



EMDR 3RD PEER LEARNING SUPPORT

Chrystella Lo
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Biodata of “A”

- Admitted into DaySpring Residential Treatment Centre in August 2013
- Female / 14 years old (at admission)
- In Secondary Two, Normal (Technical) stream
- Was referred by Child Protection Services (MSF) for sexual abuse
- Prior to admission to DaySpring, was in IMH due to self-harm and suicidal ideation

Family Background of “A”

- Only child of parents
- In 2008, “A” came to Singapore as her parents worked here
- Mother left Singapore in Jul 2012 due to marital conflicts
- Sexual abuse took place from Oct 2012 to Jul 2013, after perpetrator (friend and colleague of father) had moved into the house to help with the rent.
- During stay at DaySpring, revealed that much of her trauma also stemmed from witness of spousal violence and conflicts.

Presenting Issues

- Experienced episodes of amnesia which started in 2012.
- Frequent nightmares of “uncle” abusing her. Expressed shame and shared that she felt dirty. Did not know how to get help, especially from father.
- Loss of attachment figure when mother returned to China and unable to form positive attachment with father.
- Difficulty with emotional regulation and attempted suicide several times since Jan – Jul 2013. Form teacher noticed and probed further in Jul 2013.
- Was transferred from KKH to IMH due to high risk of committing suicide on 25 Jul 2013.
- Emotional dysregulation continued in DaySpring Residential Treatment Centre even after admission.

Treatment Plan

1. Weekly individual counselling (have had approximately 56 sessions over 13 months)
2. Daily group therapy: Art Therapy, Dance and Movement Therapy, Animal-Assisted Therapy, Emotional Regulation, Recreational Therapy, Identity discovery and development, Personal and Community Values.
3. Therapeutic Milieu: Containment, Structure, Support, Validation and Involvement.

Treatment Goals:

- Decrease depressed mood and increase emotional stability
- Decrease self-harming behaviour and suicidal ideation
- Decrease post-traumatic stress and anxiety
- Improve her relationship with her parents

EMDR Sessions

1. 20 March 2014: Calm/Safe place

2. 30 June 2014: List and rate best & worst memories

- Grandmother passed away **5**
- Mom and dad gamble, drink and smoke and left me alone **6**
- My parents fought and my mother almost died **9**
- My parents abused me, punched me, when I asked for money **8**
- My parents started to fight again in Singapore **8**
- My father's bad habits comes back again **7**
- My father abused my mother **7**
- My mother returned to China **8**
- I start to go online to find people to go out with **7**
- I get sexually abused three times (by men she met online) **9**
- My father trusts the "uncle" more than me **8**

EMDR Sessions

- The “uncle” sexually abused me **9**
- The “uncle” forced me to eat his semen **10**
- The “uncle” threatened me **8**
- When the “uncle” touched me, my father didn’t say anything **10**
- My father scolded me because the “uncle” was not happy with me **9**
- The “uncle” threatened my father that he would return to China **9**
- Police kept asking me how many times I had sex with the “uncle” **6**
- Fight with girls in DaySpring **8**

3. 11 Jul 2014: EMDR Desensitization

- Started with earliest memory and lowest score
- Reached SUDs of 1; VoC reached 6.5
- Preferred tapping instead of eye movements
- Felt tired from the BLS

EMDR Sessions

4. 31 Jul 2014: EMDR Desensitization of another worst memory

- Did not get to do as we ran out of time during session

5. 16 Sep 2014: EMDR Reprocessing on the theme of “I’m not good enough” / “It’s my fault”

- Float back technique to earliest memory: when she was in Primary school and her parents were fighting over having no money, father started to blame her for using a lot of money.
- PC: “It’s not my fault. It’s their problem, not my problem and I have been responsible.”
- Several memories were linked with this NC of “It’s my fault”, eg. mother going to the hospital, grandmother passing away, etc.
- Felt tired from EMDR but willing to continue
- SUDs reached 0 and VoC reached 7

EMDR Sessions

6. 17 Sep 2014: EMDR Installing future template

- “A” felt there was nothing else to reprocess, hence we moved ahead with installing future templates
- Scenario: one of her pre-school students fell down while running; boy’s parents scolded and blamed her, saying it was all her fault.
- PC: It’s not my fault because I tried my best and I am a good person. I am good enough as I am.
- There were several interruptions and “A” didn’t want to continue as she felt tired. Continued when encouraged.
- VoC for PC reached 6
- PC changed slightly to: “When it’s my fault, I should admit it. When it’s not my fault, don’t care what others say.”

Challenges

- Residential setting. I.e. frequent “crises of the week”, other assignments to do during sessions, lack of safety amongst the residents.
- 8 Phases may not flow smoothly from one stage to another. Sometime there is a long gap in between sessions.
- Inexperienced and unsure if proceeding correctly. Role also involved case management.
- “A” often felt tired during the BLS and wanted to stop.
- Unsure if “A” was telling the truth or gave a response of “SUDs 0 and VoC 7” just to end the session.
- Too many worst memories to do – where to start from? Did not get to complete desensitization and reprocessing for all memories.

Advantages

- Residential setting. I.e. able to facilitate forming of new positive memories; able to address theme of “It’s my fault” in other incidences; able to establish safety and emotional stability first through Therapeutic Milieu and TF-CBT.
- Supportive clinical director and supervisor.
- Strong therapeutic relationship with “A”; willing to continue when encouraged.
- “A” had adequate level of insight and cognitive ability to point out themes of NC.
- Partnership with MSF – Assessment & RES group / TF-CBT work by Psychologists.
- Partnership with IMH, Secondary school, and CPS.



THANK YOU