



**FAIRFIELD COUNTY  
TRAUMA RESPONSE TEAM, INC.**

540 Tunxis Hill Rd., Fairfield, CT 06825-4412

**EYE MOVEMENT DESENSITIZATION AND REPROCESSING THERAPY (EMDR)**

[www.fctr.org](http://www.fctr.org)

[www.emdria.org](http://www.emdria.org)

**Description:**

EMDR is a form of psychotherapy specifically developed in 1990 to help resolve symptoms of trauma. Due to developments in neuroscience, trauma therapists have increasing knowledge about why symptoms of trauma develop and therefore we better understand how to specifically and effectively treat post-traumatic stress. In prolonged situations of danger the brain actually stores the experience in a different way than it stores experiences of everyday life.

Symptoms - such as nightmares, flashbacks, sensory triggers, anxiety/panic, startle responses, trouble going to sleep or staying asleep, isolation, numbing, and withdrawal – are all understandable and even predictable results of the way the experience gets stuck in the brain rather than the usual ways of processing events. EMDR therapy has a set of procedures that allows the stalled brain to safely resume the processing of the traumatic experience. EMDR taps into our innate capacity to heal from experiences that have naturally evoked feelings of fear, terror, and helplessness. EMDR is a unique approach that helps process through the thoughts, feelings, and body sensations that feel stuck, too much in your face, too foggy or unreal, disorienting, or going around in circles without resolution. EMDR sessions are 1 to 1 ½ hours in length. Symptom relief is often experienced during the first session.

**EMDR is appropriate for children, adolescents and adults. It is an individual treatment that can also be utilized in groups following disasters.**

**EMDR is a collaborative, safe, evidence-based treatment which:**

- Has specific and predictable ways to help resolve trauma symptoms
- Is typically a brief treatment in the aftermath of disaster
- Understands and respects the brain's responses to fear and safety
- Incorporates anxiety and stress management strategies into the treatment
- Helps you feel 'from the inside out' that you can be back in present life, knowing what happened, having integrated to the fullest capacity what has happened, and being able to be back, without unsettled distress, in the moment-to-moment experiences of everyday life.
- Uses bilateral stimulation (eye movements, alternating sensory modalities) at very specific times during treatment when you are in a state of dual awareness. Dual awareness is a felt sense of safety in the here and now while recollecting adverse experiences, this process helps the brain cross-talk and find information from other life experiences you have had to help resolve and heal.