

## What is EMI?

Eye Movement Integration (EMI) is an innovative therapeutic modality developed by Connirea Andreas (PhD) and Steve Andreas (MA) in 1989. With their cooperation, Danie Beaulieu (PhD) wrote a book (Eye Movement Integration Therapy, 2003) and developed a training curriculum for therapists.

EMI is seen as a neuro-therapeutic modality, combined with psychotherapy. It is a therapeutic tool to help the brain change traumatic memory networks and heal itself.

Research has shown that our eye movements are connected to our memory networks. Through guided eye movements we can also access these memory networks and reprocess them. Through the eyes we thus have a perfect entrance to the brain and old trauma memory networks.

## What is Trauma?

Every day we receive information through our eyes, ears, nose, mouth and skin, which informs the brain about ourselves and our environment. During sleep the brain processes this information. The information is then either archived or kept in present tense memory to help keep us safe. When we experience something that is overwhelming, the information is stored by the brain in present tense memory as part of our survival instinct. The overwhelming nature of the incident creates a situation where the brain stores all the sensory information, the emotions that come with these and the reactions in the body in present tense.

This creates a situation where any of these can be experienced again when there is something in our environment that is connected to the traumatic memory. We can then re-experience the same reaction (e.g. of fear, or shame) as if it is happening again in the present moment. This is called a traumatic reaction. The pictures, smells, sound that creates these “flashbacks” are called “triggers”

Through EMI the brain can process these triggers in such a way that they lose their power to re-traumatize the person.

**EMI is suitable for all painful memories that keep returning.**

## How does EMI help the brain to do this?

EMI gives the brain another chance to do, what it usually does with non-traumatic information during sleep. It accesses and processes all the information about our experiences and “defrags” this during sleep, filing it into past tense memory. During EMI we use slow, smooth pursuit eye movements (SPEM) across the entire visual field of the person. Through these SPEM movements the brain can scan itself and collect all the relevant information about the traumatic experience. During this process the brain collects all the pieces of the puzzle that remained scattered in the different brain regions, and brings it into an integrated whole, also creating a more complete narrative, that is now also connected to our logical thinking brain. In this way the memory can be moved to past tense and be

integrated with new meaning. The result is that the triggers are not triggers anymore and the incident is just a memory from long ago.



## When to use EMI?

EMI can be used to de-activate any and all traumatic memories. EMI can be used for a single traumatic incident and for more complex trauma such as experiences that continued over many years. EMI has successfully been used with:

Phobias

Physical, emotional or sexual abuse and violence

Grief

Anxiety and panic attacks

Any form of accident

Burn out

Psychological aspects of illness

Traumatic medical procedures

**EMI can be used successfully at any age from about 4 years old**

### How does an EMI session work?

An intake session with an EMI therapist will explore the possible traumatic memory networks related to the symptoms with which the client comes to therapy. This will help decide whether EMI is the right therapy to use for this person. During an EMI session, the eyes will be guided through the entire visual field with 24 eye movements in different directions, at a speed that is comfortable for the person. These movements are combined with the core words that summarize the trauma. During the session the stress reaction to the words and the movements become less and less, until there are no more memories and it all feels like something that happened in the past, with no relevance for the present time.

### What will you experience?

During the session, old emotions can come up. It is also possible to experience sounds, images, scents, tastes or bodily sensations that are related to the subject of awakening. An EMI session could last on average 90 minutes, with preparation and integration it can take up to 2 hours. As the stress load decreases, the sessions will become less. The time between two sessions is two weeks. The brain needs this time to process the session. A single trauma incident can be solved within 1 session. For multiple trauma incidents, more sessions are needed.



# EMI®

## EMI® EYE MOVEMENT INTEGRATION

Your EMI-therapist is:

## THE KEY TO PROCESSING TRAUMA

Through the eyes back to yourself