

# EMDR

Real Talk Therapy Podcast

## How EMDR Works

Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) Therapy utilizes bilateral movements (movements that cross the body's midline) and dual awareness (mentally holding the past and present at the same time) to help move triggering memories from the emotional part of your brain (the limbic brain) to the rational part of your brain (the cortical brain). By identifying memories that fuel current negative beliefs about ourselves - beliefs that often influence our behaviors, self-talk, and relational reactions - we are able to reprocess the ways in which those memories have been maladaptively stored so that more adaptive information is online for us to tap into in our daily lives.

## Different Elements of EMDR

EMDR will start with an extensive intake process that allows for the therapist and client to collaborate in developing a mutual understanding of the underlying themes and problems. Issues will be viewed through three potential categories: defectiveness/responsibility ("I'm not good enough," "I'm worthless," "it's my fault," etc.), safety/vulnerability ("I am unsafe," "I can't trust anyone," etc.) or power/control/choices ("I am powerless," "I have no agency," "I don't have any choices," etc.). Once the therapist and client have an understanding of the roles these themes play in the presenting issues, the therapist will work with the client to ensure they have tools to tolerate distress before moving into the actual reprocessing of memories. Reprocessing includes desensitizing the distressing information and installing positive and adaptive information in its place before completing a body scan for any additional signs of distress. There is always a re-evaluation component to ensure the memory is completed and to allow for the positive belief to be installed with future scenarios.

# Issues to Treat with EMDR

Single incident PTSD	Complex PTSD	Developmental trauma and deficits	Attachment trauma and wounds
Anxiety and depression	OCD and related tendencies	Substance use and abuse	Eating disorders and disordered eating
Dissociative disorders	Phobias and panic disorders	Chronic pain	Grief and loss

## EMDR Resources

- [EMDRIA](#) - EMDR International Association has information about getting trained and certified in EMDR, provides additional information on how it works, and allows for people to search for EMDR therapists near them.
- [The Center for Excellence in EMDR Therapy](#) - where Kate and Nooshin received their training!