

The Science and Research Behind Tapping by David Feinstein, Ph.D.

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ENERGY PSYCHOLOGY

A Brief Introduction

Energy Psychology has been called "acupressure for the emotions." It is a self-empowerment approach that draws from ancient spiritual practices and healing traditions. It provides simple methods for shifting brain patterns that lead to unwanted thoughts, actions, and emotions, such as fear, anger, anxiety, jealousy, shame, and depression. By tapping energy points on the surface of the skin while focusing the mind on specific psychological problems or goals, the brain's electrochemistry can be shifted to quickly help:

- overcome fear, guilt, shame, jealousy, anger, or anxiety.

- change unwanted habits and behaviors.

- enhance the ability to love, succeed, and enjoy life.

The approach offers powerful tools for the clinician as well as potent back-home tools for the client. This class is a hands-on introduction that will teach you the basic principles and enough technique that you can immediately begin using Energy Psychology in your own life and make informed choices about how it might be integrated into your practice if you are a clinician.

Energy Psychology combines tools from conventional psychotherapy, such as focused imagination, with tools from healing and spiritual practices that understand the "vital energies" that are at the foundation of physical and mental health. It works by stimulating energy points on the surface of the skin which, when paired with specific psychological procedures, send signals to the brain which may impact stress chemicals such as cortisol and DHEA, deactivate limbic system arousal, and rapidly alter neural pathways. In brief, undesired responses can rapidly be uncoupled from their triggers, providing you with greater ease and freedom to live your life more effectively and joyfully.

Energy Psychology is still a controversial development within the mental health field (the techniques look quite strange, are adopted from foreign ancient cultures, and the claims of a growing number of practitioners seem almost too good to be true), but evidence is mounting that these techniques are significant, powerful tools for both self-help and clinical treatment.

Energy Psychology Fact Sheet

What It Is:

Energy Psychology has been called "psychological acupuncture without the needles." It is both a clinical technique and a self-help approach that provides simple methods for shifting brain patterns that lead to unwanted thoughts, actions, and emotions. It draws from ancient healing traditions, such as acupuncture and yoga, and uses them in thoroughly modern ways.

The Essential Principle:

Recent research shows that the brain's ability to alter neural pathways that are the source of many psychological disorders is far more extensive than previously believed ("neural plasticity").

How It Does It:

Tapping on acupuncture points (along with related techniques) while an anxiety-evoking memory or thought is brought to mind sends signals to the brain that turn off the anxious response in the moment and rapidly alters the brain chemistry that maintained that response.

The Conditions It Helps:

Variations of this strategy also appear to shift, for the person's benefit, the brain's coding of irrational anger, jealousy, guilt, shame, unremitting grief, compulsive behaviors, phobias, PTSD, depression, addictions, and chronic pain. The method has also been shown to promote peak performance and to help in attaining personal goals.

Who Practices It:

Both licensed mental health professionals – such as psychologists, psychiatrists, and social workers – and life coaches who do not treat mental disorders use the methods of Energy Psychology with their clients. Energy Psychology also offers back-home techniques for clients as well as potent self-help tools for those not in counseling. Variations include EFT (Emotional Freedom Techniques), TFT (Thought Field Therapy), and TAT (Tapas Acupuncture Technique), among numerous other formats.

What Does It Do to the Brain:

Energy Psychology works by stimulating energy points on the surface of the skin which, when paired with various psychological procedures, send signals to the brain that may impact stress chemicals such as cortisol and DHEA, deactivate limbic system arousal, and rapidly alter neural pathways.

Has Its Effectiveness Been Established?

Energy Psychology is still a controversial development within the mental health field (the techniques look quite strange, are adopted from foreign cultures, and the claims of a growing number of practitioners seem almost too good to be true), but evidence is mounting that these techniques are significant, powerful tools for both self-help and clinical treatment. Visit <http://www.eftuniverse.com> and click "Research" in the sidebar.

Links to some 300 articles can also be found in The EFT & Energy Psychology Article Library at <http://www.eft-articles.com>.