

From Surviving
to Thriving
During the
Festive Season!



Dr Peta Stapleton

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Other Books by Dr Peta Stapleton

EFT for Teens –

<https://www.amazon.com/EFT-Teens-Peta-Stapleton-PhD/dp/1604152648>

EFT for Introverts –

<https://www.amazon.com/EFT-Introverts-PhD-Peta-Stapleton-ebook/dp/B07FP6D6GQ>

Your Mind Power: Strategies for Behavior Change –

<https://www.hybridpublishers.com.au/product/your-mind-power-strategies-for-behaviour-change>

Attract Money Subconsciously –

<https://www.amazon.com/Attract-Money-Subconsciously-Peta-Stapleton-ebook/dp/B004JZXQYO>

“EFT for Weight Loss,” chapter in *Clinical EFT Handbook*, Vol. 2 –

https://www.amazon.com/Clinical-EFT-Handbook-Eft-Handbooks-ebook/dp/B00HU3YAEC/ref=sr_1_2?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1469756038&sr=8-2&keywords=clinical+EFT+handbook+vol+2#navbar

The Science behind Tapping: A Proven Stress Management Technique for the Mind and Body (Hay House) –

https://www.amazon.com/Science-behind-Tapping-Management-Technique/dp/1401955738?mc_cid=80b2b02aa6&mc_eid=%5BUNIQID%5D

Important Note

This book outlines an impressive personal improvement tool. It is not a substitute for training in psychology or psychotherapy. The author does not assume responsibility for how the reader chooses to apply the techniques herein. The ideas, procedures, and suggestions in this book are not intended as a substitute for consultation with your professional health care provider. If you have any questions about whether or not to use EFT, consult your physician or licensed mental health practitioner.

This material is for your general knowledge only and is not a substitute for traditional medical attention, counselling, therapy or advice from a qualified health care professional. The information here is not intended to be used to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease or disorder.

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About the Author

Peta Stapleton, PhD, has 25 years of experience as a registered clinical and health psychologist in Queensland, Australia. Peta has also spent the last 15 years in academia and is associate professor in psychology at Bond University. She is a published author, certified practitioner of Neuro-linguistic Programming, Timeline Therapy, and Emotional Freedom Techniques (and an EFT Universe Trainer, Levels 1 to 3). Peta is the Hay House author of *The Science Behind Tapping: A Proven Stress Management Technique for the Mind and Body*, and is Australasia's leading EFT researcher and academic.

Peta specializes in eating disorders and emotional eating, women's health, and adolescent issues, and she is a world leader and researcher in EFT. In 2014, she was awarded the Harvey Baker Research Award for meticulous research in Energy Psychology and also became a Gold Coast Business Events Ambassador for Gold Coast Tourism. In 2015, she received the Global Weight Management Congress Industry Professional Award of Excellence, and was named the Gold Coast Women in Business–Woman for Change Winner. In 2016, she was awarded the greatest contribution to the field of Energy Psychology by the Association of Comprehensive Energy Psychology. In 2018 Peta was named the Gold Coast Women in Business Innovation and technology winner for her online therapy trials and work.

Peta is on most social media and would love to connect!

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LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/petastapleton>

Research publications:

<https://research.bond.edu.au/en/persons/peta-stapleton>

Dr. Stapleton's clinical food craving program based on research trials:

<http://www.weightmanagementpsychology.com.au/onlinecourses/tappingforweightmanagement>

Tap into a Better You apps:

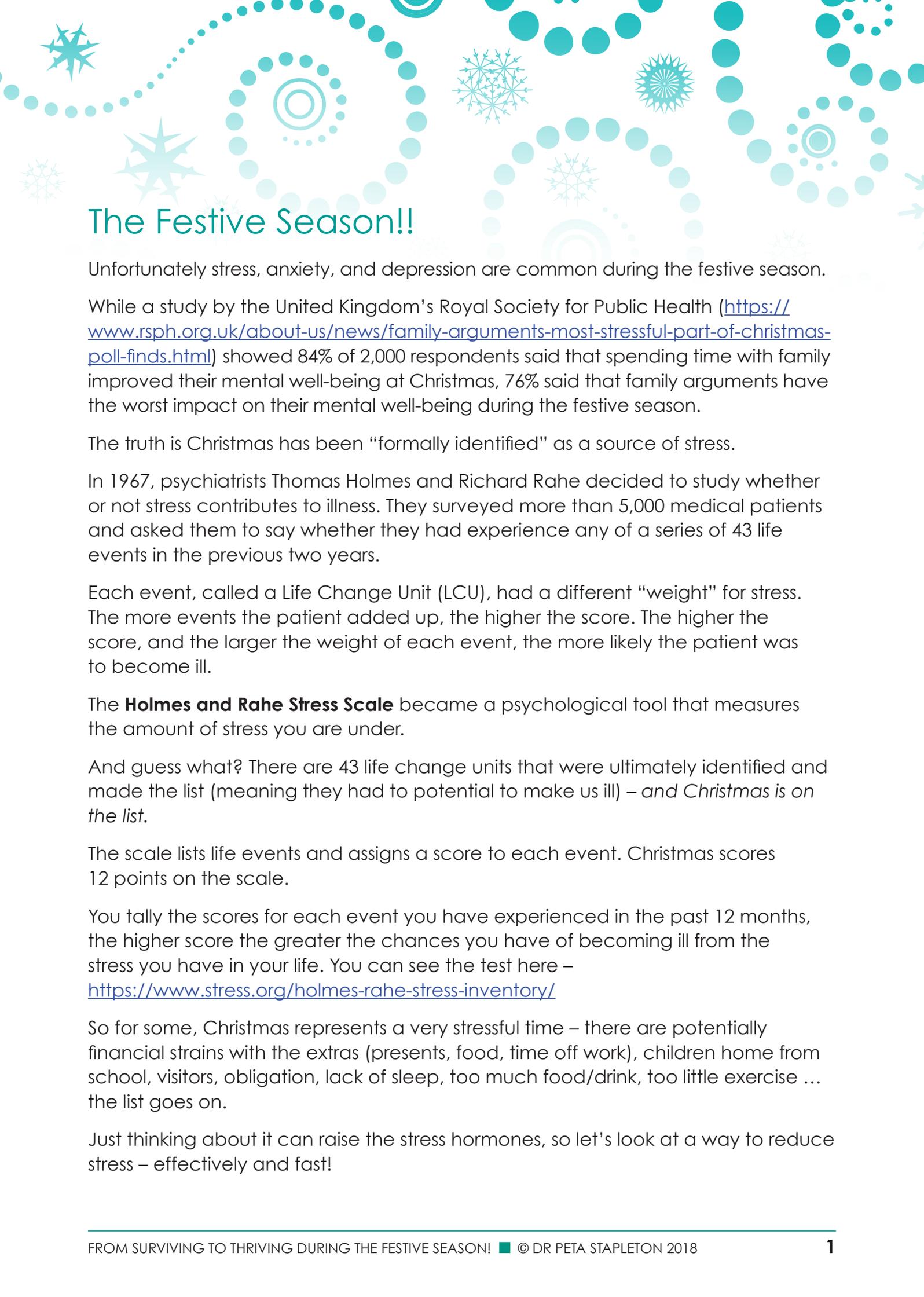
Apple: <https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/tapinto/id991658832?mt=8>

Android: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.petastapleton.tapintoabetteryou>



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The Festive Season!!

Unfortunately stress, anxiety, and depression are common during the festive season.

While a study by the United Kingdom's Royal Society for Public Health (<https://www.rsph.org.uk/about-us/news/family-arguments-most-stressful-part-of-christmas-poll-finds.html>) showed 84% of 2,000 respondents said that spending time with family improved their mental well-being at Christmas, 76% said that family arguments have the worst impact on their mental well-being during the festive season.

The truth is Christmas has been “formally identified” as a source of stress.

In 1967, psychiatrists Thomas Holmes and Richard Rahe decided to study whether or not stress contributes to illness. They surveyed more than 5,000 medical patients and asked them to say whether they had experience any of a series of 43 life events in the previous two years.

Each event, called a Life Change Unit (LCU), had a different “weight” for stress. The more events the patient added up, the higher the score. The higher the score, and the larger the weight of each event, the more likely the patient was to become ill.

The **Holmes and Rahe Stress Scale** became a psychological tool that measures the amount of stress you are under.

And guess what? There are 43 life change units that were ultimately identified and made the list (meaning they had a potential to make us ill) – *and Christmas is on the list.*

The scale lists life events and assigns a score to each event. Christmas scores 12 points on the scale.

You tally the scores for each event you have experienced in the past 12 months, the higher score the greater the chances you have of becoming ill from the stress you have in your life. You can see the test here –

<https://www.stress.org/holmes-rahe-stress-inventory/>

So for some, Christmas represents a very stressful time – there are potentially financial strains with the extras (presents, food, time off work), children home from school, visitors, obligation, lack of sleep, too much food/drink, too little exercise ... the list goes on.

Just thinking about it can raise the stress hormones, so let's look at a way to reduce stress – effectively and fast!

A Way to Calm the Body and Mind

By definition, EFT (Emotional Freedom Techniques) is a fairly quick and new intervention which combines elements of exposure and cognitive therapy, and somatic stimulation. This means you need to be in the present moment for EFT to work.

EFT has been around for over 30 years but in recent decades it has been subjected to many clinical trials to test how it affects the mind and body.

With roots in Eastern philosophies, particularly acupuncture, our understanding of how EFT works has been rapidly progressing. While initial explanations focused on the body's "meridian" or energy system, tapping now has over a decade of clinical trials and research and these show this tapping technique has profound effects on the nervous system, the production of stress hormones (particularly cortisol), DNA regulation, and brain activation.

It is often referred to as 'Tapping' as it uses a two finger tapping process with a verbal statement that includes acceptance of the issue at hand.

EFT is also called:

- A relaxation technique
- A stress reduction technique
- An emotional or psychological version of acupuncture

A decade-long research program at Harvard Medical School looking at what happens in the body when various acupuncture points are stimulated found that certain points almost instantly decrease the activation of the stress response in the brain. The capacity to rapidly reduce the stress response is a cornerstone in the speed and effectiveness of tapping.

EFT – The Technique

Points are stimulated by tapping on them with 2 fingers, the index and middle fingers, on the face and upper body.

The strength of tapping should be comfortable and you should be able to feel a resonance spreading out across the adjacent area of your body from the point you are tapping.

Tap on each point approximately 7 times before moving on to the next point. You don't need to count these though, as you will be focusing on the problem you are tapping on.

Usually you only use the tapping technique when you have a problem, some distress, a feeling you don't like, or a belief you would like to change.

You start by saying your problem in a statement and you also accept that you have the problem with the end of the statement.

The setup statement you use in EFT usually looks like this –

Even though I have this problem (insert actual issue), I accept I have this problem

An example might be “*Even though I’m feeling anxious about that public talk I have to give, I accept myself*”

After each round of EFT always ask, “*How intense 0 to 10 is the problem now? How do you know?*” (the intensity has gone up or down)

You can tap subsequent rounds by saying, “*Even though I still have some of this problem, I accept myself.*”

Other possible endings for your set-up statement:

.....I completely accept myself and my problem

.....I deeply and completely accept myself

.....I completely love/like and accept myself

.....I deeply and completely love and accept myself anyway

.....I deeply and completely forgive myself

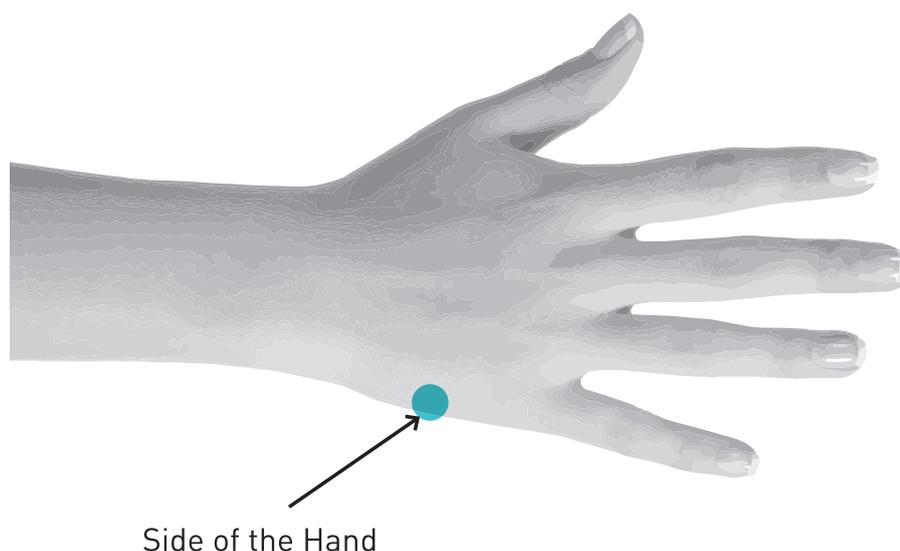
.....I deeply and completely love and accept my feelings

.....I choose to love and accept myself

.....I choose to be open to this process

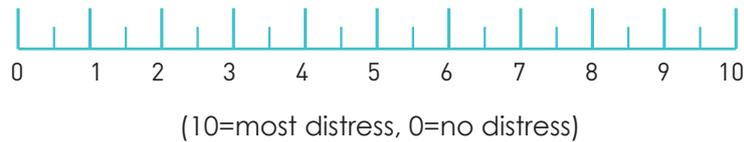
.....I am OK and open to the process

When you say the tapping setup statement, you tap on the side of the hand with two fingers from the other hand.



Tapping – The 5 Steps

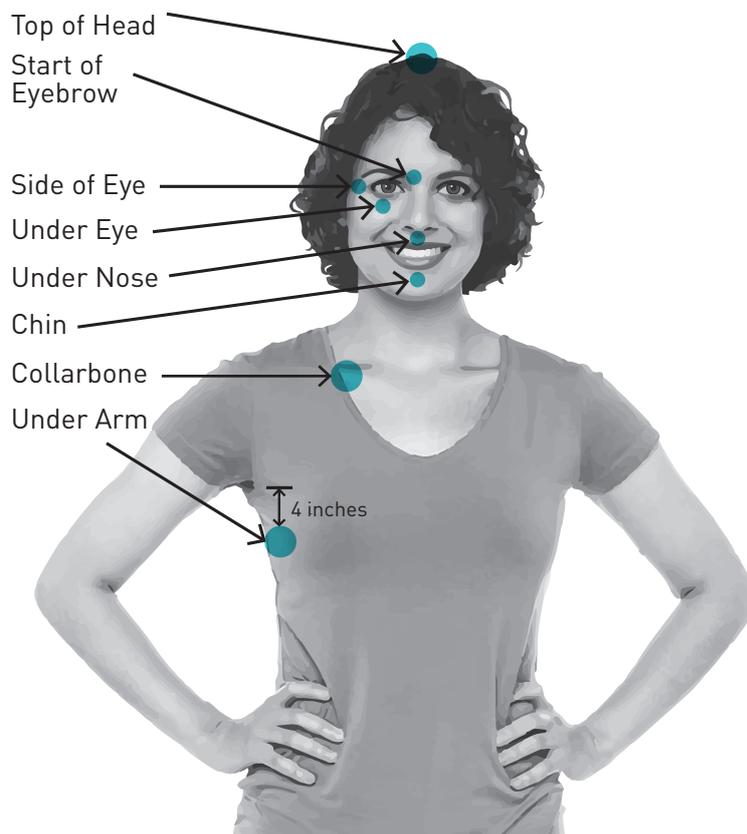
1. Acknowledge there is something to change and rate distress/discomfort out of 10 (10=most distress, 0=no distress).



Your ratings are subjective – you can guess the number out of 10, or you just may feel a difference after tapping. The aim is to tap until you feel calmer, the number is 0-1 or you have achieved the shift you want for that tapping time.

State problem in setup statement while tapping on side of hand point (3 times).

2. Tap through all 8 EFT points **while saying a short reminder phrase, which is usually the main feeling or body sensation, or thought. This is to stay engaged and not drift off in your thoughts.**
3. Take a breath and re-rate your distress out of 10.
4. Tap again from the eyebrow point until rating is 0. You only need to start again with the setup statement if you want to change the topic you are tapping on.



An example

You tap on the side of the hand while saying “Even though I have this headache in both temples, and I feel sick, I accept I have this headache”

Do this 3 times while tapping on the side of the hand.

When you start tapping through the 8 points below, you just say “this headache” or “I feel sick”.

How Does EFT Work?

EFT appears to affect the **amygdala** (stress centre in the brain) and **hippocampus** (memory centre), and both play a role in the decision process when you decide if something is a threat. EFT has also been shown to lower cortisol levels, which is the stress hormone. Too much cortisol can result in lowered immune function and ultimately affect our physical health (e.g. fatigue illnesses).

Stimulation of acupoints like those used in EFT is believed to send a signal to the limbic/emotional system, and reduce the arousal.

What Can EFT be Used For?

Every Feeling Thing, i.e. everything you have a feeling or sensation about – e.g.:

- Food Cravings
- Body Shape-change and fat burning
- Stress and Anxiety
- Sports Performance
- Trauma, Memories
- Physical Pain
- Illness
- Addiction ... and more ...

Why Do we State the Negative?

Tapping doesn't affirm the problem.

- It states the truth and acknowledges it. This makes it a bit different to other approaches where you might reframe or just try and accept your concern.
- Tapping calms the physiological response from the body.
- Once released, cognitive shifts (reframes) may surface.
- Going positive too soon will only bring on a palliative result. It is like spraying air freshener when the garbage is still there.

The Importance of Being Specific

Tapping works the best when you are specific. Tapping on big global statements like “I always run late” may not result in much change to your behaviour. You are better to pick exact memories of running late and tap on what happened and how you felt. Pick the earliest possible memory as much as possible as this may be closer to the start of the behaviour/pattern. You can also try and remember ever learning a behaviour/pattern when you were quite young (e.g. by watching a family member) as you may have feelings/beliefs that you adopted by watching, rather than ever experiencing yourself. You can still tap on those times where you took on a lesson from someone else.

- There are often many pieces of the puzzle for an issue
- Each piece may have several sides and these are called **ASPECTS**

Example – a fear of flying might have these aspects (and you would tap on all of them separately)

- The fear of turbulence
- The fear of loss of control
- The fear of aircraft or pilot failure
- Fear of terrorism
- The fear of tight spaces (claustrophobia)
- The fear of heights
- The fear of the unknown
- Then it may shift to a seemingly unrelated issue

A food craving could also have many aspects such as:

- Smell of the food
- Taste in mouth
- Feeling in body/mouth as you eat the food
- Past memories of that food or similar
- Sight/vision of the food
- Sound of food/wrapping



Ideas for Tapping when you Think of a Memory

Sometimes as you are tapping, a fleeting thought passes through your mind, sometimes related, sometimes unrelated. Often it is part of your unconscious letting you know an earlier reason, or time a decision point may have happened.

Here's a way to tap with any memory – whether it is one from 5 years of age, or 50 years of age.

1. Imagine the memory on a movie screen and you are watching it from the seats (start the movie memory at a neutral point before anything happened)
2. Play the movie memory slowly, and stop the movie every time a negative feeling, belief or anything else comes up
3. Tap for that one little bit, rewind movie memory, play it again to see if that has cleared – stop at the next increase in intensity – tap on those aspects
4. Keep doing this until each rewind results in a neutral movie by the end.

It doesn't change that the memory happened to you – but it does release any emotional charge that still might be in there.

Positive Tapping?

Most people only tap when they feel a negative feeling they would like to reduce or discharge. But you can use tapping for positive statements. It is highly recommended you only do this AFTER you have reduced any negative feelings associated with a memory, thought, or feeling. You can then do some rounds of positive tapping to instill any new feeling or belief you would like to have.

Examples

Even though I was really nervous about giving that talk next week, I now feel calm and confident (you can use 'calm and confident' as the reminder phrase).

Even though I have had that headache for days, I now feel clear and focused (reminder phrase is "clear and focused").

Applying Tapping/EFT to Stress in the Festive Season

There can be a lot of stress during the festive season, and a lot of commitments.

So we can use some tapping to calm your nervous system.

Write down everything you can think of that might make you feel overwhelmed, flustered, stressed etc during the Christmas period:

When you are done, go back and rate them out of 10 for level of intensity (e.g. 10 = the most intensity and 0=very calm).

Now here's a way to get started:

While tapping the side of the hand point (on either hand), repeat these phrases out loud, *(or change the words to fit your exact situation)*.

"Even though I feel completely overwhelmed at the moment, I accept myself anyway."

"Even though I feel stressed with the thought of everything I have to do, I accept how I feel."

"Even though I feel sad, depressed, lonely, overwhelmed, tired, exhausted..., I accept this is how I feel right now."

Now for the reminder phrases

Tap through each of the points from the image:

Eyebrow: "I feel so tired"

Side of Eye: "I'm feeling overwhelmed."

Under Eye: "I feel angry."

Nose: "I feel stressed."

Chin: "This is overwhelming."

Collarbone: "I am SO exhausted."

Under Arm: "I feel so much resistance."

Head: "I don't know how to change all of this."

Tap around and see how your body feels after a few rounds. Try and identify areas which might be holding tension, emotions or overwhelm. Keep tapping until you are a 0 or a 1 out of 10 (10 being the most overwhelm, and 0 being complete calm). Jot down your notes to check in later.

Remember to change the words to describe exactly how you feel – it is very important to be specific.

Some other ideas for the Christmas season

Maybe routine goes out the window, maybe there is a little too much sugar and lack of sleep, but nevertheless, you always have tapping.

Here are some tips that might come in handy:

- Use tapping as a strategy to get some quality sleep – use these types of setup statements “Even though I can’t get to sleep... even though I am so tired... even though there is so much to do...”
- Use tapping as a calming technique when you pause for a moment (e.g. in the bathroom!) – e.g. “Even though I feel run off my feet... even though I don’t have enough hours in the day... even though there is STILL so much to do...”
- Use tapping to loosen any negative feelings about this time of year – e.g. “Even though I HATE Christmas... even though I can’t stand the obligations at Christmas... even though I can’t stand xxxx (person’s name)...”

I hope this helps ease any burden that might be attached with December. We have included some worksheets at the end of this book so you can keep a track of what you thought of and worked on.

Wishing you a peaceful end of year and much calm into the New Year too!

Peta

My Tapping Notes

Date: _____

Issue/Feeling or Problem I need to work on:

My Setup statement

My Reminder Phrases:

Intensity rating 0 to 10 where 10 is worst I can imagine and 0 is none:

Round 1 –

Round 2 –

Round 3 –

Round 4 –

Round 5 –

If you get stuck at any particular intensity rating for several rounds then ask yourself whether something else has come up, or another aspect has become more important that you may need to focus on first. If so start again with a setup statement for this issue.

Other things I became aware of during this tapping –

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