

# Understanding Attachment-Focused EMDR Therapy

## 1. What is Attachment-Focused EMDR?

Attachment-Focused EMDR (AF-EMDR) is a compassionate and relational form of EMDR therapy that integrates attachment theory. It recognizes that early relationships and experiences shape how we view ourselves and others. AF-EMDR helps heal not only trauma memories but also the deep emotional wounds that come from unmet attachment needs—such as feeling unseen, unsafe, or unworthy. Through gentle, guided reprocessing and a strong, trusting therapeutic relationship, AF-EMDR helps restore a sense of connection, safety, and self-compassion. It's a nurturing approach that honors the importance of healing in relationship.

## 2. What can Attachment-Focused EMDR help with?

Attachment-Focused EMDR can be especially helpful for those who have experienced relational trauma or difficulties in early caregiving relationships. It combines the power of EMDR's trauma reprocessing with the healing potential of secure connection.

AF-EMDR can help with:

- Childhood neglect or emotional unavailability
- Relationship difficulties and fear of closeness
- Anxiety, depression, or shame related to early attachment wounds
- Low self-esteem or fear of rejection
- Complex trauma and relational PTSD
- Grief, abandonment, or betrayal

This approach helps clients develop a deeper sense of self-worth, inner safety, and the ability to form healthy, supportive relationships.

■ *This information is provided for educational purposes and is inspired by trauma-informed care principles.*

*Source: Attachment-Focused EMDR materials from Laurel Parnell, Ph.D.*