

4 Secret Energy Healing Tools to Stop Stress in Your Life

Tool #4 Emotional Freedom Techniques (EFT)

The following is an excerpt from my new book, *MenAlive: Stop Killer Stress with Simple Energy Healing Tools*. If you'd like to keep up with my latest work, please sign up for my free e-newsletter at www.MenAlive.com.

I wrote MenAlive to offer specific tools that were easy to learn and use, scientifically sound, and effective in preventing and treating stress that harms us all. The emerging field of Energy Healing offers many different approaches. After reviewing the field, I chose to offer four: Earthing, Heart Coherence, Attachment Love, and Emotional Freedom Techniques (EFT). If you'd like to learn about the other tools described in the book, send me an e-mail: Jed@menalive.com and put "Energy Tools" in the subject line.

I first heard about EFT when I was having serious pains in my shoulder. I was told it was like "acupuncture without needles." I tried it and found that it worked wonders to relieve my pain and allow greater movement in my shoulder. I was convinced it had helped me, but I didn't understand how it worked. I got some answers in the book *The Promise of Energy Psychology: Revolutionary Tools for Dramatic Personal Change* written by EFT founder Gary Craig and Energy Psychology and Energy Medicine Experts David Feinstein and Donna Eden.

In the foreword to the book, neuroscientist Candace Pert says, "The Promise of Energy Psychology is a synthesis of practices designed to deliberately shift the molecules of emotion. These practices have three distinct advantages over psychiatric medications. They are

noninvasive, highly specific, and have no side effects.” This is the kind of medicine that makes sense to me.

“What excites me most about EFT,” says Craig, “is its application to physical health and wellness. I’m convinced more than ever that Modern Medicine has walked right by a major contributor to chronic and acute diseases. Our unresolved angers, fears, and traumas show up in our physical bodies and manifest not just as back pain but as rheumatoid arthritis, cancer, multiple sclerosis, Parkinson’s disease, and hundreds of other illnesses.”

“In essence, EFT is an emotional version of acupuncture wherein we stimulate certain meridian points by tapping on them with our fingertips,” says Craig. “This addresses a new cause for emotional issues (unbalanced energy meridians). Properly done, this frequently reduces the therapeutic process from months or years down to hours or minutes. And, since emotional stress can contribute to pain, disease and physical ailments, we often find that EFT provides astonishing physical relief.

How EFT Works

Dr. Feinstein has expanded on the theories of how acupuncture works and has developed a 10-point theory of how EFT and other “tapping” therapies can heal:

1. Energies—both electromagnetic energies and more subtle energies—form the dynamic infrastructure of the physical body.
2. The health of those energies—in terms of flow, balance, and harmony—is reflected in the health of the body, mind, and spirit.

3. Conversely, when the body, mind, and spirit are not healthy, corresponding disturbances in our energy fields can be identified and treated.
4. Flow, balance, and harmony can be non-invasively restored and maintained within an energy system by tapping specific energy points on the skin.
5. Tapping specific energy points while holding fearful or anxiety-provoking memories can permanently change the way these memories are processed and stored in the brain.
6. When you bring to mind an anxiety-provoking memory, thought, or related cue, an alarm response is activated in the amygdala. (The amygdala is an almond-shaped group of nuclei located deep within the brain which helps in the processing and memory of emotional reactions).
7. The simultaneous stimulation of acupoints sends deactivating signals to the amygdala, initiating an opposing process.
8. The signals sent by the acupoint stimulation turn off the alarm response, even though the trigger is still present.
9. With a few repetitions the trigger no longer evokes fear, and this innocuous experience, which becomes the defining memory about the trigger, is stored in the long-term memory banks of the brain.
10. We still remember the event or situation that triggered the negative emotional response, but it no longer causes us problems.

Basic Instructions for Using EFT

Energy Psychology experts David Feinstein, Donna Eden, and Gary Craig offer a simple, yet effective set of instructions for addressing a range of problems. I think of the process as having four simple steps: Get Ready. Get Set. Go. Review. The following description will show you how to use this power tool. If you'd like to see it demonstrated you can view a video at:

www.MenAlive.com

Get Ready: Understand that changing your energy field can change the discomfort you are feeling.

Those of us who work in the health profession agree that negative, self-limiting emotions can often be traced back to emotionally damaging early life experiences. A current stressor may activate an earlier experience which triggers a defensive emotional response and leads to increased stress and dysfunction.

The new idea in Energy Healing is that there is a step between the memory and the emotion, and that step is a disturbance in your body's energy field. Conventional psychotherapy focuses on the memory and often goes back in time to address the issues surrounding the earlier trauma. Energy Healing focuses on the energy disturbance as well as the memory, and it works quickly and easily.

Get Set: Focus on the problem and rate your discomfort.

The problem you pick to work on could cover a range of issues, as we'll discuss in later chapters. But they can be summarized as follows:

- Emotional reactions, such as “resentment toward my father” or “anger because my spouse is treating me insensitively.”
- Physical reactions, such as “the stress headaches I get at work” or “my back pain when I try to sleep.”
- Habits of thought, such as “seeing others negative qualities rather than what they do well” or “getting irritated each time my wife is the least bit late.”
- Patterns of behavior, such as “alcohol use” or “overeating.”

Once you have selected the issue or memory you wish to work on, the next step is to rate it on a scale of 0 (no distress) to 10 (extreme distress, or the worst it has ever been), based on the amount of discomfort you experience when you think about it.

Go: Create the set-up, tap, do the “eye thing,” tap again.

The setup is a way of establishing a psychological and energetic receptiveness for change. Whenever you decide to change a habit of thought, behavior, or emotion, the part of you that initially established the pattern may resist your efforts. To do this, you state a precisely worded affirmation while stimulating certain energy points. One of the easiest methods is to say the affirmation while tapping the “karate chop” area on the fleshy part of the outside of either hand with the fingers of the other hand. Self-acceptance in the face of our problem allows change to occur.

Note: There is a diagram with all the energy points you should tap at the end of this section.

The affirmation statement has two parts:

a): Even though I have this _____,

b): I deeply love and accept myself.

You fill in the blank with a brief description of the problem being addressed. Here are a few examples:

- Even though I have this anger toward my wife, I deeply love and accept myself.
- Even though I have this chronic back pain, I deeply love and accept myself.
- Even though I feel frustrated and depressed, I deeply love and accept myself.

Although some approaches advise us to ignore negative thoughts and feelings and state positive affirmations, this approach encourages people to state the problem while tapping. The affirmation is best stated out loud, with feeling and emphasis. If the affirmation doesn't feel quite right to you, it's O.K. to use alternative wording as long as you acknowledge the problem while at the same time affirming your worthiness even though you are having a problem.

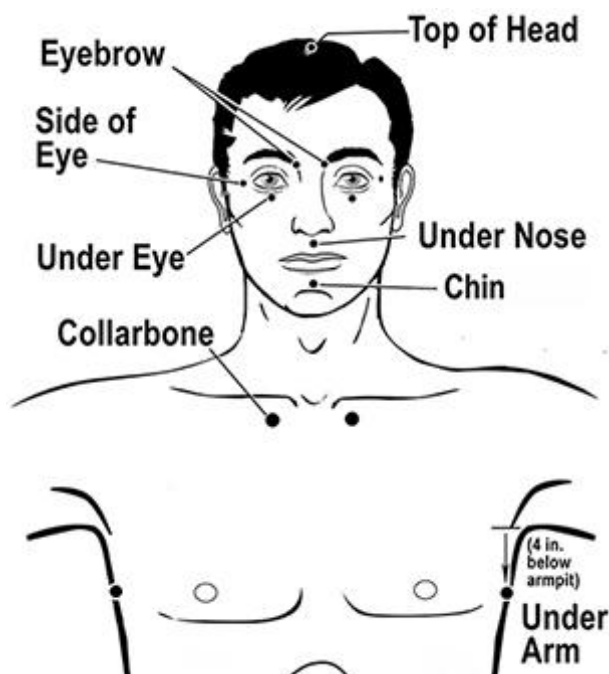
I think of the next "go" thing we do as an **ice-cream sandwich**: Two chocolaty wavers surrounding a big slap of tasty ice-cream. Have the picture? The top waver is the first tapping sequence. The Tapping Sequence is designed to restore an optimal flow of energy through our body's "meridians," or energy pathways. There are fourteen major meridians, and each is associated with acupoints on the surface of the skin that, when tapped or otherwise stimulated, move energy through the entire meridian system. It turns out that the meridians are interconnected so stimulating one meridian can affect others. This also means that working

with only a subset of meridian points is all that is usually necessary to get the entire energy system into enough of a flow to resolve the issue you are addressing.

Various specific subsets have been used with good results. The sequence you will learn includes nine points found to be an effective combination (I think of my wafer as having 9 little holes in it to remind me of the 9 places to tap. The diagram below will show you where to tap). Tap about seven times on each of the tapping points described below, while repeating a reminder phrase. The reminder phrase can be the same as the one used in your initial set up or a shortened version. The idea is to just keep your mind focused on the problem. For instance you could say: "Anger toward my wife" or shorten it to "this anger" You could say, "chronic back pain" or just "back pain."

Tapping Points Diagram





1. Beginning of the eyebrows—inside edge of the eyebrows, just above and to one side of the nose.
2. Sides of the eyes—on the bone bordering the outside of each eye.
3. Under the eyes—on the bone under each eye, about one inch below the pupil.
4. Under the nose—on the small area between the bottom of the nose and the top center of the upper lip.
5. Under the lower lip—midway between the point of the chin and the bottom of the lower lip.
6. The two points immediately below the “collar-bone corners. To locate these points, place your forefingers on your collarbone and move them toward the U shaped notch at the

top of your breastbone (about where you'd knot a tie). Move your fingers through the bottom of the U. Then go to the left and right about an inch and tap.

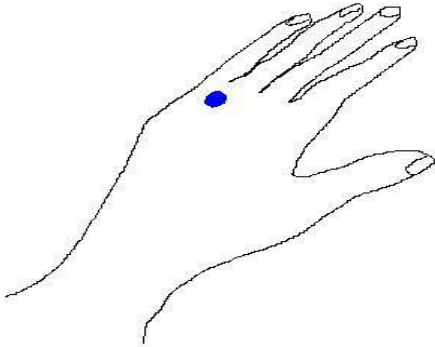
7. Under the arm—About four inches beneath the armpit, about even with the nipple in men.
8. Karate-chop points—In the middle of the fleshy part on the outside of either hand, between the top of the wrist bone and the base of the little finger.
9. Top of the head—Tap the top of the head with all your fingers.

Tapping can be done with either hand, or both hands simultaneously or in sequence. You can tap with the fingertips of your index finger and middle finger, or make a “three-finger notch” by including your thumb. Tap solidly but never so hard as to hurt or risk bruising yourself.

After we've done a round of tapping (top wafer of my ice-cream sandwich), we then do the “eye thing” as Thought-Field Therapy founder, Roger Callahan, calls it, The Nine-Gamut Procedure.

The “gamut point” (on the back of either hand between the pinkie and ring fingers, about one-half inch beyond the knuckles, towards the wrist) is continuously tapped while nine simple steps are carried out.

The Gamut Point



1. Close your eyes.
2. Open your eyes.
3. Move your eyes down and to the left.
4. Move your eyes down and to the right.
5. Circle your eyes, rotating them 360 degrees in one direction.
6. Circle your eyes 360 degrees in the other direction.
7. Hum a tune for a few seconds (“happy birthday or “row, row, row your boat” or something easy to remember.
8. Count to five.
9. Hum again.

When you are finished, bring your eyes down to the floor and then slowly and very deliberately bring them up to opposite wall, projecting your sight and the “old” energy out into the distance as your eyes move up the arc.

Now repeat the tapping procedure again (the second wafer of our ice-cream sandwich) just as you did the first time round.

Review: Revisit the problem, repeat if necessary, challenge the healing.

When you have completed the second sequence of tapping, assess the intensity of the problem again. Close your eyes, bring the original memory to mind, and give it a rating from 0 to 10 on the amount of distress it causes you now, as you think about it. The rating will almost always go down. If it isn't down to 0, you can continue go through the sequence again. Once you've learned the techniques each round should take about 3 or 4 minutes.

Sometimes you will resolve a problem after a single tapping sequence. More often, you will get only partial relief and you need to repeat the whole sequence a number of times. You will need to make a simple adjustment for these rounds to acknowledge that you still are experiencing some degree of pain.

Change the set up phrase slightly:

“Even though I still have some of this _____

For instance, you might begin with “Even though I still have some shoulder pain, I still deeply love and accept myself.”

Continue going through the above sequence until your discomfort rating goes down to 0 or 1.

Once you get the subjective distress level down to 0 or near 1, a final step is to “challenge” it. Try to recall or visualize the situation in a manner that evokes the earlier experience of distress. If you can remember the experience, but there isn’t any emotional distress, you know you’ve taken care of it. Here’s how David Feinstein, Donna Eden, and Gary Craig, describe this final step: “If the disturbed energy pattern and neurological sequence have been corrected—that is, if the earlier memory, thought, or situation is now paired to a stable response in your brain and energy system—you will not be able to activate your earlier feelings. The speed with which this can often be accomplished is among the most striking benefits of energy psychology.”

When I first experienced how quickly I was able to heal long-standing traumatic memories and even physical pain in my body, I couldn’t quite believe it. Even after using EFT for many years, I still have to remind myself that it really does work. Men, particularly, are conditioned to believe, “No pain, no gain.” We often want to experience pain because we are convinced that’s the only way to we can improve our lives. It requires a radical change in our belief systems to accept that we can heal quickly and easily.

When I first read the description of the “basic recipe,” I thought, “this is really complicated.” But it’s a lot more complicated to explain for the first time than to do it. Once you’ve practiced it a few times, you’ll find that it is quick and easy. As you read more in the book, you’ll get other examples and opportunities to practice. For now, begin to become familiar with the directions and try it some issue that may be troubling you. Don’t worry about “getting it right.” The more you practice, the more you’ll hone in on what works for you.

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