



Brief Eclectic Psychotherapy for PTSD (BEPP)

BEPP is an individual therapy designed to help people process overwhelming experiences. We call these traumatic experiences

People who have been through such experiences are sometimes still greatly troubled by them later on in life. Images of the traumatic event return in all their vehemence, sometimes also in nightmares, whether or not they are triggered by situations or things that recall the terrible event. Because these re-experiencings are emotionally so intense, you try not to think or talk about them or you avoid anything that might remind you of them. It takes a lot of effort to keep these memories at bay. Consequently, there is less room and attention to give to everyday matters. You keep having the feeling that the danger may strike again, so you are excessively vigilant and easily startled, and you may have problems sleeping. And in turn, you easily become angry and irritated. These complaints are all part of the Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). The best way to treat these complaints is by recalling the overwhelming memories of the traumatic events in thoughts and images and finally processing the powerful emotions.

How long does the treatment take?

The treatment typically consists of 16 sessions of 45 to 60 minutes that take place, preferably, on a weekly basis.

Is BEPP effective?

BEPP is an effective therapy to treat the posttraumatic stress disorder. As much has been demonstrated in internationally published studies. Most clients state that they feel considerably better after the treatment and that they have gained insight into their own functioning. Some people may continue to have residual complaints in some reduced ways, such as diminished concentration. This goes, as far as we know, for all treatments that target trauma processing.

For more information, including some brief films, please go to www.traumabehandeling.net

Are there any side effects?

After a treatment session you will often be troubled more for a few days by the memories you called to mind during the treatment. That is a sign of your working through them. But ultimately, the complaints will diminish. You can discuss with your therapist what you could do to deal with these reactions as well as possible. It may at first be difficult to give sufficient attention to your work and to those at home. The education you receive during the treatment is also meant to help you tackle this and explain matters to others.

ARQ Centrum'45 is *the* Dutch national centre for specialist diagnostics and treatment of people with complex psychotrauma complaints.

www.arqcentrum45.org

Bezoekadres

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Locatie Oegstgeest

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088 - 330 55 11





How does BEPP work?

BEPP helps you to allow in and access painful feelings and thoughts, and to process these; also, it helps you get a grip on your life again. The treatment in particular targets memories, thoughts and feelings related to the traumatic event and the impact they have had on your life. Each session of this treatment has its own specific goal. Below you will find a description of what happens during the sessions. It is possible that some part needs more or less time. In other words, this is a guideline, not a prescription. During the first session you will receive information about PTSD and the content of the treatment. You will be asked to briefly talk about the traumatic event(s) you have been through. You are very welcome to bring your partner or someone else to support you to this first session. In the next sessions (sessions 2 to 6) your therapist will encourage you to recall the details of the trauma. A brief relaxation exercise precedes this, where you by turns tense and relax your muscles, to help you concentrate better. Next, you recount the traumatic event as if you were experiencing it now. In order to make the memories as vivid as possible, you will be asked to bring an object with you to the therapy session that is related to the trauma. This could be a photograph, a legal statement, an item of clothing or a bag. The therapist helps you to access and re-experience the painful emotions and memories. Ahead of this session, people understandably often dread having to relive their experiences thus. But practice has shown that it will finally provide relief and liberation from the symptoms. And afterwards, it is exactly this part that people usually mention as having been the most important in processing the trauma.



For homework you will be asked to write a letter. This letter is directed at a person or an institution that you hold responsible for the trauma or its consequences. The letter is meant to express your anger about the (feeling of)

injustice that you were done. After all, feelings of annoyance and anger are unpleasant symptoms of PTSD. You are not supposed to actually send the letter, so language or grammar are not important. Often, traumas are also accompanied by grief over people and children who were killed or, sometimes, who died at other times. Writing a letter may also serve as a way to say good-bye to them.

About halfway through the treatment (session 7) you, together with your therapist and your partner or another support figure, assess the result of the treatment so far. Together, you look at what improvements you have made, and what sort of problems you still face. The therapy can then be adjusted as needed.

After all the details and painful emotions associated with the trauma have been completely recalled again, the PTSD complaints usually diminish considerably. However, going through a traumatic event and its consequences leaves a deep impression. That is why the subsequent sessions (8 to 15) address the impact the events have had on you. In what ways has it changed your ideas and thoughts about yourself and the world? You thus learn from the experience whether you have regained your trust in others and in yourself. Family members and others can also be involved in this stage. And, if necessary, your work resumption could also be an area to pay attention to.

In the last session you look back on the treatment. Together with your therapist you reflect on what you have learnt and on how you could continue to use this in future. Closure of the treatment deserves special attention. After all, the trauma has controlled your life for a long time. Your PTSD complaints are now largely over. That means that a distressing period in your life has come to an end. Together with your nearest and dearest, you will give a personal and special touch to your farewell to this unpleasant period and to the celebration of better times ahead (farewell ritual). Your therapist will encourage you and help you with your plans.

Questions?

Please direct all your questions to your NET therapist or your main therapist.