

Dr. David Feinstein's Energy Psychology, EFT, and Acupoint-Tapping Series



In this series of articles about Energy Psychology, Dr. David Feinstein shares his powerful contribution to psychotherapy, based in his 50 years' experience as a clinical psychologist.

While David's papers have been written primarily for therapists who use Energy Psychology methods in their practices, some of these papers are proving to be highly instructive for their clients as well.



David Feinstein, PhD

Whether you are a therapist or someone looking into EFT for your own growth and challenges, we're offering 10 of Dr. Feinstein's most influential journal articles or book chapters and will present one each month over the next 10 months: [Read more...](#)

Want the Latest Scientific Understanding of EFT?

Your All-Access pass to the 2021 Scientific Symposium is now available. This pass includes access to each video presentation and supporting materials from each of our presenters:

Dr. Peta Stapleton: EFT for Stress and Chronic Pain, the Latest Updates



EFT International

Dr. Mahima Kalla: Tapping into Recovery – Recovering a Scientific Symposium
Life Amid Chronic Illness

Dr. David Feinstein: Tapping for Healing and Human Potential, the Evidence
as of March 2021

EFTi Chair Jacqui Footman: Understanding NICE Recommendations for
EFT

Dr. Craig Weiner: Using Scientific Evidence to Supercharge Your EFT
Business

Suzanne Connolly LCSW: Tapping the Way to Global Mental Health

The EFTi Research Team: Q & A

EFTi Volunteers John Freedom and David McKay: Discussion of Clinical
Case Studies

This event was co-hosted by **EFTi Research Team Volunteer Sonia Munafo** and **Research Team Chair Pat Ballantyne**. **EFTi Research Team Volunteer Melanie Hammick** hosted the Q & A.

[Purchase here](#)

NICE Recommendations for EFT

[Read more](#) about how NICE (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence in the UK) has found EFT to be clinically and cost-effective for PTSD...

Publishing Guidelines for EP Research Studies

Click [here](#) for the 2021 guidelines for publishing Energy Psychology Research, compiled by Dr. Peta Stapleton

Dr. Peta Stapleton Talks About Her Research into EFT (Emotional Freedom Techniques):

In the below videos, Dr. Stapleton shines a spotlight on the latest in EFT Research and translates, in laypersons' terms, how EFT has been shown to positively address PTSD, stress-related conditions, and depression. The links to the studies mentioned can be found on [Dr Peta Stapleton's website](#), but can also be found by searching the EFTi Research section (above).

In this video clip, Dr Peta Stapleton describes what a meta analysis is. She outlines the effect sizes of using EFT for PTSD, depression and anxiety and explains what this means.

In this video clip, Dr Peta Stapleton outlines the results of some studies that have used EFT for stress reduction.

In this video, Dr Peta Stapleton provides an overview of 3 studies that target depression using EFT.

Perspectives on EFT Tapping Research

An Overview of the Science Behind EFT from Dr. Shoshana Garfield

There are major scientific areas where EFT is being studied and tested. Below are brief summaries of some of the findings – together with references and links for further information:

Neuroscience – Including Brain Plasticity and Memory Reconsolidation

“It used to be ‘commonly known’ that the brain cannot change, and if neurons die, they cannot be replaced. What we know now is vastly more dynamic and points to where EFT can make a profound difference.

Although we have not made the technological innovation to regenerate new nerves extensively, there is something else that we all do every day, and very well. We learn. What happens when we learn is that new connections

between neurons get denser and more robust. That can be so extensive we can overpower previous habits that are wired into the body and even sometimes circumvent dead areas of the brain to regain, at least to a certain degree, what has been lost. The first chapter in Norman Doidge's 'The Brain That Changes Itself' is a poignant account of how one man – who happened to be a gifted medical student – refused to give up on his father,

Pedro

After doctors proclaimed Pedro's stroke to be permanently and severely debilitating. Bach-Y-Rita painstakingly got his father speaking and walking again, and his father went on to **live** a very full life; Pedro was still rock climbing when he died at age 72! Neurology hasn't been the same since. Another example is Jill Bolte Taylor, a neuroscientist who had a stroke at 37 which could have left her greatly impaired – but she believed in neuroplasticity. She worked hard on her recovery and is a college professor, author of **My Stroke of Insight**.

EFT helps us unlearn what we don't enjoy about our feelings and behaviours, and more quickly learn to do and feel what we do enjoy. If there is an emotional component, EFT may help. Two terms that are critical to understanding how this happens is "extinguishing" and "reconsolidation"; you can learn a lot about this by reading Bruce Ecker's **Unlocking the Emotional Brain**. If you prefer audio learning, then David Feinstein's audio from his short talk on extinguishing and reconsolidation will soon be available as a link on this site.

Thoughts and Feelings



When we have thoughts, conscious or subconscious, we often have a feeling that goes with it; happiness comes with thoughts we consider happy, despair with thoughts we consider to induce despair, sadness comes with sad-making thoughts. We DO feelings, in our brains and our body. Feeling each feeling is its own skill. And just like any other habit, the more we do a thing, the more we think a thought, the more we feel a feeling, the better we are at it.

When we are “good” at doing something, it means that we have a significant amount of brain real estate devoted to that something in terms of brain area and we have rich connections between neurons. Piano players have larger and denser body maps for their fingers, blind people have the areas otherwise devoted to sight taken up by other senses, and linguists have more real estate and neuron connection density devoted to language. People prone to panic attacks have a nervous system primed to react fearfully, and those evolutionarily ancient fear circuits are more robust, triggered by more perceptions and more easily.

Interventions like cognitive behavioural therapy help people learn new and genuinely valuable skills that, the more someone practices, the better they can be at – for instance, calming down. However, the sensitivity underneath the new skills of soothing remain in potential, and can be re-expressed under certain circumstances. In short, the panic attack potential remains. This new learning as an overlay is called “extinction.” You can think of it as like water extinguishing a fire, but the combustible material can light up again later.

Still sticking with the panic attack example, EFT can help someone soothe themselves in a moment. That gives them the experience of having the panic, and having things be OK too. By using that meridian stimulation, over time, something quite special happens – the underlying potential for the panic attack is unlearned. It is unwired from the body. New skills replacing an old set of skills is called 'reconsolidation'. Not only is the fire put out, the flammable material is cleaned away.

See Bruce Ecker's book, **Unlocking the Emotional Brain: Eliminating Symptoms at Their Roots Using Memory Reconsolidation.**"

The 'New Biology' of Epigenetics

"Just like we used to think the brain was pretty fixed and stuck, we used to think the same thing about genes. Genes are the body's way of telling us how to make necessary stuff like proteins, blood, new cells, etc. all necessary for life. Different ways of making the same thing, like hair in different colours or textures, are called alleles; they are simply different types of the same gene.

Watson and Crick (and their teams) were considered the first to discover the spiral staircase structure of DNA, called a helix, made up of a small number of proteins that came in predictable pairs. Many thought we were on the verge of wiping out not only genetic diseases like Huntington's Syndrome, we also thought we had found the 'Lego set' of nature – we could build anything. Genetic companies sprang up like a biological Silicon Valley – and just like there, most went bust.

Why? Because the promise of, "we can find this gene that will always do that one thing," simply wasn't true.

Why Wasn't It True?

Dr. Bruce Lipton, who wrote an engaging book called, **The Biology of Belief**,

was a pioneer in the seemingly small territory of petri dishes. He found that DNA would behave differently in different environments. The teensiest nutshell of epigenetics is that the environment – which includes the internal chemistry of your body – can turn genes off and on. Genes can be regulated without medicine; we do it all the time, every minute. Our internal biological environment, deeply influenced by what happens outside of our bodies, is gene regulation.

This turned out to be so extensive, in fact, that if someone feels sad for even a few minutes, they will suppress the functioning of their immune system by activating the genes that disable the immune system and inactivating the ones that strengthen it. Conversely, feeling the more pleasant side of feelings, like happiness, for even a few minutes, goes the other way around. Feeling happy turns on the genes that strengthen your immune system, and switches off the genes that weaken it.

Just like our brain, our internal environment is constantly shifting and changing, and our intentions map a path for our biology to follow.

The very capacity of our biology to follow our conscious intention is another explanatory strand in explaining why EFT and other interventions can work so very well."

Body and Brain Chemistry Related to Stress

"When we get stressed, we have had thoughts telling us we are in, right now, or about to be in, danger. This isn't just about ancient circuits making us go into flight or fight when seeing a predator. Like horses and dogs, we are social creatures, and social dangers like rejection and even disapproval can, just like spotting a puma dangerously close by, can set off the same fear circuits inside of us.

Stress is a summary for a body state that is primed to accommodate survival. Stress experienced as something we can handle will result in fight

or flight being triggered – that's the part of the autonomic nervous system called the sympathetic nervous system. This is action priming, experienced as raised heart rate, suppression of immune system and digestion, suppression of the detoxification function of the liver and kidneys, and getting rid of weight to enable higher speeds (soiling or wetting one's underwear – guess that worked better when we didn't wear clothes). Also, reaction times that go through our more recently evolved brain area, the neocortex, simply goes offline. We literally can't think properly as our intellect and reason has been pretty much switched off.

Stress – danger – that we are not sure if we can handle results in the freeze response – like pressing down on the accelerator (sympathetic system) and the brakes (parasympathetic) at the same time. You have seen this in the taut muscles of a deer caught in headlights. It is a state of being frozen in terror.

There is a deeper state, brought on by what is called Inescapable Stimuli (IS). This is the deepest stress of all. When we can't run, and we can't fight our way out, and we learn or surmise that no matter what we do we cannot escape, another part of our nervous system takes over. We shut down; the Vagal Nerve System has taken over – you can read about this in detail in any book by Stephen Porges or catch some of his full YouTube videos. This is a state of flop, of collapse. It is useful to have the biological capacity for this collapse because the chewing and tearing of some predators are triggered by the thrashing of the prey – if one were to stop fighting, then it could increase chances of survival, and stress means survival of the physical organism is at the top of the biological agenda. This is Fight/Flight/Freeze/Flop – our bodies in distress.

EFT can help sooth the autonomic and vagal nervous systems and bring people back to balance. See Hypothmalus Pituitary Adrenal Axis (more coming soon)."

Cutting-Edge Trauma Research on Body-Based Interventions (Enter

EFT)

"Cutting-edge trauma research is indicating that body-based interventions are necessary for lasting change and meridian stimulation is a very effective somatic intervention.

The single article that most changed American energy psychology (EP) history is David Feinstein's meta-analysis of the energy psychology efficacy literature, published in 2012. Before this article was written, the American Psychological Association (APA) was vociferously against all forms of energy psychology, and had stated that it would not even support research in the area. When this study came out, with the advocacy of senior EP practitioners in the US, the APA did a complete 180. David's article convinced them not only that research was valuable and desirable; the APA now accepts continuing education credits from some carefully vetted EP courses run by ACEP and in their annual conference.

The take-away point from David's article is that EP research indicates that meridian-based interventions are at least as good as conventional treatments, if not better, at relieving particularly post-traumatic stress, anxiety and other stresses and their related issues such as phobias. EP has attained what is the highest level of proof in the treatment of mental health: 'probably efficacious'. Although the term 'probably efficacious' can seem wishy washy to people not familiar with the jargon, there is no higher category to attain in the APA system.

Top level medical doctors specialising in trauma, like Dr Robert Scaer ('Body Bears the Burden,' 'Trauma Spectrum' and www.traumasoma.com), and people researching and theorising about psychological recovery from trauma like Dr Stephen Porges ('Poly Vagal Nerve Theory') and Peter Levine 'Waking the Tiger', all recommend acupuncture point stimulation to relieve psychological stress. Even Dr Gordon Turnbull ('Trauma'), who has worked with special forces and countless other military personnel, talks about EFT as a promising field of treatment."

Psychoneuroimmunology (PNI)

"This new branch of science has emerged in the last 35 years. It is the study of how psychological processes (our thoughts and emotions) affect the nervous and immune systems of the human body. The late Dr. Candace Pert who made groundbreaking discoveries concerning the way the emotions act directly upon the immune system through neuropeptide-specific receptors, was another scientist who advocated EFT.

A major focus of PNI has been the study of stress and how the body's stress responses — linked to the emotions of anxiety, fear, tension, anger and sadness — weaken the immune system, interfere with healing and even cause disease. For physical health and wellbeing, we need to be able to effectively release stressful emotions from the body and cultivate a more balanced state. This is precisely what EFT accomplishes."

Agreement on the Existence of the Body's Meridian System

"Have you ever heard of acupuncture? This is an established way of treating just about any disorder as well as contributing to the maintenance of optimal health. It uses 14 meridians and channels that used to be considered speculative.

We know there is something to the acupuncture notion of points because there are many studies done on the voltaic potential differences over the predicted points on the skin. But how do they all connect? There was a study done that wound up proving the existence of meridians – radioactive tracers were injected in blood vessels, in meridian points, along predicted meridian lines, and in neutral points where no circulation of any sort was expected. The results were conclusive – the blood vessels flowed in the expected directions, either towards (veins) or away (arteries) from the heart, but never in both directions. The neutral spots showed a pattern of spherical diffusion, like when you drop food colouring into the centre of a still bowl of water. At the acupoints, however, the tracers flowed in both directions, and traced the

meridians according to established working knowledge. (Citation below)

[Acupoint Stimulation Research Review](#)

A Study on the Migration of Radioactive Tracers after Injection at Acupoints
American Journal of Acupuncture, Vol. 20, No. 3, 1992 Writers: Jean-Claude Darras, Pierre de Vernejoul, and Pierre Albarhde."

EFTi Research Chronicle Newsletter for Members Archive

Every few months, EFT International sends via email to all members a chronicle of the latest in EFT Tapping Research. Join as a Supporting Member today to receive these updates in realtime.

[September 2021](#)

[May 2021](#)

[April 2019](#)

[January 2019](#)

[July 2018](#)

Resources for EFT Practitioners Undertaking Research

[Application for EFTi Research Funding \(.docx\)](#)

[Criteria for EFTi Research Funding](#)

[Science Behind Energy Psychology \(.docx\)](#)

[Hierarchy of EFT Research \(.docx\)](#)

Dr. Liz Boath Makes the Case for EFT and Writing and

Publishing EFT Case Studies

Liz is Professor of Health and Wellbeing at Staffordshire University as well as an advanced. Her presentation is about how to write a case study for publication. She also speaks about how there is a paucity of case studies in EFT and why case studies are important. This is a must see presentation for anyone considering doing a case study in EFT.

[Download audio of Dr. Liz Boath's presentation \(.mp3\)](#)

[Download Powerpoint \(.pptx\)](#)

Outcome Measures Documents

In order to conduct any research, researchers need pre- and post-outcome measures. Here are some examples of outcomes measures used in previous EFT research. Most are free to use, but please investigate copy-write considerations before using your chosen outcome measures.

[The City Birth Trauma Scale](#)

[SA-45](#)

[PHQ9-GAD7 Questionnaire](#)

[Outcome measures with LTC](#)

[IES-R Form](#)

[Health Anxiety Inventory](#)

[ICD10 PTSD](#)

[CORE-LD](#)

[CORE Outcome measure](#)

[BDI- II 03 Sep 2007](#)

[Beck's Hopelessness Scale](#)

[BAI](#)

[Friedman Life Balance Scale](#)

[Friedman Mini 5 Factor Personality Scale](#)

[Friedman Spiritual Awakening Scale](#)

Further Information Regarding Outcome Measures

Many of the outcome measures that have been made available (see above), require additional information. Below are links to additional guidance about how to score outcomes, utilize the impact of events scale, and consider the issues involved.

[Copy of Beck's Hopelessness Scale – Scoring](#)

[How to Score Impact of Event Scale](#)

[IES-R Info](#)

[IES-R Use Issues January 2008](#)

[IES-R Scoring](#)

[Image_1_Development of a Measure of Postpartum PTSD_ The City Birth Trauma Scale](#)

[Research Info sheet Final Accessible 7.05.08](#)

[SA-45 scoring](#)

[Therapist Guidelines Administration of CORE LD – 18.8.08.08](#)