

Weight Loss with Emotional Freedom Technique

By Tom Porpiglia, MS, LMHC, D.CEP, EFT-ADV

Note: This case is being presented with the client's permission.

In June 2001, Joanne (not her real name) came to me after hearing a presentation I did on Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) at the now defunct Greater Rochester Wellness Council. She had tried every diet in the book to loose weight. She would loose weight and then put it back on. She wanted desperately to loose weight and keep it off.

EFT works by bringing the energy system of the body into balance around the specific issue. We accomplish this by creating a statement about the issue and then tapping on thirteen different energy meridian points at various locations on the body while repeating the statement at each point. For example, one of the issues here is not liking to exercise, so, the statement used was "I don't like to exercise" while she was tapping on her energy meridian points. Each issue is also rated in intensity at the start of the process; ten being the most intense and zero meaning it is no longer an issue. This is simply a tool to track progress and tells us whether we need to repeat the process or not.

I also used Tapas Acupressure Technique (TAT) in this process. TAT works differently than EFT and is equally as quick and effective. I particularly like TAT for installing positive thoughts, ideas and tools. TAT involves a physical pose using both of your hands on the front and back of your head, touching specific areas and points that correlate to energy meridians. While holding this pose, the client focuses on the specifics of the situation in their minds eye until a shift occurs. In this case, the shifts we were looking for were along the lines of "I can do this," "I exercise daily," "my ideal weight is," and the person knowing for certain in their mind and body, that the task can be accomplished. These shifts show up in a variety of ways and bring confidence to the client.

TAT has seven steps that can be done, if necessary. Each step involves the same pose and a different phrase. These steps involve, the issue, the opposite situation of the issue, healing all of the origins of the issue, healing all of the storage places of the issue, healing the part of self that benefited from having the issue, forgiving self and other contributors for having the issue, and asking for forgiveness from those who have been hurt because of the issue.

It is difficult to describe a client's experiences when using EFT or TAT, because it is unique to both the individual and the issue. Sometimes the release of the issue is as simple as a sigh or a yawn, sometimes people experience intense emotional release via tears and sobbing. I have had others who have gone from a serious frown to hysterical laughter and one client experiences involuntary muscle contractions. Regardless of what they experience during the process, almost all of them report feeling lighter and more relaxed at the end of the session.

At her first session and intake interview, we identified the following issues via traditional talk therapy, that were contributing to her weight problem; 1) she was unhappy in her marriage to her 2nd husband, 2) she used food to stuff her feelings, 3) she had a fear of being rejected, 4) She was self-conscious about her stomach, 5) Date rape, and 6) her weigh gain only happened when she was in a relationship. The weight gain was a way for her to test the validity of the relationship. Would she still be loved if she were fat?

As we only had a short time left in the session, Joanne chose to focus on the issue of putting on weight to test men's love. We used EFT to tap out the issue. After that, she identified her ideal weight as 135 pounds, and we scheduled our next session.



At her second session, Joanne reported that for the first time in 4 years, she went out in public in her bathing suit, and did not wear a tee shirt or shorts to cover up and that she got complements from her husband and daughter. She had difficulty conveying her issues to me so I had her use Tapas Acupressure Technique (TAT) to get some clarity. TAT can often bring clarity to issues by creating images in the mind's eye. Here's what she came up with; 1) she had to have something (food) in her hands to be acceptable, 2) she had to eat when she felt awkward (stuffing feelings), 3) she believed that she did not fit in his family or hers.

We applied EFT to each of the issues, creating a shift to the positive in each case. She became acceptable without having food in her hands. She no longer felt awkward or had to eat to stuff feelings. The issue with the biggest emotional charge was not fitting in. As we tapped this issue out, she began to cry, realizing that for many years she thought that she was fitting in by being flexible and that she had only been false with herself.

At her third session, Joanne reported that her husband had made an unusual observation about her as they walked around the campground they were staying at. He said she appeared to be friendlier. Sometimes the shifts and changes in thinking and behavior show up in unexpected areas of our lives. We did not work directly on her being friendly, or unfriendly, however, this appears to be an improvement in self-esteem.

This session's focus was on exercise. Joanne's first issue was a fear or belief that she would only put the weight back on. Again, we applied EFT to the issue, removing the fear. Then she made a list of her objections to exercise, as follows; 1) I'm big, 2) I get tired easily, 3) I sweat easily, 4) It's hard to breath, 5) the clothing is uncomfortable, 6) my thighs rub together, 7) the temperature has to be just right 8) I don't like to feel uncomfortable, 9) her kids begged her not to go to the gym.

Intuition plays a big role in how I work with clients, and my intuition was leading me to something I had not yet tried; applying TAT to all 9 of these issues at once! The outcome was that she got to a place of acceptance on each of the issues and that she had also held the ideas that exercising in a gym was not a spiritual or stimulating experience. Those ideas were no longer blocking her.

At this point, we used TAT to do positive installations; installing something positive in her belief system. We created a new positive self-image of what she would look like when she lost the weight, and what her ideal weight and measurements were. She used the statement "I weight 135 pounds and that's all that I weight." We also included a vision of her exercising in this image. Without creating this new image, the brain would take over and put on any weight that she lost because its old picture would not match the new body. She reported feeling very comfortable with the entire concept when she finished the process.

During Joanne's next session, she reported doing very well. She had started walking or doing step aerobics daily. Her focus during this session was being sexually rejected by her husband. He always found an excuse. She also had a belief that she was a "big, fat blob." We applied EFT to each of the issues bringing her to a place where she realized that her husband's rejection was not about her, and that while she may be overweight, she is not a big, fat blob. She has a choice and the ability to do something about it.

We also repeated the TAT process on the original statement of statement "I weight 135 pounds and that's all that I weight." She reported that she was able to "see" her body change and evolve into a thinner, in-shape person.

Joanne's final session was a month later and she reported losing four pounds and exercising 5 days a week. She had reduced her food intake, and had ceased bingeing or eating when she is nervous. She also reported that she wanted to lose two pounds a week. I muscle tested her to verify that it was ok with her body to lose two pounds a week and it was.

She identified the following issues still in her way: 1) a belief that she can't lose two pounds a week, 2) the inability to lose two pounds a week (these were different issues), 3) fear of people looking at her because she was on a diet, 4) fear of people looking at her stomach because they know she's on a diet. Her outlook when she left was "who cares if I'm on a diet or people are looking at my stomach. How would they know unless I tell them." We give our imagination so much power sometimes.

We did away with each issue with EFT and closed our session. I ran into her five months later and did not recognize her. She had lost 25 pounds, dropped four dress sizes from a 16 to a 12, was getting braces, walking three miles a day, and had her hair cut, colored and styled! She was also training for a three day, eight hour a day walk to raise awareness for breast cancer.

To date, she has lost almost 40 pounds and looks very good. Her self-esteem improved to the point that she left an emotionally abusive husband. She continues to exercise daily and has a great outlook on life. What is amazing about this client is that we did this in only five sessions.

Not every weight loss case will proceed this quickly. I am certain that the commitment, honesty and openness the client brought to session with her, along with EFT, TAT and other awareness she had during our sessions, made this an exceptional case.

Tom Porpiglia, MS, EFT-ADV, founder and CEO of *Life Script Counseling Services*, is a master practitioner of Emotional Freedom Technique and other energy therapies. He can be reached at [585-704-0376](tel:585-704-0376), or info@lifescryptcounseling.com.



Before Using EFT: 191 Pounds



After Using EFT: 158 Pounds

Note: Individual results will vary!