

EMDR and the Six Healing Sounds

By **Sharon Joy Ng Hale, M.A., Ph.D.**

Master Chia has recently incorporated the use of Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) when utilizing the Six Healing Sounds in the practice of the Universal Tao system. According to the literature on EMDR, it is believed that the left/right pattern of eye movements assist in completing emotional processing. Most of us are not very good at letting go of our negative emotions, but through the practice of using the Six Healing Sounds we learn to compost the less healthy emotions of sadness, depression, fear, anxiety, anger, cruelty, impatience, hastiness, worry or pity and change or transform them into their positive counterpart emotions of courage, stillness, generosity, happiness and compassion.

EMDR has helped people overcome the inability to let go of negative memories that keep them from living a full and happy life. Getting closure to unfinished emotional trauma is essential to achieving health, both psychological and physical. In psychodynamic language, we are being affected by unconscious and unfinished business. When this happens a person continues to suffer long after the event has passed and suffers from these negative emotions. When we are processing negative emotions in the practice of the Universal Tao we are essentially putting behind us emotions that may have a long history with us.

Because we are human we cannot avoid feeling negative emotions, but if we can clear our organs each time we experience something negative then we can reverse the damage this negativity has on our psyche and bodies. When we hold onto bits and pieces of hurt, anger, impatience, fear, pity or sadness the result is an accumulation of that negativity in our organ systems. We seem to stand at readiness to feel and express the negative emotion all over again.

Most of us carry stuck emotions that impact our everyday lives and we fail to realize that these heavy emotions often come from the accumulation of feelings that have not been fully processed. We tell ourselves that we are over whatever happened that originally created our negative response. Yet when similar situations arise in our lives, we are primed and ready to experience the same negative emotion again. We anticipate that the past will repeat itself and we become hypervigilant for cues that validate our fears. The residual anger, fear, impatience, or depression keeps us ready to react again. This unfinished business is cumulative and we get stuck in a pattern of reviving the emotion in similar circumstances. Sometimes out of nowhere we will feel sad again, or anxious, fearful, or impatient.

When traumatic things happen to us, either physically or emotionally, we often are not prepared to deal with the situation to the extent that we can gain closure. Some things that happen in life are so significant that they only have to occur once and it is seared into our emotional memory banks. Then there are the other types of trauma that come from sustained exposure to stress. Using the Six Healing Sounds, we work on processing the negative from ourselves and infuse our organs with the more positive vibrations of the strengths associated with the organs. EMDR facilitates the speed at which we are able to feel the positive emotions and be less affected by the negative. When we take our negative emotions and mix them with their more positive, more fruitful counterpart, the eye movements help to process the emotions and beliefs. We are more

easily able to turn sadness into courage; fear into gentleness and stillness; anger into generosity and kindness; worry into compassion and fairness; and impatience into love, joy and happiness.

Why EMDR Works

One of the theories that helps explain why the eye movements help in processing the stuck emotions is based upon sleep and dream research. It is known that rapid eye movement (REM) sleep is essential for mental well being. Sleep is characterized by five stages that progress in a 90-minute pattern. The first four stages are called non-rapid eye movement (NREM) stages because there is an absence of the rapid eye movements that characterize the fifth stage of sleep, or REM. In a typical night of sleep when we sleep for eight hours, we experience approximately five REM periods. Each REM period lasts longer than the last and we move from a 10-minute REM period at the beginning of our sleep to almost an hour of REM activity by the end of the night. REM periods are also associated with our most vivid dreams and not surprisingly, our ability to experience lucid dreams as well.

Some people report that they never dream because they have no memory of their dreams. In the sleep lab where a person can be monitored for brainwave activity, muscle tone and REM, it has been found that almost everyone dreams. Researchers are able to know when a person enters into REM sleep through various monitors that are used in the sleep lab. These machines are usually the electrooculargraph (EOG) that measures eye movement; the electromyograph (EMG) that measures muscle tone; and the electroencephalograph (EEG) that measures brainwave activity. When sleepers are awakened in the sleep lab during REM periods they will generally recount that they were in fact having a dream.

In sleep deprivation studies researchers tested to determine which stages of sleep were essential to cognitive functioning and emotional balance. When a person is continually awakened during NREM stages, but is allowed to complete the approximate five REM stages during the night the person wakes up feeling refreshed and is able to function normally. But when a person is kept from entering REM but is allowed to sleep through the NREM stages that person is less able to function optimally the next day. We have a hard time carrying out simple tasks, we feel irritable and our ability to think clearly and cope with random stressors is compromised. Without a good night's sleep we just cannot function as we normally do. Simultaneously, our immune system is compromised through the lack of the right kind of sleep. In other words, we need REM sleep and when anything interferes with that stage, we suffer.

The EMDR Process

EMDR is an eclectic approach that utilizes the left/right eye movement pattern, imagery, cognitive therapy, body-mind awareness, and psychodynamic techniques. We begin the process by identifying the negative cognitions or beliefs being held. We are not required to relive emotional events or reexperience trauma but simply need to identify any negative or irrational beliefs that we are holding about the situation. By making a list of these negative thoughts, we have a starting point from which to begin the EMDR process.

The negative belief or beliefs that are impacting us adversely are then rated according to the amount of discomfort they produce in us. These negative beliefs are the target of focus when the

eye movements are begun. Next, we identify a counter belief or positive belief that we would rather believe about the situation or ourselves. These positive beliefs then become the focus of the second stage of the EMDR process.

Similarly to the Universal Tao practice of detecting the negative emotions and then infusing the organs with the positive emotions, EMDR is also a two-fold process. As stated previously, the first step of the EMDR process is to identify or detect any negative beliefs being held and then to assess that belief for the level of discomfort it causes us on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 represents a low level of discomfort and 10 the highest. These are called subjective units of discomfort (SUD). Generally people report having a high SUD in relation to the emotion or belief being processed at the beginning of the process.

While holding the negative belief in consciousness, using the eye movements, the Six Healing Sounds and the colors associated with each organ, the processing of the negative emotion is targeted. As the clearing process continues with the eye movements, memories and feelings from the event or related events may arise that then become targets for further processing with the eye movements. One stops to discuss these memories that arise in order to bring closure to the stuck emotions associated with these memories. As the process unfolds, clarity develops regarding the stuck emotions or memories. Remembering these associated events and feelings tap into the neural network that has kept the negative feelings alive. By stopping and revisiting these feelings from a cognitive standpoint, we are able to arrest the emotions from strengthening their connection so that we can begin to feel the positive instead. We come closer to letting the negative go and experience healing. It starts to feel as if the negative emotions are no longer something in the present, but that they are now part of the past where they rightfully belong. We are more able to let it go and put it behind us.

The EMDR process combined with the practice of the Six Healing Sounds can also give rise to a range of sensations or experiences that establish a route to further processing of emotions. There may be feelings of discomfort or changes felt in parts of the body that can then be focused upon while the person is directed to commence the eye movements again. Sometimes images may arise from past situations, or emotions of sadness, anger, frustration, worry or fear may come into consciousness that can lead to still further processing. The point is to continue with the detection and transformation until the positive emotion becomes the predominant feeling in our consciousness.

In the next step of the process, a counter or positive belief is targeted for processing. This is the belief that the person would rather have in consciousness and can be stated in a way that encompasses the associative positive emotion of the organ we are clearing out. For example, if I am clearing out my kidneys of any fear or anxiety being felt, then the counter belief would include an element of installing gentleness and stillness into my behaviors.

Although we can tell ourselves how we would rather feel, it is often hard to have confidence in the truth to that belief. Prior to processing the newly identified positive belief, we need to rate the validity of that thought using a Validity of Cognition (VOC) scale. This is a scale ranging from 1 to 7, with 1 representing completely false and 7 representing completely true. One generally begins this part of the process with a low belief in the validity of that preferred cognition.

Using the eye movements to install the positive emotion or belief, focusing on the color associated with the organ while using the healing sound for that organ should result in a strengthening of the validity of that cognition. As the emotions are processed, the former negative belief fades and becomes something of the past in the person's mind. The new counter and positive belief becomes more valid simultaneously. As one might suspect, as the EMDR process and the Six Healing Sounds helps to complete the emotional processing and the positive emotions are installed, the SUD will lower while the VOC will rise.

Summary

In the Six Healing Sounds and Fusion of the Five Elements we focus upon our negative emotions and attempt to transform them into the positive emotions associated with each of the organs. By detecting the negative emotion as we concentrate on each organ we can simultaneously identify the negative belief we are holding.

The Healing Sound associated with each organ; along with the left/right eye movements should have a positive impact on the composting of the negative with the positive emotions. We can also more easily identify the cognition we would rather have by associating the negative emotion we experience with the positive emotion associated with that particular organ. With the installing of the associated positive characteristics and emotions of each organ, the eye movements help to bolster our feelings of the more positive qualities connected with the respective organs. At the same time, we are also able to more completely clear the organ of the negative emotion.