

## EMDR PROGRESS NOTES AND WORKSHEET

A therapist may use an Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) progress note to document and track the progress of a client's EMDR therapy sessions. EMDR is a specialized therapeutic approach that focuses on resolving traumatic experiences or distressing memories by integrating bilateral stimulation techniques, such as eye movements, taps, or auditory tones, to facilitate the processing of the trauma.

Here are some reasons why a therapist would use an EMDR progress note:

- **Treatment Planning.** The progress note allows the therapist to outline the client's treatment goals and objectives related to their trauma or distressing experiences. It helps establish a roadmap for therapy and provides a framework for tracking progress and evaluating the effectiveness of EMDR interventions.
- **Session Details.** The progress note documents the specifics of each EMDR session, including the date, duration, and any significant events or interventions used during the session. It may include details about the client's emotional and physiological responses, observed changes in affect or behavior, and notable insights or breakthroughs.
- **Target Identification.** EMDR progress notes include information about the specific targets or memories that were processed during the session. This includes details about the original traumatic event, associated negative beliefs, desired positive beliefs, and any shifts or changes in the client's beliefs or perceptions that occurred during the reprocessing.
- **Progress Evaluation.** Progress notes enable the therapist to monitor the client's progress over time. By documenting the client's subjective ratings of distress levels before and after each session, the therapist can track changes in the intensity of traumatic memories or triggers. This information helps the therapist assess the effectiveness of EMDR interventions and adjust the treatment plan if necessary.
- **Intervention Strategies.** The progress note allows the therapist to record the specific interventions or techniques used during each EMDR session. This may include details about the bilateral stimulation methods employed, any cognitive or emotional processing techniques applied, and variations in the standard EMDR protocol tailored to the client's needs.
- **Follow-up and Continuity of Care.** EMDR progress notes serve as a historical record and provide valuable information for future reference, ensuring continuity of care in case of therapist changes or breaks in treatment. The progress notes can be shared with other healthcare professionals involved in the client's care to provide a comprehensive understanding of the client's progress and treatment plan.

In clinical practice, proceed only after "Preparation Phase." Comments you may make to your client are in italics. For example, you may give these specific instructions: *"Often, we will be doing a simple check on what you are experiencing. I need to know from you exactly what is going on with as clear feedback as possible. Sometimes things will change and sometimes they won't. There are no "supposed to's" in this process. So just give as accurate feedback as you can as to what's happening without judging whether it should be happening or not. Just let whatever happens, happen."* Remember to tell the client about the STOP hand signal.





