

EMDR

Child and Youth

Dissociative disorders

Kirsten Hauber en Arianne Struik



Characteristics of youth with dissociative disorders

1. the dissociative disorder is a coping mechanism, a stress response
2. which always comes with attachment issues
3. internal conflicts result in identity fragmentation which leads to
4. traumatic memory not always accessible due to amnesia
5. fragmented memories - can be processed in layers, processed several times during the treatment

Which problems in the EMDR treatment can you come across and need to be solved

1. Structuring the **preparation phase** around safety, instability in daily life, attachment, emotion regulation and guilt, shame, and self hatred
2. Challenges in the **reprocessing phase** are maintaining connection, regulating stress levels, managing abreactions and blocked processing, somatic responses, re-enactment, and using interweaves

In general:

3. The child is one person
4. Working with individual personality states/parts

Transference and countertransference

1. Keeping focus in chaos
2. Risk of rescuer fantasy
3. Risk of a therapist taking over instead of an attachment figure

Taking over responsibility from the child or caregivers risks promoting regression and maintaining identity fragmentation. Instead of the therapist fulfilling the child's need for nurture and care, they can try to arrange an attachment figure in real life. **Involve the network!**

Conclusion

EMDR therapy in children and adolescents with a dissociative disorder requires

- a creative interplay
- processing of traumatic memories safely
- clear boundaries
- reflecting on the therapeutic relationship by the therapist
- which result in a corrective emotional experience of connection