

© Sam Taylor 2003

© Gore & Osment Pty Ltd 2003

This article is copyright and must not be reproduced without the permission of the publisher.

TAP HAPPY

(Your Destiny Good Medicine Oct 03)

Anxious? Phobic? Tap into acupuncture for the emotions. By Sam Taylor

Thought Field Therapy, or TFT for short, is a fascinating new technique for emotional healing that has only been in Australia for a short while, yet it's spreading like wildfire. Why? Because it's such an effective and quick way for you to make sudden, lasting changes in your life or to vanquish an anxiety, fear or phobia that has been bothering you for years. Or so goes the sales pitch.

Armed only with the knowledge that it has something to do with "tapping", and that self-help super-guru Anthony Robbins was "into it", Your Destiny went to talk to Eugene Piccinotti, Australia's leading teacher/practitioner of TFT to see what the excitement is about.

Growing up on the mean streets of New York's Hell's Kitchen in the 1960s, Eugene was subject to many forms of abuse and trauma as a child. You name it, it happened to him, which naturally set him up for a life of strife, fear and anxiety. Many troubled years later, and now living in Australia, Eugene's world was completely turned around by one single event, one single discovery.

"I was the number one caller of the Lifeline crisis number at the time," he says. "I would talk to those guys for hours every day, often calling back again and again, up until I fell asleep." Then a friend introduced him to a practitioner of Thought Field Therapy and the world, for Eugene, changed forever. "Just by doing this simple 'tapping' on various points on my own body, I felt my anxiety completely disappear! It was like: 'Jeez! I love you! Wow!'"

Eugene married the practitioner and has been tap-happy ever since. After using TFT to turn his own life around, Eugene was driven by a desire to get this incredible system of techniques out to people at grass-roots level. It took him to the USA to study with Roger Callahan, PhD, the leading American clinical research psychologist who developed TFT 25 years ago.

What is it?

By taking the principle of meridians, the body's energy points and pathways best known to us in the west through acupuncture, Callahan had developed a systematic set of techniques for the treatment of personal emotional problems. By directly addressing

the energy flows established by a person's thoughts, Callahan discovered a way to quickly cure long-standing fears, phobias or anxieties. And this is the fun part. It's all done through simple tapping of the various meridians on your body for just a few seconds. Not tapping "your power" in a psychic boogie-boogie way, nor a hot shoe shuffle à la Fred Astaire, but literally just a gentle patter with a finger or two on the appropriate spot.

What to do

Here's a simplified version of one Thought Field Therapy technique, just so that you can get a feel for its amazing simplicity.

1 Focus on something that worries or frustrates you in your life.

2 Rate that worry or stress on a scale from 1 to 10 – "10" being really, really bad and "1" being a breeze, no problem.

3 Lightly tap the specific meridians (see below) related to that particular type of stress or upset a few times each with two fingers of one hand. It doesn't have to be hard or strong tapping, just enough to stimulate the meridian located there. Tap the following meridian points on your body, in order:

a) above the innermost tip of the eyebrow just a fraction above the bridge of your nose;

b) just under the eye-socket bone on your cheek;

c) on your ribcage approximately 8cm below your armpit;

d) below the right collar bone, about 2.5cm down and 2.5cm from where a man's tie knot would be.

4 Again rate the feeling or upset from 1 to 10, "10" being the worst. If it hasn't gone down at all, try lightly rubbing the point about 2.5cm or so down from the middle of your left collarbone. This is like repolarising a magnet and should make all the difference for next time round.

5 Next time round. Repeat the above steps as many times as you need and keep recording your score from 1 to 10. You may well find that after just a few times you're feeling a whole lot different.

This is an abridged and slightly simplified version of a Thought Field Therapy technique, but I did a similar exercise with Eugene and was amazed at how quickly my feelings around my chosen issue were shifted.

Sure, nothing had changed in the outside world, the event that caused my problem was still true, but I now no longer cared to care for it – as if the fuel behind the upset had been syphoned out of me. I no longer have the time to care about it, I'm moving on, very much like the feeling of finally getting over a broken heart.

Since my session with Eugene, I've been impressed by the simplicity and adaptability of TFT. Any time I'm feeling angst or get uptight about something I can now do this simple tapping technique and the world truly does take on a new colour. It's like acupuncture for the emotions for the 21st century – immediate, painless and outrageously fast.

Too good to be true? Hold that thought and start gently tapping above your eyebrow...