

# **Enhancing EMDR with Imagery: Practical Strategies for Complex Cases**

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## **Abstract**

Imagery techniques offer a powerful, versatile tool for enhancing EMDR therapy, especially for clients who encounter challenges such as avoidance, cognitive barriers, or emotional overwhelm. This workshop will guide practitioners through integrating imagery activities, including imagery rescripting, to optimise therapeutic outcomes and streamline the EMDR standard protocol.

Imagery has long been recognised for its ability to facilitate emotional access, transform distressing memories, and foster self-compassion (Arntz, 2012; Holmes et al., 2021; Morina et al., 2017; Saulsman et al., 2019). There is also evidence to highlight the role of imagery in improving client tolerance for trauma-focused interventions, reducing dropout rates, and enhancing engagement (Arntz et al., 2007). By combining these techniques with EMDR, therapists can address client complexities with greater precision and flexibility.

This interactive session provides a structured, step-by-step approach to incorporating imagery into EMDR therapy, including a solid understating of when the addition of imagery is clinically indicated. Drawing on current research and theory, clinical examples, and video demonstrations, participants will learn when and how to apply imagery techniques to overcome resistance, strengthen therapeutic rapport, and foster emotional regulation. Attendees will leave with actionable strategies to enrich their practice and maximise client outcomes.