

Keynote Chris Lee

Understanding EMDR: a history of practice guiding science

Since its beginnings, clinical observations of EMDR have influenced its scientific investigation, which in turn have influenced practice. Whilst research has supported the efficacy of EMDR as a treatment for traumatic memories, we still know very little about how the procedure actually works. Some researchers continue to maintain that EMDR works through processes that are identical to imaginal exposure, yet EMDR in practice is experienced very differently. Several studies conducted by the speaker have shown that indeed EMDR is different to traditional exposure. These findings, as well as clinical vignettes, will be presented to highlight the unique aspects of EMDR processing compared to other trauma therapies.

Dr Christopher Lee is currently the director of the clinical psychology programme at Murdoch University in Perth. Previously he was the Senior Psychologist in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioural Sciences at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital where he sat up a treatment programme for Borderline Personality Disorders. He has also been in private practise for 10 years. He conducts therapist training for the Australian Psychological Society in clinical supervision and advanced cognitive therapy. He has conducted training workshops in EMDR and personality disorders throughout Australia and overseas. He has published in the area of PTSD and personality disorders. He was the recipient of the 1999 EMDR International Association award for research excellence and in 2006 received an award for research excellence from the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies (Australian branch). He is a reviewer for Cognitive Research and Therapy, the Journal of Clinical Psychology, and the Journal of EMDR Practice and Research. He is currently the chair of the EMDRIA research committee.

