

# The Relationship Between Eye Movement Integration (EMI) and Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR)

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Long before eye movement desensitization and reprocessing was called, "EMDR," there were a number of eye movement trauma techniques that came out of research in the 1960s, particularly in relation to neuro-linguistic programming (NLP). John Grinder, one of the founders of NLP, taught these techniques to an administrator who worked with him. The administrator was Francine Shapiro, who then later claimed to have invented EMDR without reference to Grinder, or any other source for that matter.

According to John Grinder in The Whispering and the Wind Forum:

"Francine Shapiro worked (*administration and sales*) in the Santa Cruz offices of Grinder, Delozier and Associates in the 80's. She approached me one day and told me that a friend of hers from New York has been raped and she wanted to help her through this trauma and ensure that she exited cleanly and without scars. I told Francine to put her in resourceful state (anchored) and have her systematically move her eyes through the various accessing positions typical of the major representational systems (with the exception of the kinesthetic access). I suggested that she see, hear (but not feel) the events in question - obviously the kinesthetics were to remain resourceful (the anchored state) while she processed the event. She later reported that the work had been successful. You may imagine my surprise when I later learned that she had apparently turned these suggestions into a pattern presented in an extended training, with no reference to source, with a copyright and a rather rigorous set of documents essentially restricting anyone trained in this from offering it to the rest of the world."

Robert Dilts was one of Grinder's original students at the University of Santa Cruz in the early 1970s.. Dilts went on to become one of the most prominent figures in NLP. In one of his classes, Grinder gave Dilts an assignment to work with eye movement. Dilts then began doing his own impromptu research. Dilts offered the hypothesis that eye movements were related to the sensory mode of cognitive processing occurring, making the following generalizations:

- Movements upward of the horizontal plane are related to visual processing.
- Movements along the horizontal plane are associated with auditory processing, and
- Movements downward from the horizontal plane are associated with kinesthetic, and other nonverbal phenomena.
- A later observation was that spatial orientation along the left-right horizon is often associated with past-future distinctions, respectively (in visual and auditory modes).

Shapiro's story about the origins of EMDR refer to her personal experience. She claimed to have discovered EMDR as she was walking one day. She said that she found herself processing negative psychological material along with REM behavior. As a psychologist, she wondered if this would be replicable with clients. In other words, she wondered if she could duplicate the REM behavior while attending to a distressing cognitive event and unpleasant internal visual image, and lessen in negative impact? *The only problem with this scenario is that Grinder had basically already taught Shapiro the technique.*