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**EMDR INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

Please initial each box after you have read the material.

For most people, most memories tend to be stored as just the story of what happened with a few vivid images. Memories for stressful and traumatic experiences can be stored in the brain with vivid pictures, sounds, thoughts, feelings and body sensations. EMDR reactivates these different parts of disturbing memories and allows the brain to reprocess the experience. This is what normally happens in REM or dream sleep—that is why we wake up feeling differently about experiences from the day before that were still upsetting when we went to sleep. The alternating eye movements (tones, tactile stimulation) that we use in EMDR help the brain to reprocess the way information is stored in the brain. It is your brain's own ability to heal that will be doing all the work, and you will be in control.

\_\_\_\_\_ (INITIAL)

When we work with disturbing memories, you may re-experience the physical sensations, emotions, images or sounds from the original experience. These can sometimes be fairly vivid at first. With reprocessing these tend to fade until they are no longer disturbing. After reprocessing is complete they will be just like memories for most experiences—with the story of what happened, but without disturbing images, sensations or emotions. \_\_\_\_\_ (INITIAL)

During reprocessing people often make new connections and gain new insights. Occasionally during reprocessing people remember experiences they had forgotten about or deliberately suppressed. By consenting to EMDR treatment, you acknowledge that you are ok with this. \_\_\_\_\_ (INITIAL)

Scientific research has established EMDR as effective for the treatment of post traumatic stress, phobias, panic attacks, anxiety disorders, stress, sexual and physical abuse, disturbing memories, complicated grief and addictions. \_\_\_\_\_ (INITIAL)

**The possible risks of EMDR treatment include the following:**

- Reprocessing of the memory normally continues after the end of the formal therapy session. Other memories, flashbacks, feelings and sensations may occur. You 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 needed. \_\_\_\_\_ (INITIAL)

As with any other therapeutic approach, reprocessing traumatic memories can be uncomfortable; that means some people won't like or be able to tolerate EMDR treatment well. Others need more preparation, offered by the therapist, before processing traumatic events using EMDR.

- There is no known adverse effects of interrupting EMDR therapy; therefore, a client can discontinue treatment at any time.
- Alternative therapeutic approaches may include individual or group therapy, medication, or a different psychotherapy modality.
- EMDR treatment is facilitated by a licensed psychotherapist having EMDRIA-approved training. \_\_\_\_\_(INITIAL)

## HISTORY AND SAFETY FACTORS

You must ...

- be willing to tell the therapist the truth about what you are experiencing . \_\_\_\_\_(INITIAL)
- 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 and relaxation techniques (eg. calm place exercise). \_\_\_\_\_(INITIAL)
- remember debriefing instructions and call your therapist, connect with supportive family or friends, or use meditation or other techniques (eg. calm place exercise) you have agreed to in therapy, if needed. \_\_\_\_\_(INITIAL)
- disclose to therapist and consult with your physician before EMDR therapy if you have a history of or current 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 you at medical risk. Due to stress related to reprocessing traumatic events, pregnant women should consider postponing EMDR therapy. \_\_\_\_\_(INITIAL)
- inform therapist if you are wearing contact lenses and will remove them if they impede eye movements due to irritation or eye dryness. The therapist will discontinue bilateral stimulation (BLS) eye movements if client reports eye pain and use other dual stimulation (tapping, sounds) to continue reprocessing. \_\_\_\_\_(INITIAL)
- you may need the ability to postpone demanding work schedule immediately following EMDR session. \_\_\_\_\_(INITIAL)
- before participating in EMDR, discuss with therapist all aspects of an upcoming legal court case where testimony is required. You may need to postpone EMDR treatment if you are a victim or witness to a crime that is being prosecuted because the traumatic material processed using EMDR may fade, blur or disappear and your testimony may be challenged. \_\_\_\_\_(INITIAL)
- understand disagreements with family and/or friends may occur as you learns new skills such as assertiveness or social skills after processing problems and disturbing material using EMDR. Vulnerable clients may need to be protected. \_\_\_\_\_(INITIAL)
- be willing to explore the issues(s) that may arise as change occurs. For example, changes regarding your identity; finances; loss of identification with a peer group; and/or attention. \_\_\_\_\_(INITIAL)
- consult with your medical doctor, 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 anti-depressants. \_\_\_\_\_(INITIAL)

- address with the therapist your ability to participate in EMDR due to recent cocaine dependence, long term amphetamine abuse, seizures, and/or other neurological conditions. EMDR is contraindicated with recent crack cocaine users and long term amphetamine users \_\_\_\_\_ (INITIAL)
- discuss with the therapist any Dissociative Disorders; Dissociative Identity Disorder unexplained somatic symptoms, sleep problems, flashbacks, derealization and/or depersonalization, hears voices, unexplained feelings, memory lapses, multiple psychiatric hospitalizations, and multiple diagnoses with little treatment progress. EMDR may trigger these symptoms \_\_\_\_\_ (INITIAL)

I have read and understand the possible outcomes of EMDR listed above and understand I can end EMDR therapy at any time. I agree to participate in EMDR treatment and I assume any risks involved in such participation:

NAME (PRINTED):

\_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_