

THERAPEUTIC APPROACHES

EMDR

Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing uses bilateral stimulation while the client holds a distressing memory in mind, allowing the memory to be reprocessed so that it loses its charge.

It is recommended in Australian and international guidelines as a first line treatment for PTSD.

BEST SUITED TO

- Single incident trauma: motor vehicle accidents, assault, workplace injury, medical trauma, natural disaster
- PTSD with intrusive memories, flashbacks, nightmares and avoidance
- Birth trauma and perinatal distress
- Specific phobias and performance anxiety with a clear originating event
- Clients who find talking about the event repeatedly intolerable, since EMDR requires less verbal recounting than exposure based approaches

A note on sequencing: for complex and developmental trauma, stabilisation and resourcing come first. Reprocessing is paced carefully and is often preceded by Schema Therapy, DBT skills or somatic work.

INDICATIVE DIAGNOSES

PTSD; acute stress disorder; complex PTSD; adjustment disorders; specific phobia; panic disorder; prolonged grief disorder; and distress following birth trauma or medical trauma.

This list is indicative rather than exhaustive. Diagnosis guides the choice of approach but does not determine it on its own.