

# **MOOC 1 – Unit 6:**

## **Part B: EMDR**

### **Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing in Emergency**

**Developed by  
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# Unit 6: EMDR in Emergency

## Part B

### TOPIC DESCRIPTION

- Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) therapy is a World Health Organization (2013-2019) recommended intervention to support the lives of people affected by trauma and mental illness related to stressful experiences and relationships, in order to promote and enhance mental health.
- Most of the time, emergency crises are stressful or traumatic.
- With time, EMDR has developed different kinds of intervention to stabilize, normalize and/or treat victims involved in emergency settings.

# Learning Unit 6 – EMDR in Emergency Chapters index

Chapter 1 describes First Aid Support through the EMDR Phase 2 (or Preparation Phase) to:

- Provide psychoeducation to normalize victims
- Stabilize victims
- Improve self stress management

Chapter 2 describes EMDR trauma-focused intervention emergency protocols:

- EMDR Recent Traumatic Events Protocol
- Emergency Response Procedure (ERP)

Chapter 3 describes group protocols to support group of victims and to support rescuers (third type of victims):

- EMDR Integrative Group Treatment Protocol (IGTP) Group intervention to support rescuers
  - EMDR Short Group protocol
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# Introduction

## Scientific support for EMDR

- EMDR therapy is a scientifically supported treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). As well as being recommended by the World Health Organisation (2013), it is now accepted as a treatment of choice by numerous health departments, National Health Systems and trauma organisations. The US Departments of Defence and Veterans Affairs Practice Guidelines have recommended EMDR as a treatment of choice for all trauma populations at all times (2017).
- The International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies designated EMDR as an effective treatment for PTSD, as have the Departments of Health of both Northern Ireland and Israel, which have indicated EMDR to be one of only two or three treatments of choice for trauma victims.
- Furthermore, the American Psychiatric Association Practice Guideline recommends EMDR as a first-line treatment of trauma.
- EMDR can be applied in large-scale for humanitarian emergencies (after natural and man-made disasters), as well as with individuals or groups in the different phases of trauma (from acute to chronic stages), to provide emotional relief and enhance post-traumatic growth and wellbeing.
- EMDR is also widely used with refugees, survivors of terroristic attacks, earthquakes, mass accidents, combat trauma, police forces, firefighters and first responders.

# What is EMDR?

- Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) is an innovative, comprehensive, integrative psychotherapy approach of brief duration.
- EMDR focuses on reprocessing of memories of stressful and traumatic experiences, as well as on positive and functional resources.
- Stimulation such as repeated eye movements aim to desensitize, process and work through memories of trauma and other adverse life experiences.
- During the reprocessing phases, the patient dwells momentarily on past memories, present triggers, or anticipated future experiences, while simultaneously receiving bilateral stimulation treatment.

# EMDR protocol

EMDR is a process that engages the patient in the therapy progressively. At the beginning of the therapy, the therapeutic contract is discussed together with the therapeutic alliance. The timing of the therapeutic process respects the patients' coping resources and needs. Therapy could be focused on the trauma, so it provides a fast improvement of the self-healing process, or could be anticipated by a preparation phase to stabilize the patient before dealing with the trauma.

EMDR designed eight phases to proceed with the intervention.

Phase 1: History-taking and Treatment Planning

Phase 2: Preparation

Phase 3: Assessment

Phase 4: Desensitization

Phase 5: Installation

Phase Six: Body Scan

Phase 7: Closure

Phase 8: Reevaluation



# Clinical application of EMDR

EMDR has proven to be an effective and brief treatment for a broad scope of disorders and patients, including:

1. Crime victims, combat veterans, police officers, fire fighters.
2. Sexual assault victims.
3. Survivors of bullying, terroristic attacks and natural disasters (earthquakes, floods...).
4. Chemical dependency, sexual deviation/addiction, eating disorders and pathological gambling.
5. Somatoform disorders, including migraines, chronic pain, phantom limb pain, chronic eczema, gastrointestinal problems, etc.
6. Phobias, panic and anxiety disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder.



In Method/Good Practice Isabel Fernandez describe a Clinical application of EMDR