



**For Immediate Release**

**Press Contact: Christopher Davis/ Kelly Kapaun  
805/687-3322**

## **Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing Helping Patients and Clients at Hospice of Santa Barbara**

**March 14, 2011, Santa Barbara, CA**—Hospice of Santa Barbara seeks to utilize the most effective therapies to help their clients and patients through the difficult and painful experiences that come with grief and loss. Complimentary therapies for existing clients and patients work in concert with more conventional treatments to care for the ‘whole’ person. Complementary Therapies, such as massage therapy, cranial sacral therapy, Reiki, and others can alleviate suffering and heal the mind and spirit. Hospice of Santa Barbara counselors will sometimes refer a patient or client for one or more complimentary therapies to address specific issues that may surface in standard talk therapy.

One new treatment which a number of Hospice of Santa Barbara counselors use is EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing); a short-term treatment modality utilizing eye movement to process trauma.

Trauma gets stored in a part of the brain (the hippocampus) with all the original raw and vivid imagery sensations and thoughts. During EMDR, this material gets re-processed and stored in to different “files” of the brain, allowing the client to become more objective about the trauma. Clients come to a place of being able to remember the trauma without being flooded by painful and disturbing images and sensations. This technique is completely non-invasive and involves something called dual stimulation using bilateral eye movements, tones or taps. During the reprocessing phases the client recalls past memories, present triggers, or anticipated future experiences while simultaneously focusing on a set of external stimulus. During that time, clients generally experience the emergence of insight, changes in memories, or new more positive associations.

Many Hospice of Santa Barbara counselors have been trained in EMDR and are using it with their clients with great effectiveness. Clients often report feeling comforted and relieved in a way that talk therapy alone is unable to do.

“This added tool does not take away or replace the need for counseling, but it can complement it,” said Steve Jacobsen, Executive Director of Hospice of Santa Barbara. “The need for sharing grief in ‘talk’ therapy and group settings is still very essential to our work.”

Hospice of Santa Barbara, Inc. is a Volunteer Hospice Organization that provides care to anyone experiencing the impact of a life-threatening illness, or grieving the death of a loved one.

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