

EFT – Emotional Freedom Technique

We use EFT to break the cycle of negative conditioned responses associated with traumatic events by pairing a memory with a statement of self-acceptance. This pairing utilizes two well-researched psychological techniques called exposure (remember the trauma) and cognitive restructuring (self-acceptance). Then, you tap with your fingertips on a series of acupressure points on your face and body, which sends a calming signal to your brain, making you feel safe. So, while before, the memory might send your body into a conditioned stress response, you're now re-conditioning your brain with a positive association. The signal of safety sent by your fingertips tells your brain's stress machinery to disengage, breaking the stress response. Once that loop is broken, it often stays broken so that when you later think of the traumatic event, you no longer feel stressed. You may have to tap many times on deep emotional scars or it may take just a time or two to break the stress response.

The eyes can be open or shut during EFT. Sometimes, just like with meditation, we might have to start with eyes closed to turn inward, but as we advance in the practice, we may be able to use the techniques with eyes opened. This can be helpful because we can do shortened tapping sequences in our cars, in line at the store, etc. You can whisper the statements or say them to yourself and you may only do one or two points in those moments.

This is not the only way to do tapping. I am outlining one way. There is no right or wrong way; do what works for you. There are some tappers who tap different points or in different order than what I've listed below.

Step #1: Determine what issue you would like to work on that has a negative emotion attached to it.

Examples: I failed an important test and now feel inadequate or dumb. My husband left me and I feel unloved. I am financially stressed and feel scared that I won't be able to pay my bills. I am often sick at my stomach and this frustrates me. My right foot hurts and I am angry that I can't enjoy walking.

Step #2: Determine how strong your negative emotion is (fear, stress, etc), using a scale of 0-10 with 0 being no emotion at all and 10 being almost unbearable.

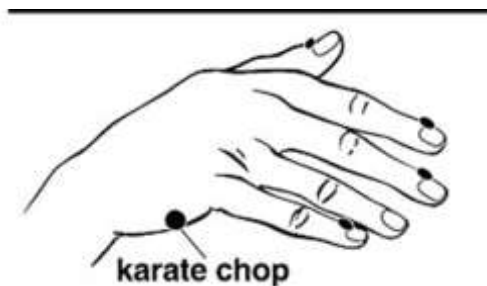
Step #3: Create a setup statement. For example:

Even though I failed a test and feel let down, I deeply love and accept myself. Even though my husband has moved out, I deeply love and accept myself. Even though I am financially stressed and afraid, I deeply love and accept myself. Even though I am often sick at my stomach, I love and accept myself. Even though I feel angry because my right foot hurts, I love and accept myself.

There is no specific way you have to word the setup. For example, in the last example above, I could have said, “Even though my right foot hurts...” Or “even though my foot hurts...” or “even though I am angry because of my foot issue...”

We often use “love and accept” but these are not the only words you could use. You could use “I love myself” or “I accept myself” or “I forgive myself” or whatever else might be appropriate.

Step #4: Set Up. The set up includes saying the statement you created in step #2 three times, while tapping on the karate chop point. Some tappers believe you should use all 4 fingers of the dominant hand to tap this point, while others say 2 fingers – index and middle finger. Do what feels right to you.



Step #5. Shorten the phrase, such as “failed test”, “husband left”, “financial stress” or “foot pain” and tap the following points about 7 times each as you repeat the shortened phrase (failed test, failed test, failed test, failed test, etc.). We normally use the index and middle finger for these points. There is no need to count the number of taps. Just do about 7. You may say the phrase 3, 4, or 5 times when tapping 7 times, depending on how long your phrase is and how fast you speak. Normally, we verbalize our words, but if you are in a public place and need to tap without drawing attention to yourself, you can whisper or even do it silently. You can also tap in fewer places if you need to (for example, if you are waiting in line or in a meeting).

Top of the Head – You may use 2 fingers or all 4.

eyebrow - The eyebrow points are located at the beginning of the eyebrow, nearest the center of the face. You may tap just using your dominant hand on that same side or you may use both hands to tap both sides. The same will apply for the points below

Side of the Eye - The side of the eye points are located on the bone at the side of the eye. It's not so close to the eye that it feels like you're poking yourself, and not so far away that you are tapping at the temple.

Under the Eye - The under the eye points are on the bone located under the eye about even with the pupils. Using the fingertips of the index and middle fingers, gently tap this spot under both eyes.

Under the Nose - The spot is roughly midway between the bottom of the nose and the top of the lip.

Under the Mouth – This point is mid-way between the bottom of the lower lip and the chin, in that indentation area.

Collarbone – The collarbone spots are located about one inch down and over towards the outside of where a man would tie his tie. You can use 2 or all 4 fingers to tap. An alternative is to use the flat of one hand, with about the same pressure as you would pat a baby's back to help it burp.

Side of Body- The side of body point is located about 4 inches below the armpit. I lift my left arm and use the four fingers of my right hand to tap under my left arm.

Step #6. You can do 3 rounds and then re-assess (using the 0-10 scale) or do a single round and re-assess. Repeat as needed. Some practitioners do the 2nd and 3rd round (before reassessing) without doing the set-up again. In other words, they skip the karate chop point on these rounds.