

Imaginal and in Vivo Exposure Blended with Emdr: Becoming Unstuck, an Integrated Inpatient Treatment for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

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Abstract : Traditionally, PTSD treatment has involved trauma-focused cognitive behaviour therapy (TF CBT) to consolidate traumatic memories. A piloted integrated treatment of TF CBT and eye movement desensitisation reprocessing therapy (EMDR) of eight phases will fasten the rate memory is being consolidated and enhance cognitive functioning in patients with PTSD. Patients spend a considerable amount of time in treatment managing their traumas experienced firsthand, or from aversive details ranging from war, assaults, accidents, abuse, hostage related, riots, or natural disasters. The time spent in treatment or as inpatient affects overall quality of life, relationships, cognitive functioning, and overall sense of identity. EMDR is being offered twice a week in conjunction with the standard prolonged exposure as an inpatient in a private hospital. Prolonged exposure for up to 5 hours per day elicits the affect response required for EMDR sessions in the afternoon to unlock unprocessed memories and facilitate consolidation in the amygdala and hippocampus. Results are indicating faster consolidation of memories, reduction in symptoms in a shorter period of time, reduction in admission time, which is enhancing the quality of life and relationships, and improved cognition. The impact of events scale (IES) results demonstrate a significant reduction in symptoms, trauma symptoms inventory (TSI), and posttraumatic stressor disorder check list (PCL) that demonstrates large effect sizes to date. An integrated treatment approach for PTSD achieves a faster resolution of memories, improves cognition, and reduces the amount of time spent in therapy.

Keywords : EMDR enhances cognitive functioning, faster consolidation of trauma memory, integrated treatment of TF CBT and EMDR, reduction in inpatient admission time

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