



## THERAPY SPOTLIGHT

EMOTIONAL FREEDOM  
TECHNIQUE

by Cristiana Chiappini-Brodie

**E**motional Freedom Technique (EFT) is a practice of energy psychology, which allows a releasing of emotional distress by tapping on specific acupressure points. Acupressure points are areas of the skin that are more sensitive to stimulation, with certain points being known for sending signals to the part of the brain associated with emotions when stimulated (Feinstein, Eden, Craig, 2006). EFT, sometimes called 'tapping', was developed by Gary Craig in the early 1990s, by simplifying Dr Roger Callahan's Thought Field Therapy (TFT). EFT is based on the understanding that there are subtle energies that flow through the body's meridians and when these energies do not flow freely we experience negative emotions (Freedom, 2013).

Negative emotions are perceived as a threat by the amygdala. The amygdala is part of the midbrain or limbic system where emotional memories are encoded. "The amygdala works with the hippocampus to generate primary emotions from external perceptions and internal thoughts. It helps to emotionally charge experiences and to warn us about vital sensory information" (Dispenza, 2007). This results in the body being frequently in the 'stress response' due to traumatic memories and negative emotions.

EFT allows us to soothe the amygdala by tapping on certain acupressure points (see Fig. 1) that corresponds to the end of the meridians on our body so that we are not triggered even when reminded of past traumas (Edwards, 2010). Tapping balances blockages in the energy flow by reprogramming the way the amygdala



Fig 1. Tapping points - (Ref. Tapping Solution)

perceives a particular threat; therefore deactivating the state of fight or flight that was associated with that memory and allowing us to experience a calming and peaceful sense of well-being.

Dr Joe Dispenza (2012) and Bruce Lipton (2005) extensively describe the direct effects that our thoughts and perceptions have on our health and how our emotional state is the main controller of our physiology. By using EFT to release fears, traumas and anxiety we holistically benefit the mind and body.

So what happens in an EFT session? An EFT session starts with a brief discussion of the issue the client wants to address. The practitioner usually maps the issue and jots down words that will be used to construct the set-up statements and reminder phrases in the tapping sequence.

Depending on the problem and client's stress/discomfort/anxiety level (rated from 0 to 10), the practitioner will choose the most appropriate EFT approach.

After a brief demonstration of the tapping points' location, the practitioner will guide the client into the first rounds of tapping by asking the client to copy his/her movements and words.

After a few rounds the practitioner checks with the clients if the level of intensity of the issue has changed, and based on what else might have come up during the first few rounds, adjust the next sequence.

Tapping sessions aim to target events, issues and beliefs until the intensity of the core belief is reduced to zero.

After tapping clients often feel calmer, more at peace, have improved clarity of



thought, and look at the initial problem in a different way.

EFT tapping is an empowering technique. Clients can take away and use the basic principles after the first session. They are encouraged to use it on themselves when needed, and in between sessions with an experienced practitioner.

EFT is based on the discovery that imbalances in the body's energy system have profound effects on one's personal psychology. As emotional distress becomes lodged in the body, muscular tension and fatigue block energy and the body's balance is worsened.

EFT may be used safely and effectively in combination with massage therapy. The combined benefits of relieving physical symptoms with massage, and releasing emotional distress with EFT, can have the potential for a positive effect on the client's health and wellbeing.

Combining these two therapies to bring physical and emotional balance may help clients achieve a more complete and lasting relief.

EFT is a gentle and easy technique that can be used with anyone, including children. EFT has been successfully used to release fear and phobias, traumatic memories, physical symptoms, feeling stuck, anxiety and more. Successful results in treating anxiety, depression and anger have recently

prompted the UK National Health Service in considering adopting Emotional Freedom Technique. (Innes, 2014).

The formation of the New Zealand EFT Association is currently underway. At present practitioners need to complete the minimum of Level 2 practitioner training and can choose to become certified by an International EFT association. The Association for the Advancement of Meridian Energy Therapies (AAMET) is the largest professional EFT association worldwide.

For further information about EFT please check out the websites:

[www.emofree.com](http://www.emofree.com)  
[www.eftuniverse.com](http://www.eftuniverse.com)  
[www.aamet.com](http://www.aamet.com)

Cristiana Chiappini-Brodie is an EFT (Level 2) practitioner, and is currently completing her AAMET certification process. Cristiana practices EFT, Psych-K and other modalities with her clients to help them achieve a more fulfilling life and total wellbeing. To contact her please visit [www.inpower.co.nz](http://www.inpower.co.nz) or email [info@inpower.co.nz](mailto:info@inpower.co.nz).

Please let us know if there is any particular therapy or practice that you would like to see highlighted, or write about, in this section by emailing [publicity@massagenewzealand.org.nz](mailto:publicity@massagenewzealand.org.nz)

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# SOUTHERN CROSS EXPANDS INTO NEW TERRITORY

Southern Cross Health Society has launched a new day-to-day 'HealthEssentials' consumer plan, which allows HealthEssentials policyholders to claim for remedial massage therapy performed by a RMT who is registered with Massage New Zealand (MNZ).

This is a new healthcare plan and separate from the Wellbeing Body Care

module that already allows policyholders to claim up to \$400 annually for remedial massage therapy performed by an RMT registered with MNZ.

HealthEssentials has been designed to help policyholders look after their everyday health needs by providing them with a contribution towards their costs. Cover for massage therapy is included

in the Self Care benefit offered by HealthEssentials. Under the Self Care benefit, policyholders will be able to claim for 75 per cent of their costs up to an annual maximum of \$250 per claims year. Under this single annual limit they are also able to claim for osteopathy, chiropractic, physiotherapy, dietitian and acupuncture.