

# EMDR and stalking: a multiple baseline trail on reducing the urge to stalk

Published: 19-05-2016

Last updated: 20-04-2024

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<b>Ethical review</b>	Not approved
<b>Status</b>	Will not start
<b>Health condition type</b>	Impulse control disorders NEC
<b>Study type</b>	Interventional

## Summary

### ID

NL-OMON43549

### Source

ToetsingOnline

### Brief title

EMDR and stalking

### Condition

- Impulse control disorders NEC

### Synonym

Interloper, Obsessional Following

### Research involving

Human

### Sponsors and support

**Primary sponsor:** De Forensische Zorgspecialisten (DFZ)

**Source(s) of monetary or material Support:** De Forensische Zorgspecialisten

## Intervention

**Keyword:** EMDR, Rejected stalker, Stalking

## Outcome measures

### Primary outcome

The primary study parameter is the self reported urge to stalk. Every session in the study (treatment as usual and EMDR) will start with the question to the participant to report the urge to stalk at that very moment, thinking of their (ex)partner and what they hope to achieve in the relation with their (ex) partner.

Clients will score a 11-point scale in which the zero stands for no urge and the eleven for maximum urge. A same 11-point scale will be used during the EMDR sessions to score the intensity of positive feelings. (Shapiro, 1989; Wolpe, 1982).

### Secondary outcome

The secondary outcome of the study is to answer the question if the intensity of the reported tension, positive and/or negative, during the EMDR sessions, is correlated with the measured physiological arousal.

The expectation is that the, during the EMDR sessions reported Levels of Positive Affect (LoPA), Levels of Urge (LoU) and Subjective Unit of Distress (SUD) will correlate with the physiological arousal, in the form of reactivity in skin conductance (positive) and HRV (negative).

Physiological arousal will be explorative measured with the Empatica E4 wristwatch, an instrument that measures heart rate, skin conductance and body

temperature. They will wear the wristband during the whole time of the EMDR session. This method was chosen because it is the least intrusive method of the physiological instruments in the hope it will not interfere with the decision to participate in the study.

During the four EMDR sessions will the participants be asked to report the level of tension (LoPA, Level of Positive affect and SUD, Subjective Unit of Distress) and the level of urge to stalk (LoU, Level of Urge).

Measurements of skin conductance and heart rate (from which the Heart Rate Variability will be calculated) will be done during all four EMDR sessions.

From this data 6 correlation coefficients will be calculated between the physiological measures and the self reported data.

## Study description

### Background summary

Within the forensic mental health services exists a demand for the development of focused interventions and/or guidelines for the treatment of specific problem behavior. For domestic violence there exist several treatment programs, but for stalking, which is sometimes part of the domestic violence, no such program exists. This study hopes to be the first start for developing such a program. This study will examine if the intervention Eye Movement and Reprocessing (EMDR) is effective in reducing the urge to stalk.

The hypothesis is that EMDR treatment of stalkers, according to the addiction protocol of Miller (2010), will lead to a significant decrease in the urge to stalk.

The idea that EMDR could be a suitable intervention comes from the already published research of treating addiction problems with EMDR (see page 15 research protocol). Stalking is by many seen as obsessive behavior where one may suspect that a lot of the same mechanisms play a role as in addiction and therefore can be influenced with a EMDR treatment. (see research protocol page 15 and 16).

### Study objective

The objective of this study is primarily to answer the question if the EMDR Feeling State Addiction Protocol van Miller (2010), can contribute in reducing the urge to stalk. Participating clients are in treatment at De Waag (a out patient forensic psychiatric centre in The Netherlands with various offices)

Based on this objective the following hypothesis is formulated:  
It is expected that EMDR treatment of stalkers according to the addiction protocol from Miller (2010), will lead to a significant decrease in the self reported urge to stalk.

## **Study design**

The study concerns a multiple baseline study (N=1). This design was chosen because of the small number of clients in forensic treatment. Stalkers who are just started with treatment and those who are already in treatment are included in the study. All participants will get at some moment, the experimental intervention. A serie of pre measurements will serve as a baseline which can be compared with post measurements. The four experimental EMDR sessions will be inserted at different times in the treatment as usual so the added value of the experimental treatment can be beter evaluated.

After informed consent, participants will be explicitly measured the first following appointment on their positive feelings about stalking at that moment, as in every following session, treatment as usual and EMDR during the study. These measurements will be done at the beginning of the session. (See table 1, research protocol C1, pag. 18).

During the four EMDR sessions will, according to the protocol, the Levels of Possitive Affect (LoPA), Levels of Urge (LoU) and Subjective Units of Distress (SUD) be measured. The LoPA and LoU measure positive feelings. The SUD is used to measure negative feelings. During the session, on average, the LoPA/LoU and SUD meting will be measured 15 times. Skin conductance and hartbeat, from with the HRV will be calculated, are measured during the hole session.

## **Intervention**

Every participant will get four EMDR sessions from one hour. For further details see the researchprotocol pages 20 to 23.

## **Study burden and risks**

Thera are no safety risks associated with the treatment. The treatment can elicit negative feelings because difficult, sensitive and private topics are discussed. Clinical practice has shown that such feelings are well tolerated and can even be beneficial to the processing proces of the problems. Further it is possible that participants will need some time to get accostumed to wearing the special wristwatch which measures physical arousal during the

EMDR sessions.

The burden implies four treatment sessions of one hour and 8 treatment as usual sessions in which only at the beginning of the sessions a few short questions will be asked (max two minutes). In the first EMDR session and in the last session of the study participants fill in two short questionnaires (2x20 min) Participants are at any time free to prematurely end their participation, without this having any negative consequences for the rest of their treatment.

## Contacts

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## Trial sites

### Listed location countries

Netherlands

## Eligibility criteria

### **Age**

Adults (18-64 years)

Elderly (65 years and older)

### Inclusion criteria

Age between 18 and 70 years

Stalking behavior

Rejected stalker type

In treatment at De Waag

## Exclusion criteria

Presence of a severe psychiatric state like a psychotic disorder, depressive disorder, bipolar or organic mental disorder

Insufficient Dutch language skills

Age under 18 or above 70 years

three times in a row the urge score is zero on the pre measurements

## Study design

### Design

Study phase:	2
Study type:	Interventional
Masking:	Open (masking not used)
Control:	Uncontrolled
Primary purpose:	Treatment

### Recruitment

NL	
Recruitment status:	Will not start
Enrollment:	25
Type:	Anticipated

## Ethics review

Not approved	
Date:	19-05-2016
Application type:	First submission
Review commission:	METC Erasmus MC, Universitair Medisch Centrum Rotterdam (Rotterdam)

## Study registrations

### Followed up by the following (possibly more current) registration

No registrations found.

### Other (possibly less up-to-date) registrations in this register

No registrations found.

### In other registers

Register	ID
CCMO	NL56529.078.16