

## ■ BOOK REVIEWS ■

### ■ EMDR and the Universal Healing Tao: An Energy Psychology Approach to Overcoming Emotional Trauma

Mantak Chia & Doug Hilton. Rochester, VT: Destiny Books, 2017, 211 pp., \$19.95 (paperback)

The authors clearly shine their expertise as master Taoist healers. The first half of the book introduces Taoist philosophy on health and illness, attributing the causes of trauma and addiction to an imbalance of energy in life, ultimately leading to an imbalance within the energy system of the person. It is written in terms that are easy to follow and understand, with a strong theoretical basis. The authors skillfully apply this ancient philosophy to patterns within our culture. Searching for solutions to discontent outside of ourselves leads to addictive patterns that continue to cycle throughout our lives. In Chinese medicine, these cycles of addictive patterns and beliefs effect the energy flow in the organ system, leading to exhaustion, depression, and anxiety. Repetitive actions, obsessive thoughts, and compulsions forge new pathways in the energy system, creating a new *energetic tattoo* within the energy matrix of the individual with its own set of beliefs and behaviors. The outer world quick fix that we have fostered in our culture effects brain chemistry and sets up the cycle for addiction. The energy pattern in the individual often originates from trauma that has not been processed. The theme of the interwoven mind-body connection and our connection to a universal life force penetrates the book. Therefore, linear solutions are part of the problem and not part of the solution. There are insightful quotes from the Tao Te Ching exemplifying that balance is the key to health and opposites and paradoxes are part of one whole.

In the second half of the book, the authors offer specific protocol to identify the organ systems holding the dense energy of negative beliefs and traumas, systematically clearing the energy through imagery, color, sounds, and hand and eye movements which are long-term elements of Universal Healing Tao Chi Kung practices. One by one, the energy is cleared from each organ system, leading to neutralization of the issues, negative beliefs, and trigger responses. Beautiful illustrations of the energy and organ

systems are provided. The ultimate goal of Taoist practice is to transcend physical boundaries through the development of the soul and the spirit within human experience. This philosophy provides a larger context for healing, helpful to therapists with all levels of eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR) training.

The book reads well as self-help and is informative for newcomers to Taoist healing whether therapist or general public. The book has some limitations. EMDR therapy is discussed peripherally to Taoist healing practices. Although there are commonalities in the goal to heal trauma and to use eye movement, EMDR is introduced in the middle of the book as the client is asked eight questions, which are not specified. The eight phases of EMDR protocol are condensed to three overarching phases, without mention of the adaptive information processing (AIP) model. It is left to the imagination of the reader to integrate Tao healing practices with EMDR therapy because Taoist healing is presented as a stand-alone process. The general public will learn about Taoist philosophy and healing but will not sufficiently understand the principles and protocol of EMDR therapy. Experienced EMDR therapists will find value in learning the Taoist philosophy and protocol, expanding their context for healing and using it as an adjunct to their EMDR practice.

REVIEWED BY IRENE R. SIEGEL

### ■ EMDR Therapy: Treating Anxiety, Obsessive-Compulsive, and Mood-Related Conditions

Marilyn Luber (Ed.). New York, NY: Springer Publishing, 2016, 430 pp., \$65.00 (paperback)

This is the latest publication in Marilyn Luber's series of eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR) protocols for treating various client populations. EMDR practitioners from various countries contributed with detailed and step-by-step guides for adapting EMDR standard approaches to persons with mood disorders. Specific EMDR therapy strategies are described for issues often neglected in the treatment of mood disorders. Included are scripts developed by the editor that faithfully summarize each chapter; these scripts are assets in all of the books in this series as they provide both clinical guidelines based on

“best practices” and standard prototypes for research. Topics covered, besides those in the title, include body dysmorphic disorder, olfactory reference syndrome, and hoarding.

There is much overlap among chapters. On the one hand, it is helpful to realize that EMDR clinicians with the most experience with these presenting problems widely agree on which modifications to the standard EMDR methodology appear most likely to help clients. The reader will also need to compare chapters, however, to find suggestions specific to a particular presenting problem. Updated research is summarized regarding the protocols, which at once points to the limits of scientific support while providing guidelines for developing the protocols further.

The main limitation is the absence of complementary practices, which can leave the impression that EMDR is a stand-alone intervention for mood and anxiety disorders. This is concerning, given the well-established benefits of approaches such as exercise, relaxation training, and mindfulness. The editor apparently asked authors to include “helpful resources” in their chapters (p. xxii), although few did. This is particularly surprising given that in the early years of EMDR, workshops on mood disorders included references to self-help practices (beginning with intentional breathing) that might enhance, and be necessary for, optimal treatment of the clients targeted in the book. The reader is encouraged to consult other references for those cases where depression or anxiety is more connected to diet, gut bacteria, or a sedentary lifestyle than to their relationships, fears, or traumatic childhoods.

In spite of these oversights, Lubert’s work remains the best collection of expert opinions regarding EMDR for mood disorders, and researchers are encouraged to refer to it to develop hypotheses that can be investigated scientifically.

REVIEWED BY JOHN HARTUNG

### ■ Cultural Competence and Healing Culturally Based Trauma with EMDR Therapy: Innovative Strategies and Protocols

Mark Nickerson (Ed.). New York, NY: Springer Publishing, 2017, 368 pp., \$65.00 (paperback), \$51.99 (Kindle)

Mr. Nickerson’s new book, *Cultural Competence and Healing Culturally Based Trauma with EMDR Therapy*, is a timely edition that integrates the attention that diversity issues are receiving in the mental health field with eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR) therapy. This is an edited volume, and Mr. Nickerson has assembled a group of experienced EMDR clinician/authors who have addressed applications of EMDR therapy within a range of cross-cultural issues. Each chapter is well-researched with reference lists from which readers may follow-up and expand their knowledge base.

This book is divided into six sections. Section I is a series of four chapters by Mr. Nickerson. Admirably, he addresses well cross-cultural issues and interweaves them with the Eight Phases and adaptive information processing (AIP) model offering useful examples, for example—of negative and positive cognitions that may be relevant for a client who is reprocessing memories or triggers associated with experiences of stigmatization or prejudice.

Section II is a series of chapters addressing clinical applications with a range of clients from diverse cultures including immigrants seeking a better life in the United States, asylum seekers, and victims of political violence. Rajani Levis and Laura Siniego’s chapter usefully suggests that the separation of “informational plateaus” of responsibility and defectiveness would be useful in contrast to Shapiro’s (2001) conceptualization that responsibility and defectiveness are integrally linked. Ms. Levis’s chapter, “Placing Culture at the Heart of EMDR Therapy,” is particularly helpful in emphasizing the value of community cultural wealth resources, the resources unique to that client that integrate cultural components and values.

Section III includes two chapters that offer innovative perspectives on using EMDR therapy for resolving client issues stemming from intergenerational trauma to using EMDR therapy in a group context. Natalie Robinson’s chapter, “Legacy Attuned EMDR Therapy: Toward a Coherent Narrative,” assists us as the EMDR therapist to expand our view of what the “past” in the three-pronged approach can mean for some clients particularly those who may be struggling with transgenerational experiences that impact their current functioning (Juni, 2016). André Maurício Monteiro’s chapter, “EMDR in a Group Setting (GEMDR),” presents an interesting innovation, that is, offering EMDR therapy in a group therapy context in which the group dynamic can become a resource for the EMDR client to reprocess traumatic material. This may be a useful model to provide EMDR therapy in agency programs that are exclusively group oriented as well as in agencies where the demand for mental health services is severe and outstrips the available resources.

Specifically, Section IV includes three important chapters addressing sexual/affectional orientation and gender diversity, offering useful insights for EMDR clinicians less experienced with these populations. Section V offers a series of chapters that considers applications of EMDR therapy with clients struggling with issues of social stigma, for example—transgenerational impact of anti-Semitism, intellectual disability, addictions, physical appearance, aging, and socioeconomic class as well as an informative chapter by Liz Royle on working with the military and first responders. Section VI focuses on bringing the EMDR approach to other cultures internationally. Some past international training projects have been more successful than others. The authors of these two chapters, Rosemary Masters et al. and John Hartung, emphasize the need for awareness of and sensitivity to the host culture where an EMDR

training project is occurring. More attention to these issues may increase the probability of having a successful cross-cultural project.

This book was “an engaging and enjoyable read” for several reasons. A consistent message that is expressed explicitly or implied by every author is the need for us as EMDR clinicians to have the humility and sensitivity to ask our clients the relevant questions regarding cultural and diversity issues where this is necessary. It was difficult to identify limitations in this volume inasmuch as I found something useful in virtually every chapter. However, when I finished this book, I wanted more and, at the same moment, realized that this is a voluminous topic that cannot

be addressed completely in one volume. This book will be useful for EMDR therapists at all levels of experience.

REVIEWED BY GERALD PUK

## References

- Juni, S. (2016). Second-generation Holocaust survivors: Psychological, theological, and moral challenges. *Journal of Trauma and Dissociation*, 17(1), 97–111.
- Shapiro, F. (2001). *Eye movement desensitization and reprocessing: Basic principles, protocols, and procedures* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Guilford Press.