

EMDR RESEARCH FOUNDATION

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Given the Uncertainty of Life... When is NOW the Right Time to Plan?

In light of the events over the last several weeks, the uncertainty of life was brought to the forefront of my mind. This is the most somber article I have written for the EMDRIA Newsletter and hope it is the last. It is so clear to me that little is certain and planning for the future is necessary NOW.

The terror attacks in Paris made me pause to wonder what is next and if there is safety anywhere in the world. My heartfelt thoughts and prayers go out to everyone affected by these unthinkable and horrific acts. As trauma therapists, we know how far and deep the effects can run. However, as EMDR therapy clinicians we are fortunate to know the depth of healing that can be accomplished quickly and completely. Katy Murray, our esteemed colleague, friend and Foundation Board member, reminded us in a written

message shortly after the Paris attacks of:

“Dr. Shapiro’s discussion (2001 text, pages 382-385) of our global responsibility as EMDR clinicians and researchers further reminds me that through practice and research we can make a difference not only for our generation, but future generations throughout the world.

p. 383: “... if left untreated, trauma and associated stress conditions can impair the physical and mental development of children and contribute to the cycle of violence and psychological disturbance. [citations]”

....“Whether individuals are suffering from traumata engendered in developing countries or within the inner cities of developed nations, there is evidence that violence begets violence and that some of our most prevalent social problems are correlated with trauma histories [citations]. Specific research is needed to explore the degree to which successful treatment of trauma decreases the amount of high-risk and /or perpetrator behavior [citations] and deters further victimizations. Specific research is also needed to explore the degree to which neurobiological changes correlated with traumatization, cognitive deficits, affect dysregulation, and perpetrator behavior [citations] can be reversed with the judicious application of EMDR, or any other treatment, within a multimodal treatment plan [citations]. It seems self-evident that the ideal way to address pressing societal needs, on both local and global levels, is by the integration of science and practice.”

p.384:....“As a helping profession, we must take help to where it is most needed. As a global network of committed clinicians and researchers, we must integrate our therapeutic practices and our scientific rigor in the service of humanity.”

As Dr. Shapiro predicted in her original text, there is an ever growing body of research indicating that Early EMDR Intervention (EEI) - can provide relief to those suffering in trauma’s immediate aftermath, and prevent the development of PTSD and other mental health conditions following disaster/trauma.”

In 2013 the EMDR Research Foundation established “Addressing the Global Burden of Trauma” as one of our research priorities. The research previously done on early interventions indicated a need for research validation of the various protocols utilized. The [EMDR Early Intervention Researcher’s Toolkit](#) is the response to that need and was specifically designed to assist EMDR clinicians who provide early EMDR therapy interventions as part of frontline trauma response and recovery. It provides guidance to clinicians in the use of specific EEI protocols for groups, individuals, adults and children; as well as information for measuring the impact of these interventions. We hope that you find the comprehensive document useful and a practical guide on which ever frontline you might work.

Another sobering event happened a few weeks prior, when the EMDR therapy community suffered a tremendous loss of our own. In a freak auto accident, Carol York of Austin was killed. Carol was a pioneer in working with children and made EMDR therapy a significant part of her life’s work. Carol touched many people’s lives in many ways. She was EMDRIA’s first Executive Director and served in this capacity for seven years. As with any organization, the start up is not always easy and EMDRIA was no different. I served on the Board as Secretary and President during this time and although there were bumps in the road, Carol was steadfast in making EMDRIA a viable organization. She was committed to enhancing the professionalism of EMDR therapy and she did so. Carol remained dedicated to EMDR therapy as a trainer, specialty instructor, consultant and exemplary clinician. The EMDR Research Foundation is grateful to have had Carol as a donor and to all who have contributed in her memory. These donations are earmarked for a worthy research project studying EMDR therapy with children. What is of utmost importance is that our special friend and esteemed colleague be honored for the wonderful person she was and all that she brought to our lives.

A few weeks prior to that, the Foundation received numerous memorial contributions in the name of someone unfamiliar to us. Shortly after, we received a letter from his wife explaining the memorials. According to her, he was treated many years with traditional therapy that helped him only manage his symptoms related to life long trauma. However after he was treated with EMDR therapy he was finally "able to live." She selected the Foundation to receive the memorials in gratitude for what EMDR therapy did for her husband while he was alive. In talking with her to express my gratitude and share how important the donations are to further our understanding, we were both moved in how something bad can bring something good. As EMDR therapy clinicians we often see transformation in our offices, and hear first hand about the significant changes our clients are making. This conversation was somehow different and meaningful in a special way to hear her talk about the differences EMDR therapy made for someone she loved. It was gratifying to hear just how important further research is to the memory of her husband.

As I said in the beginning, this is not the typical article I write and perhaps the uncertainty of life has awoken the necessity of planning for the future. In 2011, when the Board contemplated the Visionary Alliance recurring donation program we thought of it as a way to "pay it forward" for all the gifts received from learning and using EMDR therapy. The **ultimate** way to pay it forward is for you to consider the Foundation in your planned giving arrangements. There are a variety to choose from and each offer important benefits for donors, their families and the EMDR Research Foundation. Please visit the "Get Involved" page on our website to learn about such choices as an Endowment Gift, where the funds are used annually in perpetuity or you can name the Foundation as a beneficiary in your Will or Trust. *I know we are all caught up in the busy-ness of life and work, and believe there will be time later for this type of consideration and deliberation. I think NOW is just the right time to pause and reflect on this very important, meaningful and life-sustaining decision for EMDR therapy research!*

As this is the last article for 2015, I want to end on an upbeat and positive note. Our 2015 fundraising campaign "Expanding our Research, Deepening our Impact" goals have been mostly met, in part due to your generosity. We hope with your year-end giving choices we will be able to maintain or better yet exceed our last year's funding level. We also made progress on our second goal of expanding international awareness of the Foundation. As you may be aware, at least 50% of the Foundation's funding is to international research teams. We are delighted to have increased our international donor base and gained the organizational donors of EMDR Australia, EMDR Italy and EMDR Spain. It is a great start and we look forward to continuing the trend in 2016. Our third goal was to house full list of all current EMDR therapy research projects worldwide on our website. The template is there and ready to be completed by all EMDR therapy researchers!

I want to thank the Foundation Board members who gave another year of unselfish time and unwavering effort to forge us forward. I extend my warmest wishes to everyone for a Blessed Holiday Season and a very Peaceful, Safe and Prosperous 2016.

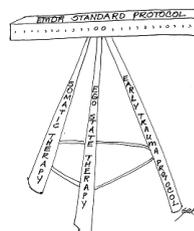
"In these matters, the only certainty is that nothing is certain"
- Pliny the Elder ❖

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