

## What is ENERGY PSYCHOLOGY?

**Energy Psychology (EP)** is the name for a broad range of psychological treatments that utilize the human energy system. These techniques have been clinically shown to help with a wide range of psychological problems. These tools can be used on your own to take care of yourself, as well as being useful in psychotherapy and counseling, as well as in education to improved learning. Included in this group are treatments such as Thought Field Therapy, Emotional Freedom Technique, and many other such methods. Each of these intentionally utilizes the meridian system of the human energy systems during psychological treatment. From the point of view of Energy Psychology, painful physical, emotional, and spiritual symptoms are the result of a disruption in the energy system. When the disruption is corrected, symptoms will be replaced by calm, healthy functioning. EP works by stimulating energy points on the surface of the skin which, when paired with specific psychological procedures, can shift the brain's electrochemistry to:

- . Help overcome fear, guilt, shame, jealousy, or anger
- . Change unwanted habits and behaviors
- . Enhance the ability to love, succeed, and enjoy life

Traditional psychotherapy has utilized the power of speech to transform emotions. Through talking about one's feelings, experiences, and struggles, one is often able to come to a better understanding of oneself, develop new ways of viewing things, and begin to consider new alternatives. However, discussion alone does not have the power to significantly change one's innermost world. Experiential therapies such as EMDR and EP do act deeply to help release emotional blocks, foster healing, and change emotional patterns. Energy psychology techniques add one more unique therapeutic dimension: by correcting a disruption in the energy system, these techniques can bring balance to a disturbed internal pattern and virtually "re-wire" the inner world.

These changes often happen within only minutes of treatment, and yet the inner transformation is often profound and enduring. Treatment effects are typically generalized, meaning that the treatment of one issue often causes resolution of other related issues (a real bonus!).

I use several forms of energy psychology in my own practice. **Thought Field Therapy (TFT)** originated in 1970 by psychologist Dr. Roger Callahan. TFT is thought to manipulate bodymind energies by activating the meridians identified by Chinese medicine. TFT assumes that psychological symptoms originate from disturbances located within subtle energy fields, rather than from disturbances in brain chemistry, thought patterns, moods, or attachment bonds in parental relationships, as traditional psychological theories teach. While Dr. Callahan's methods are still evolving, the basic TFT approach at this point involves following a program of therapeutic recipes, known as algorithms, that prescribe gentle self-tapping with the index and middle fingers of the dominant hand on various acupuncture points in a specific order, depending on the symptoms. For example, there are TFT algorithms for specific phobias, addictive urges, depression, anger, guilt, trauma, panic, and other kinds of anxiety symptoms.

Sometimes the benefits of the tapping recipes can be blocked by psychological reversals (PRs). PRs refer to a condition of negative motivation, in which our motivations operate in ways that are opposite to how we hope they will work (e.g., when we attempt to lose weight, stop using drugs or alcohol, or achieve other goals). There are several possible explanations for reversals, including severe psychological stress, exposure to environmental or ingested toxins, or reversed electromagnetic poles within the energy meridians themselves. Special tapping techniques can interrupt these reversals, so that energy systems can respond fully to TFT and other techniques.

**Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT)**, developed by Gary Craig, evolved from TFT. Craig claims that EFT takes TFT a step further by using a comprehensive procedure that eliminates the need for a complicated diagnosis. EFT supporters allege that, by tapping on all of the meridian points, problems associated with the misdiagnosis of underlying emotional distress due to poor or ambiguous definitions are eliminated. EFT adds affirmations (i.e., positive self-statements) in opposition to the feeling state associated with each meridian point as the point is tapped, and has a more extensive repertoire of treatments for psychological reversals than does TFT, to my mind.

Sources: *Finding the Energy to Heal* by Maggie Phillips, Ph.D. (2000).  
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