

INSPIRATION RELAXATION

UNDERSTANDING

EMDR DEPENDENCY

(EYE MOVEMENT DESENSITISATION AND REPROCESSING)

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STRENGTH **THERAPY**

CONFIDENCE EXHILARATION

ACCOMPLISHMENT

STIMULATING LIGHTENING

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Eye movement desensitisation and reprocessing (EMDR) is a revolutionary new therapy for the treatment of a wide range of psychological problems. This leaflet explains what EMDR is and how it can help you.

What is EMDR therapy?

EMDR is a therapy invented by Dr Francine Shapiro. In 1987, while she was walking in the park, Dr Shapiro noticed that after rapid eye movements, certain disturbing thoughts and feelings became less intense. Therapists and researchers worldwide have used her findings to develop EMDR, which uses rapid eye movements to relieve long-term distress. Recognised worldwide by the medical profession, it is a successful procedure which does not use drugs or hypnosis.

What problems can EMDR therapy treat?

EMDR has been successfully used to treat:

- Post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Flashbacks
- Depression
- Phobias
- Addictions
- Grief and bereavement
- Anxiety, guilt and anger
- Panic attacks
- Sleep disturbances

How does EMDR therapy work?

While we are asleep, we naturally get rapid eye movement (REM), which repeatedly stimulates the right and left sides of the brain in turn to try to process information. But when we suffer a traumatic experience, it can overwhelm our brain and we become unable to fully process this information. This can lead to a disturbing memory which affects us long after the event. By moving the eyes quickly back and forth, while concentrating on the disturbing memory, EMDR therapy kick-starts and speeds up this natural healing process.

EMDR helps us to finish processing information, and can replace 'negative' associations of the memory with 'positive' associations.

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For example, a rape victim may believe they are to blame for the attack. By reprocessing their associations with the memory, EMDR can help them to blame the attacker.

EMDR therapy works using three processes:

1. **Eye movement:** By quickly moving our eyes we stimulate the right and left sides of the brain. This begins the healing process.
2. **Desensitisation:** This refers to removing the emotions associated with a traumatic memory.
3. **Reprocessing:** This replaces our negative beliefs associated with a traumatic memory with healthier, more positive beliefs.

With EMDR, you lead the therapy so it stays within your control. It is not hypnotherapy.

How will a typical course of EMDR therapy work?

There are several stages in a course of EMDR therapy.

1. **Assessment:** The therapist will discuss your psychological problem, assess whether you are ready for treatment, and if so design a treatment plan
2. **Coping skills training:** The therapist will make sure you've got the coping skills for handling the emotional distress caused by revisiting the stressful memory or belief
3. **EMDR therapy:** The therapist will ask you to identify the most vivid image related to the memory or negative belief. They will then use an external stimulus (for example the therapist's fingers being moved back and forth in front of the patient's eyes) for 20 to 30 seconds to start rapid eye movements. The therapist will repeat this process and will encourage you to think of the same memory or negative belief, but this time with a 'positive' association
4. **Re-evaluation:** As you make progress, the therapist will reassess your treatment. They will ask you to keep a diary of any associations or emotions with the trauma to help them with this stage

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How long does EMDR therapy take?

How many sessions you need will depend on your problem, your history, and how well you respond to the therapy. Because EMDR can work quickly, it can significantly shorten your overall time in therapy. Most people need twelve EMDR sessions.

Priory will always discuss and agree with you how many sessions you will have.

Does EMDR therapy actually work?

EMDR therapy has helped an estimated half a million people of all ages. It's an effective treatment for the lasting symptoms following trauma, and is an excellent treatment for post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Should I have EMDR therapy?

Although EMDR is carried out in a safe setting, it can be a very intense, emotional, experience. You need to consider whether it's likely to be a good approach for you, or you should ask your GP for advice.

Finding help

Contacting your GP is often the easiest way to get help and further treatment. If you're worried about talking to your GP, consider writing down your concerns and questions. You can:

- take a friend or family member with you;
- see another doctor in the practice; or
- join a new GP practice.

The type of professional support offered will depend on the services available in your area and the arrangements that your primary care trust (PCT) has with other health authorities or private providers.

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You may also want to contact any of the following organisations.

- EMDR Training and Consultancy
Phone: 020 8343 3665
Website: www.emdr.org.uk
- EMDR Europe Association
Website: www.emdr-europe.org
- EMDR Institute Inc
Website: www.emdr.com
- Priory:
Phone: 0845 4 PRIORY
0845 4 774679
Website: www.priorygroup.com

If you're interested in receiving treatment from the Priory Group, your GP will be able to refer you. If you or a relative has private medical insurance, your insurer will probably insist that your GP refers you to us.

Why should I choose Priory?

Our service

At Priory, our committed and professional staff provide the highest standards of care, understanding and service for all. This service brings hope and confidence, allowing our patients to take control of their lives within a safe and secure environment.

Expertise and innovation

Through our close links with the public and private sectors, we've developed the expertise and innovation to offer consistent and successful treatment. And, as Europe's leading independent provider of specialist mental health, neuro-rehabilitation and special education services, we bring experience and an excellent reputation.

This document has been edited by Dr Austin Tate MB ChB FRCPsych DPM, with the help of Plain English Campaign (www.plainenglish.co.uk).

The Crystal Mark applies to wording only.



The Priory Hospital Altrincham
Rappax Road, Hale, Cheshire, WA15 0NX
Phone: 0161 904 0050 Fax: 0161 980 4322

The Priory Hospital Brighton & Hove
14-18 New Church Road, Hove, East Sussex, BN3 4FH
Phone: 01273 747 464 Fax: 01273 727 321

The Priory Hospital Bristol
Heath House Lane, Stapleton, Bristol, BS16 1EQ
Phone: 0117 952 5255 Fax: 0117 952 5552

The Priory Hospital Chelmsford
Stump Lane, Springfield Green, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 7SJ
Phone: 01245 345 345 Fax: 01245 346 177

The Priory Hospital Glasgow
38-40 Mansionhouse Road, Glasgow, G41 3DW
Phone: 0141 636 6116 Fax: 0141 636 5151

The Priory Hospital Hayes Grove
Prestons Road, Hayes, Bromley, Kent, BR2 7AS
Phone: 020 8462 7722 Fax: 020 8462 5028

The Priory Hospital North London
Grovelands House, The Bourne, Southgate, London, N14 6RA
Phone: 020 8882 8191 Fax: 020 8447 8138

The Priory Clinic Nottingham
Ransom Road, Nottingham, NG3 5GS
Phone: 0115 9693 388 Fax: 0115 9693 381

The Priory Hospital Preston
Rosemary Lane, Bartle, Preston, Lancashire, PR4 0HB
Phone: 01772 691 122 Fax: 01772 691 246

The Priory Hospital Roehampton
Priory Lane, Roehampton, London, SW15 5JJ
Phone: 020 8876 8261 Fax: 020 8392 2632

The Priory Hospital Southampton
Hythe Road, Marchwood, Southampton, SO40 4WU
Phone: 023 8084 0044 Fax: 023 8020 7554

The Priory Ticehurst House
Ticehurst, Wadhurst, East Sussex, TN5 7HU
Phone: 01580 200 391 Fax: 01580 201 006

The Priory Hospital Woking
Chobham Road, Knaphill, Woking, Surrey, GU21 2QF
Phone: 01483 489 211 Fax: 01483 797 053

Woodbourne Priory Hospital
21 Woodbourne Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B17 8BY
Phone: 0121 434 4343 Fax: 0121 434 3270

PRIORY

Priory Group, Priory House, Randalls Way,
Leatherhead, Surrey, KT22 7TP
Phone: 01372 860 400 Fax: 01372 860 401
Email: info@priorygroup.com www.priorygroup.com