

Supporting going back to workplace with EMDR reprocessing



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Ethical considerations: To ensure confidentiality of clients, personally identifiable information are omitted. Both two clients permitted me to present case illustrations in conference by documents after I received feedback and explained outline of presentation. In the explanation, their permission is based on their free will and they may receive any disadvantage even though they reject this request.

EMDR(Eye movement desensitization and reprocessing)

- Psychotherapy which processes traumatic memories with eye movement(or other bilateral stimulations) published in 1989 by Francine Shapiro.
- Evaluated as Effective in PTSD Therapy Guideline of various countries or organizations all over the world
- Hypothesizes Adaptive information processing model
 - Important to Identify Negative memories and Positive ones in Clients' history.
 - Important to identify touch stone memory.
- Three pronged protocols- past, present, future.

Power Harassment (Definition)

1. Conduct based on hierarchical relationship
2. Exceed the appropriate range of business
3. Give physical and/or mental pain, or ruin working environment

Power Harassment (Types)

1. Physical attack
2. Mental attack
 - Use offensive language: "Stupid" "Stop your games" "Useless" "Dogfucking" "Die" etc.
 - Being scolded in front of other colleagues
 - Rebuking in e-mail which can be read by many people
 - Leaving workers without enough guidance
 - Insulting by negating personality in the process of guidance
 - Sigh, overbearing attitude such as slap something onto desk
 - Separating from relationship of colleagues
3. Too much demanding
4. Too little demanding
5. Overstep the boundary of relationship of what is proper between a boss and his or her workers

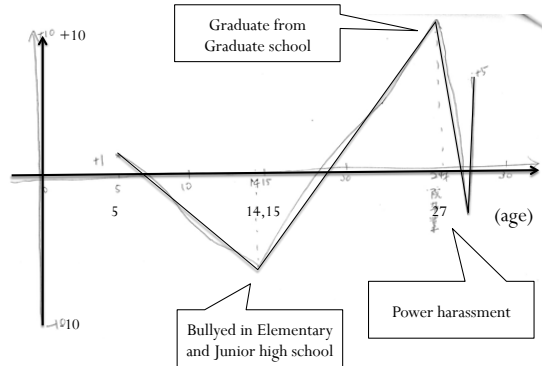
Case #1(Outline)

- Later twenties
- Company working male
- Diagnosis: Depression, Irritable bowel syndrome
- Family history: Live with mother. Father died seven years ago from cancer. Two senior brothers, one is fifteen years older and one is eleven years older live separately.
- History: Three years ago, onset of depression. Boss treated him badly. After changing the company, he is becoming better, but still physically difficult.
- Hobby: Playing golf with colleagues, Drinking

Case #1(Outline, Continued)

- Life history: He had been bullied at elementary and junior high school. He was a honor student. Bad boys bullied and punched him saying "You butter a teacher up. Since no one but your parents worry about you, you can die." IBS symptoms began. A teacher treat the bullying issue, saying "You triggered to be bullied."
- When he was graduate school student, he worried that result of researches was not successful. A professor accused him and he blanked out. IBS symptoms reoccurred. He recovered by successful result of research.
- When he job hunted, he declined recommendation from professor and found a job at local employment briefing. At the company, he was assigned to job which doesn't need any his specialty. Boss envied his academic history, and tripped him up.

Case #1: Timeline



Case#1 Session summary 1

- #1: Intake, History taking
- #2: Reprocessing bullied memory in elementary school
 - Picture: He was hit by mop.
 - NC: I am weak. PC: I am strong. VOC: 1
 - Emotion: anger, fear, miserableness. SUDs: 7->2(12sets)
 - B/S: head, chest
 - SUDs:->2
- #3: Reevaluation: SUD: 5-> 0.5(14sets), VOC: 7

Case#1 Session summary 2

- #4: He is absent from work several days
- Reprocessing memory of power harassment from ex-boss.
 - Picture: He was scolded at not give appropriate instruction at constructing site.
 - NC: I am worthless. PC: I am worthy. VOC: 1
 - Emotion: Loneliness: SUDs: 6
 - B/S: Head, chest
 - In 16 sets, He attributed responsibility to ex-boss. He attacked against him in imagery. SUDs:-> 0, VOC:-> 5

Case#1 Session summary 3

- #5: He can go to work.
 - Picture: He received nonsense scold.
 - NC: I cannot reach the expectation. PC: I am good enough as I am. VOC: 3
 - Emotion: Sadness, Guiltiness. SUD: 6
 - B/S: abdomen
 - In 16 sets, He recognized ex-boss's fault. It is not my fault. SUDs:->0, VOC:->7

Case#1 Session summary 4

- #6: Scolded from mother
 - Picture: Mother pointed knife to him, saying "Will I look in your head with this knife?"
 - NC: I am stupid. PC: I am good enough as I am. VOC: 2
 - Emotion: fear. SUD: 6.5->5(10 sets)
 - B/S: head
- #7: Reevaluation, SUD: 6
 - In 29 sets, I recognized that mother is wrong and I am ok to escape.
 - SUD: ->0.5, VOC: ->7

Case #1 Follow up: Two year later

Follow up by phone.

- He continues working in the same company.
- I am okay when I look forward. Present is present, past was past.
- IBS are almost cured.
- I like playing golf.
- I do not drink alcohol since I recall previous company.
- The relationship with mother remains neither too close nor too distant. I am trying to assert myself when it is necessary.

Case #1, Discussion

- Although the goal is to support going back to workplace, I think reprocessing maladjustment at the previous company is not enough. His tendency to be patient with unfair circumstance was brought up from early life stage.
- First, I treated bullied memory in elementary and junior high school age. And we found the mother's unreasonable punishment as feeder memory and reprocessed it.
- Since he went back to workplace, he become busy and treating relationship issue with mother could be insufficient. He has self confidence with adjustment to current workplace

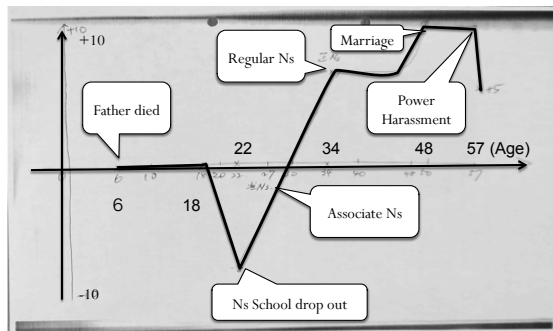
Case #2 (Outline)

- Late fifties
- Female nurse
- Diagnosis: Stress response, depression
- Family: Kind husband(Office worker). Nine years' marriage. No children.
- Original family: Strict mother. Father died when she was six years old from stomach cancer. One young sister is three years younger.
- History: In the summer three years ago, one doctor hurt abuse at her and began to ignore her. One year ago, he negated her personality and chased her. She had a tic, was unable to modulate emotion, wept and had nausea.
- IES-R: 46

Case #2 (Outline, Continued)

- Hobby: Playing golf with husband, traveling, dining out, feeding with two rabbits.
- Life History: Although mother is very strict person who think importance of commonsense, she took well care of client and young sister. From 6 to 18 years' old, client had looked after young sister. Client did not feel any difficulty in daily life. In school of nurse, she dropped out. After five years' experience as company worker, she got license of practical nurse. After several years, she became registered nurse.
- Resource memories: Playing volleyball in junior high and high school.

Case #2: Timeline



Case#2 Session summary 1

- # 1: Intake, safe place
- # 2-9: Reprocessing power harassment:
 - NC: I am worthless. PC: I am worthy. VOC:4→7, Emotion: sadness, anger, fear. SUD:10→8→6.5→5.5→4.5→2→2.5→0
- # 10: Nightmare: He imprison her in elevator: NC: I am weak. PC: I am strong VOC:4, Emotion: anxiety. SUD:8
- # 11: When Submitting documents at the hospital, she suffered pain. SUD:10
- # 12: Verbal session
- # 13: Power harassment: SUD:3.5, Nightmare: SUD:10, Perpetrator's eyes: SUD:4.5, Autogenic training
- # 14: She did not practice AT. RDI "Challenging:" "Reliable superior nurse"

Case#2 Session summary 2

- # 15: She did not use RDI. Reprocessing power harassment: Complete session. SUD:6.5->0, VOC:3->7
- # 16: Reprocessing power harassment: SUD:2.5->0, VOC: 6, Behavioral hierarchy table
- # 17: Reprocessing perpetrator's eye. Behavioral task: Going shopping by herself.
- # 18: Reprocessing words of perpetrator "you are disliked by everyone" "No one admire you" reprocessing. SUD:4->
- # 19: Reprocessing nightmare. SUD:7->1, VOC:3->6, Going into hospital with boss guide.

Case#2 Session summary 3

- # 20: Reprocessing nightmare, reprocessing going hospital building with boss guide(Present trigger), Behavioral task: Taking look at new section she will belong.
- # 21: Reprocessing going hospital building with boss guide(Present trigger), RDI
- # 22: Future template: working at new section. Going through in front of shop in hospital.
- # 23: She returned to the hospital in new section. Reprocessing witnessing arguing of colleague(present trigger) SUD:2.5->0
- Follow up: 6 months later, She experienced flashbacks several times, but continues working there.

Case#2 Discussion

- Since the perpetrator of power harassment remains in the hospital without any punishment, it is not easy to let her back to the workplace. In hospital in general, medical doctors have predominance and the employer hesitates to punish them, even their behaviors are inappropriate. Although she will be assigned to other section, she was afraid of being traumatized again by him. Therefore, only reprocessing past trauma is not enough. She received colleague's understanding and support, and needed behavioral in-vivo exposure hierarchically, and future template and reached a goal: going back to workplace.

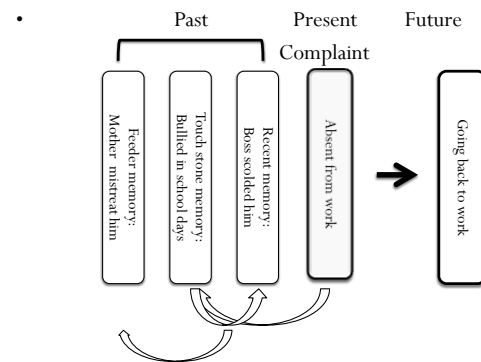
Case#2 Discussion (Continued)

- If client cannot receive enough support to change the working environment, ecological validity function as obstacle against therapeutic gain. In many cases, client has to give up continuing to work in the same place.
- In this case, the combination of her resiliency and trauma-focused and behavioral treatments can lead to successful result.

Ecological validity

- The ecological validity of a study means that the methods, materials and setting of the study must approximate the real-world that is being examined.(Wikipedia)
- EMDR cannot decrease the necessary level of emotion in certain environment. Rather decreasing of necessary emotion level is not appropriate. But, it is not easy to evaluate the environment which need certain level of emotion.

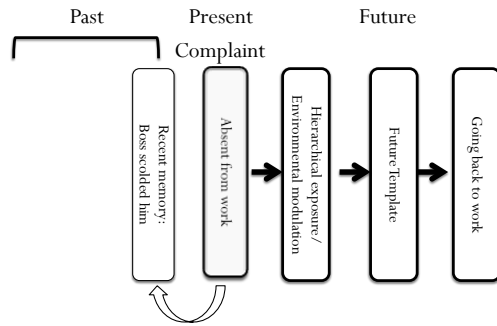
Case #1



Final Discussion

- Two cases seem to follow different therapeutic process.
- In case #1, Although direct cause of current complaint is recent power harassment in adult age, bullied memory in elementary and junior high school supported as basic experience of helplessness or weakness. In process of treatment of those memories, feeder memory of mothers' maltreatment was found and reprocessed. By reprocessing those memories, he went back to work place with confidence and this may function as relapse prevention. Of course, the fact of that he already changed company and escaped from perpetrator of the harassment is positive factor to get successful result. In this case, reprocessing of past traumas is main focus in the therapy.

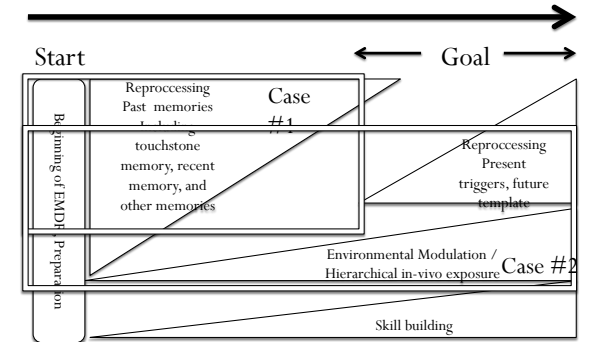
Case #2



Final Discussion

- In case #2, I cannot find any traumatic memories in early life stage and treated recent harassment memory. But, she tried to go back to the same hospital, therefore there is possibility to encounter the perpetrator in the hospital, even though she will be assigned to different section. She had nightmare and relapsed several times. Environmental modulation, hierarchical in-vivo exposure and future template can helped her to return to work place successfully.
- In order to treat power harassment, it is not enough to reprocess only the recent harassment memory. Various methods should be included. Considering ecological validity, combination of reprocessing including early and recent memories and future template and behavioral treatments could be important.

Comprehensive case formulation



Thank you for your attention.

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