real, but it is just an old memory that was previously locked in the nervous system. The idea is to dismantle the old memory and allow useful information to flow from one part of the brain to another - your job is simply to notice the information and continue to allow the processing to continue. Some liken this to having the video of your life become stuck and you can't move ahead from the trauma. EMDR is like pressing the pause button again to release the whole memory bank so that you can be released from the past, move forward in time and live a productive and fruitful life.

During processing we stop at regular intervals when I you to tell me what your memory has brought up for you. It may be that the picture has changed in some way or the feeling has altered. On occasions a previously forgotten part of the memory will be recalled or an interesting thought or observation occurs. These changes are important and I will ask you to share them with me for use in shaping the treatment plan accordingly. Sometimes things will change and sometimes they appear not to. When something occurs to you just tell me what it is without trying to decide whether or not it is relevant or important. Therapy is completed by creating and installing a mental, emotional and physical template (model) for you to live by.