

EMDR formulation & plan



The brain has a system to heal traumatic or emotionally harmful events called the adaptive information processor (AIP). This system uses psychological resources as healing factors but the process can be overwhelmed or disrupted by traumatic or adverse events. This means the events aren't processed and will keep their distressing elements. We can stimulate the AIP using EMDR. This formulation explores your experience and outlines a treatment plan.

First we explore your psychological resources. These can be internal to you like your positive memories, traits, feelings, etc. They can also be external like places, people, connections or anything outside of you that is positive. These resources will stimulate the AIP in the sessions and be healing factors. We can work on defining more if you think you don't have many.

My resources

The AIP should use these to process and heal from traumatic or adverse events. But if the events overwhelmed caused dissociation or were just too big to process the AIP cant do this so the memories aren't correctly processed. They won't feel like normal memories, they will feel emotionally relevant or have a "now factor". These can all be processing targets for therapy.

Traumatic or adverse events

The unprocessed events will emotionally impact us when they are triggered or recalled. You may experience emotions, physical sensations and negative beliefs. Examples of these may be beliefs about safety, responsibility for events, defectiveness or control of life/events. The result of all of these will be our current symptoms (like anxiety, mood, etc) or maladaptive behaviours (like avoidance, overcompensation, aggression.)

Triggers/ Situations



Emotions/ body sensations



Negative beliefs



Symptoms & maladaptive coping behaviour

The unprocessed events trigger emotional and bodily reactions. These states impact our beliefs about ourselves and others which impacts how we perceive the world. This is why the events are so important to current mental health and why they define the symptoms or maladaptive behaviours. By processing the events they can be reached by the wider memory system and the AIP can use your resources to heal them. This creates new possibilities for good mental health, wellbeing and the future life you want. In this last section, define your mental health goals and the future you would like to have to chart where we are going.

My goals

My vision for my future