

DIAGNOSTIC CRITERIA FOR POSTTRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER (PTSD)

The person has experienced, or witnessed, or was confronted with an unusually traumatic event or events that involved a threat of death or serious injury, and the person felt intense fear or helplessness. Examples are found in veterans returning from war; people who have experienced a near fatal accident or one that involved a fatality; childhood abuse; sexual assault and domestic violence either experienced or witnessed as a child.

The person relives the event or has a numbing of general responsiveness as indicated below:

- 1. Intrusive, distressing thoughts or images.
- 2. Repeated, distressing dreams.
- 3. Flashbacks or hallucinations.
- 4. Marked mental distress in reaction to internal or external cues that resemble the event.
- 5. Physiological reactions such as elevated blood pressure to the cues.
- 6. Avoidance of activities or events that recall the event.
- 7. Inability to recall certain aspects of the event.
- 8. Feeling detached or isolated from other people.
- 9. Excessive vigilance.
- 10. Poor concentration.
- 11. Experiences restriction in ability to love or feel other strong emotions.
- 12. Increased startle response.
- 13. Angry outbursts or irritability.
- 14. Insomnia, either partial or interval.
- 15. Marked loss of interest or participation in activities important to the person.
- 16. The symptoms have lasted longer than one month from the event and cause significant distress or impair work, social, or personal functioning.

EMDR is the most powerful and well-researched tool for working with PTSD. Other methods that have been of benefit include Guided Visualization, Thought Field Therapy, Hypnosis, Yoga, Tai Chi, and Emotional Freedom Therapy.