

Participant Information Sheet**1. Title of Study**

The Embodied Witness: A Reflexive Thematic Analysis of EMDR Accredited Practitioners' Lived Experience, Somatic Resonance, and Post-traumatic Growth in the Treatment of Complex PTSD

2. Version Number and Date

Version 1.1

Date: 01.09.2026

3. Invitation to Take Part

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide whether to participate, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and feel free to ask if anything is unclear or if you would like more information. You are also welcome to discuss this with colleagues or others if you wish.

Participation is entirely voluntary. You do not have to take part, and choosing not to participate will not affect you in any way.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information.

4. Eligibility Criteria

To take part in this study, you must meet all of the following inclusion criteria:

- Be an **EMDR-accredited Practitioner or Consultant**.
- Be currently practising within the UK.
- Self-report having experience of working therapeutically with clients presenting with Complex PTSD (CPTSD).
- Be able to provide informed consent.

- Be able to participate in an interview conducted in spoken English or with appropriate communication support (e.g. a British Sign Language interpreter arranged by the participant).

You will not be able to take part if you:

- Are a current or former client of the researcher.
- Are a current or former supervisee of the researcher.
- Consider yourself to be experiencing significant distress, crisis, burnout, or vicarious distress that may make participation difficult or affect your wellbeing during the interview.
- Are unable to provide informed consent or participate in an interview conducted in spoken English or with appropriate communication support.

5. What is the purpose of the study?

This study explores how accredited Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing (EMDR) practitioners experience the emotional, bodily, and relational aspects of working with clients who have experienced Complex Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (CPTSD).

While EMDR is a well-established therapy, less is known about how therapists experience this work in practice. This research aims to better understand how practitioners notice, interpret, and manage their own emotional and bodily responses, how they navigate challenging moments in therapy, and how this work may impact them professionally.

The study is also interested in how practitioners experience and utilise somatic awareness, relational attunement, and co-regulation within the therapeutic relationship. In addition, it will explore how practitioners understand the relationship between these experiences, how they might influence therapy outcomes, vicarious distress, and post-traumatic growth.

The findings may help to inform EMDR training, supervision, practitioner wellbeing, and understanding of factors that support effective and sustainable trauma therapy.

6. Why have I been invited

You are invited to consider participating because this study is seeking EMDR-accredited practitioners and consultants actively working in the UK who report experience of working with clients presenting with Complex Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (CPTSD).

Participation is open to EMDR-accredited practitioners and consultants currently practising in the UK who meet these criteria and are willing to take part in a 60–90 minute online interview conducted in spoken English or with appropriate communication support.

Participants who use British Sign Language (BSL) are welcome to take part if they are able to arrange their own interpreter. Any interpreter involved in the study will be required to adhere to confidentiality and data protection requirements.

You should not take part if you are currently experiencing significant personal distress, burnout, compassion fatigue, vicarious distress, or any other circumstances that may make participation emotionally demanding at this time. Potential participants are encouraged to consider their current wellbeing before deciding whether to participate.

The study aims to recruit approximately 10–12 participants.

7. Do I have to take part?

No. Participation is entirely voluntary. You are free to decide whether or not to take part.

If you choose to participate, you may stop the interview at any time without giving a reason and without any disadvantage. You will also have the opportunity to withdraw your data for up to four weeks following the interview. Full details of the withdrawal process are provided in Section 13.

This Participant Information Sheet is provided to help you decide whether you would like to take part in the study. Please allow yourself at least two weeks to consider the information before completing the online Consent Form within Qualtrics. If, after this time, you decide to participate, please complete the Consent Form within Qualtrics. Once your completed consent form has been received, the researcher will contact you to arrange a mutually convenient interview.

8. What will happen if I take part?

If you agree to take part, you will be invited to participate in a one-to-one semi-structured interview lasting approximately 60–90 minutes.

Before the interview, you will be asked to complete an online consent form. Once consent has been received, the researcher will contact you to arrange a mutually convenient interview date and time.

The interview will:

- Take place online via Microsoft Teams using the researcher's University of Lancashire account.
- Be conducted by the researcher, Carly Morgan, an EMDR Consultant and doctoral researcher.
- Last approximately 60–90 minutes.

- The interview will be recorded via Microsoft Teams with your consent. Participants may choose whether to have their camera switched on or off during the interview. If you choose to keep your camera switched off, no visual image of you will be captured in the recording.
- Take place on one occasion only. No follow-up interview will be required.

The interview will be conversational in style and guided by a series of open questions. You will be invited to reflect on your experiences of working with clients presenting with Complex Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (CPTSD), including:

- Emotional and bodily responses that arise during therapy.
- Experiences of somatic resonance, relational attunement, and co-regulation.
- Experiences of challenging therapeutic moments, including ruptures and repair.
- The impact of this work on you professionally.
- Your understanding of the relationship between these experiences, therapy outcomes, vicarious distress, and post-traumatic growth.

There are no right or wrong answers. You are simply being asked to share your experiences and reflections as an EMDR practitioner.

You are not required to disclose personal traumatic experiences or confidential client information. The focus of the interview is your professional experience of working with CPTSD.

Your responsibilities as a participant are to:

- Attend the interview at the agreed time.
- Engage with the interview questions to the extent that you feel comfortable.
- Avoid sharing information that could identify individual clients.
- Inform the researcher if you wish to pause, take a break, skip a question, or stop the interview.

You may pause the interview, decline to answer any question, take a break, or stop the interview at any time without giving a reason.

Following the interview, Microsoft Teams will generate an initial transcript. The researcher will manually review and correct the transcript against the audio recording to ensure accuracy before anonymising it and importing it into NVivo for analysis using Reflexive Thematic Analysis.

Participants who require communication support, such as a British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter, are welcome to participate provided that arrangements are made in advance and confidentiality requirements are met.

9. How will my data be used?

The University processes personal data as part of its research and teaching activities in accordance with the lawful basis of 'public task', and in accordance with the University's purpose of advancing education, learning and research for the public benefit.

Under UK data protection legislation, the University acts as the Data Controller for personal data collected as part of the University's research.

The University privacy notice for research participants can be found at:

<https://www.lancashire.ac.uk/legal/privacy-notice/research-participants>

This study may collect information relating to participants' professional experiences, emotional responses, wellbeing, and experiences of working with trauma. Such information will only be collected where participants choose to discuss it and will be processed for research purposes in accordance with UK data protection legislation and University research governance procedures.

Further information about how your data will be used is provided below.

Question	Information
How will my data be collected?	Contact details and consent will be collected via University-approved systems, including Qualtrics for the online consent form. Research data will be collected through a semi-structured interview conducted via Microsoft Teams using the researcher's University of Lancashire account. The interview will be recorded via Microsoft Teams with participant consent. Participants may choose whether to have their camera switched on or off during the interview. If a participant chooses to keep their camera switched off, no visual image of the participant will be captured in the recording.
How will my data be stored?	Interview recordings, transcripts and consent forms will be stored on secure, encrypted University of Lancashire Microsoft 365 systems, including OneDrive. Identifiable information will be stored separately from research data.
How long will my data be stored for?	Anonymised transcripts and consent forms will be retained securely for up to seven years in accordance with University policy.
What measures are in place to protect the	All electronic files will be password protected and stored on secure University systems. Identifiable information will be stored separately from research data. Appropriate technical and

Question	Information
security and confidentiality of my data?	organisational measures will be used to protect confidentiality and data security.
Will my data be anonymised?	Yes. Microsoft Teams will generate an initial transcript. The researcher will manually review and correct the transcript against the audio recording before anonymising it. Participants will be assigned a pseudonym and any identifying information will be removed before analysis begins.
How will my data be used?	Interview data will be transcribed, anonymised and analysed using Reflexive Thematic Analysis, a qualitative method used to identify and interpret patterns and themes within participants' accounts. The analysis will explore practitioners' experiences of working with CPTSD, including emotional, bodily and relational processes, somatic resonance, co-regulation, therapy outcomes, vicarious distress, and post-traumatic growth. Anonymous quotations may be included in the doctoral thesis, academic publications, conference presentations and other research outputs arising from the study.
Who will have access to my data?	Only the researcher will have access to identifiable participant data, including interview recordings, transcripts, consent forms and contact details. Supervisors may be shown anonymised extracts of data where necessary for academic supervision and oversight.
Will my data be archived for future research projects?	No. The data collected for this study will only be used for the purposes described in this information sheet.
How will my data be destroyed?	Interview recordings will be deleted once transcription has been completed and checked for accuracy. Contact details used to arrange interviews will be deleted following the interview. Anonymised transcripts and consent forms will be retained securely for seven years before being confidentially destroyed in accordance with University policy.

No personal data will be transferred outside the United Kingdom.

10. Are there any risks in taking part?

There is a possibility of emotional discomfort during the interview, as you will be reflecting on your experiences of working with clients with complex trauma. This may include reflecting on emotional responses or past experiences of vicarious trauma.

You are not required to share personal traumatic experiences.

If you feel uncomfortable at any point, you may pause, skip questions, or stop the interview.

If you experience distress, you are encouraged to inform the researcher. A break can be taken, or the interview can be stopped.

You may also wish to access your usual professional support structures, including clinical supervision, peer support, occupational support, or personal therapy, where appropriate.

11. Are there any benefits from taking part?

There are no direct benefits to taking part in this study.

However, your participation may contribute to a better understanding of therapists' experiences of working with complex trauma, which may help inform training, supervision, and practitioner wellbeing in the future.

12. Expenses and payments

There are no payments or expenses associated with participation.

13. What will happen to the results of the study?

The findings from this study will form part of a doctoral thesis submitted to the University of Lancashire.

The completed thesis will be publicly available through the University of Lancashire's online research repository. Findings may also be published in peer-reviewed academic journals and presented at academic or professional conferences.

Participants will not be identifiable in any reports, publications, presentations, or other outputs arising from this study. Any quotations used will be anonymised.

Participants who wish to access the findings will be able to do so through the University repository once the thesis has been successfully completed and published.

14. What will happen if I want to stop taking part?

You may stop the interview at any time without giving a reason. Following the interview, you may withdraw your data for up to four weeks by contacting the researcher. After this period, your data will have been anonymised and incorporated into the analysis, meaning it will no longer be possible to identify or remove your individual contribution.

15. Who has reviewed this study

This study has been reviewed and approved by the appropriate Ethics Review Panel at the University of Lancashire.

[reference number]

16. What if I am unhappy or there is a problem?

If you are unhappy or have any concerns, please contact the researcher:

Carly Morgan

CEMorgan1@lancashire.ac.uk

If you remain unhappy or wish to make a complaint, you can contact:

OfficerForEthics@lancashire.ac.uk

If you have concerns about how your data is handled, you can contact the Information Commissioner's Office on 0303 123 1113.

17. Contact for further information

Researcher: Carly Morgan

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Supervisor: Marie Percival

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