the Foundation Board was thrilled to receive four research grant proposals. These proposals are now under review and the award recipients will be announced in September. In the last funding cycle, along with the dissertation award, a $10,000 grant was awarded to the research team of Bessel van der Kolk, M.D. and Ruth Lanius, M.D., Ph.D. The research study “Functional Neuroanatomy of Bilateral Eye Movements During Trauma Script Imagery,” will make a significant contribution to the body of science regarding EMDR. Here is the abstract:

Despite substantial evidence of its effectiveness in treating posttraumatic stress disorder (e.g., Bisson et al., 2007; Bradley, Greene, Russ, Dutra, & Westen, 2005, van der Kolk et al, 2005), eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR) remains a controversial treatment. Most of this controversy has centered on the necessity and function of the eye movements or other bilateral stimulation techniques in promoting symptom reduction and integration of traumatic memories. Although several possible mechanisms of action have been proposed, the functional neurobiology has not yet been elucidated (see reviews Gunter & Bodner, 2009; Maxfield, 2008). At present, few studies have attempted to directly study the functional neuroanatomy of EMDR. Thus, we propose a mechanistic fMRI study to examine the neurobiological mechanisms underlying horizontal saccadic eye movements during exposure to trauma script imagery. The proposed study aims to systematically test the hypothesis of increased thalamic activation and connectivity during EMDR through visualization of functional neurological activity during trauma script imagery with and without horizontal or vertical eye movements. We will use concurrent fMRI, EEG, heart-rate variability (HRV), and skin conductance measurements throughout the protocol, in order to correlate the various measures of psychophysiological functioning and attempt to provide information to assist with integrating previous
EMDR Research Foundation President’s Message

We plan to recruit 40 participants: 20 participants without a history of psychiatric disorders and 20 participants with PTSD.

We know EMDR works, we know what we can accomplish and how to do EMDR, but we don’t know why it works. Think of what a definitive statement about the mechanisms of action underlying EMDR will do for the future of EMDR. It will be amazing….YOU can be part of the SOLUTION!

Although the Foundation Board is always pleased to offer funding to all qualified recipients, we also recognize that most high quality research requires so much more funding than we are able to offer at this time. As the Foundation is the only funding source for EMDR research at present, we have very big shoes to fill. The need to award more financial support per study is imperative. This year, our fundraising campaign has targeted two areas for growth. The first goal is to increase the number of one-time annual donors by 50%. The second goal is to increase the number of Visionary Alliance members to 200. As you know, the Visionary Alliance is the program that offers our donors the opportunity to make a sustaining pledge by automatic monthly donations. This predictable, continuous stream of income offers the Foundation leverage when we pursue funding from larger organizations, granting agencies and foundations. It will also offer us the opportunity to increase the amount we can give to researchers on a regular basis. YOU can be part of the SOLUTION!

There are many, many questions to be answered, which only high quality EMDR research can answer. The Foundation Board is excited to have this opportunity and to meet this need. WE are happy to be part of the SOLUTION and hope YOU join us in the effort.

“ Dreams come a size too big, so we can grow into them. ”
~ Josie Bisset ✨

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