

## **WHEN THERE ARE NO WORDS: REPROCESSING EARLY TRAUMA & NEGLECT HELD IN IMPLICIT MEMORY**

This workshop addresses some of the most difficult challenges of using EMDR with individuals with affect dysregulation, somatic distress and attachment injuries from early trauma and neglect. The methods efficiently empower clients with resources for containment, safety, and increased affect tolerance; and systematically target and reprocess early disturbance for which there may be no explicit memories. Although the workshop primarily addresses adolescents and adults, it also describes its use with infants and children.

The challenges of using EMDR for early trauma and neglect include: EMDR readily targets explicit memories, but early trauma is held in implicit memory in the right hemisphere and is not typically subject to direct recall. Accessing the felt sense of early experience can be overwhelming if it evokes the paucity of internal resources of a neglected baby. This workshop addresses both problems by careful preparation and systematic trauma reprocessing for implicit memories and early templates.

The preparation includes 1) containment, 2) safe state, and 3) resetting innate emotional resources, which appears to directly act upon primary process subcortical affective circuits to downregulate the experience of emotional intensity. Done correctly, it avoids evoking the felt sense of the emotions so they can subsequently be reprocessed without flooding.

After the three preparation steps, the method systematically reprocesses early trauma in the absence of explicit memory. It targets consecutive time periods beginning before birth, and installs positive reparative experience. As a result, the client builds a new foundation of a felt sense of attachment and belonging, with emergent positive cognitions, enabling the client to meet the next developmental milestones in sequence.