

## **Emotional Freedom Techniques**

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Emotional Freedom Techniques is an amalgamation and simplification of energy healing methods that is rapidly gaining popularity in many areas of the USA and beyond. (See Gallo, 2002.) Compared to many other energy healing methods, EFT is easy to learn and can be rapidly applied. EFT is a Chinese meridian-based system that employs tapping on each of the 12 major meridians and the Conception and Central Vessel. Scaling of the disturbance of the target problem or event is done before, during and at the end of the balancing/treatment procedure.

Retired businessman, Gary Craig, has been the prime developer and promoter of EFT. In 1991 Craig began to study the method of Roger Callahan, Ph.D. called Thought Field Therapy (TFT) (Personal communication, April 3, 2005). TFT builds on the ideas of George Goodheart, DC in Applied Kinesiology and John Diamond, MD in Behavioral Kinesiology. Craig simplified the TFT method and brought into EFT what he considered the necessary elements to obtain beneficial results.

Some of the differences of EFT from TFT are that in EFT 1) no muscle testing is required, 2) there is no routine assessment for or correction of neurological disorganization, and 3) there is no requirement for a specific sequence of acupoints to be stimulated in relation to a specific problem. EFT uses none of the information about specific meridians and their association with specific emotions; rather, it simply describes 15 anatomical points that correspond to acupoints and provides a logical descriptor word or words to designate each balancing point.

EFT is like TFT in that it uses the same acupoints and preserves the use of the 9-Gamut sequence. While TFT was developed with the psychotherapist in mind, like Touch for Health (TFH) (Thie, 1994), the intention of the developer of EFT is it is a method for the lay public as well.

EFT has the same theoretical basis promulgated by Callahan for TFT - that the cause of all negative emotions is a disruption of the body's energy system. Anecdotal information seems to indicate that EFT and TFT are relatively equivalent in efficacy.

### **EFT PROCEDURE**

The method for implementing EFT is called “The Basic Recipe” and is deceptively simple. The Basic Recipe involves four procedures: 1) The Setup, 2) The Sequence, 3) The 9 Gamut Procedure and 4) the Sequence (again). After The Setup, steps two, three, four are repeated until the disturbance is resolved.

Over time the EFT procedure is continuing to evolve as Craig modifies the process based upon results. EFT method information in this article comes from the fifth edition of *The Manual* (Craig, 2004).

Prior to The Setup, several steps are indicated:

#### **IDENTIFY TARGET**

The practitioner discusses the issue with the subject, clarifying what the essence of the disturbance.

#### **ADDRESS RESISTANCE**

(While Craig does not address resistance in the Basic Recipe, I have found that this step seems to increase the likelihood of success in resolution of the process.) After the disturbance is identified, ask

the subject if there is any reason to maintain the disturbance. Help the subject explore where there is any reluctance to let go of the disturbance and from where the reluctance stems. If you identify any reluctance, talk through the reluctance or target the reluctance for treatment/balance. I ask “Is there any reason you can think of that if you lost this disturbance, it would be harmful to you or others?” and “Is there any benefit that you can think of for maintaining this disturbance?”

### IDENTIFY EMOTION AND SCALE DISTURBANCE

Ask the subject to attune to the problem and associated distress.

Ask what is the associated emotion. (While not a part of basic training in EFT, I believe identifying affect is useful in promoting the anticipated outcome. This step serves a similar function to muscle testing for the emotion associated with a goal in TFH.)

Ask for and record a Subjective Units of Disturbance (SUD) rating (Wolpe, 1991) on the target issue. (“On a scale of zero to ten where zero is no disturbance and ten is the highest disturbance you can imagine, how disturbing does it feel to you now?”)

### 1) THE SETUP

The Setup serves the function of addressing potential psychological reversals (PRs). PRs stop progress to resolution of the disturbance during the balancing procedures.

### DEVELOP THE REMINDER PHRASE

The practitioner asks what is the worst part of the target event and works with the subject to decide on a reminder phrase for the target event. (The reminder phrase should be short and contain the kernel of the disturbance. Its purpose is to help the subject maintain a psychoenergetic disruption of life energy during the period of the treatment/balance processes). Sometimes the reminder phrase will be self referential like a negative cognition in EMDR (Shapiro, 2001), such as “I’m helpless” and sometimes it will be an emotion, a word or a phrase to remind the subject of the incident, such as “what my uncle did.” related to an abuse incident.

### CORRECT THE ASSUMED PSYCHOLOGICAL REVERSAL

In about 40% of there is a likelihood of a psychological energy block (in EFT called a polarity reversal) (Craig, 2004, p 21). This phenomenon is also called psychological (or psychoenergetic) reversal (PR)). Rather than do muscle testing for a PR, in EFT, the practitioner assumes there to be a PR. A simple procedure is done to correct or balance the assumed psychological reversal.

EFT suggests the subject correct the PR by firmly rubbing a neurolymphatic reflex (NLR) point on the upper chest (this is the NLR in TFH that is associated with the neck flexors and extensors) or by tapping on SI-3. You can also treat the assumed PR by tapping TE-3, GV-26, or CV-24. (Muscle monitoring (testing) for psychological reversal may be substituted here.) See diagram “[Selected Chinese Meridian Acupoints and Associated Emotions.](#)”

Have subject repeat the affirmation including the reminder phrase aloud three times while tapping or rubbing. (Practitioner tapping with the subject models the movement for the subject, increases the subject’s comfort and allows the practitioner to support the process and act as a surrogate for the subject.)

PR TREATMENT	SAY THREE TIMES:	OPTIONAL MUSCLE TEST
Tap side of hand (SI-3)	I deeply and profoundly (love and) accept myself <b>even though I have this problem</b>	I want to <b>get over this problem.</b> [versus] I want to <b>continue to have this problem.</b>

With this procedure, the vast majority of the time, any PR is cleared as confirmed by the fact the treatment/balance proceeds to diminish the negative emotional attachment to the target incident, i.e. the SUD level drops.

## 2) THE SEQUENCE

The Sequence is the main part of the treatment/balancing process and most likely to be associated with a decrease in SUD level. *The Manual* suggests to firmly tap the acupoints while stating the problem reminder phrase aloud. I find that tapping *lightly* 5 to 7 times (or gently touching) at each acupoint while stating the problem reminder phrase aloud does the job and is less likely to be disconcerting to the subject.

The sequence of the tapping and how many points you tap are not critical. Most of the time in demonstration workshop, Craig uses only the first seven acupoints (on head and torso) (Craig, 2004, 2005). In 1998, he added a point at the top of the head that corresponds to the crown chakra (Personal communication, April 3, 2005) He dropped using Lv-14 for a while because of its anatomical position; however, he has resumed using this point in the basic protocol and uses it occasionally in his workshop demonstrations. In order to avoid the anatomically sensitive Lv-14 acupoint and to include the liver meridian in the treatment, I use Lv-8, just below the knee on the medial aspect of the leg. See table "[Description of Location of Common Acupoints](#)." How many points that are tapped each time is a matter of clinical judgment.

Inherent in maintaining the "thought field" (the concept that thoughts affect the life energy fields (ch'i) of the body, coined by Roger Callahan, Ph.D.) associated with the disturbance is the practitioner's repeating the reminder phrase and having the subject also repeat the phrase, while tapping on selected acupoints. The practitioner should shift the phrasing, addressing a variety of aspects of the disturbing event that have been described by the subject. The practitioner can interject ideas that the practitioner thinks would likely be associated with the disturbance even if the subject had not previously reported the ideas.

## 3) THE 9 GAMUT PROCEDURE<sup>1</sup>

The "9-gamut procedure" is a series 9 short exercises that can be applied whenever the disturbance level does not seem to be dropping as quickly as expected. It is a standard procedure for The Basic Recipe. However, in Craig's current practice, it is seldom used (Craig, 2004, 2005).

Ask subject to tap at Triple Energizer (Triple warmer)-3 (Gamut Point, Back of Hand) throughout the exercises.

Clinician leads and instructs subject:

1. Close your eyes	4. Look down to the left	7. Hum a note**
2. Open your eyes	5. Move eyes clockwise*	8. Count 1-3-5-7-9***
3. Look down to the right	6. Move eyes counterclockwise*	9. Hum a note**

\*It is best to lead this maneuver, slowly moving your finger in a wide circle near the perimeter of the subject's range of eye motion. Look for "catches" in the smooth movement around the arc and "smooth out" these spots.

\*\*The Basic Recipe uses "Hum a tune" to activate the right brain. I believe that sequencing of a tune might also activate the left brain, so I ask the subject to "Hum a note."

\*\*\* The Basic Recipe uses "Count rapidly from 1 to 5." I believe that "1-2-3-4-5" may be rote and very automatic, while having the subject count odd numbers requires more thought in this step to activate the left (sequential) brain.

<sup>1</sup> The Nine Gamut as described here was developed by Roger Callahan and has been modified to several forms.

#### 4) THE SEQUENCE (AGAIN).

Repeat The Sequence as above. If the subject smiles or laughs, it is a clue that a new insight is being experienced and the SUD is probably decreasing.

Emotional disturbance about an event rarely abates completely after only two sequences of tapping.

#### EVALUATE PROGRESS

After tapping through The Basic Recipe, ask subject to attune to the problem and request a SUD level. If the SUD drops two or more points, repeat tapping of treatment points. After the first round, vary the reminder phrase to address different aspects of the problem, add emotion and state issues that might be relevant. Using humor helps.

#### ASPECTS

##### CHECK FOR TARGET SHIFT

If the SUD hasn't dropped, or if it has increased, inquire as to whether the target has shifted. If the target has shifted, you can clear for an assumed psychological reversal again and treat/balance as above. If the target hasn't changed, treat again for assumed psychological reversal. (TFH practitioners can muscle test for psychological reversal.) Then again attune to the problem and treat/balance as above.

##### CORRECT MINI-REVERSAL

If progress is being made and the SUD rating drops less than two points after a period of tapping, assume a psychological reversal for the remaining problem (called Mini PR by Callahan), and treat with the affirmation and tapping (or touching) acupoints as follows:

PR TREATMENT	SAY THREE TIMES:	OPTIONAL MUSCLE TEST
Tap side of hand (SI-3)	I deeply and profoundly (love and) accept myself even though I still have some of this problem	I want to get completely over this problem. [versus] I want to continue to have some of this problem.

Keep repeating these procedures until the problem is resolved (SUD = 0). Practitioners who have learned anchoring procedures and procedures to enhance the desired outcome can apply those methods.

**FOLLOW-UP ON RESULTS** While not a part of The Basic Recipe, it is recommended that the practitioner recheck the SUDs level at the session following the balance. If a desired behavioral outcome was agreed upon, results should be inquired about.

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