

I am writing this report to thank the FPSA for their financial support. Specifically the cost of course fees for my EMDR Europe & UK accredited EMDR part one, two and three training. The training provider was the EMDR academy; the training took place in Chester and was facilitated by Matthew Wesson and Susan Darker-Smith. My attendance on this course and therefore the option to become an accredited EMDR therapist would not have been possible if it was not for the FPSA's generosity. My attendance of this three part training has enhanced my clinical effectiveness and efficiency when working therapeutically with adolescents and young people. In particular the three part training has enhanced my skills in the support of adolescents, young people and their families where they have experienced trauma and are experiencing PTSD symptoms.

I currently work for Wrexham CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service). In regards to the young people I work for a large proportion have sadly experienced trauma in their lives. In response to experiencing such events many of the young people experience high levels of emotional distress such as fear, guilt, shame, sadness and a reduced ability to function in their everyday life. Therefore therapy itself can be very challenging, as we explore whether the young people feel safe enough to talk about their experiences. In some young people, you can sadly see how trauma has become embodied and children are almost wired to respond from a place of threat, making it very hard for them to engage in traditional talking therapies. I think this is one of the key reasons I found this training so useful, that EMDR does not require the young person to talk as much as other therapies. In my opinion the unobtrusiveness of EMDR can allow young people to feel more in control of the process and supports those who possibly don't have the emotional literacy to, or don't want to express their thoughts, emotions and experiences verbally. I feel my EMDR training has enabled me to support young people and adolescents who previously may have not engaged in therapy.

In regards to the three parts of the training specifically, part one focussed on introducing the eight phase protocol and through practicums put the 8 phase protocol in to practice. Part two focussed on developing our existing skills, considered complex cases, we practiced more complex skills, such as blocked processing and cognitive interweaves and received supervision on our work to date. Part three focussed on how to work with those clients who had experienced complex trauma, touchstone memory and float back techniques and provided the option of practicing more complex protocols.

In my role as a Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) Psychotherapist, I have worked with a large number of young people whilst training and since having completed my EMDR training. Many of whom have now been discharged due to their progress and the reduced impact and distress their thoughts and behaviours have on their everyday lives. Moreover, I have been able to support my CAMHS team to reduce the services waiting times, which has resulted in young people being able to access mental health services faster. This opportunity, to support so many adolescents and young people along their journey of recovery, would not have been possible without the FPSA funding. I am so thankful. I look forward to continuing to support adolescents and young people with my newly acquired skills.

James McGuirk
Psychological Therapist
CAMHS