Tapping “Can Reduce Coronavirus Anxiety”

New research suggests EFT tapping can reduce stress hormone levels

As the world struggles with the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic, many people in the UK and other countries are experiencing high levels of anxiety and fear. A simple self-help technique, known as Emotional Freedom Techniques, or ‘tapping’, may help to manage these emotions and reduce stress levels, according to new research. With this in mind, the technique’s professional body, EFT International or EFTi, which is based in the UK, wants to spread the message that ‘tapping’ can help us all at this difficult time.

EFT is a complementary treatment for health and wellbeing. It involves fingertip tapping on acupuncture points on the body while tuning-in to the issue at hand. This process is thought to send calming signals to the part of the brain that controls stress. New research carried out by Bond University in Queensland, Australia, and just published in the American Psychological Association Journal, Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy, shows that using EFT can reduce levels of the stress hormone cortisol. (High cortisol levels have been shown to suppress the immune system and have been linked to a wide variety of health problems.)

The research was led by Dr Peta Stapleton, Associate Professor in Psychology at Bond University. “We were looking at changes in stress biochemistry and psychological distress symptoms,” she said. “We compared levels of cortisol in three groups of patients, one having EFT, the second having PE (‘psychoeducation’ such as supportive interviews) and the third having no treatment. We found that those having EFT had a 43% decrease in cortisol levels compared to 19% for the PE group. The third group showed a 2% rise (suggesting that stress does not go away by just resting). These findings mirror the results of similar EFT research carried out in 2012, and further confirm that EFT can be an efficient and effective short-term treatment for reducing biological markers of stress.”

The findings have been welcomed by Dr Shoshana Garfield PhD, Co-Chair of EFTi and Co-Director of its Training Board, who is based in Brighton. “EFT is easy to learn, and accessible to us all. Now, more than ever, we are looking for treatments that can be done from home, and tapping is ideal as a way of reducing anxiety. We like to think of EFT as ‘emotional first aid at your fingertips’. It is a versatile technique that can be adapted for different situations. At the moment people are being discouraged from touching their faces, as this can spread the virus, so instead of using normal tapping points on the face we can use the crown of the head, the wrist, the collar bone, the underarm and finger points.” Cont.
EFTi has its own online tapping groups, which anyone can join. These, together with a free tapping instruction sheet and tapping manual can be found on the Coronavirus and tapping support resource page on the EFTi website https://eftinternational.org/eft-training/eft-tapping-support-resources-covid-19-coronavirus/

“These aids are a good starting point for people interested in EFT, and they can then learn more with specialist tuition,” added Shoshana. “We also have our own YouTube channel with helpful introductory videos.” https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWUo-0LFI8CT-THNL-ToXeQ

There is a growing body of anecdotal evidence suggesting that people are finding EFT helpful during the COVID-19 pandemic. Many people may have seen the videos posted online last month by Dave Abel, from Oxfordshire, who caught COVID-19 and was quarantined on a cruise ship off the Japanese coast. In his video he explained how he had used EFT when oxygen levels in his blood dropped and he faced the prospect of being put on a respirator.

“Many years ago, I used to practise a therapy called EFT... One of the exercises I used to do with EFT was expand my lungs, so this is what I started to do. And within 48 hours my oxygen levels increased from 93 to 99. No respirator required. From that moment on, my general health started to improve at quite a rapid rate.” He has now fully recovered from the virus.

EFTi Master Trainer, Tamara Donn, has also seen positive responses from clients using EFT to help them cope with the virus. “A COVID-19 patient has been watching my daily videos (designed to help people with all aspects of the virus). She has been affected by the cough, widely seen with this virus, and she has found that watching and tapping along to three of the tapping videos, has helped to stop her from coughing.”

**Editors’ notes**

2. More information from www.eftinternational.org. Or contact EFTi Co-Chair Jacqui Footman on 07933 998118
3. EFT International is a UK-registered Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), charity number 1176538. EFTi was formerly known as AAMET (the Association for the Advancement of Meridian Energy Techniques).
4. EFT was originally developed in the US by Gary Craig, in the 1990s.
5. The Bond University research is entitled ‘Re-examining the Effect of Emotional Freedom Techniques on Stress Biochemistry: A Randomized Controlled Trial’. It was published on 12th March 2020 by the American Psychological Association and is available at the US National Library of Medicine, the National Center for Biotechnology Information. The findings confirmed the results of previous EFT clinical trials carried out in 2012 by Dawson Church PhD, Garret Yount and Audrey J Brooks.
6. In 2019, Peta Stapleton was named Psychologist of the Year by the Australian Allied Health Awards.
7. EFT has also been found to be useful in the treatment of war veterans suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. In 2018 the UK government health body NICE recommended further investigation of the use of EFT in the treatment of PTSD in adults.
8. Press release by www.ndmedia.co.uk
9. Ends