



The Multiple Benefits to Walk and Talk Therapy

I always suggest to the couples that I counsel, when working on building a closer connection, to walk and talk together and share with each other about their day. The left and right step movement results in a greater connection. Let me explain further.

I began to realize, first noticing that as I spoke to friends or clients over the phone, when walking and pacing back and forth, I was able to think more creatively and express myself at a deeper level. Around the same time, practicing EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization Reprocessing) therapy, where I lead my clients with eye movements, left to right horizontal sweeps or tapping with bi-lateral movements, I came to understand that walking produces similar bi-lateral processing. (*See the EMDR page for further explanation on how this therapy helps to reprocess memories*). The left to right body stimulation while walking facilitates processing the issues through the workings of the brain, causing a deeper level of consciousness and increased connection.

Walk and Talk Therapy is also effective, according to the research, exercise stimulates our endorphins, the neurotransmitters that block pain and increases feelings of pleasure. Research also supports that exercise can be an alternative to medication for patients with depression.

In a recent article from the American Psychological Association written by Kirsten Weir and titled, Exercise Effect, states that James Blumenthal, PhD, a clinical psychologist at Duke University, found a mood-exercise connection through a series of randomized controlled trials. In one such study, he and his colleagues assigned sedentary adults with major depressive disorder to one of four groups: supervised exercise, home-based exercise, antidepressant therapy or a placebo pill. After four months of treatment, Blumenthal found, patients in the exercise and antidepressant groups had higher rates of remission than did the patients on the placebo. Exercise, he concluded, was generally comparable to antidepressants for patients with major depressive disorder (Psychosomatic Medicine, 2007).

Walk and Talk Therapy is a great way to improve mood, enhance a more open social connection, getting to the roots of your issues while helping you to move forward to attaining your goals.

Come Walk with Me!!