



**Moving Minds**

# **The Phobia and Present Anxiety EMDR Protocol**

**Second EMDR Conference, Yorkshire and Northeast  
Regional Group,  
Leeds, 16 October 2009**

Manda Holmshaw: Moving Minds

EMDR Workshops

**British Insurance Awards – 2005, 2006, 2007**

**Rehab First Awards – 2005, 2007, Highly commended Rehab Initiative - 2009**

# Contents



1. The AIP model and phobias/present anxieties
2. The three layered approach: Case conceptualisation
3. History taking and preparation
4. Targets
5. Future template
6. Float forward
7. Discussion



Moving Minds

Basic assumption of the EMDR AIP model:

Present phobias and some current anxieties  
are manifestations of past unprocessed  
events



# The three layered-approach:

## Case conceptualisation

- Process **past event/s** that laid foundation of present problem
- Process **worst event** and remaining current triggers
- Develop **future template** of coping with feared stimuli/ situation

# History taking and Treatment planning



- Usual history
- Fear/Phobia History
- Determine appropriate and feasible treatment goal – behaviourally
- Identify CS (Stimulus situation): “Describe the object or situation that you are afraid of. What about ..... triggers your fear most?”



Moving Minds

Identify expected  
consequence/catastrophe (UCS):

“ What are you afraid of that could happen  
when you are exposed to....?”

# Experience (Target) 1



- Identify the **origin** of current fear – **Target 1**  
Conditioning event – “When did this fear begin?/ When did you first become aware of (feared consequence)?”



**Moving Minds**

- Check for an earlier event
- “Are you sure you were not already fearful before this event?”
- Touchstone



# Experience (Target) 2



Moving Minds

- Most representative experience
- “What is the most extreme or most frightening experience related to this fear?”

# Experience (target) 3



- Most recent experience
- “What is the most recent time that you experienced this fear which is still disturbing when you think about it?”

# Wasp Phobia: 11 year old boy



- Presented with mother – only child
- Bright, friendly, successful at school
- Foundation: 4 years of age: grandmother, “not a real boy”
- Most fearful: being chased at school
- Most recent event: wasp in garden – table tennis
- Triggers: summer outside, peers at school, sound of wasps/bees
- Treatment goal: to be in presence of wasps/bees without anxiety

# Target processing



- Each identified experience/ target is processed, applying the standard protocol
- Reprocess other targets if necessary

# Installation of Future Template



- Run a detailed mental video of the whole process, use bilateral stimulation to process any discomfort

# Preparation for future confrontations



- If necessary: behavioural experiments/exposure tasks to enhance self confidence to confront fear eliciting cues
- Relaxation/self control techniques if necessary

# Closure



- At the end of every session, install a separate positive state
- “What was the most positive thing you learned today?”
- “What does it say about you as a person?” (identity) - install

# Past – Touchstone memory



Identify the past event that laid the foundations of the phobia/present anxiety by floating back from presenting symptoms



# Touchstone



- Negative cognition (When client cannot identify memory but can identify a NC)
- Affect scan/ Affect Bridge (When client has present distress, but cannot identify earliest memory or an NC)

# Touchstone



- Target and process the touchstone memory first, using the full protocol, before moving to worst memory, then present trigger/s and future template
- Float Forward (dealing with anticipatory anxiety) may be required

# Float Forward (for anticipatory anxiety)



- Worst imaginable situation in the future around engaging in previously feared situation
- Target that with standard protocol:
  - e.g. Driving on a motorway, overcome by anxiety, pull off on hard shoulder, attract attention of police
- Image, NC, PC, VoC, Emotion, SUDs, Location in body

# Resource Installation



Moving Minds

- This may be necessary before EMDR commences Or
- During desensitisation Or
- After desensitisation in preparation of future scenarios i.e. Self assertiveness



**Moving Minds**

**Thank you**

**Questions?**

[manda.holmshaw@moving-minds.org](mailto:manda.holmshaw@moving-minds.org)

[admin@emdrworkshops.com](mailto:admin@emdrworkshops.com)