

EDITORIAL

The Future of EMDR Therapy and of the *Journal of EMDR Practice and Research*

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After 15 years of dedicated and outstanding service, Dr. Louise Maxfield, Founding Editor of the *Journal of EMDR Practice and Research*, has retired from her editorial responsibilities. This editorial introduces the first issue under the joint editorship of Dr. Derek Farrell and Jenny Ann Rydberg, who highlight the need to address the future of EMDR therapy in general and the *Journal of EMDR Practice and Research* in particular, and welcome a community-informed discussion on new directions.

Keywords: editorial; eye movement desensitisation and reprocessing (EMDR) therapy

With the sad passing of Francine Shapiro, it was inevitable that EMDR therapy would embark upon a new era. The Council of Scholars, in the *Future of EMDR Therapy Project*, was founded to respond to that reality: a group of international EMDR thought-leaders tasked with a scoping exercise to determine a vision of what the next generation of EMDR therapy will look like—including definition, application, empiricism, competency, and education. In 2020, the Research work group published “The Current Status of EMDR Therapy, Specific Target Areas, and Goals for the Future,” and in the last issue of 2021, the work group tasked with answering the question “What is EMDR?” published “What Is EMDR Therapy? Past, Present, and Future Directions.”

EMDR therapy has current credibility with the World Health Organization, International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies, American Psychiatric Association, VA/DoD, National Institute of Health and Care Excellence, and United Nations High Commission for Refugees, amongst others. While of immense political significance, it is fair to say that EMDR therapy “on the ground” is primarily influenced by practice-based evidence rather than evidence-based practice.

Over the past 15 years, the *Journal of EMDR Practice and Research*, under the stewardship of Louise Maxfield, has performed a simply sterling job in promoting the agenda of publishing high-quality EMDR therapy articles, including research studies, field studies, brief reports, case studies and series, as well as theoretical, clinical, and review articles.

Louise has invested countless hours and energy in the development of the Journal, with great generosity, patience, and dedication. On behalf of the worldwide EMDR community, we express our heartfelt thanks and gratitude to Louise and wish her well in her retirement. To follow in her footsteps is a daunting task, so much so that two Editors were selected instead of one, each with unique areas of focus, while working collaboratively. Jenny will have primary responsibility for article submission, review, and publication decisions, while Derek will focus on the next developmental steps of the Journal. This focus on identifying future needs stems from the concerning issue that many of the most significant papers on EMDR therapy, such as excellent-quality randomized controlled studies, as well as systematic reviews and meta-analyses—which all play an essential role in the

development of international treatment guidelines—are published in other journals: journals with impact factors.

Of course, the scientific and clinical worth of an individual article is independent of a journal's impact factor. Nonetheless, the rules of academia are such that researchers are required by their institutions to publish their work in highly ranked scientific journals. Currently, the *Journal of EMDR Practice and Research* does not meet criteria to obtain a Clarivate Analytics Impact Factor—a measure of the frequency with which articles within the journal are referred to by other articles. In addition, other factors may explain why some authors, including clinicians who do not have the constraints of an academic career, choose to publish elsewhere rather than in our Journal: this a topic for which we need to gain a better understanding.

Thus, it seems that we face two options—status quo or a change in direction. Both options are under consideration. To have an informed debate and policy

discussion about the future of our Journal, we will embark upon a significant review of its readership and Editorial Board. Therefore, we seek your assistance and guidance in this endeavor, as this needs to be a community-informed decision, shared by EMDR clinicians and researchers, readers, authors, reviewers and Editorial Board members.

In this transition period, the challenge will consist of keeping the household running in its usual fashion while considering, and possibly planning and performing, renovations on that same house. We had very little time to prepare the present issue, the first of Volume 16; therefore, several articles that were accepted for publication by Louise before her retirement were kept for this issue, to complete those accepted by us more recently—and, in that sense, this is truly a transitional issue, with Louise Maxfield as Founding Editor passing the baton to us as incoming editors. We look forward to future conversations in determining the next steps for this Journal.