Family therapy session note

Client | Date | Session no.

1. Brief context

What the client came with, key events.

2. Key themes and affect

Themes, feelings and body reactions named in the session.

3. Circular patterns

The loop: who does what in response to whom, and how it keeps itself going.

4. Structure, roles and boundaries

Alliances, triangles, hierarchy, roles and how clear the boundaries are.

5. Intergenerational patterns and genogram

Roles, rules and loyalties passed down, and how they repeat now.

6. Hypotheses and reframes

A cautious hypothesis about what the symptom does in the system, or a reframe.

7. Agreements and homework

Tasks and observations until the next session.

8. Risks

Only signals that came up. Empty if none.

9. Speech and thinking features

Anything notable in the form of speech. Usually empty.

10. Plan for the next session

What to return to.

Family therapy session note: filled example

Client Anna, 34 (fictional) | Date 11/12 | Session no. 4

1. Brief context

Came in after a conflict with her manager, has slept badly for a week.

2. Key themes and affect

Anxiety → "my chest tightens before planning meetings".

3. Circular patterns

The stricter her manager, the more she checks → checking delays the report, and he gets stricter.

4. Structure, roles and boundaries

Work comes home → she rechecks the report in the evenings, sleep suffers.

5. Intergenerational patterns and genogram

"In our family we don't make mistakes" → her father's rule, still heard today.

6. Hypotheses and reframes

Reframe: checking as care for the work that has become too costly.

7. Agreements and homework

Watch the loop → note what her manager does after each of her checks.

8. Risks

None mentioned.

9. Speech and thinking features

None noted.

10. Plan for the next session

Draw the genogram: rules about mistakes across three generations.