

Early crisis intervention from the AIP perspective in multiple scenarios

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In the past decade, the Italian EMDR Association has provided acute phase interventions to children and adults struck by natural and manmade disasters, within the first three months following a traumatic event. Community disasters impact entire groups of people and can compromise physical infrastructure, as well as social texture. Representing a risk factor for the development of severe mental health problems in adults and children (Fletcher, 2003), every country must develop well-established psychological interventions to be implemented on a wide scale within the first month following the traumatic exposure (Council of Europe, 2007). In Italy, during the initial acute phases, about 1000 children and nearly as many adults have been treated with the EMDR group protocol (Artigas & Jarero, 2000), as well as with the individual protocol (Shapiro, 2008). Among these were victims of violent man caused traumas, and whose community, including family members, schoolmates, sons and daughters, as well as parents affected by infanticides and feminicides - developed serious emotional responses.

We will discuss efficient EMDR healing interventions addressing wound recovery in affected communities and families. We will illustrate the conceptualization of a complex community-based postdisaster psychological intervention: communicating bad news within a few hours after the critical event, guidelines to accompanying to mortuary, brief, mid-range and long-term therapy, as well as examine every phase related to the resolution of trauma starting from the moment the event occurred.

We will present effectiveness results of individual and group-based EMDR interventions operationalized in Italy.