



# The Current State of Scientific Evidence

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# The Science of Tapping

## The Current State of Scientific Evidence

### Purpose

This white paper is based upon the effort of many contributors in the attempt to scour the scientific literature in order to provide the most current database of Energy Psychology (EP) and Tapping research (including techniques such as Emotional Freedom Techniques (EFT), Thought Field Therapy (TFT), Matrix Reimprinting (MR), and selected others. There are of course a wide range of studies that fall under the category of EP that do not include “tapping” or meridian acupuncture application that we have decided not to include in this compendium. It would be impossible to guarantee that every single paper worldwide has been listed here, but through literature review mechanisms, we believe it to be one of the most comprehensive sources available. This list includes a wide range of studies from Meta-analyses, Randomized Control Trials, Clinical Outcome Studies, Case Reports, Dissertations, Theoretical and Review Articles, Published Commentaries, and more.

We have attempted to categorize studies that address different conditions/situations most accurately, as well as include the same study in multiple categories if the paper addresses multiple conditions. The decision on how to categorize each study is a subjective one and we have done our best to accomplish this challenging task.

Its purpose is to provide an accurate and complete resource for professionals to use to educate the clinical and academic worlds, as well as the general public as to the current state of reviewable scientific evidence, and to demonstrate the depth and breadth of published Tapping research.

This collection of research is being published in conjunction with the documentary film, *The Science of Tapping*.

For further information on the current state of Tapping research, please visit [www.ScienceofTapping.com](http://www.ScienceofTapping.com).

For further resources on Tapping Training programs, please visit the EFT Tapping Training Institute at [www.EFTTappingTraining.com](http://www.EFTTappingTraining.com).

Thank You,

Craig Weiner, DC, and Alina Frank  
The Science of Tapping Project

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# Tapping Research Summary

There are now over **100 peer-reviewed outcome studies**, **52** of which are **Randomized Controlled Clinical Trials (RCT)**, 98% of which document the effectiveness of tapping modalities. Between 2000 – 2005 only 6 RCTs had been performed. By 2010, 14 had been performed and reported. By the end of 2018 the scope had expanded to **52 RCTs, 6 Meta-analyses and 6 Systematic Reviews in peer-reviewed journals.**

## The evidence base continues to grow in quantity and quality:

2014 – 2016: **3 Meta-analyses** show tapping methods to be effective for Depression and Anxiety.

2017 – 2018: **Meta-analysis** shows EFT effective for PTSD.

2018: **Two Randomized Controlled Clinical Trials** using epigenetic measures document positive outcomes for EFT Tapping:

- 2018, the first fMRI study of EFT for food cravings performed. Results soon to be published.
- In 2018 a review of physiological markers demonstrate improvements in immune system markers, decreases in cortisol stress hormones, decreases in heart rate and blood pressure.

### Research studies have found that tapping methods effectively treat:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Food cravings
- Physical Pain
- Trauma and PTSD

## Important Landmark Achievements:

- In December, 2018, an arm of the UK government, National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), has acknowledged that there is EFT and TFT research that meets their inclusion criteria for PTSD treatment. A collaboration of multiple Energy Psychology organizations submitted published research for review. EFT and TFT along with Somatic Experiencing (SE) has been acknowledged as a Combined Somatic and Cognitive Therapy (CSACTs) in the considered psychological interventions for the treatment of PTSD in adults. The review suggests that CSACTs could possibly provide EFT as a treatment choice for military combat trauma.
- In March, 2018, the College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario, Canada (CRPO) released the Controlled Act Task Group Consultation Documents listing the five Categories of Prescribed Therapies Involving the Practice of Psychotherapy. One of the approved categories is Somatic Therapies which amongst others includes Emotional Freedom Therapy (considered to represent EFT and Energy Psychology).
- In 2017, the U.S. Veterans Administration added EFT to List 2, approving it as a “generally safe therapy.”
- In 2016, Thought Field Therapy (TFT) was validated by the National Repertory of Evidence-based Practices and Procedures (NREPP), a division of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) in the U.S., as an evidence-based treatment.

# Research Definitions

**Meta-analysis:** Thoroughly examine a number of valid studies on a topic and mathematically combine the results using accepted statistical methodology to report the results as if it were one large study.

**Systematic Reviews:** Scholarly articles that focus on a clinical topic and answer a specific question. An extensive literature search is conducted to identify studies with sound methodology. The studies are reviewed, assessed for quality, and the results summarized according to the predetermined criteria of the review question.

**Randomized Controlled Clinical Trials:** Carefully planned experiments that introduce a treatment or exposure to study its effect on real patients. They include methodologies that reduce the potential for bias (randomization and blinding) and that allow for comparison between intervention groups and control (no intervention) groups. A randomized controlled trial is a planned experiment and can provide sound evidence of cause and effect.

**Uncontrolled Outcome Study:** A clinical study that lacks a comparison (i.e., a control) group.

**Survey Studies of Practitioner Observations:** A phenomenological study exploring practitioners' observations and experiences.

**Clinical Case Study:** A formal report which uses established pre- and post-intervention assessments with one subject and details one or more treatment variables.

**Systematic Observational Report:** An informal outcome report describing the course of treatment using a single therapeutic approach with multiple subjects.

**Anecdotal Report:** An incomplete description of the medical and treatment history of one or more patients. Anecdotal reports may be published in places other than peer-reviewed, scientific journals.

**Theoretical and Review Articles:** Scholarly articles which discuss theoretical considerations and plausible mechanisms of action for a treatment approach, review existing research studies, and/or discuss clinical applications based on these studies.

Adapted from: National Institutes of Health; Duke University School of Medicine; and APA Journal, *Psychotherapy: Theory, Research, Practice, Training*: "Energy Psychology: A Review of the Preliminary Evidence" (Feinstein, 2008).

# Research Archive

## Academic Performance

- Boath, E., Good, R., Tsaroucha, A., Stewart, T., Pitch, S., & Boughey, A. (2017) Tapping your way to success: using Emotional Freedom Techniques (EFT) to reduce anxiety and improve communication skills in social work students. *Social Work Education*, 36(6).
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## Children and Adolescents

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Church, D., Piña, O., Reategui, C., & Brooks, A. (2011). Single session reduction of the intensity of traumatic memories in abused adolescents after EFT: A randomized controlled pilot study. *Traumatology*. doi:10.1177/1534765611426788 **RANDOMIZED CONTROLLED CLINICAL TRIAL**

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