

AN EFT FORMULA FOR SPECIFIC TRAUMA – PART 1

This is Part One of Two on using EFT on a specific trauma. Part One concentrates on the situations and methods that are involved in using EFT on traumas. Part Two will focus on particular traumas and the words and phrases that were instrumental in bringing about EFT's incredible gifts of emotional relief and freedom from the sabotage of old traumas.

A trauma, such as a car accident or being betrayed by a friend or lover, can have impacts that reach deep into our subconscious, sometimes causing behaviors or fears many years later. Those behaviors or fears may at first seem unrelated to the old trauma that is actually driving them; however, when we look for core issues to current behavior, those old traumas can show themselves as being huge saboteurs in our lives.

EFT surpasses anything else I know for releasing the negative emotions and resultant behaviors from a specific trauma. In my experience, the biggest obstacle to success in resolving traumas with EFT is people's lack of specificity about the details or aspects of that trauma.

Sometimes, we just don't know the specifics. If that's true, we use EFT by working with what we do know, even if that information is very general. When we start off with general issues, sometimes that wonderful EFT journey will include remembering more specifics and sometimes it will not. We just work with what we have. When we do know specific details, it is best to do EFT on those details.

What follows is a formula for working with a specific trauma or event when you DO know specifics. This article does not cover situations wherein the client is overwhelmed at the beginning. If my client is overwhelmed, I would start off with very general phrases. The formula I share with you here is for those times when the trauma is still a major thread in our life, but we are not incapacitated by it.

Central in using the technique is remembering to work with only one trauma at a time and not move around from one trauma to another. It is useful to incorporate different aspects of a trauma in a single round of EFT, however be careful not to switch to another trauma. I often use more than one aspect of a trauma in a single round of EFT when using the free flowing language method. (The free flowing language method is found on many of Gary Craig's DVDs and consists of rounds where the phraseology includes more than one aspect.) If there are multiple traumas, the first question may be:

"Which is the most intense trauma?"

or

"Which one happened first — which trauma from the past may be overloading the more recent trauma?"

If there is more than one trauma I find it is helpful to write them down. Then, consciously choose the one that you feel is the most pivotal in your healing at this time.

Making an Aspect List

Once the particular trauma is chosen, I like to make a list of all the aspects of that trauma, in as much detail as possible. The aspects are what make up the whole, collective trauma. My favorite analogy of how EFT works is Gary Craig's image of a table top being the issue and the legs being the aspects that hold the table top up. Knock out enough of the aspects and the legs collapse, leaving perhaps a memory, but no more trauma. You don't have to knock out all the aspects for the issue to collapse, just as you don't have to get rid of all the legs of a table in order for the table top to collapse.

What follows are two examples of traumas and what might be the various aspects to work on with EFT. The first example relates to betrayal, the second relates to a car accident.

Sample aspects of a Betrayal trauma:

- He lied about me, said I cheated her.
- I feel like such a fool.
- I trusted him — how can I ever trust anyone again?
- I chose him as my friend/lover/whatever —can't trust myself to choose again.
- I can't believe he actually did _____ .

- I can't believe he actually said _____ .
- When I tried to counter the allegation, he lied again about me.
- When I told mom about it, she just said, "Get a life! .No support there."
- They will think I'm a liar, a cheat.
- This keeps happening to me — must be something wrong with me.
- I feel so lonely — there's no one to share this with.
- I don't know what to do.
- I'm embarrassed to face the others again.
- I must be unlovable or people wouldn't keep doing this to me.

Sample aspects of a Car Accident trauma:

- Saw that truck coming toward me and knew it was going to hit me.
- Woke up and smelled gasoline and couldn't open my door.
- The car could have burst into flames any minute and I would have died.
- Had to wait a long time smelling gas before anyone got there to help me.
- What would my five-year-old son have done without his mother if I had died?
- I WAS going too fast — it was all my fault.
- The police didn't even test the other driver's breath for alcohol and I'm sure he was drunk

This issue may remind you of something in your past

The above aspects may all be for a trauma that happened recently and you may automatically do EFT on that trauma. However, it is a very good thing to ask the core issue question, "What does that remind you of?"

If a similar trauma happened long ago, it may be that the first experience that is not healed is stockpiling into the more current trauma and we may have to heal the first trauma before we can get great results with the more recent one. If there are multiple similar traumas, I get the best results by doing EFT with whichever trauma has the most intensity. Most often, the first incident has more intensity.

I determine intensity by using the Intensity Meter – 0-10 with 10 being the worst intensity. Clients rate how they feel before we work on the issue, then again during the work.

The Movie

Once you have decided what you want to work on and the aspects are written down, I ask a client to run the movie through his or her mind. After they have run the trauma movie through their mind, they may have more aspects to record. You can do EFT on the general movie name. Examples are: that betrayal, the car accident. However, faster healing normally occurs when you work with one of the most intense aspects rather than the entire trauma.

Which aspect is most intense?

If my client is in overwhelm or extremely emotional, I wouldn't go immediately into the most intense aspect. However, if my client is calm, I would work with the most intense aspect first. Do several rounds on that aspect. Check the Intensity Meter to make sure the intensity is going down. If it does not go down, it is probably because there is a much greater core issue that must be addressed first. If this happens, keep asking questions and probing to discover the appropriate core issue.

If the Intensity Meter does go down with the first aspect, keep with that aspect as long as you're getting improvement. I like to get issues down to a zero, but often we have to work with more than one aspect before any go down to zero. Because all aspects are interconnected — like pieces of a puzzle — they may not release until more than one aspect is released.

After working with the most intense aspect first and bringing that intensity down, I'd then ask which of the remaining aspects is the most intense and do EFT with that aspect as long as I continued to get improvement.

Has an emotion come up?

After working with one or two aspects, several rounds each, I like to check in with my client and ask if an emotion has come up. I ask this even if my client is not showing any indicative signs of an emotion. If an emotion has come up within the context of working with the specific trauma, it is a part of that trauma.

At this point, combining the emotion with the trauma can be more powerful than doing EFT on one or the other separately. An example is, "Even though I have this car accident sadness, I deeply and profoundly accept myself." In this case, we are combining sadness and the car accident — two aspects of an issue in one round of tapping.

The emotions that present themselves most often are sadness, guilt, grief, anger, rage and shame. I have found that shame is the emotion least likely to be mentioned by my clients — it is important it be acknowledged if it is present.

If the client gets overwhelmed at any time, I use the protocol for overwhelm first. This protocol includes continual tapping — no words — starting with the karate chop point, then going through all the other tapping points and beginning again at the karate chop point, continuing through all the points — until the emotion has subsided. The protocol also includes keeping the eyes open until the emotion is gently released or has subsided.

After an emotion has come up and been tapped on, I would ask what Intensity level the person is now experiencing on the original issue and see if it has shifted.

Continue with original aspects/emotions/or ask if a body sensation has appeared

What is the most appropriate aspect to work on next with EFT? We can either go back to the aspect list and ask which is most intense now, or if any new aspects have come up, we can ask if any other emotions have come up. OR we can ask if any body sensations have arisen.

If a body sensation has come up when we are doing EFT on a specific trauma, I consider that body sensation as being part of the trauma. It becomes another aspect of that trauma that we want to release. If a body sensation arises, I might tap on something like, "Even though I have this car accident nausea in my gut, I deeply and profoundly accept myself." Or, "Even though I have this betrayal tightness stuck in my throat, I deeply and profoundly accept myself." Sometimes the body sensation will move and then there is a choice as to whether to chase it through the body or go back to the aspect list to see which is most intense now. If the body sensation gets down to a 2-3, I have found it most helpful to go back to the aspect list and see if other aspects are higher than the 2-3.

If you've worked on an emotion or body sensation

If you have tapped on an emotion or body sensation, go back to some of the original aspects you tapped on and check their Intensity Meter. Sometimes aspects will shift after releasing an emotion or sensation.

Continue until you are satisfied with your results

This formula reminds me of a dance – moving back and forth between aspects already known, emotions, body sensations, and any new aspects that arise, until the trauma is no more than a distant memory.

Summary

Be sure you use the Intensity Meter on all of the aspects mentioned below. This is an important benchmark and helps you to determine what to do next.

- Tap on one or two of the most intense aspects — doing several rounds for each.
- Ask if an emotion has arisen.
- Ask if a body sensation has arisen.
- Tap on emotion or body sensation or, if neither has arisen, keep tapping on the most intense aspect.
- Continue to go through this list until you have great improvement.

And remember to be as specific as possible.

When you are satisfied with your results, I suggest a round of positive affirmation tapping such as the following: "I am deeply grateful for these healings in my body, mind and spirit and I give thanks." You can, of course, choose your own words.

If your trauma is a complicated one, or if you mix up similar traumas and have difficulty getting results, you may want to work with a skilled practitioner for a session or two. Sometimes we can't see our forest for the trees....

Maggie Adkins, EFT Master

earthwomandreaming@bigpond.com

www.maggiadkins.com.au

In Australia: 02 6556 7661 0420 314 837