



## Information Sheet: EMDR

### What is EMDR?

EMDR or Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing was originally developed to treat Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). It is recommended by NICE as one of two methods of treatment for this disorder. [NICE is the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence]. It has since been found to be beneficial in the treatment of a variety of other issues which involve feelings of anxiety – for example, pain, stress, low self-confidence and grief. It can also be helpful in lessening the pain of distressing memories, e.g. if someone has been sexually abused or has been involved in an accident.

Things which make us anxious can be very difficult to talk about: sometimes talking about something increases the anxiety. EMDR offers the opportunity to deal with anxiety in a different way to some talking therapies, as the therapist needs to know very little information about the cause of it to be able to work with it. Past, present or future worries can be processed in a way which can leave the client feeling much less anxious.

### EMDR and anxiety:

Most of us will experience anxiety during our lives. If we are able to cope with this anxiety, however, perhaps identifying the cause of it and taking some form of action, this should not cause major problems. But if the level of anxiety begins to feel overwhelming - and just the thought of doing something starts to feel frightening - it presents a real barrier.

We may feel unable to do things which previously seemed easy: we begin to avoid doing anything which might trigger our anxiety, limiting the way we live our lives significantly.

## How it works:

EMDR helps to speed up our own healing process. Old, disturbing memories can get stuck in the brain instead of being naturally processed. They get locked into the nervous system along with the original images, sounds, thoughts and feelings involved.

Whenever we hear similar sounds, see similar things the old distressing memory is triggered, preventing any learning or healing taking place. In another part of the brain we already have the information we need to resolve the problem, but the brain will not allow the two parts to connect.

EMDR enables that connection to take place, allowing the brain to resolve the problem and process the memory in the normal way - in much the same way as a problem can seem less distressing after we have slept on it. This happens spontaneously with rapid eye movement which helps us to process unconscious material when we are asleep.

## What CCL offers?

We provide free-to-access EMDR treatment in Malton and in Scarborough. To access the service, please contact us using the contact details at the bottom of the page.

Please note that we only offer a limited number of EMDR appointment slots under the free-to-use service due to funding and that waiting times can vary. We also offer EMDR treatment (in Malton only) as part of Options, which is a chargeable service. Sessions can last up to an hour and a half and cost £45 per session.

## Other sources of information:

YouTube has some video demonstrations of EMDR (just search by “EMDR”) and you can find out more on the internet at [www.emdrassociation.org.uk](http://www.emdrassociation.org.uk).