MOUNTAIN PATHWAYS COUNSELING

A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO EMDR

Is EMDR right for me?

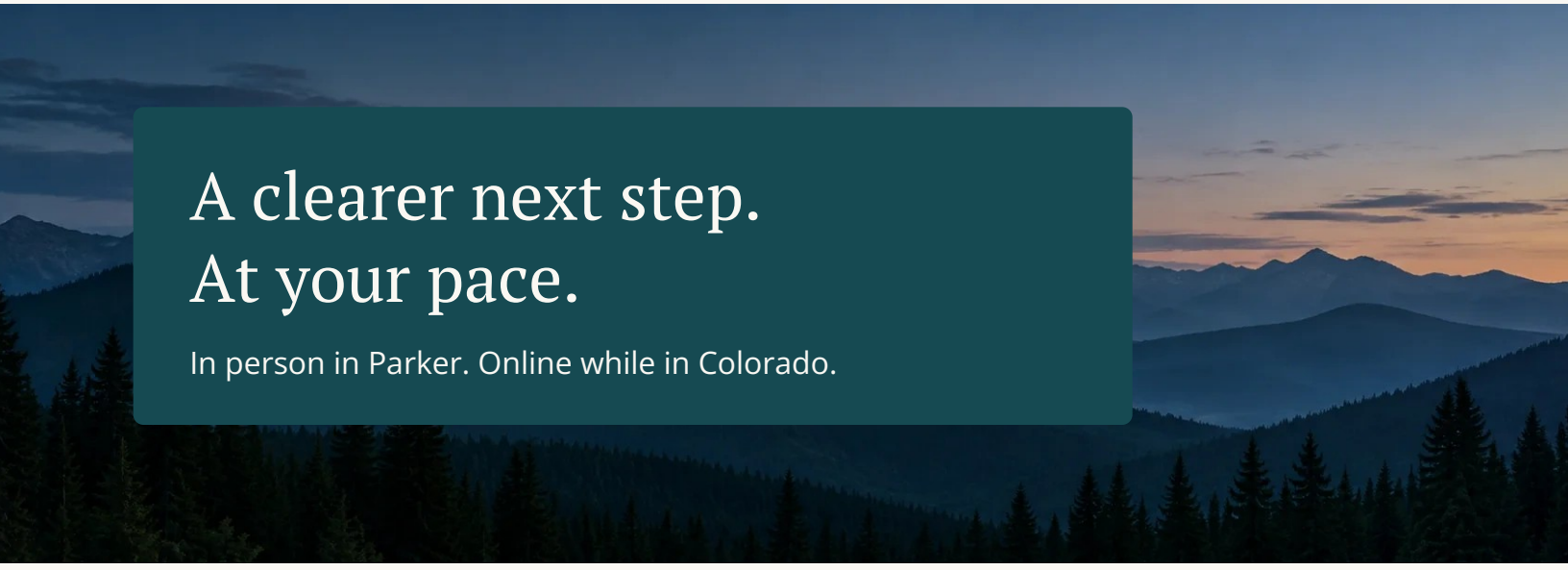
Understand the process, know what to ask and choose a clearer next step.

Understand the approach

Know what to expect

Prepare for a conversation

Schedule a Free 15-Minute Call



A clearer next step. At your pace.

In person in Parker. Online while in Colorado.

General information, not diagnosis, self-treatment instructions or individualized clinical advice.

01 / UNDERSTAND THE APPROACH

A different way to work with a difficult experience.

When reminders of a past experience bring a strong response, EMDR is one treatment option you can discuss with a clinician.

What is EMDR?

EMDR stands for Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing. This structured psychotherapy combines preparation, attention to selected experiences and guided bilateral stimulation, such as side-to-side eye movements. It is a fuller treatment process than eye movements alone. [2]

What does reprocessing mean?

The aim is to change how distressing material affects you now. A clinician helps you work with the experience and its meanings. EMDR does not erase your history or guarantee that memories will never feel difficult.

What does the evidence say?

EMDR is an evidence-based treatment for PTSD. A distressing reaction does not by itself establish PTSD, and EMDR does not fit everyone. Discuss your goals and other treatment options with a qualified clinician. [1]

> You do not need to choose a treatment before asking for help.

Sources 1-2. Independent reading links are on page 8.

02 / CONSIDER THE FIT

Start with what is affecting life now.

You can ask about EMDR without knowing whether it fits. Begin with the concern you want to understand and the support you are looking for.

- A past experience still feels emotionally close when a reminder appears.
- You notice a response connected to reminders that you want to understand.
- You wonder whether the past is influencing a current pattern.

These are reasons to ask questions, not a checklist for PTSD or proof that EMDR will fit.

Preparation is part of the work.

A clinician considers your history, current needs, coping resources and support before memory-focused work. Pacing can change as your needs become clearer. More preparation, another approach or additional support may be the better starting point. [3]

What would help me feel supported during this work?

How would we agree on a way to pause or slow down?

The purpose of a consultation is to explore a starting point, not to pass a readiness test.

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03 / KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT

The process has a beginning, middle and review.

EMDR has eight phases. They do not all happen in one session, and the time spent in each phase varies. This overview explains the structure; it is not a set of exercises to try on your own. [4]

BUILD A FOUNDATION

1. **History & treatment planning**
   Discuss your goals, history and experiences that may matter.
2. **Preparation**
   Learn the process and ways to manage distress.

WORK WITH SELECTED EXPERIENCES

3. **Assessment**
   Identify a focus and connected thoughts, feelings or sensations.
4. **Desensitization**
   Work with the focus using guided bilateral stimulation.
5. **Installation**
   Strengthen a helpful belief connected with the work.
6. **Body scan**
   Notice whether distress remains in the body's response.

CLOSE & REVISIT

7. **Closure**
   End with a plan for settling and managing what follows.
8. **Reevaluation**
   Review your response and decide what needs attention next.

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04 / GET CLEAR ANSWERS

Questions you may be carrying into the room.

Will I have to describe every detail?

Often, EMDR does not require a detailed spoken retelling. You will still work with relevant memories, thoughts or sensations. Ask what the clinician needs to know and how you can communicate your boundaries. [1]

What if it feels uncomfortable?

Difficult feelings can come up during memory-focused work. Ask your clinician how to pause, how sessions will close and what support is available between appointments. Preparation and check-ins are part of the process. [1, 3]

How many appointments will I need?

There is no reliable number for everyone. History, goals, preparation, response and practical circumstances affect the plan. Ask how progress will be reviewed rather than relying on a promised timeline. [3]

Can EMDR happen online?

Ask whether online EMDR is appropriate for your situation. A private setting, reliable technology and a plan for disruptions matter. [5] For MPC telehealth, you need to be located in Colorado.

Ask about options. A longer appointment is not a promise of faster progress.

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05 / MAKE THIS USEFUL

A few notes for your first conversation.

You do not need a detailed history or polished explanation. Use the prompts that help, and skip anything you would rather discuss privately with a clinician.

1. What is affecting me in everyday life?

A broad description is enough. You do not need to write out the event.

2. What would I like to handle differently?

Think about one response, relationship pattern or part of daily life.

3. What would help me feel comfortable asking for support?

A question about pace, privacy, clinician fit or the setting is welcome.

4. What do I want to ask before deciding?

For example: preparation, other approaches, fees or online options.

Keep these notes for yourself. You do not need to email them to the practice.

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06 / TAKE A CLEAR NEXT STEP

A short call can help you decide what comes next.

A free 15-minute call gives you space to ask about clinician fit and practical details. It is not a therapy session, assessment or commitment to begin.

01 **Share a broad overview.**

Share what is affecting your life now. Keep detailed histories out of initial email.

02 **Ask the practical questions.**

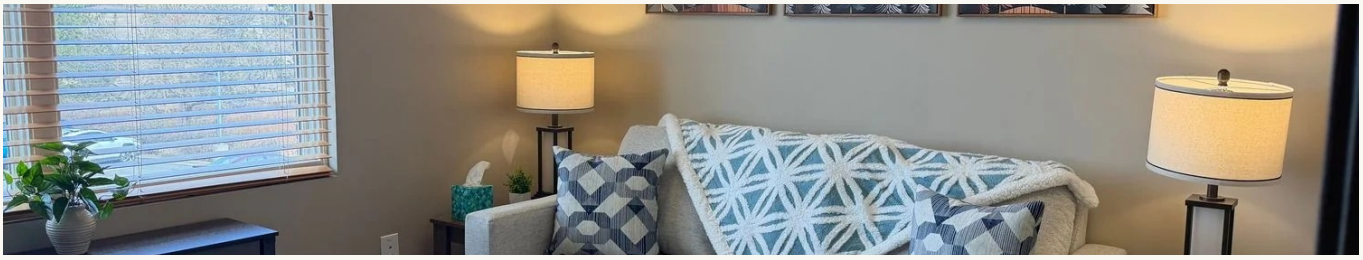
Ask about availability, fees, preparation, follow-up and the proposed appointment format.

03 **Choose your next step.**

Discuss an initial appointment, another option or taking more time to decide.

Schedule a Free 15-Minute Call

Or call (720) 772-8341



Mountain Pathways Counseling | Parker, Colorado

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INDEPENDENT READING & PRACTICAL DETAILS

Good questions deserve reliable information.

If you want to read further, start with these independent educational resources. They do not endorse MPC or replace individual advice.

1. VA National Center for PTSD

EMDR for PTSD - read online

2. EMDR International Association

About EMDR therapy - read online

3. EMDR International Association

Experiencing EMDR therapy - read online

4. EMDR International Association

The eight phases of EMDR therapy - read online

5. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Preparing for a telehealth visit - read online

> Bring the question that matters to you. You do not need to have the answer.

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A PERSONAL NOTE FROM KRIS



You can begin with a conversation.

Dear reader,

Thank you for taking time to learn about EMDR. You do not have to sort everything out before reaching out. Wanting something to feel different is a place to begin.

My approach is practical and relational: understand the pattern and build the capacity to respond differently. I'm trained in EMDR, and we can discuss whether it fits the work you want to do.

You can bring uncertainty to that conversation. You do not need to know the right words or have a diagnosis.

I invite you to schedule a free 15-minute call with me. Bring questions about the process, clinician fit or practical details. You do not need to share every detail of a difficult experience or commit to ongoing therapy.

We can discuss an appropriate starting point, including another kind of support if that would better match your needs.

Warmly,

Kris Pierson

M.A., MFTC, LPCC | Mountain Pathways Counseling

Schedule a Free 15-Minute Call

mountainpathwaysco.com/contact-us | (720) 772-8341

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