

The Impact of Past Experiences on Our Present: A Brief Overview

The Crucial Impact of Early Experiences on Our Present Well-being

Our past experiences, particularly adverse ones during early childhood, play a pivotal role in shaping our lives. These experiences influence our emotional well-being, interpersonal relationships, and overall psychological health throughout adulthood. To understand the workings of EMDR therapy, it's essential to understand how our past experiences shaped memories and how these memories can affect our emotional and physiological well-being in the present.

The Nervous System: A Fundamental Element

Let's start by understanding the nervous system, the body's command center responsible for sending messages between the brain and all other body parts. It regulates essential functions such as breathing, movement, speech, and vision, while also monitoring internal and external stimuli. The nervous system comprises the Central Nervous System (CNS), consisting of the brain and spinal cord, and the Peripheral Nervous System (PNS), a network of nerves extending from the spinal cord.

Within the PNS, two branches are crucial to our discussion: the Somatic Nervous System, governing voluntary movements, and the Autonomic Nervous System (ANS), which regulates involuntary body functions such as heart rate and breathing. The ANS viewed through the lens of Polyvagal Theory, is particularly involved in the stress response or fight-or-flight reaction, making it a focal point in EMDR therapy.

Memories and Their Encoding in the Brain

The brain, as the central command of the body, encodes and stores information gathered from our experiences, forming a repository of memories. These memories hold valuable information and lessons derived from past experiences, shaping our present identity. They also guide our expectations of others and influence how we navigate and respond to our surroundings and the individuals within our environment.

Trauma, Memories, and Relationship Dynamics

Trauma and adverse experiences can significantly impact the nervous system, disrupting both the brain and the body's normal functioning. This disruption can lead to a range of physical and psychological consequences, including heightened emotional responses and altered perceptions of safety. Over time, these effects can set the stage for enduring consequences that shape how we approach future challenges and relationships.

The Resilience of the Nervous System and Healing Potential through EMDR Therapy

Understanding the intricate interplay between trauma, memories, and the nervous system provides us vital insights into the complexities of current symptoms often addressed in therapy. By delving into these connections, we can develop a deeper understanding of the resilience of the nervous system and the potential for healing and growth through EMDR Therapy.

Your Past is the Present: Laying the Ground to Understanding Your Past

Video Resources to Understand How Your Past Impacts the Present

Attachment Theory, ACEs, and Relationships

- ▶ Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs): Impact on brain, body and behaviour
- ▶ Understanding ACEs: What are Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)?
- ▶ The Attachment Theory: How Childhood Attachment Affects Adult Relationships
- ▶ 4 Types of Trauma & How It Impacts Your Relationship
- ▶ What Are the Four Attachment Styles? Understand Now!
- ▶ The 4 Main Attachment Styles in Relationships (+ The Attachment Theory)

[The Personal Development School - YouTube](#) - This channel focuses on [Attachment Theory](#)

Memory

- ▶ Explicit and Implicit Memory
- ▶ Dr. Pat Ogden: Implicit & Explicit Selves
- ▶ Making Implicit Memory Explicit in Trauma Treatment -- Sebern Fisher & Ruth Lanius in Conversation

Trauma and Memory

- ▶ What is Trauma?
- ▶ Implicit Memory and Trauma: Why Can't We Forget
- ▶ How the body keeps the score on trauma | Bessel van der Kolk for Big Think+
- ▶ Trauma and the Brain

Trauma and the Nervous System

- ▶ How are Trauma Memories Stored in the Body? - Janina Fisher, PhD
- ▶ 9 Signs You Have Unhealed Trauma

Polyvagal Theory

- ▶ Become an Active Operator of Your Nervous System | Deb Dana | Podcast Interview with Dan Harris
- ▶ What is the Polyvagal Theory?
- ▶ Polyvagal Theory: The 3 States of Anxiety in the Nervous System
- ▶ The Polyvagal Theory. Explained.
- ▶ Polyvagal Theory and How Trauma Impacts the Body
- ▶ Polyvagal Theory for Total Beginners (What I Found the Most Helpful) #polyvagalthery
- ▶ Polyvagal Theory and Trauma – Deb Dana (2 hour for Clinicians)

Healing Trauma

- ▶ Memory Reconsolidation: How to Rewire Our Brain - Chapter 4
- ▶ How EMDR Can help bad memories. <https://emdrassociation.org.uk>
- ▶ What is Good Therapy?
- ▶ Rebecca Kase talks about EMDR, Polyvagal, and Trauma
- ▶ What is EMDR Therapy? by EMDRAA
- ▶ What is EMDR Therapy? by Dr. Angela Kenzslowe
- ▶ Understanding EMDR Therapy: An Intro for New Clients by Christina Granados

Stress Reduction and Relaxation Videos

Calming Your Nervous System

Before beginning to reprocess distressing memories, the nervous system needs to feel relatively calm and safe. These videos are helpful resources to help prepare for reprocessing.

Stress Reduction Videos

- ▶ Inner Retreat - A 5-minute Guided Relaxation
- ▶ Peaceful Place Guided Imagery Meditation
- ▶ 3 Minute Relax and Relief
- ▶ 3 minute Mindful Breathing Meditation Relieve Stress
- ▶ Three Minute Meditation.
- ▶ PMR (Progressive Muscle Relaxation) to Help Release Tension, Relieve Anxiety or Insomnia
- ▶ Calming Breath - A 5-Minute Guided Relaxation
- ▶ Container Meditation - A 5-Minute Guided Relaxation
- ▶ EMDR Container Meditation Exercise | Guided Imagery for Anxiety Triggers | 5 minute meditation - A 5-minute EMDR Meditation
- ▶ Tree Meditation - A 5-minute Guided Video for Grounding
- ▶ Vagus Nerve Reset To Release Trauma Stored In The Body (Polyvagal Exercises)
- ▶ 5 Minute Body Scan Meditation
- ▶ Lightstream Technique with Stephanie
- ▶ The Powerful Release of Letting Go! Guided Meditation
- ▶ take a deep breath by Calm
- ▶ 3-minute mindfulness meditation for clarity - Flow
- ▶ 15 Minute Guided Meditation to Release Suppressed Emotions | Mindful Movement
- ▶ How to Find Your Perfect Place of Peace | EMDR Grounding Meditation for Anxiety | Calm Safe Place
- ▶ Daily Calm | 10 Minute Mindfulness Meditation | Be Present
- ▶ Daily Calm | 10 Minute Mindfulness Meditation | Letting Go
- ▶ 5 Minute Long Deep Breaths
- ▶ Daily Calm | 10 Minute Mindfulness Meditation | Santosha

▶ Daily Calm | 10 Minute Mindfulness Meditation | Present

Sleep Videos

▶ Meditate | Deep Sleep Release

▶ Wind Down Before Sleep Guided Meditation

▶ Guided 20 Minute Sleep Meditation

Inner Child Videos

▶ Guided Meditation For Inner Child Healing

▶ Inner Child Healing | 10 Minute Guided Meditation

▶ Inner Child Healing: Fear Of Abandonment Guided Meditation