

What can EMDR treat?

The benefits of EMDR are limitless.

It is most commonly used to help clients with any traumatic event, anxiety, phobias, PTSD (Post-traumatic Stress Disorder), pain management, and depression.

Who endorses EMDR?

- The American Psychiatric Association
- The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
 - Department of Defense
 - Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration

EMDR has been used to treat traumatized people from the September 11 terrorist attacks, the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, and recently the Sandy Hook tragedy and Hurricane Sandy.

How is EMDR done?

The therapist uses one of two methods.

- 1) Therapist guides the client through sets of bilateral tones heard through headphones and mild pulses felt from small paddles held in both hands. Bilateral refers to the tones and taps that are sent to the right side and then left side. The number of sets will depend on the client and his or her history.
- 2) Therapist guides the client's eye movements by prompting the client to follow the therapist's fingers in a bi-lateral motion. The number of sets will depend on the client and his or her history.

Below is the Tac Scan device that is used to send tones and pulses to the client. The therapist controls it.



The client holds the paddles or "tappers" in each hand. The vibrating pulse that is sent to the paddles is very mild. It does not shock the client.

The Natural Healing of EMDR

Most of the time, our bodies manage new information and experiences without us being aware of it.

However, when either a "big" or "little" trauma occurs (e.g. big - a car accident, assault; small - a friend saying something to you when you were 5) or distressing events are experienced repeatedly (e.g. cruel parenting, childhood neglect), natural coping mechanisms can become overloaded.

This overloading can result in disturbing experiences remaining "frozen" in the brain or being unprocessed. Such unprocessed memories and feelings are stored in the limbic system of the brain in a "raw" and emotional form, rather than in a verbal "story" mode. The limbic system's traumatic memories can be continually triggered when we experience events similar to the difficult experiences we have been through.

Painful feelings such as anxiety, panic, anger or despair are continually triggered in the present.

EMDR helps create the connections between the brain's memory networks, enabling the brain to process the traumatic memory in a natural way - therefore clearing any future distress.