

A close-up photograph of a person's back and shoulder. A hand is gently touching the person's shoulder, illustrating the EFT (Emotional Freedom Techniques) therapy. The person is wearing a white tank top. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light color. The image is framed by a blue gradient at the top and bottom, and a light green vertical bar on the right side.

EFT Therapy 101

Emotional Freedom Techniques Explained

By The American Institute of Health Care Professionals, Inc.

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What is EFT Therapy?

The Emotional Freedom Technique is widely known as *tapping* or psychological acupressure. It draws from theories including energy healing, acupressure, and acupuncture. While the discovery is relatively new, the treatment is evolving quickly. The purpose of the technique is to release the many blockages in the body's energy system.

So many millions of us have settled. We have settled on lives where we carry heavy emotional burdens and experience poor health as the norm. We no longer know how to achieve contentment, there's no desire to reach goals and lead the lives we dream of. We're stuck. That's just on the emotional side.

There are physical aspects to consider as well, and often these physical issues are the direct result of the emotional issues. Often, we choose to self-medicate to escape our emotional problems, which means we drink too much, pick up drugs and smoking. You convince yourself it's to help you sleep at night, yet sleep is slow to come. All we are really doing is fueling our anxiety.

It's difficult to break out of this when you feel so trapped in the cycle. If you are tired of feeling tired, anxious, unhappy, unwell, and depressed, then EFT Therapy might be the answer to your problems. If you are tired of spending your money on treatments that are as ineffective as they are expensive, then EFT Therapy may help. If you want to flourish, thrive, and grow and you want to live your best life, then Emotional Freedom Techniques could be the answer.

EFT Therapy can help you find relief, both physically and emotionally. It's a way for you to take control of your wellbeing. The best part is that it's free because it's easy enough that *anyone* can master it.

There are a variety of issues that EFT Therapy can assist with. In addition to helping you find relief from chronic pain, it will also assist with disorders, phobias, emotional problems, addictions, and even physical diseases.

The Inner Compass Initiative breaks down just how effective EFT Therapy can be in helping with addiction. It can assist in withdrawal symptoms such as brain fog, agitation, anxiety, insomnia, irritability, anger, shame, and even panic attacks

<https://withdrawal.theinnercompass.org/coping/emotional-freedom-technique-eft>).

While you might think that tapping is a new practice, in actuality the healing concepts that it's based on have been practiced for thousands of years. These techniques were designed to utilize your body's meridian points. All it takes to stimulate them is tapping. Yes, use your fingertips and literally tap into your own body's energy and create your own healing.

Our bodies are more powerful than we give them credit for, and EFT therapy can help you tap into it.

How EFT Therapy Works

The negative emotions that we experience cause disruptions in our body's energy. Any illnesses, diseases or physical pains that we experience are the results of that disruption. Every health problem that you experience will create a feedback loop, your physical symptoms create emotional distress just as emotional distress manifests in physical symptoms.

This is why it's vital that you approach the health of your body as a whole. It's impossible to simply address symptoms rather than addressing the root cause *and vice versa*.

Your body is made up of energy, just like the rest of the universe. So, to restore its balance, you first need to repair the physical symptoms *and* the negative emotions that have been caused by the disruption in your body's energy. EFT Therapy is what helps restore that balance and assists in the conquering of those negative emotions and physical symptoms.

You will need to focus on your negative emotions, whether it's an unresolved issue, a specific fear, the memory of a negative event... just, anything that bothers you. You maintain your focus on that issue and begin tapping on those meridian points. There are twelve points and each of them should receive around five taps.

While you tap on these points, concentrate on accepting the problem, and resolving it. Tapping allows you to access the energy in your body and dealing with the emotions and issues at hand will allow you to balance your energy.

To explain the meridians in a bit more detail, your body's energy circulates on a specific path. Think of them as your energy highway – and the meridians are junctions that you can tap into to clear the road of any traffic that is backing things up.

The concept stems from Traditional Chinese Medicine where the energy of the body is known as qi (or ch'i). It's your life force. Initially, ancient Chinese practitioners found 100 points and they discovered that stimulating them could help the body heal. EFT Therapy is much like acupuncture, except there are no needles necessary – your fingertips do that job.

Additionally, acupuncture will take many years to master and you can't do it to yourself. Practitioners study for years to learn the hundreds of different points throughout the body.

With EFT Therapy there are just twelve points to memorize. It's also painless, simple, and just about anyone can learn it. While it's certainly possible to carry out EFT Therapy on others, it's just as simple to do it on yourself. The benefit of this, of course, is that you can do it wherever you want and whenever you want.

The Science of EFT Therapy

Despite the fact that EFT Therapy has been met with skepticism (and criticism), there is science to back it up. While some psychologists and doctors are quick to write it off, there is evidence from both patients and practitioners of EFT Therapy who say otherwise.

While it's easy to write off anecdotal evidence (even if there is a lot of it), it isn't quite as simple to ignore the scientific research that supports EFT Therapy. Yes, in the last decade there has been an increase in research into the subject and it's undeniable at this point. With EFT Therapy, you can achieve significant improvement and lasting and real healing.

Harvard Medical School is just one institution to have researched the therapy technique. What they found was that by stimulating those meridian points you can relieve the fear and stress response from the brain.

This particular study (The salient characteristics of the central effects of acupuncture needling: limbic-paralimbic-neocortical network modulation; Fang et al) dealt specifically with acupuncture, but as we know, EFT Therapy *is* acupuncture, but without the needles. The point is that tapping provides a similar response as acupuncture.

Other studies have completed double-blind research that stimulated the points without the use of needles and got similar results. A study from Corpus Christ Independent School District found that EFT Therapy is effective in treating phobias (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21571234>).

According to a study from the National Institute For Integrative Healthcare, EFT Therapy is effective for treating PTSD (The Manual Stimulation of Acupuncture Points in the Treatment of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder: A Review of Clinical Emotional Freedom Techniques; Church, et al). This team carried out a controlled trial to discover how 83 subjects would respond to hour-long EFT Therapy sessions.

The researchers measured cortisol (the stress hormone) levels and found that on average, cortisol levels dropped 24%. Some subjects, though, experienced a dip of as much as 50%.

For the control group who instead enjoyed an hour-long talk therapy session, there was no significant change in cortisol levels.

Additionally, Dr. Church created a project to teach PTSD sufferers how to tap for themselves. For these war veterans, it took just six sessions to decrease their symptoms by 63% (on average). This research is incredibly exciting and shows that science backs up EFT therapy.

The History of EFT Therapy

The year was 1980, and psychologist Roger Callahan was treating a patient with a phobia of water. The patient, Mary, had an extreme fear. She couldn't go to the beach with her children or even drive close to the ocean.

She felt anxious when it was raining, couldn't look at water on the television, and had nightmares about water. Dr. Callahan had been working with Mary for over a year and eventually, Mary was able to sit within view of Dr. Callahan's pool.

However, it still left her extremely distressed. While she found different ways to cope with the fear, she was unable to overcome the phobia itself. They discussed the problem at length but could not overcome it.

The fear that she experienced manifested in physical symptoms like stomach pains. Meanwhile, Dr. Callahan had discovered meridians as he had been looking into Traditional Chinese Medicine. This inspired him to look into the different meridians and he encouraged Mary to tap on the stomach meridian (which is on the cheekbone).

He thought that this might help to relieve the stomach pains that she was experiencing. So, she did and not only did her stomach pains disappear, so did the water phobia. Immediately, she was able to go to the pool and splash water on herself.

This is where it all started, Dr. Callahan termed it as Thought Field Therapy. It was Gary Craig, who trained under Dr. Callahan during the 1990s, that took the practice, evolved it, and renamed it as EFT Therapy. The reason for this is that Craig found a variety of issues with TFT. For example, practitioners had to tap meridians in a specific sequence for different problems.

Additionally, to diagnose the issue something called muscle testing was required. The practitioner would measure muscle strength as the patient cycled through various statements and thoughts.

As Craig noted, this led to many incorrect diagnoses which meant the wrong sequence of tapping would be used. Yet, it still worked. This made Craig realize that the sequence didn't matter. Ultimately, EFT Therapy is a simplified version of TFT. It is this that has allowed so many more people to enjoy the relief that comes with tapping.

Tapping Sequences

EFT Therapy can be used for a variety of issues, but one of the most common reasons people turn to tapping is anxiety. So, we wanted to provide you with a basic sequence that you can start using right away. First of all, though, we want to explain how the tapping sequence works.

- The first step is to determine which problem or issue that you would like to focus on. It might be a general anxiety disorder or a specific issue or event that causes anxiety.
- Think about that situation or issue and consider how it makes you feel right now. Rate your anxiety's intensity level on a scale of one to 10, ten is the highest and one, of course, is the lowest.
- Now, you will need to create a statement to set you up. This should acknowledge the issue you wish to deal with and an affirmation. For example – *even though I am anxious about my appraisal, I accept myself wholly and completely.*
- The first point you will tap is the karate chop (the small intestine), you will find this opposite your thumb on your hand's outer edge. You can consult the map we linked you to above. Use two fingers to tap the point as you repeat your statement out loud. Take a deep breath after you have made your statement three times.

It really is as simple as that.

To ensure your technique is correct, we have some additional tips for you to consider.

- Your pressure should be gentle, but firm. Think about how you would check fruit to see if it's ripe. Or, how you drum your fingers on your desk.
- You can use four fingers or two to carry out your EFT Therapy sequence. Generally, one would use all four for wider areas like the collarbone, underarm, and the head. However, two is sufficient for other areas, such as your eyes.
- Ensure that you are tapping using your actual fingertips. This isn't a job for your fingernails.

- You should start at the top with your tapping and work your way down. You can circle back to the top of your head to complete your tapping loop.
- Every point should receive at least five taps.

Other points that will complete your sequence.

- Head (the governing vessel) – at the very center at the top of your head, it's the crown you tap. This is where four fingers are perfect.
- Eyebrow (the bladder) – close to the bridge of your nose, you can use just two fingers on your eyebrow's inner edges.
- Side Eye – (the gallbladder) this is another job for two fingers, and you'll need to be gentle to ensure you don't poke your fingers in your eye. It's the firm area between your temple and eye that you are looking for.
- Under Eye (the stomach) – it's the firmer area beneath your area, where it meets your cheekbone. Again, this is a two-finger point and your fingers should be in line with your pupil.
- Under Nose (the governing vessel) – look for the point between your upper lip and the bottom of your nose – apply two fingers.
- Chin (the central vessel) – beneath the point you just left, between your chin and your lower lip.
- Collarbone (the kidney) – use four fingers here to tap beneath your collarbone's hard ridge.
- Underarm (the spleen) – this is another spot to use four fingers and you will find it around four inches below your armpit on your side.
- Head – and finish the sequence.

Remember to repeat your issue as you tap each point. Once you have finished, you should take another deep breath. Once you've completed the entire sequence you can shift your focus back to the issue at hand. Think about how intense your anxiety is and rate it again using the same scale as before.

If you are rating it higher than a two, then you should follow the tapping sequence again. You should continue tapping until you have relieved the anxiety completely. If you need to change your statement to reflect a repeat of the sequence, you can do so. Now that you have dealt with your immediate anxiety, you can start to focus on instilling positive emotions and feelings.

It's important to note that this is not the same as positive thinking. This isn't an attempt to obscure the stress through affirmations. Instead, this is about confronting the negative feelings that your anxiety is causing.

It's about completely accepting yourself and the emotions you are experiencing. You are transforming those negative vibrations into more positive ones. This is why EFT Therapy is more effective than the idea of thinking positively.

While positive thinking has its own benefits, tapping is tapping into your energy and tuning positivity into your body. You are literally changing your energy.

Essentially, the entire EFT Therapy process can be broken down into just five, simple steps.

- 1. Identifying the issue** – as noted above, it might be a specific issue or a general one, but it's vital that you identify the issue to start with. Your outcome will be far greater if you focus on just one issue at a time.
- 2. Testing the intensity** – once the problem is identified you must take a moment to determine what level of intensity your anxiety, pain or discomfort is at. This is simply a way for you to monitor the progress of your EFT Therapy. If you start at a 10 and one sequence drops you to a five, then you will know you've improved by 50%.
- 3. Setting it up** – before you start tapping, you need a setup phrase or statement that acknowledges your issues and establishes that you accept yourself no matter what.

The statement *must* address your own issues, it's the only way for you to relieve the stress and distress.

4. **The tapping sequence** – you can use the one above as an example or at least use this as a starting point. While there are 12 meridians, typical sequences focus on just the nine that we mentioned above.

5. **Retesting the intensity** – once the sequence is finished, you can retest the intensity of your discomfort to determine how effective the tapping sequence has been. Again, if you don't reach zero after the first session, you can repeat the tapping sequence until you do.

Final Thoughts

Ultimately, the science shows that EFT therapy is an effective treatment for a number of issues. It has been used to great effect for war veterans who have returned with PTSD, as well as people who suffer from anxiety, insomnia, depression, and physical pain.

There are plenty of success stories to look at, but research still continues to investigate what else EFT therapy can be used for. So, if you have any of these issues and you wish to seek relief, you may want to use EFT therapy as an alternative course of treatment.

That doesn't mean that you should give up on a treatment course recommended by your doctor, this is simply something that you can use in conjunction with the traditional treatments your doctor has prescribed.

Additionally, if you do want to embark on this therapy course, you should speak to your doctor to ensure you don't worsen your symptoms or any existing injuries that you may have. Your doctor may react with skepticism, but as you have seen above, there is plenty of evidence that EFT Therapy is effective.

You don't need their blessing to do so, you just want to make sure that you won't exacerbate any current symptoms or injuries. Alternatively, you may find that your doctor is incredibly supportive of this technique. As we have discussed, it's a popular treatment course for PTSD sufferers.

Again, EFT Therapy is something that you can learn to do yourself. You can do it at home or at work, and you don't need to pay a professional practitioner to do it for you. In addition to the information that we have provided you with above, you can also find a plethora of resources online, including video tutorials that will guide you through sequences that will help you address your specific issue(s).

There is nothing standing between you and emotional freedom, except that is for learning how to practice Emotional Freedom Techniques yourself.