Dilemmas of using EMDR in Time Limited Environments

(By Time Limited we mean a limited number of sessions!)

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Aim of this presentation

To look at some of the dilemmas of working with other than a simple trauma in time limited environments
Some Important Points

- What is the ‘typical’ client?
- Simple versus complex trauma
- What is a time limited environment?
  University: ~4 sessions
  Medico-legal insurers: 5-10 sessions
  NHS: 12, sometimes up to 20 sessions
Predominant goals of short term work

- Symptom relief
- To help someone function better or be better integrated
- In the NHS ‘IAPT’ service where we work, the goal is to get clients into ‘recovery’
Types of issues we have worked with in short term work using EMDR

- Complex grief
- Phobias
- Pain problems including phantom limb pain
- RTAs
- Traumatic childbirth
- Sexual, physical and mental abuse as child and/or adult
- Eating difficulties
- Fear of death
- Religious torture
- Post operative PTSD symptoms both as child and as adult
- Attachment difficulties
- Affect regulation
- Burglaries
- Physical attack
- OCD
Some key considerations

- Impact of association of the neural networks
  - How do we adapt to the time constraint?
Risk factors/contraindications

- Severe risk factors
- Current environment instability
- Legal proceedings foreseeable or ongoing
- Physical health conditions
- Medication
- Dissociation
- Attachment difficulties
- Personality disorders
Do I start?

Phase 1 – history, planning, assessment

- Full history, float back & formulation
- Continuously assess
- Screening tools
- Goals & focus
- Ringfence - Carolyn
- Stable enough?
Do I start?
Phase 2 – preparation/stabilisation

- Explain EMDR & give information
- Do a ‘dry run’
- Access resources & manage affect
- Prepare the client
Where do I start?
Phase 3 – target assessment

- Standard protocol
- NC, PC
- Break down target memory
- Other protocols
I’ve started:
Phase 4-desensitisation

- Client centred / led
- Create safety and containment
- Create distancing & other techniques
I’m in Phase 4: Help! – when ‘problems’ occur

- Abreactions
- Dissociation
- Processing blocks
- Stay calm, grounded & reassuring …
Is that it then? – no it isn’t!
The remaining phases

- New material surfaces
- Sticking to the protocol?
- Summarise and reflect
- Re-evaluate
Summary

- What might you not do?
- What will you need to do and be?
- Have faith!
- Attend workshops and conferences
- Questions?
Resources

- CPS guidelines on Provision of Therapy for vulnerable or intimidated adult witnesses prior to a criminal trial published 24/1/02. http://ww.cps.gov.uk/publications/prosecution/pretrialadult.html


- www.getselfhelp.co.uk


