

One session of EMDR versus solution-focused resourcing to treat performance anxiety. Usefulness of eye movements in a resource protocol. A randomized controlled study.

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## Abstract

In this study a resource protocol was used to help in one session a population of students to face future anxiety-inducing exams. The aim of the study was to compare the efficiency of a resource protocol used with eye movements and the same protocol used without eye movement and to determine whether eye movements are requested or not in resource installation and development. This trial compared the efficiency of these two ways to use a resource protocol in reducing test anxiety related to a future exam in only one session, and in improving self-esteem and well-being.

Context: Leeds, who created the Resource and development installation (RDI) protocol (2002), doesn't question the efficiency of eye movements (EMs) in resourcing. On the contrary, Hornsveld & al.: concluded that Eye Movements are not necessary for resource development. Taboada & al. demonstrated the usefulness of eye movements in resourcing.

This is one of the first randomized trials assessing the efficiency of eye movements in resource installation. And it is one of the first studies about the efficiency of a solution focused protocol and an EMDR resource protocol in performance enhancement, and more specifically in performance anxiety treatment.

Design, setting and participants: A randomized controlled trial of students (n=30), most of them professional athletes. Participants were randomly assigned to receive only one session of the EMDR and Solution - Focused Reinforced Resource Protocol (with eye movements) (n=15), or one session of the Solution-Focused Reinforced Resource Protocol without eye movement (n=15). The control group was a no-treatment group (n=15), the participants were on a waiting-list and first replied to questionnaires through Internet.

Measurements: The SUDs, the VOC, the well-being (SOS-10), the self-esteem (Rosenberg scale), the goal attainment, the length of the sessions (in minutes) were assessed. The data were collected: two weeks before the session for the control group, just before and just after the sessions and at a two-month follow-up.

Results: Statistically significant improvements are observed in both protocols, they reduce and even eliminate the negative emotions and cognitions related to an anxiety-inducing upcoming event: SUDs decreased and VOC increased in both groups and these results were maintained two months after. Both procedures helped the participants to achieve their goals: to pass their exams. No lasting increase in self-esteem was observed in both groups. Well-being was lastingly improved only by the Resource Protocol without eye movement. The length of the sessions was not significantly different.