This is a monthly E-newsletter created primarily for our colleagues trained in Eye Movement Desensitization and Desensitization (EMDR) who work with military, veterans, and their families. The purpose of **EMDR and the Military in Action** is to promote continued dialogue regarding the efficacy and current developments with EMDR and its use with these special populations.

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Researchers!

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Citations - EMDR and Addiction

Abel, N. J., O'Brien, J. M. (2010). EMDR Treatment of Comorbid PTSD and Alcohol Dependence: A Case Example. *Journal of EMDR Practice and Research*, 4 (2), 50-59. Doi:10.1891/1933-3196.4.2.50.

Eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR) is a therapy that has been demonstrated to be effective in the treatment of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). A relatively small but growing body of literature indicates that EMDR may be an effective adjunctive treatment for substance abuse. This article reviews the various protocols that have been developed for that purpose, including protocols by Vogelmann-Sine et al., Omaha, Popky, and Hase. A case study that incorporates the use of some of these interventions is presented to illustrate successful EMDR treatment of a woman who had long-standing comorbid alcohol abuse and PTSD. Two-year follow-up after EMDR showed that the woman was successfully maintaining sobriety and that the PTSD continued in full remission. After a discussion of the important aspects of this case, the authors explore future directions for research.

Acion, L., Ramirez, M. R., Jorge, R. E., and Arndt, S. (2013). Increased Risk of Alcohol and Drug Use Among Children from Deployed Military Families. *Addiction*, 108(8), 1418-1425. doi:10.1111/add.12161.

Aims. To examine the association between military deployment of a parent and use of alcohol and drugs among children of deployed military personnel.

Design. Observational and cross-sectional study.

Setting. Data from the USA 2010 Iowa Youth Survey, a statewide survey of 6th, 8th and 11th graders, were analyzed during 2011.

Participants. Of all 6th, 8th and 11th grade students enrolled in Iowa in 2010, 69% (n=78,240) completed the survey.

Measurements. Ever drink more than a few sips of alcohol and past 30-day: binge drinking, marijuana consumption, other illegal drug use and prescription drug misuse.

Findings. The rates of alcohol use [risk difference (RD) = 7.85, 99.91% confidence interval (CI) = 4.44 - 11.26], binge drinking (RD = 8.02, 99.91% CI = 4.91 - 11.13), marijuana use (RD = 5.30, 99.91% CI = 2.83 - 7.77), other illegal drug use (RD = 7.10, 99.91% CI = 4.63 - 9.56) and prescription drug misuse (RD = 8.58, 99.91% CI = 5.64 - 11.51) are greater for children of currently or recently deployed parents than for children of parents who are not in the military. The magnitude of the effects is consistent across 6th, 8th and 11th grades. Disrupted living arrangements further accentuate increased substance use, with the largest effect seen in children with a deployed parent who was not living with a parent or relative.

Conclusions. Children of deployed military personnel should be considered at higher risk for substance use than children of non-military citizens.

Brown, S. H., Gilman, S. G., Goodman, E. G., Adler-Tapia, R., & Freng, S. (2015). Integrated Trauma Treatment in Drug Court: Combining EMDR and Seeking Safety. *Journal of EMDR Practice & Research*, 9 (3), 123-136. doi:10.1891/1933-3196.9.3.123

JOURNAL OF EMDR PRACTICE AND RESEARCH

Trauma histories with co-occurring Substance Use Disorder (SUD) are disproportionately prevalent for individuals in the criminal justice system. A study was implemented in the Thurston County Drug Court Program to determine the prevalence of trauma exposure and evaluate the feasibility of implementing an Integrated Trauma Treatment Program (ITTP) combining two empirically supported treatments: Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) and Seeking Safety (SS). It was hypothesized that individual trauma treatment would lead to improved program outcomes, including increased graduation rates and lower recidivism. Two hundred nineteen males and females, ages 18-65 were screened. One hundred sixty one participants (73.5%) were eligible for the ITTP based on a self-report of at least one "criterion A" event in their lifetime. Fifty-eight participants (26.5%) did not report criterion A trauma and were assigned to program as usual (PAU). Participants who completed only the SS groups (N=50) graduated at a rate of 62% compared to 91.3% of those who completed both SS and EMDR (N=69). After implementation of the ITTP, recidivism for graduates was 7.4% and 18% for terminators, compared to 25% and 30.6% respectively prior to the ITTP. These outcomes provide preliminary evidence that individual trauma treatment can improve graduation rates and decrease recidivism in a Drug Court Program.

frontiers

Little, M., van den Hout, M. A., and Engelhard, I. M. (2016). Desensitizing Addiction: Using Eye Movements to Reduce the Intensity of Substance-Related Mental Imagery and Craving. *Frontiers in Psychiatry*, 7(14). Published online. doi: 10.3389/fpsyt.2016.00014.

Eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR) is an effective treatment for posttraumatic stress disorder. During this treatment, patients recall traumatic memories while making horizontal eye movements (EM). Studies have shown that EM not only desensitize negative memories but also positive memories and imagined events. Substance use behavior and craving are maintained by maladaptive memory associations and visual imagery. Preliminary findings have indicated that these mental images can be desensitized by EMDR techniques. We conducted two proof-of-principle studies to investigate whether EM can reduce the sensory richness of substance-related mental representations and accompanying craving levels. We investigated the effects of EM on (1) vividness of food-related mental

imagery and food craving in dieting and non-dieting students and (2) vividness of recent smoking-related memories and cigarette craving in daily smokers. In both experiments, participants recalled the images while making EM or keeping eyes stationary. Image vividness and emotionality, image-specific craving and general craving were measured before and after the intervention. As a behavioral outcome measure, participants in study 1 were offered a snack choice at the end of the experiment. Results of both experiments showed that image vividness and craving increased in the control condition but remained stable or decreased after the EM intervention. EM additionally reduced image emotionality (experiment 2) and affected behavior (experiment 1): participants in the EM condition were more inclined to choose healthy over unhealthy snack options. In conclusion, these data suggest that EM can be used to reduce intensity of substance-related imagery and craving. Although long-term effects are yet to be demonstrated, the current studies suggest that EM might be a useful technique in addiction treatment.

In the News

Dolasinski, A. (2016, January 18). Rising Use of Opioid Painkillers May Lead Soldiers, Vets to Heroin. The Fayetteville Observer, N.D

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