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Informed Consent EMDR therapy



EMDR was developed in the late 1980's. It currently has more scientific research as a treatment for trauma than any other therapy method. The experience with EMDR by clinicians using it suggests that it may be a very effective tool and that rapid progress may be made with improved processing of traumatic information. It seems in many instances to assist in a different kind of processing of traumatic information with better integration and perspective. It also appears that it may avoid some of the long and difficult abreactive work often involved in the treatment of anxiety, panic attack, post-traumatic stress symptoms (such as intrusive thoughts, nightmares, and flashbacks), other traumatic experiences, depression and phobias.

It is not unusual for a target memory to be linked to other, unexpected material. It is important to note that traumatic material retrieved in any psychotherapy may or may not be historically accurate and is subject to a variety of contamination as are all memories. EMDR does not, in itself, guarantee the accuracy of the retrieved material but may process information whether it is accurate or not. The only way to actually validate retrieved material as historically accurate would be through independent verification. Individuals have been demonstrated to experience information so vividly that they have complete confidence in it as accurate memory. Psychotherapy and EMDR cannot absolutely differentiate between memories that are accurate, distorted, or false based on reports alone in the absence of corroborating data.

Those with limiting or special medical conditions (seizure conditions, pregnancy, heart conditions, eye conditions, etc.) should consult their medical professionals before participating in this therapeutic method. Certain medications such as benzodiazepines and narcotics for pain may reduce the effects of EMDR. There must be an emotional charge (e.g. crying, distress at the memory of the event) for processing to occur. Medications that flatten affect or reduce all anxiety will likely interfere with the EMDR process. If this applies to you, you should consult your psychiatrist or medical doctor.

EMDR may reduce the emotional charge of the incident. You may lose the vividness of the details and your emotional reaction to the incident may decrease. While this would be beneficial for your emotional well being, it may change the tone of any legal testimony you are involved with (e.g. you may not become tearful on the stand). If this concerns you, you should consult with your attorney.

I have been specifically advised of the following:

- a) Distressing, unresolved memories might surface through the use of the EMDR procedure.
- b) Some clients have experienced reactions during the treatment sessions that neither they nor the administering clinician may have anticipated, including a high level of emotion or physical sensations.
- c) Subsequent to the treatment session, the processing of incidents/material may continue and other dreams, memories, flashbacks, feelings, etc., may surface. If this happens, write them down in your log and bring them to the next session. Also, you may contact me directly.

Before commencing EMDR treatment, I have thoroughly considered all of the above. I have obtained whatever additional input and/or professional advice I deemed necessary or appropriate to having this treatment. By my signature below I hereby give my Informed Consent to receiving EMDR treatment free from pressure or influence from any person or entity.

Signature of Client: _____ date _____