

Some Frequently Asked Questions about EMDR Training and the EMDR Humanitarian Assistance Program (HAP)

Q: What is EMDR?

A: EMDR stands for “Eye Movement De-sensitization and Reprocessing”, the name initially applied by psychologist Francine Shapiro to the methodology she created two decades ago for treatment of post traumatic stress disorder. Since then, Dr. Shapiro and her colleagues have developed the EMDR method in many directions, and over fourteen controlled studies have documented the efficacy of EMDR in treatment of PTSD and related disorders. Sixty thousand mental health clinicians have been trained in EMDR worldwide, and an international standard-setting professional association – the EMDR International Association (EMDRIA) – has been formed. Several national health services in Europe and Israel have designated EMDR as the treatment of choice for trauma; so have the US Veterans Administration and Department of Defense for combat-related PTSD.

Q: How does EMDR work?

A: Dr. Shapiro’s published work has emphasized the capacity of the human brain to process information so that we can adapt to challenging stressors we encounter in life. When this capacity is overwhelmed by life experience, EMDR provides an effective means to retrieve traumatic memories and support their reprocessing so that traumatic symptoms are resolved. EMDR is a highly eclectic method, drawing on and integrating a number of techniques to accomplish its results. (A number of published studies of EMDR are listed on our website: www.emdrhap.org) While the precise mechanism that is operating in the brain during EMDR is not known, continuing research by neuropsychologists has helped to document the efficacy of EMDR and is gradually expanding our understanding of how it works.

Q: Who can benefit from EMDR?

A: A wide range of pathologies and self-esteem issues have been treated, related both to upsetting past traumatic events and present life conditions of both children and adults. Presenting complaints that are successfully addressed include loss of a loved one, other forms of grief, rape, sexual molestation, combat and disaster related trauma, chemical dependency, and traumas associated with accidents and illness.

Q: Who can become an EMDR clinician?

A: Following EMDRIA standards, independent EMDR clinicians should have completed masters level graduate education in a clinical mental health field and be either a licensed professional or a trainee on a licensure track, working under a licensed supervisor. EMDR HAP recognizes that licensure standards vary regionally and nationally. In some cases, individuals who regularly do clinical work in an agency setting are not licensed. We are able to offer training to such practitioners provided that they have the requisite clinical education, and that their agency provides them with a licensed supervisor and assumes liability for their work.

Q: What is the EMDR Humanitarian Assistance Program?

A: In 1995, Dr. Shapiro and several associates created a non-profit corporation for the express purpose of 1) promoting research on humanitarian applications of EMDR and 2) expanding the training of EMDR clinicians beyond the circle of those who could afford to travel to commercial trainings and pay commercial training fees. EMDR HAP particularly aims to help clinicians

whose clients are undersupplied with mental health resources. A third element in EMDR HAP's mission is 3) responding to traumas resulting from disasters, whether man-made or natural in origin. EMDR HAP is a 501(c)(3) organization that depends heavily on tax-deductible donations and on low program fees to support the work of hundreds of HAP volunteer professionals who conduct our trainings and respond to calls for assistance at times of disaster.

Q: What kind of training does HAP provide?

A: The core of HAP training are the Part I and Part II training sequences that introduce most EMDR clinicians to the standardized protocol for EMDR treatment. HAP follows the format of training practiced by the EMDR Institute, the originator and leading commercial trainer in the field. We use the same manuals as the Institute, and all HAP trainers are experienced clinicians who have been trained by Francine Shapiro. Part I and Part II trainings are each typically offered in 17-hour sequences over 2 ½ days, although other configurations are possible. Most trainings occur on a Friday evening and all day Saturday and Sunday.

Following each such training, we recommend that two group consultations be offered to participants, at 4-6 week intervals, to support the new practitioners of EMDR. We also strongly urge agencies to offer both Part I and Part II, since significant elements of the method cannot be taught until participants have practiced and gained confidence in the content of Part I.

Q: What other training does HAP offer?

A: We offer a Workshop on Traumatology that provides an overview of trauma: how it presents itself; what seems to be going on in the brain of trauma patients, and how trauma can be treated. This workshop does not focus on EMDR, and is not clinical training. It is aimed at explaining to both clinical and lay audiences why a clinical response to trauma is a valuable and necessary component of effective mental health resources in an agency or community. The workshop can be presented as a full day workshop or a half-day event. Traumatology workshops can be sponsored and/or attended by anyone.

Q: Who is eligible to sponsor or attend a HAP training in EMDR?

A: Any community agency that wishes to expand the resources of clinicians working with underserved populations can partner with HAP to bring an EMDR training to its community. The sponsor agency may offer the training to its own personnel or may open it to clinicians from other agencies or engaged in independent practice. Participants in the training should be clinicians with a masters degree in a clinical field. They should have a clinical license for their locale and professional field, or be on a licensure-track and working under supervision of a licensed clinician. In some cases, unlicensed clinicians not on a licensure track may qualify for training if they work for an agency that assumes liability for their work and provides them with licensed supervision. In all cases, HAP training is intended for clinicians who are engaged full time or half time in service to underserved populations.

Q: What is a sponsor agency expected to do?

A: A sponsor agency provides a designated coordinator and assumes the role of coordination for promoting the training event, pre-registration, and collection of any fees. HAP provides information about the training and appropriate forms for registration activities. The sponsor agency also provides a venue for the training activities, typically a large room for lecture presentation and smaller breakout rooms for groups of 9 participants and a HAP facilitator. These spaces are needed throughout the multi-day training event. Sponsors are also asked to

assist in the logistical needs of the training on the days of the event and to return all registration materials and fees promptly. Some sponsors choose to provide modest refreshment, with or without fee to participants, during the training, but this is not required.

Q: What does HAP do during an EMDR Training event?

A: HAP provides a professional EMDR trainer and additional facilitators as needed for an approximately 9:1 ratio of participants to staff. These HAP staff members are volunteers who have extensive experience in training for the EMDR Institute. HAP also provides forms to support registration of participants and training manuals which participants keep. The format of the training and the manuals employed are the same as those used by the EMDR Institute. HAP receives a per capita payment for its services, negotiated in advance with the sponsoring agency. HAP pays all costs associated with the travel, room and board of HAP volunteers.

Q: What is the size of a HAP EMDR training event?

A: Size can vary, but we find it best if there are at least 15 to 20 participants; on the other hand we have had successful community-wide training events with over 70 participants. Whether the participants have diverse specialties or if they share a common specialty, we can usually adapt the training to address their interests effectively.

Q: Does HAP provide CEU's?

A: No. Sponsoring agencies may apply for CEU's through their normal channels for EMDR training. HAP will provide a certificate of participation to individuals who complete Part I training, and a certificate of completion to individuals who complete Part II training, providing that they have complied with the terms of the participant agreement. In addition, by arrangement with the EMDR Institute, participants who earn either certificate will be entitled to participate in the clinicians internet discussion group hosted by the EMDR Institute, a valuable source of information and advice on EMDR practice. Licensed participants who complete Part II will also be added to the EMDR Institute's roster of clinicians for referral purposes. HAP trained clinicians may also seek membership and certification by EMDRIA, the international standard-setting body for EMDR.

Q: What does a HAP training event cost?

A: The current standard price for HAP EMDR Part I or Part II training is less than half the cost of comparable commercial training, in keeping with HAP's mission to provide low-cost training in EMDR so that this potent clinical resource can reach those who are less affluent or who serve less affluent populations. (To this end, HAP engages in fundraising and in the sale of educational materials that support EMDR practice, and HAP volunteers donate countless hours of skilled professional labor.) Traumatology workshops are typically priced for audiences up to 100 people. This includes handout materials.

Following each EMDR training event a sequence of two group consultation sessions can be added for a nominal per-participant fee. Sponsor agencies that contract for both Part I and Part II training can receive a discount on the Part II component. While our need to charge for training is real, the HAP office is always ready to work with motivated sponsor agencies to seek a way to get the training done. This has included collaboration in approaching third party payers for support. We leave it up to the sponsor to decide how much of the per-participant cost will be borne by the participants and how much by their agency employers.

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4

Q: How can we learn more about HAP training?

A: Call us and discuss your project idea. Also, visit the EMDR HAP website: www.emdrhap.org where you will find more information about HAP, about EMDR and about our projects. There are also citations of studies on efficacy of EMDR. For further information on EMDR, visit the websites of the EMDR Institute (www.emdr.com) and the EMDR International Association (www.emdria.org) The Institute site presents a detailed summary of the content of Part I and Part II EMDR training