



EMOTIONAL FREEDOM TECHNIQUE (EFT)

By Dr. Gregory Moore

Introduction: Emotional Freedom Technique was first developed by Gary Craig and Adrienne Fowlie in 1995 following earlier work by Roger Callahan. EFT, as it is commonly known, is a form of self applied acupressure, using a form of “tapping” in a sequence, to reduce the emotional charge (usually anxiety but depressive symptoms are also common) associated with a particular thought. We already know that acupuncture works for a variety of ailments including pain, asthma, and other medical issues. EFT is simply an extension of this idea without the use of needles or special training. You can learn this simple, yet effective technique in a short period of time and going through the sequence only takes a couple of minutes. This technique is used by athletes, lecturers, and others who need a quick way of managing performance anxiety as well as other individuals who have more significant anxieties such as war veterans.

The premise behind acupressure is that memories that are associated with anxiety (some sense of threat) become actively “charged” with emotion. For example, if you were driving in a car (usually a neutral experience) and had an accident, you may find that the mere thought of getting back into a car after the accident might be quite anxiety provoking. A simpler example would be common test anxiety. Taking a test becomes associated with anxiety (a negative charge) so that every time you think of taking the test, you start to get anxious. Thus, any thought that becomes charged with emotion is a candidate for EFT treatment!

In addition, you may have a false belief about yourself. For example, “I really can’t learn to drive. I’m not well coordinated and it’s just too scary” or “I’ll never make the team because I’m just no good at soccer.” The belief about learning to drive or trying out for a sport becomes associated with pain. EFT is designed to remove the pain from the thought or belief.

In order to use EFT, we must first pick an issue. Let’s use the above example of test taking. First we develop what is called an “affirmation”. It goes like this: “Even though I

am afraid of doing poorly on this test, I am a good and worthwhile person.” This affirmation is designed to break the connection between what you are DOING and who you ARE. Performing poorly on a test is, of course, no reflection on your character. It may however, reflect inadequate preparation or anxiety that is counterproductive to performance.

As we are saying the above affirmation, we take our right hand and “karate chop” our left hand gently. We say the affirmation three times. We then begin tapping with our index fingers on the following acupressure points:

1. the lower forehead, in the center and right above the eyebrows,
2. the temples
3. right below each eye
4. under the nose
5. on the chin
6. on the chest (use your fist but tap gently)
7. underneath one arm (about at what would be the bra line if you were a woman)
8. on top of the head

As you tap (7-9 times), you will say one of the following at each pressure point:

“It’s not that big a deal, it’s only a test.” “Why do I worry so much? Let it go.” I’ve done my best to prepare.” (Hopefully you have!) “I need to let go of this.” etc. You may make up your own phrases that fit and that affirm that the fear is unfounded or not such a big deal. Remember, it’s a test; it’s not a grizzly bear chasing you through the woods!

In this example, we are addressing performance anxiety which can act as a detriment to performance. Therefore, breaking the anxious hold on us will most likely improve or maximize our performance.

You may find a number of references online for EFT. Some show slightly different tapping points or ways of going through the sequence but the premise is the same. You may also go to emofree.com and view the online videos that show the use of EFT for a variety of problems, some quite significant. This technique is espoused by such

professionals as Deepak Chopra and others. Should you want further assistance with this, please contact me via this website for a consultation.