

Countering the consequences of disorganized attachment by installing a fundamental attunement resource with EMDR

The disorganized attachment, which is at the root of the relational vulnerability of many patients with complex trauma and dissociative disorders, brings his lore of setbacks in psychotraumatological therapy. The attachment style that takes place during the first year is of the order of early imprints. Attachment injuries are therefore characteristic of this type of trauma, which, when triggered, produces symptoms including acting out, major crises, suicidal ones among others, suffering that undermine therapy, the therapeutic relationship and progress towards goals. In the absence of activation of the attachment system, EMDR therapy, by working on well-identified targets, risks missing the very fundamental dimension of the attachment system.

Giovanni Liotti taught us that activating the cooperation action system among therapist and client is the best configuration for moving forward with patients with complex trauma and dissociative disorders.

How then to activate and maintain the cooperation action system when it comes to evoke attachment? What are the pitfalls to consider in trying to repair this fundamental dimension, without falling into the trap of avoidance, or that of a too early and thus too confronting traumatic activation?

We will describe our approach in the context of the conceptualization of disorganized attachment involved in complex and chronic traumatization, and we will show, through a demonstration, how to install an attunement resource, so fundamental, which has been lacking since the beginning of life. We will describe clinical cases, where this fundamental resource has allowed more effective psychotraumatological work afterwards. If there is enough time, we will also describe cases where this installation was not easy, and the paths we have identified to get there and what this fundamental resource has allowed later.