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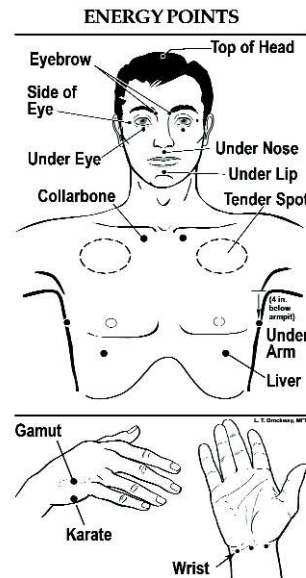
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MEETINGS AND EMERGENCIES

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The Tap Is Turned

POPPYCOCK OR NOT

In the January edition of *adiNEWS*, in a feature called 'Turning On The Tap', I invited readers who may be suffering from nerves or stress to try a reduction technique called Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT). Following my invitation to ADIs, PDIs and learner drivers around the country who were finding that nerves, anxiety and stress were getting in the way of themselves or their pupils from passing their test, I worked with a number of them and thought it would be interesting to share their experiences of the alternative technique with you.

Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) can be used alongside conventional methods of dealing with stress by erasing negative thinking (self-doubt and anxiety), changing limiting beliefs and helping you be calm, focused and trust yourself under pressure. However, there is a catch - it can look a bit odd. But if you are open to new ideas, I honestly believe it can help.

How Does It Work?

As I have said before, many people probably think this is yet another airy fairy new age idea, a bit like the power of crystals or rearranging your furniture in a particular way - after all, there is no clear scientific explanation of how the EFT procedure works. But even many sceptics

acknowledge that EFT appears to be effective. The procedure involves some psychological techniques akin to cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), and it may well be those approaches that produce the results. But in surveys of professional and lay users of EFT, experienced CBT therapists who introduced 'tapping' into their work stated that the addition of EFT significantly enhanced the effectiveness of their therapeutic interventions.

The common explanation of how EFT works, adopted by many holistic practitioners, relies on the traditional Chinese medicine's belief in our body's 'energy system'. It is thought that the energy - known across various cultures as chi, prana, life force, etc - runs through meridians or channels through our body.

When we are not well, cannot cope with everyday problems, over-react to situations or self-sabotage, it is said that the energy is out of balance in our body. EFT is believed, by some, to restore the balance in the meridian system in relation to a specific problem or issue.

Argentinean Dr Andrade concluded that tapping, or other types of pressure, on acupressure points stimulates mechanoreceptors in our skin. These points have been shown to have a high concentration of mechanoreceptors and free nerve endings. The signal generated when tapping eventually reaches specific locations in the brain, such as the amygdala, hippocampus, and other structures where the emotional problem is thought to 'reside', and the signal seemingly disrupts established

patterns.

Enhanced secretion of serotonin, one of the 'feel-good' hormones, also correlates with tapping specific points, a well researched aspect of acupuncture (Feinstein 2005).

Russian psychotherapist Oksana Korsunova suggests another explanation of the efficacy of EFT. She proposes that tapping on the points combined with the mental focus on the issue helps to balance the activity of sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems, with the former involved with the 'fight or flight' response, and the latter linked with rest, calm and relaxation. One of the most valuable features of EFT is that, after just a brief introduction, people can use the technique on their own.

So 'poppycock' or not, it was only right that I stand by what I believe in and prove that it can be effective and beneficial. The best way to do this was by offering the chance for people in need to try it. So here are some of the results from the people that contacted me after that first article, wishing to take up my offer of a free trial. Whilst these are short descriptions and few in number, I can tell you that amazingly I had a 100% success rate – that even surprised me.

No Room For Failure

Lynne Ryan had failed her first attempt at the Part 3 due to nerves – she had been given Phase 10 for her assessment, the very one she was most worried about getting. When she contacted me, she was already worried about failing three times and having to give up the idea of becoming an ADI! Just thinking about the up and coming test brought on physical shaking and nausea, she was finding it difficult to sleep and probably getting her bad headaches as a result.

My session with Lynne involved working on two areas - how she felt when taking her last test, and her feelings about her up and coming test. Asking Lynne to scale (0-10) how she felt thinking back to her last test, she gave it a 9 - her hands were shaking, she felt sick and the palms of her hands felt dry. So, whilst employing the 'tapping', we

focused on her strongest negative emotion, the 'fear of failing'. We then introduced some positive thinking into the tapping and by the end of the session, her sense of fear had already dropped to a 2. According to Lynne: *'I felt like the whole world had been lifted from my shoulders and I was feeling so happy, that I felt like smiling'*. Her physical symptoms had disappeared, and when I asked her how she felt about the up and coming test, she replied that she felt *'calm and confident'*.

That night, Lynne recalled that: *'I felt so relaxed and had the best night's sleep in weeks'*. A week later we repeated the same process, tapping more on the positive, i.e. 'No matter what module I get I will just do my best'.

So, what about when the big day arrived? *'Test day came, having been doing the tapping up to and including on the day, I was so much more relaxed about what was going to happen, no feeling sick or shaking, and had been able to sleep, which was a bonus. Thanks to Sean and EFT I passed on February 11th'*.

Jumping For Joy

Two of Nicola Wilkin's pupils from the Toads School of Motoring, both girls and both capable drivers, had failed twice because of nerves.

Joanna had her test the next day, so not much time to help. On her last test she made an uncharacteristically poor start in the 'show and tell' section,

of all things - disappointed and angry with herself, she found it difficult to recover. The challenges she faced were the fear of failing again and the inevitable embarrassment, nerves taking over, physical shaking and feeling sick, and the thought of making the same mistakes all over again. With 'tapping' we were able to reduce the negative emotions, with each issue scaled down from 8 or 9 down to a level of intensity of 2 or 3, and we were able to focus on how she would like to drive – *'calm, focused and to view the test as a positive challenge, not a threat'*.

This is what her instructor Nicola said after Joanna's test: *'I know she watched your video and spoke to you on Sunday, and I am very pleased to say she passed her test with one minor fault. She was ecstatic and was hugely complimentary about you and the tapping exercises, which she practised on her way to test and whilst waiting in the waiting room. I also noticed how calm she was this time. Thank you so much for your help.'*

Meanwhile, Angela had failed her test twice after letting nerves get the better of her, and making mistakes she would never normally make. Her challenge was predominantly the fear of failure. As well as letting herself down, she was worried about her parents who worked hard to earn their money and

had the pressure of paying for more lessons. Angela was also having to take time off school for the driving lessons, even though it was at a crucial time building up to her 'A' levels. Her last failure consisted of three minor faults and one major - she went into reverse gear instead of first, completely unsettling her and she couldn't compose herself afterwards. Of course, she now had the fear that it would happen again and, just to add to her woes, the family were moving house at the time of her test.

We focused on taking the charge out of the negative emotions, particularly the worry of letting her parents down and having to miss lessons in school. Initially she scaled it at 9, but tapping dropped it to a 5, and then a 2. When her mind was clear and she felt calmer, we were able to focus on how she would like to drive – *'be calm, confident that if anything goes wrong she would stay in control'*. It was two days before her re-test, but she passed with 2 minor faults.

Nicola, her instructor, commented: *'I was slightly sceptical when I read the article in adiNEWS, but am always open to trying new techniques to help my students be successful. The results were fantastic and speak for themselves.'*

I found that both students were much calmer in the hour before their test. Both watched the video and spoke with Sean

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before their tests and used the tapping exercises right up to the moment when the examiner arrived to check their paperwork. I have been referring all of my students to Sean's website and will continue to recommend the EFT techniques.'

You Can and You Will

Trainee driving instructor Bharat had failed his Part 3 numerous times and was debating about whether to bother again, even after spending thousands of pounds trying to complete the qualification process - he was desperate. On the first two attempts he'd completely fallen apart, with nerves leaving him completely blank, unable to focus and physically shaking. He even suffered migraines before and during each test. When I first spoke with Bharat, he couldn't bear the thought of failing again. He needed to gain self-confidence, assertiveness and the ability to believe in himself.

Unfortunately, his life history had been one of being told he was useless and a failure in whatever he did.

Initially we worked on his fear of failure, which he initially scored with a 10. Following tapping, this went down to a 9, then 8, 7 and a 6.

We then introduced some positive thinking mantras - 'choosing to be confident, optimistic and not worrying about the future' - and the intensity even dropped as low as a 4.

Over the following weeks we worked hard on reversing the psychological damage and negativity of being put down and classed a failure, which alongside causing him to fail, was making him increasingly frustrated and angry generally. We used a common positive affirmation - 'choosing to be calm, focused, confident, speak well, take control and not worry about what phase he was given' that provided a



simple method of channelling these feelings, clearing his mind and making him more positive. After many weeks of therapy, tapping and positivity, this is what Bharat had to say: *Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) has helped me immensely to pass my ADI Part 3. Each time the pressure to pass was even greater. I'd been a complete wreck even after the different trainers and holding a PDI pink trainee licence. I was not confident and able to take control of the role playing examiner.*

Basically, nerves let me down. After reading an article in the adiNEWS about Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT), I decided to give it a go. Having taken a number of sessions with Sean, I can honestly say that EFT has made a world of difference to my confidence. In the test I was totally calm, relaxed and spoke well - I had the confidence and, on this occasion, I was successful and passed with a 6, 5.

I truly believe that EFT has played a major part in my success. I would not hesitate to pass on my EFT knowledge to any of my pupils or, better still, recommend Sean Grey. EFT can be applied to any stressful situations in life and I would highly recommend it to anyone to give it a go.'

Believe And Benefit

From the work I have done with all types of people in different situations, and with different issues and problems, including myself, I have learnt that trauma can remain stored in the body. Whether people have been involved in car accidents, or are soldiers returning from war zones suffering with post traumatic stress disorders, or they've had a negative upbringing or suffered a particularly destructive experience at some time, relieving the residual issues often requires the same remedy. But conventional ways of dealing with stress, such as medication and counselling, can often provide only limited relief.

EFT is certainly a different approach, and perhaps that's why many people can't take it seriously. But maybe it is also why people can often experience such a dramatic shift in the way they feel when elect to try it. Trauma can cause a disruption in the body's energy system, like a boulder blocking a stream, and when the trauma is cleared by tapping, the energy, like the stream, flows freely again.

It seems to provide people with the opportunity to keep calm, focused and do their

best under pressure. Does it guarantee that by doing your best every time you will get the result you want? No. Just as a sportsman or woman can play/compete at their best and still lose. Part of it is about understanding and accepting what you can control in life, and allowing that to drive you forward to your own successes, in your own ways. Using EFT can help create a win/win situation, that will help you enjoy whatever challenge you have in front of you, regardless of the result, whilst helping you consistently play or perform to your potential. I hope that this slightly unscientific experiment has shown that there is help for those who struggle with confidence and nerves, and once you get over the small hurdle of thinking I am writing this from my 'New Age' tepee on top of a dreamy mountain in nonsense land, then you may just be ready to achieve your dreams.

Sue Papworth runs the Toads School of Motoring: 'Dear Sean, after questioning whether I had really won a competition in adiNEWS, I picked up the phone to find out more about 'tapping'. I had a chuckle to myself and didn't believe it could work!

I spoke to several of my pupils who agreed to watch Sean's video on YouTube and take it seriously, which is more than I did initially! Paige, Miranda, Kitty to name but a few, have benefited. Kitty said she felt so relaxed she almost fell asleep! The girls' anxiety ranged from driving test nerves, competition nerves and impending 'A' levels. Don't knock it till you've tried it, is all I'm going to say!'

Sean is a working ADI and Emotional Freedom Technique practitioner based in Wales. To find out more about EFT, visit Sean's website: www.sta.gefreedom.com adi