

EMDR and The Military In Action

A monthly newsletter to keep you informed.

This is a monthly e-newsletter created primarily for our colleagues trained in Eye Movement Desensitization and Desensitization (EMDR) who work with military, veterans, and their families. The purpose of **EMDR and The Military In Action** is to promote continued dialogue regarding the efficacy and current developments with EMDR and its use with these special populations.

In This Issue

- Eye movements reduce vividness and emotionality of "flashforwards."
- EMDR with recurrent "flash-forwards:" Reflections on Engelhard et al.'s 2011 study.
- Touch, sound and light help heal inner wounds: Veteran turns to innovative therapy to relieve PTSD.

Citations of the Month

Engelhard, I., van den Hout, M. A., Janssen, W. C., & van der Beek, J. (2010, May). [Eye movements reduce vividness and emotionality of "flashforwards."](#) *Behaviour Research and Therapy*, 48(5), 442-447. doi:10.1016/j.brat.2010.01.003.



Earlier studies have shown that eye movements during retrieval of disturbing images about past events reduce their vividness and emotionality, which may be due to both tasks competing for working memory resources. This study examined whether eye movements reduce vividness and emotionality of visual distressing images about feared future events: "flashforwards". A non-clinical sample was asked to select two images of feared future events, which were self-rated for vividness and emotionality. These images were retrieved while making eye movements or without a concurrent secondary task, and then vividness and emotionality were rated again. Relative to the no-dual task condition, eye movements while thinking of future-oriented images resulted in decreased ratings of image vividness and emotional intensity. Apparently, eye movements reduce vividness and emotionality of visual images

about past and future feared events. This is in line with a working memory account of the beneficial effects of eye movements, which predicts that any task that taxes working memory during retrieval of disturbing mental images will be beneficial.

Romain, L. B.-S. (2013). [EMDR with recurrent "flash-forwards:" Reflections on Engelhard et al.'s 2011 study](#). *Journal of EMDR Practice and Research*, 7(2), 106-111. doi:10.1891/1933-3196.7.2.106.

"Translating Research Into Practice" is a new regular journal feature in which clinicians share clinical case examples that support, elaborate, or illustrate the results of a specific research study. Each column begins with the abstract of the study, followed by the clinician's description of their own application of standard eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR) procedures with the population or problem treated in the study. The column is edited by the *EMDR Research Foundation* with the goal of providing a link between research and practice and making research findings relevant in therapists' day-to-day practices. In this issue's column, Lisa Bellecci-St. Romain references Engelhard et al.'s (2011) study examining the impact of eye movements on recurrent, intrusive visual images about potential future catastrophes-"flash-forwards." Illustrating the findings by Engelhard et al., Bellecci-St. Romain describes the successful use of the EMDR standard protocol in two cases—a woman fearful of returning to work even after past memories are cleared and a young man in early sobriety whose reprocessing of the past is interrupted by concerns of an imminent court appearance. The case examples are followed with a discussion of the importance of recognizing and targeting flash-forwards as present triggers in the three-pronged EMDR standard protocol.

EMDR in the News

Crudele, B. (2012, November 26). [Touch, sound and light help heal inner wounds: Veteran turns to innovative therapy to relieve PTSD](#). Retrieved from Army Times.

EMDR helps stimulate the brain through eye movement, vibrations and tones. Since 2008, the Lejeune hospital has used the technique to treat 200 patients suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder, and officials there said they expect even more medical providers to receive EMDR certification in the coming months.

But despite its rise in popularity within the medical community, Stowe said many Marines are still unaware of the treatment, which he believes provides a better alternative to the antidepressants and anti-anxiety medications commonly prescribed. [Excerpt]

Special Notes

Our Wordpress blog: <http://emdrresearchfoundation.wordpress.com/>
(note that there are entries on 12/16 and 12/18 with links to articles)

Like us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/emdrresearchfoundation
(note that there are quite a few relevant entries with links to articles)

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