

# [Eye movement desensitization reprocessing](https://assignbuster.com/eye-movement-desensitization-reprocessing/)

Running head: EMDR Eye Movement Desensitization Reprocessing: Worthy or Worthless Insert Here Insert Affiliation Here Eye Movement Desensitization Reprocessing: Worthy or Worthless
Eye Movement Desensitization Reprocessing (EMDR) has been used in trauma therapy for the last 20 years. As with any innovative and new treatment there are proponents and opponents both trying to convince their peers and the public about the validity and usefulness of the treatment. This trauma therapy is no different. There are people on either side of the pendulum, taking sides, and giving reasons as to why this treatment works or why it does not work. These professionals also consider the make up and procedures associated with this treatment and use this as a way to disclaim or build credibility for this treatment. Either way, each person needs to look at the facts and decide for themselves if the treatment is worthy or worthless.
Understanding exactly what EMDR is and how it works is needed before being able to make an informed decision as to whether it works or not. Developed in 1989 by Francine Shapiro, the concept was that by focusing on a traumatic event while either refocusing on following an object causing eye movement, tapping, or touching an object over time would alleviate the stress and traumatic feelings associated with the memory (Kitchiner, Roberts, & Bisson, 2006). The eye movement was supposed to refocus the memory or desensitize it and reprocess with a new positive affirmation or memory (Devilly, 2005; Karatzias, Power, McGoldrick, Brown, Buchanan, Sharp, et al, 2007; Kitchiner et al, 2006; Lee, Taylor, & Drummond, 2006; Taylor, Thordarson, Fedoroff, Maxfield, Lovell, & Ogrodniczuk, 2003). Much research has been conducted in regard to this therapy and there seems to be no middle ground in the fall out of the results. People either believe the treatment works or not.
Proponents of EDMR have conducted studies, both observational and empirical and have found that the rapid eye movement is an investigatory action which is known to help disassociate the patient from the traumatic memory. The movement is a distraction that allows for the patient to relax and realign the memory with a more positive outcome or belief. Negative thoughts associated with the event change to positive and the eye movements or finger tapping can also act as anxiety reducing techniques to alleviate any suppressed feeling or new stressful events (Lee et al, 2006; Taylor et al, 2003).
Those who disbelieve the treatment works compare the procedure to other imaging exposure therapies and cognitive behavior therapy treatments. The belief is that EMDR incorporates both of these therapies. The imaging of the event exposes the patient to the memory, feelings, and stressors associated with the trauma. This event is the focus of the patient during the rapid eye movement or other distraction. The creation of anxiety reduction practices is considered just another part of cognitive behavior therapy in which the person learns tricks to stay calm in stressful situations. Therefore, EMDR is not better or any worse than imaging exposure or cognitive behavior therapies (Karatzias et al, 2007). Other groups see EMDR as a " pseudoscience" used by creators of " Power therapies" (Devilly, 2005, p441). In fact, EMDR is claimed to have many of the characteristics such as changing procedure after initially claiming success in the first session. It is for this reason as well as many other reasons that are just this side of ethical that make many in the field question the true ability of this treatment (Devilly, 2005).
As with any treatment, especially for mental health treatments for PTSD and other traumas, the patient needs to be informed of the different types of treatments. They should ask questions, and if not comfortable with a treatment, let the counselor/therapist know so that the treatment plan can be changed. Does EMDR really work For some patients, it is a lifesaver, for others it is the opposite. With all trauma treatments, the individual is the best to understand themselves and through a little knowledge will be able to know treatments that will work with their personality.
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