

# Tapping for Life

There is an emerging field in the area of healing and it's known as Energy Psychology. Energy Psychology is a set of therapies which bypass talking about and digging the client's past in order to figure the cause of trauma or stress. Instead, energy psychology works directly on the body and brings about a change in the psyche.

Some forms of therapies used in energy psychology are breathing techniques, massage, visualisation and the most widely used technique of Emotional Freedom Technique® (EFT).

EFT seems to have gained popularity because it works when nothing else has. The technique, discovered by Gary Craig, has been clinically effective in treating trauma, abuse, fears, children's issues, depression as well as physical symptoms like headaches, back pain and other difficulties.

We decided to dig deeper and find out how EFT works and what it does. We got in touch with Rod Sherwin, Melbourne based Energy Therapist with over eight years of experience. Rod runs his EFT practice, Tap4Health, and has helped hundreds of clients with emotional and physical issues. He is passionate about personal development. Although not a psychologist, psychiatrist or a counsellor, Rod's practice has generated results due to his unconventional warmth, empathy and skills.

## **EFT - Not Really Psychology**

A subtle difference between psychology and EFT is that when a person undergoes therapy, they may know what was wrong and why they did something. They will unveil the causes, if the results are positive. However, a psychologist won't necessarily cause a shift inside the person and change their ways. EFT, on the other hand, is creating that change rather than going deeper to know the cause.

Nevertheless, just like a psychologist, an EFT practitioner must dissect what's going on underneath the emotional layers of his or her clients. We asked Rod how does this.

"We use gentle, skillful questioning and in my experience with hundreds of clients it helps you discover and heal emotional issues. Beliefs and events are the core of these issues, giving you emotional freedom from the past. However, the past also is

currently in the present. We use breakthrough techniques to clear the negative emotions, thoughts and behaviors.”

Research states there is a close relationship between disease in a person and the unsolved emotional trauma in him or her. People with unresolved emotional issues, for example, are 30 times more likely to commit suicide. Helping them resolve these innate issues is the first step and this is where EFT comes into picture.

EFT is said to work on the subtle energies of the body. A person undergoing EFT therapy will have the energies balanced by an EFT practitioner as the latter uses “emotional acupuncture”. Rather than using needles, the practitioner will use his or her fingers and tap one’s “emotional points”.

“When it comes to tapping and tapping on different acupuncture points or working with feelings, the shift actually comes from your energy system through your feelings and your thoughts change as a result,” Rod adds.

### **Measuring the Results**

EFT may occur as something that’s too subjective. How does one measure the results with such a system that works mainly by finger tapping? Like any skill, Rod advises, it takes practice, and although the results may not be immediately obvious, they will gradually show up.

“The results tend to show up for me in my interactions with others. Initially, you start from the little stuff. You start from maybe a headache or a stressful conversation at work. I found that as I tapped through lots of everyday stuff in the present and expanded to tapping through all the significant emotional events, I could think of all the way through my past which is something we call a personal peace procedure. I found that my interactions with others changed. For example, talking to my parents on the phone I found we were having much deeper conversations. It wasn’t through conscious effort and it wasn’t through thinking ‘If they say that, I should say this.’ It just came about differently.”

Notice that when you interact with someone, most of the times it depends on a lot of built-up baggage you carry from the day, months and even years at times. It’s all about releasing these old feelings first, and then interacting with the other person with an open heart and mind. This baggage, which is stored somewhere in the hard disk of our brains, will affect each conversation whether we like it or not.

Rod mentions that after consistently practising self-tapping, there are changes in the way he interacts with several people – be it the taxi driver or his boss.

### **Emotions are like Knots**

Imagine tapping as undoing a tangle created from past events. These are energy knots in our system. Tapping helps untie these knots allowing smooth flow of the energy.

“The principle we operate on for EFT is the cause of all negative emotions is disruption of the body’s energy system. By focusing on that emotion and tapping on the points, we’re clearing them. It seems that when we have significant emotional events that they get stuck in our system and we repeat them; or we continue to feel them or they manifest in our body as disease. But when we tap on them and undo the knot, they seem to clear through us.”

### **Food and Emotions**

We delved deeper to find out the relationship between foods we take and the emotional instability or stability we experience. Turns out, there is a lot of connection as explored in the new field of science, Epi-genetics.

“Ten years ago, it was like this: You’ve got the gene for heart disease therefore it’s predetermined that you’re going to have heart disease. What they thankfully have found out now is you may have that gene, but you can control whether that gene expresses itself or not by your diet, by your lifestyle, by your emotional states.

“If you eat sugar all day you’re going to have ups and downs that may or may not be helped by tapping. But why are you eating sugar? Is it because you’re anxious? Let’s focus on what’s making you anxious. You’re smoking; is it because you’re anxious or angry? We can use tapping to heal and clear those emotions and states. Then you can get rid of the biochemistry stuff that’s also contributing to your emotional state. So epi-genetics is partly about nutrition, it’s about exercise, and in a couple of the textbooks I’ve read on it they mentioned energy psychology, of which EFT is one of the forms.”

### **Personal Peace Procedure**

We asked Rod what he means by the “Personal Peace Procedure” he teaches. It’s actually a lot like taking inventory of all personal life events which may have caused a knot in our energy system. Here’s what we got:

“Write down every significant emotional event from the teacher throwing chalk at you, breaking up with your first girlfriend, your pet dog dying, to changing from high school to Uni, to failing an exam to intense emotional events. Using a calendar, write out all the significant emotional events you can think of up until now – and life happens, we all have them – so writing them down and tapping on them, one night you might get half a dozen done, the other night you might just get a part of one category done and cleared.

“When you write down these events, you’re trying to identify the emotional intensity of the event on a scale of zero to ten, where ten still feels very intense and zero is there’s no charge left on it at all and it’s just a non issue. You want to get all of these events that you’ve written down from a ten down to a zero. Some of them might be too intense to handle yourself, so you might go and see a practitioner to work with them. But a lot of the little stuff you can handle.”

### **Tapping on Children**

Rod believes it’d be best if the education system embraced tapping which means not many people would need therapy later on in their lives. Therapy actually works nicely on kids because they have no hang ups and are open to it. They try it, share it and learn to master it with much less friction as compared to an adult. They are not embarrassed or afraid of trying the unconventional.

“The youngest child I’ve used this with was about two months old. She was sitting on her mother’s chest and the little baby was having hiccups and was getting irritated, crying, and I asked the mother ‘Can we try EFT on this baby? It might be able to help with the hiccups.’ So I tapped through these tiny points with my little fingers very, very gently and within two rounds the hiccupping baby went to sleep. So from very young age up to the oldest clients, I’ve worked with them all. There is no age limit on this.”

It’s refreshing to know some schools are already using EFT and helping the kids deal with emotional stress which may mature into full-fledged depression. For example, EFT is being used against bullying. The results, as per Rod, are fantastic. The kids will tap the bully here and there – they will try figure out where the anger is coming from. Much better than hearing a counsellor say ‘It is not personal; it is okay.’

## **Physical Ailments and EFT**

So does EFT work on physical ailments directly? Will there be a time when we can bypass going to a physio, for example, and visit an EFT practitioner instead? Rod says therapy is very useful and instrumental in leading us toward healing and happiness, but it is not useable solely to treat physical ailments yet.

However, EFT can help with healing the physical issues faster. The separation between physical and emotional is actually very artificial. They are strongly connected. For example, if you trip over, you are in shock or embarrassed. If we are in an accident, there is residual anger, trauma and shock. If a bone is broken, it will take time to heal, however if the attached emotional states are treated with EFT alongside, the healing is quick and effective.

## **EFT at Large**

We asked Rod is EFT was a technique which could be applied on global issues, like global warming or problems on a society-level. Could this be used against the band-aid solutions by government which don't last long?

Turns out, tapping can be used for broader issues. Rod quoted the example of how one group of farmers couldn't come to a conclusion and allow a change that had to happen. The group of growers in Northern Queensland didn't allow the industry bodies to make some specific changes. They were at it for several months and nothing happened.

"[Later] they ran a couple of solution focused workshops and defined a common outcome, defined what was already happening and how to move towards it, and they got results in a couple of sessions versus years that they'd been messing around."

## **Learning EFT**

Like said earlier, EFT is a skill and requires consistent practice. There are a plethora of resources available online, and a lot of practitioners who will teach you willingly all they know. You can visit Rod's website ([Tap4Health.com](http://Tap4Health.com)) for articles and videos to learn the technique. However, it will take commitment.

As per Rod, one of the reasons people are not able to continue using the benefits of tapping is the lack of such commitment. Doing it for a few minutes every day will build up muscle memory and help one master the technique.

So the next time you reach for the diet coke or the bar of chocolate, try and get in tune with what you're feeling. Rod advises the words are not important, but it is the feelings that play a huge role. Are you anxious and therefore craving sugars? What's the feeling behind that addiction? Start from there. You should be good.