



**E**ye  
**M**ovement  
**D**esensitization &  
**R**eprocessing

## What is EMDR?

### EMDR for Teens:

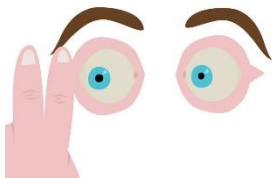
Do you suffer with low mood?

Do you suffer with anxiety or physical sensations such as an increased heart rate, changes to your breathing or body temperature?

Do you have nightmares or intrusive thoughts about something 'bad' that happened to you/ a friend / family member in the past, or more recently?

Do you turn to unhelpful coping strategies such as alcohol or drugs or self-harming to help you cope with or numb the discomfort of negative feelings and thoughts?

Like most teenagers, you may feel confused about where to turn or how to manage these difficulties -but EMDR therapy could be a helpful option.



### The 'wordy' bit:

EMDR (Eye Movement & Desensitisation) is a psychotherapy treatment that has been researched for many years and has proven helpful for many adults, young people and children in recovering from difficulties just like yours and the problems they cause- such as flashbacks, upsetting thoughts or images, hypervigilance (being 'on alert' constantly) and could also lead a young person to develop other difficulties, like PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder), low mood or difficulties with sleep or anxiety.

When an event is really bad or has happened a lot to a young person, these distressing memories or images can overload your brain, much like a virus on

your computer -and so your brain cannot work as well as it normally would to problem-solve or figure things out. As a result, these uncomfortable thoughts, images and feelings can flood your brain (sometimes in the form of uncontrollable flashbacks/intrusive memories) and make us think that these events are happening to us again now, in the present moment. EMDR Therapy can help you to do a 'spring clean' of your brain and can help you to sort these distressing memories. This helps you to properly process these intense and frightening memories or images into 'regular' memories in your brains filing cabinet- without the intense physical discomfort or fear you may have experienced before EMDR treatment.



EMDR uses eye movements, tapping and sometimes audio tones or small hand-held buzzers to stimulate the left and right sides of your brain, as you safely communicate the uncomfortable feeling, thought or image to your therapist. How you choose to communicate these difficult feelings or thoughts can be done many different ways, not just through regular 'talking' therapy. (Eg- Drawing, journaling, using visual aids/miniatures/emotion flashcards etc). You can talk to your therapist about what would suit your individual needs best.

