**Narrative Exposure Therapy (NET) Consent**

Date:

Client Name:

Therapist Name:

Location/Agency:

**Explanation of NET Procedures**

It has been explained to me that I am experiencing post-traumatic stress symptoms related to extremely stressful events in my life. I have been offered and agreed to a clinical treatment called Narrative Exposure Therapy to address these symptoms. The treatment will require me to create a detailed report of my biography (my life), including traumatic events. With the support of the therapist, I will try to clarify my memories about the traumatic experiences. There will be 6-8 sessions once or twice a week that will each last around 60-120 minutes. In order to see how helpful this assistance might be for my symptoms, I will answer similar questions that were asked during the assessment at the end of treatment and within 3-6 months after.

**Risks and Discomforts**

I understand that in the course of treatment the recollections of the traumatic events will be encouraged and may cause personal stress. I understand that the recollections of events that have caused great personal stress may evoke feelings of anxiety and frustration.

**Benefits**

I understand that the benefits I will receive as a result of treatment may reduce the intensity and frequency of symptoms that arose from extremely stressful experiences.

**Agreement**

My signature indicates that the NET procedure has been explained to me (summary below) and I have agreed to this treatment.

Signature of Client: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(and parent/guardian if minor)

Signature of Therapist:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Points for Therapist to review with Client during prior to obtaining consent**

**NET Goals**

* Reduction of PTSD symptoms by confronting/exposing the client with the memories of the traumatic event. This is accomplished through EXPOSURE - imaginative reliving, emotional processing, reweaving hot and cold memory through the construction of a consistent document.
* Construction of a consistent document. This is accomplished through NARRATION of the client’s biography, especially the traumatic events and consequences - survivor testimony.

**NET Psychoeducation (1)**

Why do I experience symptoms?

Normalization ⇒ a normal response to an abnormal experience: “after what you have experienced, everyone would be distressed”

Legitimization ⇒ symptoms are an adaptive response to a survival situation in the past - limit functioning now

Use the particular symptoms of your client to explain:

*Hyperarousal*: “in a life-threatening situation is better to be over aroused, danger-focused, numb, etc., these bodily responses remained until now.”

*Avoidance:* “just like an inflammation, each time you ‘touched’ the past experience it hurt. Therefore you have quickly learned, not to ‘get in touch’ with these memories of the past.”

*Intrusions:* “memories come back - they intrude into your current life...day and night. All of a sudden you might get upset, anxious or detach from reality and all of this happens without you knowing why.”

**NET Psychoeducation (2)**

What are we going to do?

1. Imaginative Exposure

Example: “In order to successfully store the terrible things that have happened to you, we need to gain access to theses past events. We want to look at all the thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations you experienced during the incident. We want to explore them as completely as possible and go through the different incidences in in slow motion. This time, we will deliberately approach your experiences

together. If we manage to stay long enough with the event and the feelings and sensations you had during the incident, those terrible emotional reactions will go down, loose their gripping impact and fade out...I know it is hard to imagine, but I will help you, that this can become true for you, like it has for many others. We have learnt that talking in a guided way about your life experiences,

especially the most painful or frightening ones, can greatly ease the burden on you. Putting your sad and fearful feelings into words can help the trauma symptoms to disappear.”

**NET Psychoeducation (3)**

2. The Testimony

Example: “Together we will construct a detailed, comprehensive and meaningful narrative of your traumatic event(s). We want to fill in all the gaps and holes until the testimony is complete and your bad feelings about it and the pain dissolves and fear defuses. Our experience is that the more complete the narration gets the more the symptoms will decrease. Through the process of giving testimony about what has happened to you, we would like to provide the chance for you to do justice through the documentation of what you saw and went through. It will help you to reinstate a sense of dignity for yourself. I will therefore write down a complete testimony of what you have experienced in life. Documents like this counteract forgetfulness, ignorance and denial. We think that the past should not be forgotten.”

**NET Psychoeducation (4)**

The Process

Example: “Talking about the past takes time. We will have to meet about 6-8 times. Each time we will take about 60-120 minutes to talk to each other. This can be done in

the course of 6-8 weeks.”

Pre- and Post tests

Example: “Just like we had a diagnostic session in the beginning, making sure that the

symptoms you suffer related to a traumatic experience in your life, we want to know how you are doing after treatment. There will therefore be an interview after treatment and 3-6 months after treatment.”