

Uncomfortable emotions have an energy pattern to them that we can feel (i.e. feeling *bad*), and we can be keenly aware of the change in the energy (i.e. feeling *better*). Using EFT, we may get noticeable relief and ease – quantum leaps of healing – with seemingly insurmountable problems, often where nothing else has worked in the past.

EFT and The Brain

Another reason why EFT works so well is the effect that it often has on the brain. Scans of the brain, including fMRIs (functional MRIs), have shown that the stimulation of acupoints with needles sends signals directly into the "survival" parts of the brain where the fight-or-flight part of us lives. Words alone cannot reach these areas of the brain, which do not have direct neural connections with rational language centers.

It *may be* that EFT, which involves acupoint stimulation with tapping, reaches the survival-instinct mechanism of the brain and helps to reprogram our reactions at that level. This feature is not available in many modalities.

When we are under stress, the pre-frontal cortex of the brain goes “offline,” and our body begins flooding with adrenaline and cortisol. The EFT intervention can help calm the amygdala, facilitate the release of calming chemicals, and *bring us back* to a more resourceful state (see page 56).

For further research information, notes and links, see The Science Behind EFT section (page 54) or explore the Science and Research archives available at EFTInternational.org.

The EFT Process: An Overview

We first present a short version of EFT that is currently used worldwide by a majority of EFT practitioners. EFT International calls this the Standard EFT Protocol. The complete original “Basic Recipe” from classical EFT (upon which the Standard Protocol is based) is taught on page 26. We recommend that you learn both.

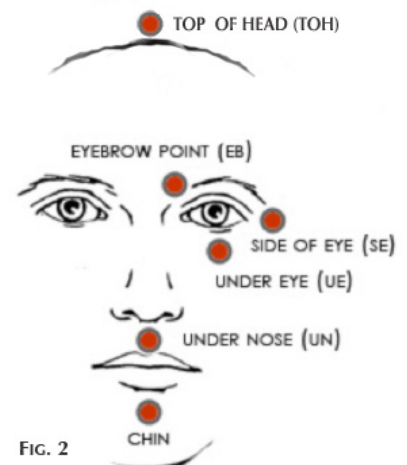
1. Notice something that is bothering you. It might be a feeling in your body or a specific thought in your head. For the sake of this exercise, let’s name your bothersome issue “stress.” Now rate the intensity on a scale of 0-10 (where 10 is the worst). How intense is this *particular* stress?



2. Do the EFT Setup. To perform the Setup, tap on the Side of Hand point (outside edge of hand, fig. 1) and repeat the following phrase three times per classic EFT:

“Even though I have this ‘stress,’ I deeply and completely accept myself.”

3. Tap through the Sequence (fig. 2). Begin at the Top of Head point whilst repeating a Reminder Phrase. The Reminder Phrase states the issue and keeps your attention on the energy of the problem while you tap:



Top of Head (TOH): *“This stress...”*

Gently tap several times (7 to 10 or so) on each of these acupoints with your fingertips, whilst saying your Reminder Phrase:

Eyebrow Point (EB): *“This stress...”*

Side of Eye (SE): *“This stress...”*

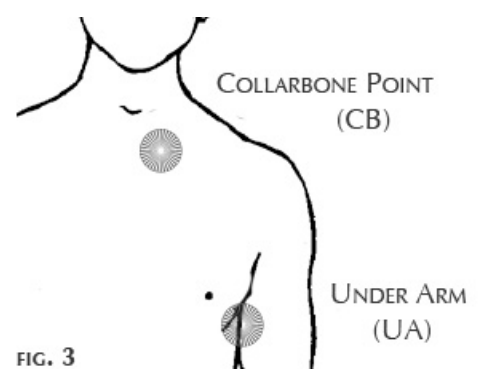
Under Eye (EU): *“This stress...”*

Under Nose (UN): *“This stress...”*

Chin Point (CH): *“This stress...”*

Collarbone Point (CP): *“This stress...”*

Under Arm (UA): *“This stress...”*



4. Check-In and Measure. Pause to notice the effects of the tapping on your specific issue – the specific stress you identified. Reassess the intensity level. Has the

number changed? What number do you give the intensity now? If you can't think of the number, just make your best guess.

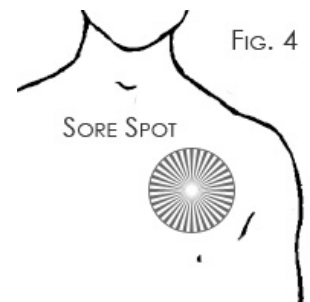
5. Refocus and Repeat. Refocus on your issue and repeat the tapping process again if your number is greater than a zero. The second time around, we often change the wording as follows:

Setup: *“Even though I **still have some** of this stress, I deeply and completely accept myself...” (repeat 3x)*

Sequence: *“This **remaining** stress” (on each of the points, starting with the Top of Head)*

Notes on the Setup:

- The acupoint used for the Setup was historically called the Karate Chop point. EFT International prefers the wording Side of Hand for reasons of cultural sensitivity, abbreviation “SOH.”
- Gary Craig's latest version of EFT recommends saying the Setup only once. The authors highly recommend that newcomers to EFT repeat the Setup phrase three times (for thoroughness). Throughout this manual we will follow the classic version of EFT (saying the Setup three times).
- Some people bristle at the phrase “I deeply and completely accept myself.” If this is the case for you, adjust or *flex* the second part of the Setup so that it feels more true to you (e.g. Even though I have [this issue], *this is where I'm at right now* or Even Though I have [this issue], **I want to deeply and completely accept myself**).
- Gently rubbing the Sore Spot (fig. 4) is an alternative to tapping the Side of Hand point. This will be explained in a later section.



Notes on Top of Head (TOH) and Additional Points:

- In the Standard EFT Protocol, Top of Head can be used FIRST or LAST in the Sequence of Tapping Points. Both have been popular through the years. We recommend that you decide and be consistent, whether you begin with Top

of Head (TOH), as we have shown here – or begin with the Eyebrow Point (EB) and end with Top of Head (TOH).

- Additional points, such as the Finger Points and the Gamut Spot were a part of the original, longer version of EFT. Many people like to add them at times to enhance the process. These are not considered part of the EFT International Standard Protocol and so are not included here. You can find out more about Original EFT, which includes these additional points, on pp. 27-29 of this manual.

Example “Round” of Tapping

Next, we will do a full round of tapping. A *round* is an EFT Setup and Sequence done together, one time:

1. Notice something that is bothering you. Use a short phrase that describes your issue. This phrase comes from your words – your subjective experience of the issue. Measure the intensity. How intense are these words on a scale of 0-10?

“I’m afraid of losing my job. About a 7”

2. Do the Setup. Tapping the Side of Hand (SOH), say the Setup phrase three times:

“Even though I’m afraid of losing my job, I deeply and completely accept myself.”

3. Tap through the Sequence (starting with Top of Head), and speak the Reminder Phrase at each point:

“I’m afraid of losing my job...” or “fear of losing my job”

4. Check-in and Measure: After one round of tapping all the points, what is your intensity on the issue now?

5. Refocus and Repeat: If your number is not yet at zero, repeat the process again, beginning with the Setup (on Side of Hand 3x)

*“Even though **I still have some** of this fear of losing my job...”*

and proceeding through the Sequence (saying a Reminder Phrase on each point, starting at Top of Head):

*“This **remaining** fear of losing my job”*

6. Check-in, Measure, Refocus and Repeat as necessary until your issue is *as low as it will go...*

How to Do EFT: Detailed Instructions

1. Focus on the Problem

Before beginning to tap, take some time to become aware of what you would like to work on. You can focus upon a “negative” emotion, a body sensation, or a more complex problem – whatever feels intense right now. Just take a deep breath and sit with whatever is coming up. What is bothering you? The more specific and detailed you can be, the better.

Sometimes talking with yourself or someone else can help you gain clarity about what feels most intense. It is especially useful to notice how you experience the emotion in your body - like tightness in the chest or a knot in the stomach, for example. In other words, how do you know you are feeling what you are feeling?

Give the problem a name. For example,

This stress from work

This sadness about the break-up

This fear of flying that makes it hard to breathe

This headache, like a throbbing behind my eyes

Helpful Hint: If you are working with a physical issue, consider asking yourself a few key questions and using the answers in your Setup phrase:

Is there something emotional going on that has been happening as long as you have had this issue?

How do you feel when you think about this?

If there were an emotional contributor to this issue, what might it be?

Sometimes, there is fear, worry, hopelessness, anger or some other strong feeling about getting closer to your issue. If these feelings are present, it is important to tap for these kinds of feelings before moving forward with anything else.

As you consider continuing, you might sense that your issues are too complex or scary to approach on your own. If this is the case, we encourage you to consider consulting an experienced practitioner.

2. Measure the Intensity

Once you have identified the issue you would like to address, a 0-10 scale is useful for measuring the scope of the problem. You might hear this referred to as the SUDS – Subjective Units of Distress Scale. What number do you give to this negative emotion or issue right now? Is it low, medium or high on the scale?

Some people prefer to use their hands to express the intensity: Palms close together is low, wider and wider apart is higher and higher. This method is especially useful for children.

Helpful Hint: By developing the habit of noting your intensity, you then have a skill to measure your progress before and after you tap.

3. Create a Setup Phrase and Perform the Setup

To create your Setup phrase, choose a few words that describe your subjective experience of the problem or issue:

Even though I have this [uncomfortable issue/problem, etc.], I deeply and completely accept myself

More examples:

Even though I have this stress from work, I deeply and completely accept myself

Even though I am so sad about the break-up, I deeply and completely accept myself

Even though I have this fear of flying and it is hard to breathe, I deeply and completely accept myself

Even though I have this headache and it is throbbing behind my eyes, I deeply and completely accept myself.

Helpful Hint: Whilst the above examples use the standard Setup phrase, the most effective Setup statements include words that are true for you (see below). We discuss some more helpful variations of the Setup on page 29.

Even though I crave this chocolate and I loath myself for it, I want to deeply and completely accept myself.

Performing the Setup

Speak your Setup phrase three times aloud whilst tapping on the Side of Hand point. The Side of Hand point is the outside edge of the hand – the fleshy part between the base of the little finger and the wrist (see fig. 1):

Even though I have this _____, I deeply and completely accept myself anyway.



Why We Perform the Setup

We can think of the Setup as a way of preparing our energy systems for healing and change – a way of intentionally softening any internal objections to being wholly present to what we are experiencing.

Historically, the Setup was considered to be the “correction for Psychological Reversal” (see page 29). To this day, some practitioners say performing it creates a more positive energy or that speaking it whilst tapping allows us to *step back more objectively* – despite the problem at hand.

In scientific terms, the Setup appears to trigger our issue in a safe manner, laying the groundwork for what is called “the disconfirming experience.” Hence, performing it helps *unwire* the neurological pathways between thinking about an issue and our distressed emotional response.

A lot of us make strategies to avoid our difficult feelings because we’re afraid we are smaller than our distress. In this light, the Setup helps remind us that we are always bigger than our feelings even if we don’t think we are.

It may help to think of the Setup as a safe way for us to explore, acknowledge, and express the uncomfortable feelings we are truly experiencing right now. By performing the Setup statement, we tell the truth about just what we are currently feeling. As we acknowledge this energy whilst tapping, we indeed begin to allow these feelings to evolve and transform.

The “Sore Spot”

The Sore Spot is an alternative to the Side of Hand point but instead of tapping, we rub this spot. To find the Sore Spot, place your finger in the indentation at the base of the neck and go down about 3” (or 8cms) and to the left (or right) 3” (or 8cms). As the name suggests, feel for a spot that is sore or sensitive.

To utilise the Sore Spot, gently press and lightly rub (or trace) the area whilst repeating the Setup phrase (instead of tapping the Side of Hand point).

4. Tap Through the Sequence Using the Reminder Phrase

After you have done the Setup, tap through the Sequence of points, repeating a Reminder Phrase at each point. The Reminder Phrase simply states the uncomfortable feeling. It is a way to hold the problem in your conscious awareness while tapping, allowing the energy to transform.

As a rule, use the same Reminder Phrase at each point.

Here are example Reminder Phrases for various issues:

This stress from work

This sadness about the break-up

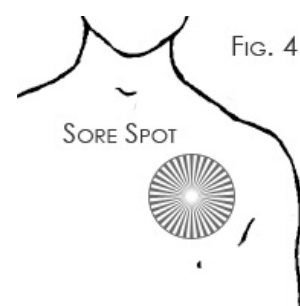
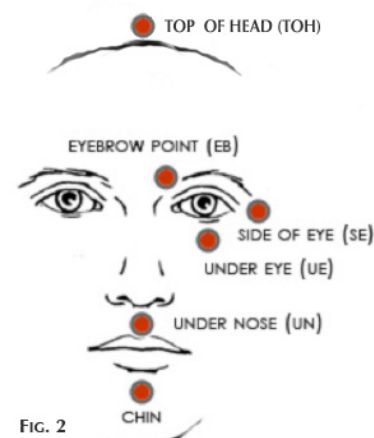
This fear of flying, it’s hard to breathe

This throbbing headache, etc.

To perform the Sequence, tap on each of these points (7 to 10 times or so) as you speak the Reminder Phrase on each point:

Top of Head (TOH), on the crown of the head, lightly tap with all the fingertips – like gentle raindrops, in a circular motion if you like.

Eyebrow (EB), beginning of eyebrow, tap on the brow bone, near the center of the face



Side of Eye (SE), on the bone near the outer edge of the eye in line with the pupil when looking straight ahead

Under the Eye (UE), on the top of the cheekbone underneath the pupil when looking straight ahead

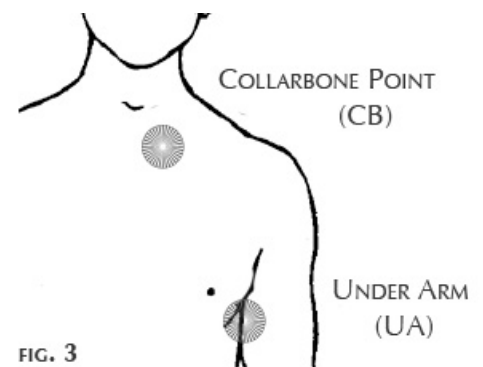
Under the Nose (UN) on the philtrum (the indentation just above the top lip)

Chin Point (Ch), in the indentation between the lower lip and chin

Collar Bone (CB), just below the collarbone, near where the collarbone and breastbone come together. From the midline, trace under the collarbone just about 2" (or 5 cms) to the right or the left.

Under the Arm (UA), torso starting at the armpit, go down on the side of the body 4" or about 10 cms (where a bra would be on the body in that area).

After you finish tapping, relax and take a deep breath. When you have done the Setup and the Sequence, you have completed one round of EFT.



5. Evaluate the Results

Sit for a moment after a round of tapping, taking plenty of time to notice any results from the tapping process. What are you aware of? How does your body feel? Is there any change in the emotional intensity you were experiencing? Did anything else come up for you?

See if you would give that intensity a different number. Has it gone down? Or up? Or did it stay the same? Rate your intensity again. Let's say you started with "fear" at a 7. You may still feel fearful but the tapping took the edge off of it, and you would now rate it a 5. Or let's say it went up to a 9 and your memories are more vivid. That means you are tuning in to the problem.

6. Refocus on the Issue and Repeat the Tapping Process

For a second round of tapping, we often change the words slightly. Perform the Setup three times, beginning with the Side of Hand point:

Even though I still have some of this _____ [feeling] (or more of this _____ or a little bit of this _____), I deeply and completely accept myself.

Tap through the Sequence again with the Reminder Phrase, using the word “remaining” where appropriate:

Eyebrow (EB): *This remaining _____*

Side of Eye (SE): *This remaining _____*

Under Eye (UE): *This remaining _____...*

Letting the Process Unfold

As you go through rounds of tapping, things usually begin to change. You may feel different or you may be unable to find the feeling at all anymore. For instance, the fear may subside to a 3, but now *embarrassment* is coming up at a 10! In EFT, we call this a different “aspect” of the issue.

Alternatively, feelings may become more intense. This is a normal occurrence. All this means is that the numbing you may have been protecting yourself with is softening and easing.

Strong Emotion

If emotional intensity is rising, it likely means that you are one step further towards resolving your issue. However, if the intensity feels like it may become too much to handle, it would probably be best to proceed with the help of an experienced EFT practitioner. In other words, your system is responding to EFT (emotional intensity is rising), but professional support may be needed.

When emotional intensity is high, you can stop working on the issue itself and simply stop using words and keep tapping around the points. You can even touch and hold the points (this is called “Touch and Breathe”). Both methods are effective for calming your system. When the emotion does become overwhelming, whatever you do – don't stop tapping. Keep tapping around the points, non-stop, until emotions begin to subside.

We invite you to explore our directory of EFT Practitioners on AAMET.org to find a practitioner that's right for you.