

## The Combination of EMDR and Hypnosis in Trauma Treatment

The basis for the neural representation of sensory events in the environment is the synchronization of neuronal responses in different brain areas. This form of “temporal coding” prepares the ground for sensory perception, the “Gestalt perception” (cf. assembly model from Engel & Singer, 1997). This model also forms the basis for releasing complex reactions, e.g. a fear reaction, which is evoked by particular stimuli. If this hypothesis is applied, it will be possible to process traumatic experiences by synchronization, i.e. changing the “temporal coding mechanism” (Engel, König, Kreiter & Singer, 1991) of the trauma itself. In psychotherapy and particularly in trauma therapy, this knowledge can be used to de-program traumatic experiences and help the client to alter the emotions, sensations and cognitions, which are connected to the traumatic event, which were originally associated with danger. EMDR appears particularly suited to what I call “de-programming”, because one of its main principles is that it takes the aspect of synchronization of brain activity into account. The eye movement-technique (or lateral stimulation of any other kind) can help to synchronize the functions of different areas of the brain (cf. activity of amygdala) and paves the way for the combination of a modified EMDR-method with hypnosis and a special method of anchoring, called covert anchoring (Sollmann, 2015, 2016b).

The advantage of this combination is that changes in traumatic experiences can be achieved in a single session. When this has been accomplished the sessions that follow can be used to alter the consequences of traumatic experiences, such as social withdrawal and poor social skills. This can be achieved by reactivating and stabilizing inner resources, building up consciousness of self, helping the client’s ability to self-regularize.

In the workshop participants will gain insight into how the method can be realized in a therapeutic session (video) and further practical advices on the basis of examples and case studies. The goal is to instruct the participants in the application of this method, step by step.

The specific steps of this combination of techniques are:

- (1) Trance induction
- (2) Activation of resources
- (3) Resources anchoring
- (4) Confrontation in sensu with the traumatic memory contents
- (5) Releasing anchors during confrontation
- (6) Re-evaluation of the past traumatic situation by input of a new core sentence
- (7) Future pacing and post-hypnotic suggestions

The therapeutic action requires some specific exercises and also meticulous preparation, because up to three steps must be performed simultaneously by the therapist: The confrontation with the traumatic event in sensu occurs first, then, second, it is coupled with a modified form of the Eye Movement technique, during which, third, the resources anchor is released. According to the author’s postulate, this time-coordinated intervention leads to the probable outcome that the temporal coding related to the trauma experience, changes within a few repetitions. The effect of this kind of intervention causes changes in trauma-related body reactions, like fear reactions and physical and emotional effects. The action described can lead to a (quiet) abreaction enabling clients to reassess traumatic events and the kind of experiences unprocessed prior to this type of therapeutic intervention.

The Aims of the Workshop:

1. Understanding the theoretical bases (brief)
2. Experiencing and understanding the steps of therapeutic action
3. Practical conversion in a therapeutic session (video)

To participate in the workshop basic knowledge in hypnosis, especially trance induction and practical experience with EMDR are recommended.

**Submission Statement indicating what is new, unique, and/or innovative about the material I wish to present with regard to EMDR**

The author's contribution consists of combining EMDR principles with hypnosis and a special anchoring method, the covert anchoring technique. This particular combination of modified EMDR, hypnosis and the technique of covert anchoring are unique and innovative.

Furthermore the theoretical background of neurophysiological research and the explanation of underlying functional mechanisms are building a bridge between neurophysiology and psychotherapy.

**References**

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