

Mindfulness Counseling Services LLC

EMDR Informed Consent

(Please read and initial each statement.)

EMDR is a simple but efficient therapy using bilateral stimulation (BLS) – eye movements, tapping, auditory tones or light – to accelerate the brain's capacity to process and heal a troubling memory. BLS, which occurs naturally during dream sleep, causes the two brain parts to work together to reintegrate the memory. Some clients experience relief or positive effects in just a few sessions. EMDR is effective in alleviating trauma-related symptoms, whether the traumatic event occurred many years ago or yesterday. EMDR gives desired results –with little talking, without using drugs, and requires no “homework” between sessions. _____

Scientific research has established EMDR as effective for the treatment of PTSD, sexual and physical abuse, disturbing memories, complicated grief, addictions, phobias, anxiety disorders and other challenges. _____

The possible benefits of EMDR treatment include the following:

- The memory is remembered but the painful emotions and physical sensations and the disturbing images and thoughts are no longer present. _____
- The brain reintegrates the memory and stores it in a more appropriate place in the brain. The client's own brain reintegrates the memory and does the healing. _____

The possible risks of EMDR treatment include the following:

- Reprocessing a memory may bring up associated memories. This is normal and those memories will also be reprocessed. _____
- During EMDR, the client may experience physical sensations and retrieve images, emotions and sounds associated with the memory. _____
- Reprocessing of the memory may continue after the end of the formal therapy session. Other memories, flashbacks, feelings and sensations may occur. The client 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. _____

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 are no known adverse effects of interrupting EMDR therapy; therefore, a client can discontinue treatment at any time. _____

For EMDR to be most effective, the client needs to:

- Be willing to tell the therapist the truth about what he/she is experiencing. There are no right or wrong responses, but it is important for the therapist to know exactly what the client is experiencing in order to make appropriate treatment decisions _____
- 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 (i.e. calm place exercise). _____
- Remember and follow debriefing instructions which include: call his/her therapist, connect with supportive family or friends, and use meditation or other techniques (eg. calm place exercise) he/she has agreed to in therapy, if needed. _____

- Disclose to therapist and consult with his/her physician before EMDR therapy if he/she has a history of or current: eye problems, diagnosed heart disease, elevated blood pressure, or is at risk for or has a history of stroke, heart attack, seizure, or other limiting medical conditions that may put him/her at medical risk. Due to stress related to reprocessing traumatic events, pregnant women should consider postponing EMDR therapy. _____
- Inform therapist if he/she is wearing contact lenses and be willing to 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 an alternative method of BLS (i.e. tapping) to continue reprocessing. _____
- Assess his/her current life situation to determine EMDR suitability and timing. Client may need the ability to postpone demanding work schedule immediately following EMDR session, or schedule therapy appointments for late in the day or week in order to continue reprocessing of material from EMDR therapy. _____
- Before participating in EMDR, discuss with therapist all aspects of an upcoming legal court case where testimony is required. The client may need to postpone EMDR treatment if she/he is a victim or witness to a crime that is being prosecuted because the traumatic material processed using EMDR may fade, blur or disappear and her/his testimony may be challenged. _____
- Understand disagreements with family and/or friends may occur as she/he learns new skills such as assertiveness or social skills after processing problems and disturbing material using EMDR. Vulnerable clients may need to be protected. _____
- Be willing to explore the issues(s) that may arise as change occurs. For example, changes regarding your identity; loss of identification with a peer group; and/or attention. _____
- Consult with his/her medical doctor regarding medication usage. Some medications may reduce the effectiveness of EMDR. For example, benzodiazapines may reduce effectiveness possibly due to state-dependent processing and/or regression may occur after ceasing anti-depressants. _____
- Address with the therapist his/her ability to attend to 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. _____
- Discuss with the therapist any Dissociative Disorders; Dissociative Identity Disorder unexplained somatic symptoms, sleep problems, flashbacks, derealization and/or depersonalization, hearing voices, unexplained feelings, memory lapses, multiple psychiatric hospitalizations, multiple diagnoses with little treatment progress - EMDR may trigger these symptoms. _____

Acknowledgement and Consent:

My therapist has explained to me the reasons why the use of EMDR is recommended in my or my child’s treatment and that there are other options available to me should I decide not to use EMDR and not to give my informed consent. The therapist has provided me with an explanation about the nature of EMDR and my questions about EMDR have been answered. Before commencing EMDR treatment, I have considered all of the above and I have obtained whatever additional input and/or professional advice I deemed necessary or appropriate to having EMDR treatment and by my signature below I hereby consent to participating in EMDR treatment. I understand that I may stop treatment at any time before or during any EMDR session and that more than one EMDR session is usually necessary in the treatment. My signature on this acknowledgment and consent is free from pressure from any person or entity and I agree to hold harmless my EMDR therapist for any unpleasant or unexpected effects which may arise from my or my child’s experience with EMDR.

Client/ Guardian signature: _____ Date: _____

Therapist Signature: _____ Date: _____



mindfulness counseling