

Avital Tahar's response to Barbara's case.

Hi Barbara,

I don't have a lot of experience with retraumatization and also not with EMDR. But it seems to me that maybe this little girl has, inside of her, the solution. I would recommend that you build with her a metaphorical story, maybe using animals that she likes or characters from a fairy tale. For example, you could tell her about a mother rabbit who had a little bunny daughter. The beautiful little bunny was very happy as she grew and always used to go out of the rabbit hutch alone to the carrot patch to pick food for herself and her family. One day a dog (or a tractor) hit her and hurt her ear. She had to stay for a long time in the hutch and she was afraid of the smell of a dog or the marks of a tractor in the fields. Then Eema helped the little rabbit so that she was able to go out of the hutch again, following the tracks of the tractor through the fields into the sweet carrot patch where she could meet all of her rabbit friends again. But then the "enemy" came again and the little rabbit again closed herself into the rabbit hutch. The Eema decided to take her little bunny to a councilor who could help her in many ways (Here you can be creative and try and develop the helping methods together) One could also build the story so that the wise councilor was an old rabbit or an owl. It's important to talk about the fear in a narrative framework and define it as something which entered the child to protect but now the bunny wants to go into the carrot patch to play with her friends. The wise councilor could also tell the mother that the bunny wants very much to keep working with EMDR so that she can build up her strength and courage as it was before. The PC can talk about her desire to return to the feeling of safety that she had before. She had experienced danger and fear again and now she wanted to find feelings of safety that were even stronger.

Good luck,

Avital

Barbara's response

Avital, thanks so much. I also love working with stories with children and this one of yours is a good one. I think I would probably use it with a child younger than this girl, but I think it could be easily tailored to any age group. For EMDR child therapists, I think, it's so important to be able to use other methods that we know to facilitate the EMDR process. Any body else have experiences that they'd like to share?

Barbara