

## Trauma Timeline

When doing trauma work, it is always important to have a good list of the traumas (both little t's and big T's) that individuals have experienced in their lifetime. Specifically when doing EMDR therapy, it is best practice to have all of the traumas identified so you are aware of what needs to be processed, what has already been processed, and what may come up during phase 4. I have several different ways that I get this list, one of which is the trauma timeline. What I like about the trauma timeline is that it can also help the therapist identify potential resources that could be enhanced during phase 2 of EMDR.

Instructions: Ask a client to draw a line horizontally on a piece of blank paper (you can use butcher paper if you want something larger). At the beginning of the line write birth, at the end of the line write present. Then instruct the client to do the following: *when considering your life from birth until now, what are things you would identify as traumatic, disturbing, or significant in a negative way? Mark them off and write brief descriptions below the line in chronological order of when they happened. (After client completes this), now on the top part of the line, can you write significant positive events or people that have been in your life from birth till now and write brief descriptions or names in chronological order.*

Ex.

