

Cody Transitions Counseling

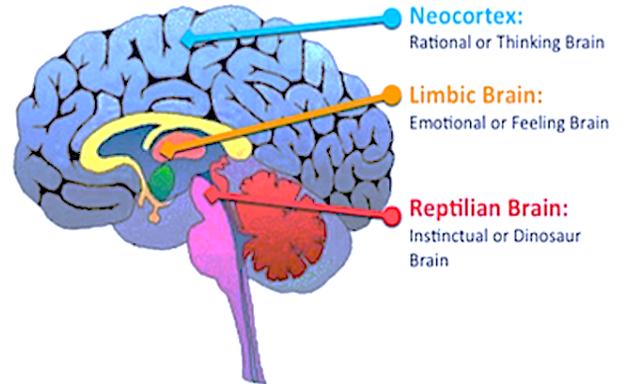
What is EMDR?

The mind can often heal itself naturally, in the same way as the body does. Much of this natural coping mechanism occurs during sleep, particularly during rapid eye movement (REM) sleep. Francine Shapiro developed Eye Movement Desensitization & Reprocessing (EMDR) in 1987, utilizing this natural process in order to successfully treat Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Since then, EMDR has been used to effectively treat a wide range of mental health problems.

What happens when you are traumatized?

Most of the time, your body routinely manages new information and experiences without you being aware of it. However, when something out of the ordinary occurs and you are traumatized by an overwhelming event (e.g. a car accident) or by being repeatedly subjected to distress (e.g. childhood neglect), your natural coping mechanism can be overloaded. This overloading can result in disturbing experiences remaining frozen in your brain -- being **“unprocessed.”** Such unprocessed memories and feelings are stored in the limbic system of your brain in a “raw” and emotional form, rather than in a verbal “story” mode. This limbic system maintains traumatic memories in an isolated memory network that is associated with emotions and physical sensations, which are disconnected from the brain’s cortex where we use language to store memories. The limbic system’s traumatic memories

can be continually triggered when you experience events similar in nature to the difficult experiences you have been through. Often the memory itself is long forgotten, but the painful feelings such as anxiety, panic, anger or despair are continually triggered in the present. Your ability to live in the present and learn from new experiences can therefore become inhibited. EMDR helps create the connections between your brain’s memory networks, enabling your brain to process the traumatic memory in a very natural way.



What is an EMDR session like?

EMDR utilizes the natural healing ability of your body. After thorough assessment and development of a treatment plan, you will be asked specific questions about the disturbing memory. Eye movements, analogous to those used during REM sleep, are recreated simply by asking you to watch lights moving back and forth across your visual field. Other forms of bilateral stimulation used can include headphones with music / sounds or vibrating pads held in each hand. Following sets of these bilateral stimulations, you will be asked to report back on what you noticed while also focusing on the memory (e.g. changes in thoughts, images and feelings).

After multiple sets of these bilateral stimulations, the memory tends to change in such a way that it loses its painful intensity and simply becomes a neutral memory of an event in the past. Other associated memories may also heal at the same time. This linking of related memories can lead to a dramatic and rapid improvement in many aspects of your life. For best effects, EMDR sessions during the actual reprocessing phases of treatment usually last from 60 to 90 minutes.

Will I remain in control and empowered?

During EMDR treatment, you will remain in control, fully alert and wide-awake. This is not a form of hypnosis and you can stop the process at any time. Throughout the session, the therapist will support and facilitate your own self-healing and intervene as little as possible. Reprocessing is usually experienced as something that happens spontaneously, and new connections and insights are felt to arise quite naturally from within.

What can EMDR be used for?

anxiety and panic attacks	PTSD	depression	addictions
low self-esteem	anger	performance anxiety	feelings of worthlessness
sleep problems	phobias	pain, including phantom limb	grief and loss

EMDR is an evidence-based psychotherapeutic approach. There are now over 30 randomized, controlled clinical trials on the efficacy and/or effectiveness of EMDR. The American Psychiatric Association, American Psychological Association, US Department of Defense, Veteran’s Administration, insurance companies, and the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies recognize EMDR as an effective treatment for PTSD. For further information about EMDR, point your internet browser to www.emdria.org

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Follow-up Appointment Date & Time: _____