

EVIDENCE BASED, CLINICAL EMOTIONAL FREEDOM TECHNIQUES Foundations and Tapping Basics

Introduction

In our work together, we will be using Clinical or Evidence Based EFT Tapping. This introduction is intended to explain the process and protocol we will use.

Our first session is an information gathering time so that we can get a “big picture” sense of who you are and what your experiences have been. In clinical terms, this is also called an “Intake” or “Initial Assessment.” It’s a broad overview that helps to provide a framework for the next steps in our work.

While you might expect that we will begin by having you tell your story about the events you’ve experienced, the science and research about trauma shows that not only is this counterproductive, it can be harmful to your body-mind system. Talking about traumatic events brings them to the front of the mind and into the body to re-experience. The more you talk about it, the more you can be “triggered” and that pattern, then is set more firmly.

The Clinical EFT Tapping process is well-researched, including how the body responds AND the process itself that supports its effectiveness. In this handout is a graphic, “EFT Improves Multiple Physiological Markers of Health”, that summarizes the research and shows ways that EFT Tapping can positively impact your life.

In our session, we will start with a demonstration of the specific tapping points we’ll be using. Although there are hundreds of these points on the body, we’ll tap on just 10 of them because they are ones most directly included in emotional and psychological issues.

Next, we will talk about the protocol; what it is and why it works.

Here are some things you can expect in this process:

- We will be taking things VERY SLOWLY and repeating some of the steps.
- I will interrupt you FREQUENTLY to check in on the intensity of your experience. This way, you’ll begin to trust your body and its physiological signals more.
- I will take notes to help us track the process and your experience.
- You’ll be prompted to drink water. Water can help the body circulate and flush the biochemicals that are released.
- We will be mindful of time and use a “Container” activity to close our sessions.
- We will talk about what to think about or work between sessions – you’ll have a say in this.
- Periodically you’ll be asked to evaluate the sessions we have had.
- You’re welcome to ask questions!

What is Tapping?

Emotional Freedom Techniques (EFT) “Tapping” is an integrative intervention that combines elements of exposure and cognitive therapy and stimulation of acupressure points. It uses a two-finger tapping sequence along with cognitive and somatic statements balanced with an emotional acceptance statement.

A growing body of research supports the effectiveness of EFT Tapping. The approach has been researched in more than 60 investigators in more than 10 countries. The scientific results have been published in more than 20 peer-reviewed professional journals. It has been shown to provide relief from chronic pain, emotional problems, disorders, addictions, phobias, post-traumatic stress disorder, and physical diseases. Although Tapping is a new intervention, the healing concepts that it's based on have been in practice in Eastern medicine for over 5,000 years.

Like acupuncture and acupressure, EFT Tapping is a set of techniques which utilize the body's energy meridian points. You can stimulate these meridian points by tapping on them with your fingertips – literally tapping into your body's own energy and healing power.

The History of Tapping: An Accidental Discovery Leads to a Healing Revolution (adapted from The Tapping Solution)

It began in 1980, with a psychologist by the name of Roger Callahan, and a patient with an extreme phobia of water. Mary's fear of water controlled her life and kept her from daily activities. She was unable to take her children to the beach and was unable to drive near the ocean; she grew fearful when it rained, and could not even withstand the sight of water on TV. She had vivid nightmares involving water.

Dr. Callahan and Mary had been working on this problem together for over a year. Finally, Mary worked up the courage to sit within sight of the pool at Dr. Callahan's house. Even doing this caused Mary extreme distress, and though she found ways to cope with the intense fear and emotional pain, she did not overcome her phobia. They discussed her problem, and how to overcome it, but without success.

Her fear of being near the water caused Mary stomach pains – a common "gut reaction." Dr. Callahan had recently been studying traditional Chinese medicines, and learning about meridians. Suddenly he had an inspiration. Remembering that there was an acupuncture point for the stomach meridian on the cheekbone, he asked her to tap there, thinking it might cure her stomach pains.

Mary tapped her cheekbone as directed. The response seemed miraculous, to both Mary and Dr. Callahan. Her stomach pains disappeared. But even more amazingly, her phobia of water disappeared, too! She ran down to the pool and began splashing herself with water, rejoicing in her newfound freedom from fear.

Based on this discovery, Dr. Callahan began a series of investigations to develop and refine this technique, which he termed Thought Field Therapy. Gary Craig trained under Dr. Callahan's tutelage in the 1990's, learning the procedures for TFT. As time passed, Craig began to observe some problems with TFT, aspects that he saw were unnecessary complications.

TFT required practitioners to tap on a specific sequence of meridians (called an algorithm) for each different problem. Diagnosing the problem required a technique called muscle testing, wherein the practitioner would measure the relative strength of a muscle, while the patient explored various thoughts or statements.

Craig observed repeated scenarios in which the problem was incorrectly diagnosed or the practitioner tapped out the meridian points in the wrong order, yet the patient was still helped. Based on these observations, he concluded that it did not matter in which order the meridian points were tapped.

Craig developed EFT as a simplified, improved version of the concepts behind Callahan's TFT. EFT has one basic, simple sequence of points to tap, no matter what the situation.

Because of this, thousands of people have used Tapping for illnesses and to resolve emotional problems. Tapping practitioners have studied the techniques and trained to take on more complicated and difficult cases, and these dedicated practitioners report more successful applications daily.

EFT Tapping is Evidenced Based Practice (Adapted from Lori Leyden, Ph.D.)

In a paper published by *Scientific Research Journal* entitled, "Clinical EFT as an Evidence Based Practice for the Treatment of Psychological and Physiological Conditions", Dawson Church (2013) defines Clinical EFT, the method validated in many research studies, and shows it to be an "evidence-based" practice. The paper also describes standards by which therapies may be evaluated, such as those of the American Psychological Association (APA) Division 12 Task Force, and reviews the studies showing that Clinical EFT meets these criteria.

Several research domains are discussed, summarizing studies of:

- 1) psychological conditions such as anxiety, depression, phobias, and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD);
- 2) physiological problems such as pain and autoimmune conditions;
- 3) professional and sports performance; and
- 4) the physiological mechanisms of action of Clinical EFT.

Church (2013) lists the conclusions that may be drawn from this body of evidence, which includes 23 randomized controlled trials and 17 within-subjects studies.

The three essential ingredients of Clinical EFT are described: **exposure, cognitive shift, and acupressure**. The latter is shown to be an essential somatic-oriented ingredient in EFT's efficacy, and not merely a placebo. New evidence from emerging fields such as epigenetics, neural plasticity, psychoneuroimmunology, and evolutionary biology confirms the central link between emotion and physiology, and points to somatic stimulation as the element common to emerging psychotherapeutic methods.

Church (2013) concludes that Clinical EFT is a stable and mature method with an extensive evidence base. These characteristics have led to growing acceptance in primary care settings as a safe, rapid, reliable, and effective treatment for both psychological and medical diagnoses.

Peta Stapleton (2019) reports that EFT Tapping has been researched in more than 10 countries, by more than 60 investigators, whose results have been published in more than 20 different peer-reviewed journals (over 100 publications in total).

David Feinstein (2012) outlines how EFT Tapping meets the APA criteria for evidence based too. What people are really asking when they ask "Is EFT evidence-based?" They are asking "Is EFT an approved treatment method?" The answer is yes. The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE in the UK) has approved EFT Tapping to be eligible for government funding based on their evaluation of the research and evidence, the Canadian Psychotherapy Association has approved EFT for their registered therapists, and Veterans Administration (VA in the US) has approved EFT as generally safe for the treatment of PTSD.

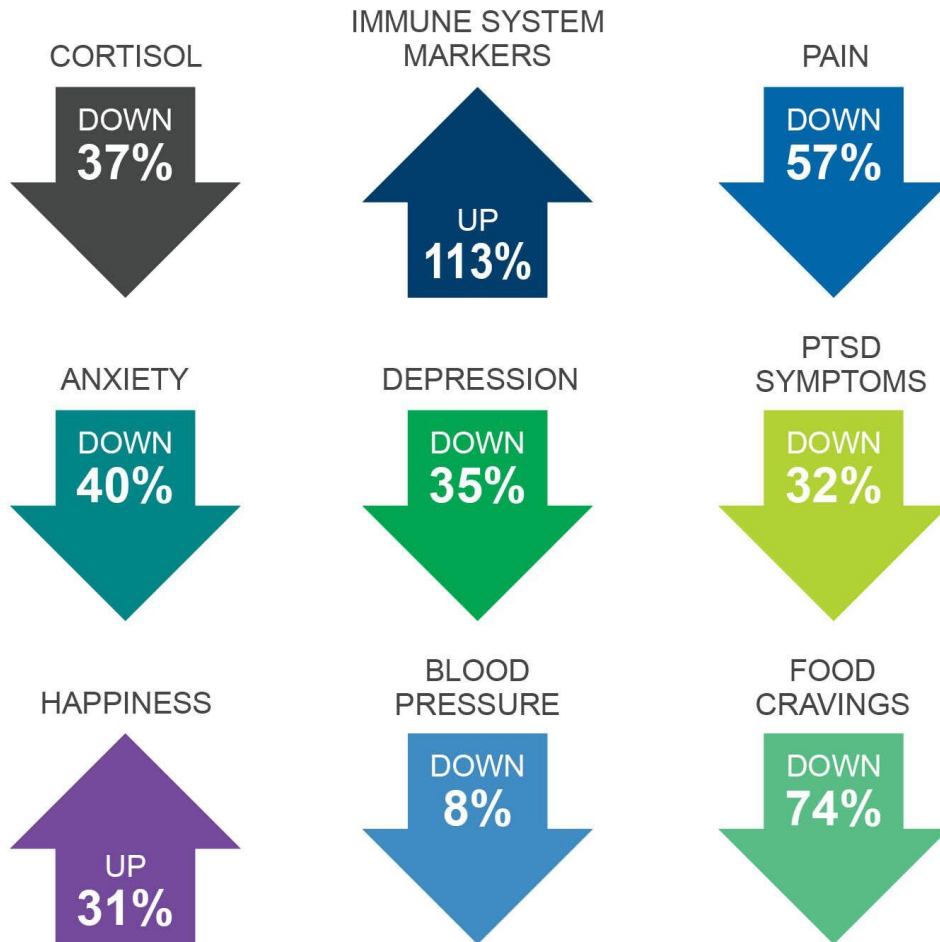
How Does it Work?

It appears that EFT Tapping affects the amygdala, the stress center in the brain, and the hippocampus, which is the memory center. Both play a role in helping you decide if something is safe or a threat. Clinical EFT has been shown to lower the stress hormone, cortisol. At higher levels, cortisol can lower immune functioning and impact our overall physical health.

Tapping is a practical, hands-on, easy-to-apply tool. It's a unique system to help people regain a sense of calm, which can be used by young and old.

This is a different approach than traditional "positive thinking." You're not being dishonest with yourself. You're not trying to cover up the stress and anxiety inside yourself with disingenuous affirmations. Instead, you're dealing directly with the anxiety and difficult feelings, and balancing that with a practice of radical acceptance to both your feelings and yourself. This results in a genuine change in how you think, feel and act.

Clinical EFT Improves Multiple Physiological Markers of Health



© Mind Heart Connect 2018. Bach, D., Groesbeck, G., Stapleton, P., Banton, S., Blickheuser, K., & Church, D. (2018). *Journal of Evidence Based Integrative Medicine*.

www.mindheartconnect.com

A Meridian-Based Approach:

Tapping on Acupressure Points to Address Issues

The cause of all negative emotion (dis-ease) is a disruption in the body's energy system. The acupressure points below are the most common ones used with meridian-based therapies. Depending on the approach, there are up to 14 different points. For our work, we'll use the following "Basic EFT Tapping" sequence:

1 = Outside of Hand - on the side of your hand, roughly in line with your life line.

2 = Top of Head - In line with the ears.

3 = Start of The Eyebrow - Where the bone behind your eyebrow turns into the bridge of your nose.

4 = Corner of The Eye - On the bone in the corner of your eye.

5 = Under the Eye - On the bone just below your eye, in line with your pupil if you look straight ahead.

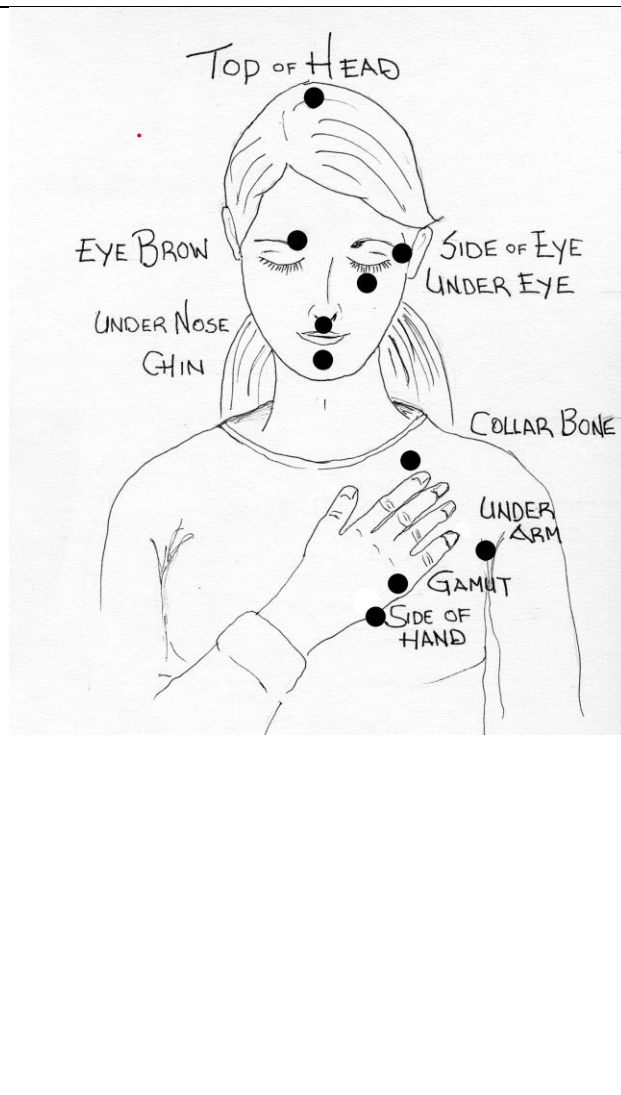
6 = Under the Nose - Between your nose and your upper lip.

7 = Under the Mouth - In the indentation between your chin and your lower lip.

8 = Collarbone - In the angle formed by your collarbone and the breastbone.

9 = Under the Arm - In line with a man's nipples on the side of the body.

10 = Gamut - the soft spot between the knuckles of the pinky and ring finger.



STEP 1: Contacting the Problem and identifying an event or specific situation you want to address.

STEP 2: Identify Aspects of the situation/event: thoughts, feelings, body sensations

STEP 3: Assessing the Intensity on a scale from 0 (no problem at all) to 10 (VERY difficult for me) as you experience it NOW (not when it was happening before, but in the PRESENT)

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

To direct the releasing effects of the tapping to the required area, we focus the mind on the problem by using a statement of the problem or **the truth** of what is happening: **"I am afraid of heights."**

Preferably, this is **spoken out loud** to engage as much of the neurology as possible and to contact the issue as directly as possible. Choose a statement that rings true to you, using words that make sense to you and you alone. **The more forthright, direct and truthful you can be, the more profound a change you will experience.**

Assess the strength of the statement on a scale from 1-10, with 10 being "the most" of the issue. For example, "I'm afraid of heights" might have a strength (or Subjective Unit of Distress – SUD) of 7 when you think about it. It might have a SUD of 9 when you imagine yourself standing on a diving board. Be sure to write down the number.

STEP 4: The Set Up

Now that we've named the problem, we can start with the Set Up. For the **Set Up Statement**, begin with the above problem statement and add a **balancing statement**. The recommended one is "I deeply and completely love and accept myself."

Begin tapping the **Outside of the Hand** point and say:

"Even though I (insert problem statement), I deeply and completely accept/love/forgive myself."

For example, if you decided your problem was "My back is killing me", you would say as your Set Up Statement: **"Even though my back is killing me, I deeply and profoundly accept myself."**

Repeat this **three times**, tapping or rubbing the Outside of the Hand point continuously as you do so, and please do endeavor to put some meaning and energy into the "I deeply and profoundly accept myself" part.

STEP 5: Tapping on the Points

The round following the Set Up, we now tap all the points, starting from the Top of the Head and ending up with the Gamut.

As you tap each point, repeat a **shortened version of the Set Up Statement** (to bring the "problem" into awareness), called the **reminder phrase**. If your set up statement was, **"Even though I hate and despise my boss, I deeply and completely love and accept myself"**, ... you'll say the reminder (the shortened version) phrase: **"I hate and despise my boss" ... on each point at the same time as you tap.**

STEP 6: Stop & take a deep breath. Notice the intensity NOW along with what thoughts, feelings, images, shifts are present.

STEP 7: Reassess on a scale from 0 (no problem at all) to 10 (VERY difficult for me)

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Tune back into the problem you began with. How would you rate the strength of it now? What other issues came up while you were tapping? If you've gotten the strength down to a 0, then you're done! If it's moved a little downward (or even upward), then tune back in and review the OBJECTIONS below, tapping on them in the same sequence as above.

STEP 8: Keep Tapping IF the intensity is more than ZERO,
Tap more rounds. Use the information from steps 1 & 2, plus step 6.

STEP 9: Repeat as necessary to get the relief you desire.
Or, stop when you've reached ZERO!

Focusing on Specific Events

You will find the most effective use of EFT Tapping is with specific events. A specific event is one from the past that can be captured in a short, 2-minute segment. The more specific you can get, the better.

Examples of GENERAL events:

“I’m not loveable.” “I’m not confident.” “All the kids at school hated me.”

One strategy for identifying a specific event would be to frame an event with, “The time when...” and work with the client to identify a sequence of brief segments that tell a story. Each event will have its own “story board” or map that contains one or more “emotional crescendos.” You might start with a general event, but ask the client for specific examples.

General: “I’m not confident.” Examples of SPECIFIC events related to “I’m not confident”:

- I felt shy and anxious when I went to my friend’s birthday party at age 7.
- The time I couldn’t find someone to eat lunch with me when I was in middle school.
- No one picked me when we played street soccer the summer I was in 9th grade.
- The first time I gave a speech in English class in 10th grade.
- No one asked me to the prom when I was in 11th grade.

“The first time I gave a speech in English class.”

- I was nervous about the speech when I walked into class.
- I had to wait 30 minutes to present.
- The two girls who talked before me had colorful posters. I didn’t!
- I felt stupid that I didn’t create one, woo.
- I just knew I would blow it.
- When I stood up to go to the front of the class, I tripped and everyone laughed at me.
- I dropped my index cards halfway through my speech. I was so embarrassed!
- I finally finished and almost ran back to my seat.

Where to find more information

The following websites might be helpful as you continue to use this approach:

- YouTube has hundreds of examples of tapping. Look for ones by
 - Gary Craig (founder of EFT)
 - Carol Look (www.AttractingAbundance.com)
 - Brad Yates
 - Margaret Lynch (focuses on money & success)
 - Pat Carrington, Ph.D.
 - Peta Stapleton (TED Talk on the Fourth Wave of therapy)
- Emotional Freedom Techniques website: www.EmoFree.com
- Dawson Church’s website: www.EFTUniverse.com
- Nick & Jessica Ortner’s site: www.TheTappingSolution.com **Check out their app on iTunes!**
- Association for Comprehensive Energy Psychology: www.energypsych.org
- Fred Gallo’s website <http://www.energypsych.com/>
- David Feinstein & Donna Eden’s website: <http://www.innersource.net/ep>
- Peta Stapleton’s website: www.PetaStapleton.com

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THE 9 STEPS

1. Identify a specific event or situation you want to address.
2. Identify aspects of the situation/event: Thoughts, Feelings, Body Sensations
3. Rate the intensity (0-10)
4. **CREATE A SET-UP STATEMENT**, including a statement of the issue along with a balancing statement (default = “I deeply & completely accept myself.”) See handout for other options. Tap on the Outside of the Hand while repeating the set-up statement 3 times
5. Tap through the 9 additional points in the sequence, while saying a reminder statement (shortened version of the issue). Tap 5-7 times at each point. End with the gamut point.
6. Stop & take a deep breath
7. Reassess the intensity of the issue NOW 0-10 What else came up? Make note of this.
8. If the intensity is more than 0-2, Tap more rounds. Use the information from step 7 and begin again at step 4.
9. Repeat as necessary to get the relief you desire. Or, stop when you’ve reached 0-2. [Use the Reframe to close here.]

EFT/Tapping WORKSHEET

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Steps 1 & 2:

A situation, event, issue or symptom that has been stressful or troubling for me is:

Some of my thoughts/beliefs about this are: (refer to the cognitions worksheet if needed)

Feelings associated with this stressor/difficulty include (circle the ones that apply):

Anxiety/anxious, fear/scared, terrified, frustrated, mad/angry, enraged, unhappy, sad, depressed, stressed, overwhelmed, guilt, shame, embarrassment; other: _____

Where I feel this in my body is (describe it):

The most intense aspect (what stands out most) of these is:

Step 3: BEFORE TAPPING:

Rate the intensity of the feeling(s)/thoughts about this as you're focusing NOW on it. Use a scale from 0 (no problem at all) to 10 (VERY difficult for me)

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Step 4: Setup Statement

This is a summary of the issue:

Balancing Statement I want to use:

Step 5: Tap on the points (see the cheat sheet)

Step 6: Pause & Breathe

Step 7: Reassess

Some things that came up when I was tapping include:

What I now notice:

Rate your level of intensity again: The intensity of the feeling(s) about this NOW on a scale from 0 (no problem at all) to 10 (VERY difficult for me)

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Step 8: If the intensity is above a 0-2, tap another round

Even though I still have some of this _____, I deeply and completely love and accept myself (or your own balancing statement).

Step 9: Rate your level of intensity again

The intensity of the feeling(s) about this NOW on a scale from 0 (no problem at all) to 10 (VERY difficult for me)

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

KEEP TAPPING until the level of intensity is 0-2 or manageable enough to notice what else is going on. (Then tap on that.)

Now that I've begun to focus on some of the critical thoughts/beliefs or difficult feelings, here are some new ones I can focus on:

Something I noticed in this process:
