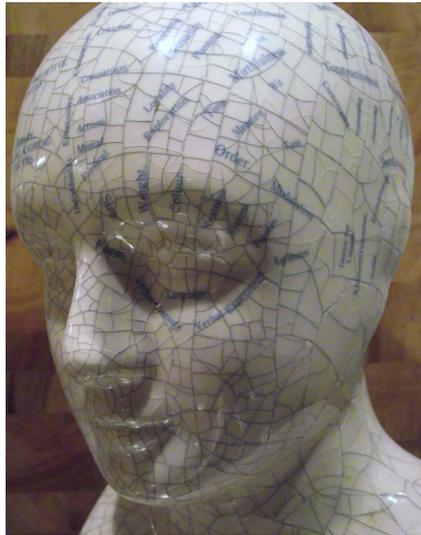


What is EMDR?

EMDR was first developed in the 1980s by Dr Francine Shapiro, a Psychologist who noticed that when thinking about upsetting things our eyes tend to move. Dr. Shapiro then went on to research this further and worked with war veterans to establish and develop the techniques used today.

EMDR or Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing is a relatively new therapy which has proved to be extremely effective for children, young people and adults who have suffered traumatic experiences.

EMDR follows 8 stages of treatment of which one is the use of eye movements or other forms of stimulation to activate both sides of the brain (known as bilateral stimulation) which can help to sort out the way you think about and remember things.



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EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitisation Reprocessing).



Why do my bad memories keep upsetting me?

When bad things happen our body usually acts automatically to keep us safe. In extreme situations this sometimes interferes with memories being made properly. This means that the sights sounds and other things we sensed are not processed and get stuck (like brain indigestion). The usual parts of the memory may then become broken up and float around in your mind being easily remembered when you see things linked to what happened. This reliving then makes the person experience things again as if its happening now. This is what often makes things so uncomfortable for people.

Sometimes traumas in childhood are easy to see but now and again when children do not remember the trauma they may show their discomfort through anger, depression, anxiety or anti-social behaviour like lying or stealing. Alternatively they may be too ready to please or reluctant to leave their carers.

What happens when I come for EMDR?

During the sessions we will usually start by setting up a safe place. This is a simple relaxation exercise that is built around a pleasant and secure thought. With practice it can be used at any time to generate positive and relaxing thoughts and physical sensations. You can even use it on your own at home. The safe place usually forms part of the other sessions which look at the bad memories.

In the EMDR sessions we will usually ask you to follow our fingers from left to right while noticing your thoughts or feelings. Sometimes we use music or taps on the hands. We then stop every 15-30 seconds and ask you what you noticed. Often things change. Your job is to notice what happens. We then repeat the exercise.

You have control of what we work on in the sessions and can stop at anytime if things become upsetting. We will always tell you how to do this. You will know when things are better when the memory we were working on doesn't make you feel as sad or upset.

What does EMDR do?

EMDR is an approach that seems to help unblock the brain, so that bad memories can become "ordinary memories". We do not know precisely how this works, it may have something to do with making both halves of the brain work together or it may get the brain to work like it does when we are sleeping. This is the time the brain usually sorts things out and turns things that have happened into memories.

EMDR may then help your brain sort out where all the bits should be stored by packing and unpacking them. This then helps them to be stored like normal memories and therefore reduces the effect they have on you. Sadly we cannot take the bad memories go away but we can help to reduce the way they make you feel.

For more information you can visit the following websites:
emdria.org
Emdrassociation.org
ChildTraumaAcademy.com