



THE SCIENCE *of* TAPPING

Science of Tapping: An Updated Summary
of Scientific Published Studies

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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 acupressure 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.org.

For further resources on Tapping Training programs, please visit the EFT Tapping Training Institute at www.EFTTappingTraining.com.

Thank You,

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

Tapping Research Summary

According to the most current data search reported by the Association of Comprehensive Energy Psychology: Over 200 studies, review articles and meta-analyses have been published in professional, peer-reviewed journals.

This includes:

- Over 51 randomized controlled trials
- Over 50 pre-post outcome studies
- All but 1 of the above 100+ studies document EP effectiveness. That's 99%.

Including the most rigorous level of research review:

- 5 meta-analyses
- 12 systematic reviews

The evidence base for energy psychology/tapping continues to grow in quantity and quality (methodological rigor):

- 2000 – 2012: 18 randomized controlled trials
- As of 2016: 45 randomized controlled trials
- 2014 – 2016: 3 meta-analyses show energy psychology effective for depression and anxiety
- 2017 – 2018: Meta-analysis shows EFT effective for PTSD, 2 randomized control trials using biologic or genetic outcome measures document positive outcomes for EP methods.
- 2019 First fMRI study documents neural changes after EFT, 2 studies documented physiological & immunological changes and genetic (microRNA) expression with EFT.
- 2 studies documented physiological & immunological changes and genetic (microRNA) expression with EFT.

And multiple research studies have shown these methods can be effectively for working with:

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

More good news:

- In 2016, TFT (Thought Field Therapy) was validated by NREPP (the National Repertory of Evidence Based Practices and Procedures, a division of SAMHSA in the U.S.) as an evidence-based treatment.
- ACEP and AAMET/EFT International made a joint submission of the research evidence for EFT and TFT as treatments for PTSD to NICE (the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence) in the UK. NICE has created a specific category for EFT, TFT and Somatic Experiencing called “CSACTS” (Combined Somatic and Cognitive Therapies), and acknowledged that they are “worthy of further research.”
- In 2017, the U.S. Veterans Administration added EFT to List 2, approving it as a “generally safe therapy.” Next is getting added to List 1, which is a list of approved treatments.
- There are over 400 identified forms of psychotherapy, many of which have little or no research to validate them. Energy psychology is both evidence-based and in the top 10% in terms of published research for psychotherapy modalities.
- Our appreciation and acknowledgment to John Freedom and ACEP (www.energypsych.org) for tabulating this summary.

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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- Reynolds, A. (2015). Is acupoint stimulation an active ingredient in Emotional Freedom Techniques? A controlled trial of teacher burnout. *Energy Psychology Journal*, 7(1). doi 10.9769/EPJ.2015.05.1.AR **Randomized Controlled Clinical Trial**
- Aremu, A. O., & Taiwo, A. K. (2014). Reducing mathematics anxiety among students with pseudo-dyscalculia in Ibadan through numerical cognition and emotional freedom techniques: Moderating effect of mathematics efficacy. *African Journal for the Psychological Studies of Social Issues*, 17(1), 113–129.
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Sezgin, N., & Özcan, B. (2009). The effect of Progressive Muscular Relaxation and Emotional Freedom Techniques on test anxiety in high school students: A randomized controlled trial. *Energy Psychology: Theory, Research, and Treatment*, 1(1), 23-30. **Randomized Controlled Clinical Trial**

Sezgin, N., Ozcan, B., Church, D., (2009). The effect of two psychophysiological techniques (Progressive Muscular Relaxation and Emotional Freedom Techniques) on test anxiety in high school students: A randomized blind controlled study. *International Journal of Healing and Caring*, 9(1). **Randomized Controlled Clinical Trial**

Yancey, V. (2002). The use of Thought Field Therapy in educational settings. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 63 (07), 2470A. (UMI No. 3059661)

Addiction

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Sezgin, N., Ozcan, B., Church, D., (2009). The effect of two psychophysiological techniques (Progressive Muscular Relaxation and Emotional Freedom Techniques) on test anxiety in high school students: A randomized blind controlled study. *International Journal of Healing and Caring*, 9(1). **Randomized Controlled Clinical Trial**

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Schoninger, B. (2004). Efficacy of Thought Field Therapy (TFT) as a treatment modality for persons with public speaking anxiety. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 65 (10), 5455. (UMI No. AAT 3149748) **RANDOMIZED CONTROLLED CLINICAL TRIAL**

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Children and Adolescents

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Brown, R.C., Witt, A., Fegert, J.M., Keller, F., Rassenhofer, M. & Plener, P.L. (2017). Psychosocial interventions for children and adolescents after man-made and natural disasters: a meta-analysis and systematic review. *Psychological Medicine*, 47, 1893–1905. doi:10.1017/S0033291717000496 **RANDOMIZED CONTROLLED CLINICAL TRIAL**

Gaesser, A. H., & Karan, O. C. (2017). A randomized controlled comparison of Emotional Freedom Technique and cognitive-behavioral therapy to reduce adolescent anxiety: A pilot study. *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine*, 23(2), 102-108. doi:10.1089/acm.2015.0316 **RANDOMIZED CONTROLLED CLINICAL TRIAL**

- Stapleton, P., Chatwin, H., William, M., Hutton, A. Pain, A., Porter, B. & Sheldon, T. (2016). Emotional freedom techniques in the treatment of unhealthy eating behaviors and related psychological constructs in adolescents: A randomized controlled pilot trial. *Explore*, 12:113-122. **RANDOMIZED CONTROLLED CLINICAL TRIAL**
- Gaesser, A. H. (2014). Interventions to Reduce Anxiety for Gifted Children and Adolescents. *Doctoral Dissertations*, Paper 377. <http://digitalcommons.uconn.edu/dissertations/377> **RANDOMIZED CONTROLLED CLINICAL TRIAL**
- Lall, M. (2014). Mindfulness and Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT): Holistic interventions for adolescent depression and anxiety. *Master's Level Graduate Research Conference*, 124. Retrieved from <http://digitalcommons.brockport.edu/gradconf/2014/Schedule/124>
- 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**
- Sezgin, N., & Özcan, B. (2009). The effect of Progressive Muscular Relaxation and Emotional Freedom Techniques on test anxiety in high school students: A randomized controlled trial. *Energy Psychology: Theory, Research, and Treatment*, 1(1), 23-30. **Randomized Controlled Clinical Trial**
- Sezgin, N., Ozcan, B., Church, D., (2009). The effect of two psychophysiological techniques (Progressive Muscular Relaxation and Emotional Freedom Techniques) on test anxiety in high school students: A randomized blind controlled study. *International Journal of Healing and Caring*, 9(1). **Randomized Controlled Clinical Trial**

Depression

- Friedman, P. (2019) Healing from Anxiety, Depression, Trauma Using Forgiveness, Self-Compassion, and Energy Psychology while Tracking Change Over Time, Part 1. Society for the Advancement of Psychotherapy.
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- Bach, D., Groesbeck, G., Stapleton, P., Banton, S., Blickheuser, K., & Church, D. (2018). Clinical EFT (Emotional Freedom Techniques) Improves Multiple Physiological Markers of Health. *Journal of Evidence Based Integrative Medicine*, accepted September 2018. **META-ANALYSIS & SYSTEMATIC REVIEW**

- Church D, House D. (2018). Borrowing Benefits: Group Treatment With Clinical Emotional Freedom Techniques Is Associated With Simultaneous Reductions in Post-traumatic Stress Disorder, Anxiety, and Depression Symptoms. *Evid Based Integr Med.*, 2018.
- Jasubhai, Shilpa, & Mukundan, C. R. (2018). Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and Emotional Freedom Technique in Reducing Anxiety and Depression in Indian Adults. *International Journal of Emergency Mental Health and Human Resilience*, 20(2). 10.4172/1522-4821.1000403. **RANDOMIZED CONTROLLED CLINICAL TRIAL**
- Chatwin, H., Stapleton, P.B., Porter, B., Devine, S., & Sheldon, T. (2016). The effectiveness of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and Emotional Freedom Techniques in reducing depression and anxiety among adults: A pilot study. *Integrative Medicine*, 15(2), 27-34.
- Nelms, J. & Castel, D. (2016). A systematic review and meta-analysis of randomized and non-randomized trials of Emotional Freedom Techniques (EFT) for the treatment of depression. *Explore: The Journal of Science and Healing*, (in press). **RANDOMIZED CONTROLLED CLINICAL TRIAL**
- Church, D., & Brooks, A. J. (2014). Reductions in pain, depression, and anxiety after PTSD symptom remediation in veterans. *Explore: The Journal of Science and Healing*, 10(3), 162–169. **RANDOMIZED CONTROLLED CLINICAL TRIAL**
- Lall, M. (2014). Mindfulness and Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT): Holistic interventions for adolescent depression and anxiety. *Master's Level Graduate Research Conference*, 124. Retrieved from <http://digitalcommons.brockport.edu/gradconf/2014/Schedule/124>
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