



Client's Full Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

## EMDR INFORMED CONSENT

### EMDR as a Treatment Modality

Eye Movement Desensitization & Reprocessing (**EMDR**) is a form of therapy that utilizes bilateral stimulation (BLS) usually in the form of eye movements, tapping or auditory tones in order to accelerate the brain's capacity to process and heal a troubling memory, thought, feeling, or phobia. BLS stimulates the same eye movements which occur during Rapid Eye Movement (REM) or dream sleep. BLS causes two parts of the brain to work in conjunction in order to reintegrate a memory. Some clients can experience relief or positive effects in just a few sessions and others need more sessions. EMDR is effective in treating trauma-related symptoms, whether the traumatic event occurred many years ago or yesterday.

As with any other therapeutic approach, reprocessing traumatic memories can be uncomfortable; that means some people will not like or will not be able to tolerate EMDR treatment at first and may need more preparation, offered by the clinician, before processing traumatic events using EMDR. There are no known adverse effects for interrupting EMDR therapy; therefore, you can discontinue treatment at any time. Alternative therapeutic approaches may include individual or group therapy, medication, or a different psychotherapy modality on an individual basis.

Research has demonstrated that EMDR is effective for the treatment of Post-Traumatic Stress, phobias, panic attacks, anxiety disorders, stress, sexual and physical abuse, disturbing memories, complicated grief, chronic pain and much more.

### Benefits of EMDR

- The memory or event is remembered, but the painful emotions and physical sensations, disturbing images and thoughts are no longer present.
- EMDR helps the brain reintegrate the memory or event and store it in a more appropriate place in the brain. The client's own brain reintegrates the memory or event and does the healing.

### Risks of EMDR

- Reprocessing a memory or event may bring up associated memories. This is normal and those memories will also be reprocessed.
- During EMDR, a client may experience physical sensations and retrieve images, emotions, and sounds associated with the memory or event.
- Reprocessing of the memory or event normally continues after the end of the formal therapy session. Other memories, flashbacks, feelings, and sensations may occur. Clients may have dreams associated with the memory. Frequently the brain is able to process these additional memories without help, but arrangements for assistance will be made in a timely manner if the client is unable to cope following an EMDR session.

### *The client must...*

- Be able to tolerate high levels of emotional disturbance, have the ability to reprocess associated memories resulting from EMDR therapy, and to use self-control such as grounding skills and relaxation techniques such as calm place, diaphragmatic breathing.
- Disclose to their clinician and consult with their medical provider before EMDR therapy if the client has a history of current severe eye problems, a diagnosed heart disease, elevated blood pressure, or are at risk for or have a history of stroke, heart attack, seizure or other limiting medical conditions that may put the client at medical risk. Pregnant women should consult with their physician, due to the stress related to reprocessing some traumatic events, postponing may be appropriate in some cases.
- Inform their clinician if they wear contact lenses as they impede eye movements due to irritation or eye dryness. Your clinician will utilize other forms of bilateral stimulation.
- Before participating in EMDR, discuss with your clinician all aspects of an upcoming legal court case where testimony is required. The client may need to postpone EMDR treatment if you are the victim or witness to a crime that is being prosecuted because the traumatic material processed using EMDR may fade, blur or disappear and client's testimony may be challenged.
- Consult with their medical provider before utilizing medication. Some medications may reduce the effectiveness of EMDR, for example, benzodiazepines may reduce effectiveness possibly due to state-dependent processing and/or regression may occur after ceasing antidepressants.
- Understand that EMDR is contraindicated with recent cocaine users and long-term amphetamine users.



- Discuss with their clinician any dissociative disorders with little treatment progress. EMDR may trigger these symptoms, but may also be helpful in attempting to resolve them.

### Consent for EMDR Treatment

By signing below, the client indicates that they have reviewed this EMDR INFORMED CONSENT, understand the outcomes of treatment with EMDR, understand THE MENTAL HEALTH STOP's policy, understand that consent can be withdrawn at any time, and the client assumes any risk involved in participation.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Client's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

### Declination for EMDR Treatment

By signing below, the client indicates that they have reviewed this EMDR INFORMED CONSENT, understand the outcomes of treatment with EMDR, understand THE MENTAL HEALTH STOP's policy, and declined to engage in EMDR treatment.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Client's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

### Declination for EMDR Treatment After Consent

By signing below, the client indicates that they have reviewed this EMDR INFORMED CONSENT, understand the outcomes of treatment with EMDR, understand THE MENTAL HEALTH STOP's policy, and client previously consented to EMDR treatment, however client declines to engage in EMDR treatment further.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Client's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date