



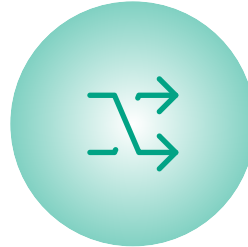
[EMDR Practices](#)

Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR)

therapy was first developed by Dr. Francine Shapiro in 1987 to alleviate distress from traumatic memories. EMDR has since been extensively researched and expanded, used not just for trauma but also for anxiety, depression, complicated grief, chronic pain, phobias, and many other areas.

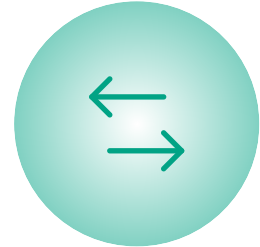
EMDR is an evidence-based trauma treatment. Unlike other forms of trauma treatment, EMDR therapy does not involve talking in detail about distressing issues or engaging in extensive homework between sessions. EMDR is a structured eight-phase protocol.

How EMDR Works (AIP Model)



The Adaptive Information Processing (AIP)

This model is the foundation of EMDR. It suggests that trauma symptoms come from unprocessed memories. EMDR helps people revisit and process these memories so they can be resolved in a healthier way. By doing this, clients can reduce emotional distress and shift negative beliefs, forming new, more adaptive connections.



Bilateral Stimulation (BLS)

Another unique aspect of EMDR is the use of bilateral stimulation: alternating left–right sensory input used throughout the process. It's integrated into several phases of treatment and applied while briefly recalling distressing memories, with the therapist closely guiding and monitoring your comfort level.

Types of BLS

Visual — guided left–right eye movements.

Auditory — alternating tones in the left and right ears.

Tactile — alternating taps or buzzes on the left and right sides of the body.

What to Expect: EMDR Session At a Glance

- 01** **Therapist frames targets**
Works with a series of targets (often the “worst part” of a memory) as the focus for processing.
- 02** **Therapist invites focused recall + BLS**
Asks you to hold the memory while engaging in bilateral stimulation (visual/auditory/tactile).
- 03** **Therapist structures brief, sequential sets**
Guides access to the disturbing material in short, repeatable doses.
- 04** **Therapist monitors distress continuously**
Carefully tracks your level of distress throughout the sets.
- 05** **Therapist titrates pace to keep you anchored**
Adjusts timing/intensity so you can keep “one foot in the past and one foot in the present” while processing.

What Can Shift

People who successfully complete EMDR will oftentimes experience a transformative shift in the meaning and emotional charge of painful events. Instead of old negative cognitions, such as “I’m a failure,” “it’s my fault,” or “I’m worthless,” people may instead experience, on a visceral level, the adaptive cognitions of “I’m ok,” “it wasn’t my fault,” “I’m safe now.” These insights tend to spring forth from the client, experienced not just as thoughts but in integrated body sensations and emotions.

Working Across Time

EMDR allows therapists to work with the past, present, and future simultaneously, fostering change and transformation.

EMDR Benefits

Quick and effective, often showing results after a few sessions

Helps recover from trauma, including PTSD

Reduces distress linked to traumatic memories

Improves self-esteem and confidence

Provides tools to cope with future stresses

Can be combined with other therapies like CBT

Enhances emotional regulation and resilience

Helps overcome phobias and irrational fears

Empowers better communication and relationships

Supports accessing and reframing childhood memories

Boosts focus, performance, and drive in various areas of life

Addresses psychological and physiological effects of trauma

EMDR: Concerns & Myths

A

Your control & awareness

- **Not hypnosis:** You will be conscious and aware throughout the session.
- **Right to stop:** You can stop at any time. Your therapist will develop a verbal and non-verbal stop signal for you to use at any point.

B

Safety & therapist monitoring

- **Careful tracking:** The therapist closely tracks your nervous system, making sure you don’t slide into fight, flight, or freeze or experience overwhelming distress.
- **Preparation woven in:** Safety and preparation is part of the process, woven into every part of EMDR.
- **Relationship matters:** As with any trauma treatment, rapport, trust, and consistency are important.

