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This article originally appeared in Gary Craigs Emofree site.

My client has a history of severe physical abuse since early childhood up until her early 20's, when she escaped a violent relationship. She has been receiving therapy and using EFT for self-help in dealing with the many traumas in her life over a period of time as each issue presented itself. This work has been delicate and complex and its been important not to rush or dig to deeply as it would have proved to triggering for her.

She presented to me with a headache and severe shoulder, neck, and back pain and a sense there was something 'needing to be dealt with' but no idea what. She had been getting severe headaches every month for 2 to 3 days and thought they were possibly hormone related. The timing of our appointment conveniently coincided with an actual headache. She had tried painkillers and tapping. However she did not know what emotion was associated with the headaches and could not get to it. Nothing had worked!

Her headache felt like her brain was hurting and something was pushing down on her face. It was a 6 in level of intensity on a scale of 0 to 10, but felt like it was getting worse and was heading to a migraine. She felt resigned that this probably wasn't going to work either because nothing had worked to date.

Even though I can't get over this problem, I have tried everything and nothing works ... I am willing to accept the possibility that maybe I am just not getting to the issue alone and I accept myself.

She felt more positive that it might work with help from me. She reported the room looked brighter and wondered if the sun had come out; but it was a grey, wet day with no sign of sun so we concluded something had shifted.

On questioning what she was aware of, she sensed a black swirling cloud over her head, feelings of foreboding and dread, like things are good but it won't last, something's going to happen. Her level of intensity was 8 out of 10.

I asked her to say, "I deserve to be happy." That felt totally untrue to her.

Even though I have a black swirling cloud of foreboding and dread, I am happy but something's going to happen, I know it, I don't deserve to be happy, so it's got to go wrong soon, I accept myself anyway.

She felt the cloud was grey and it changed from dread to unsettled and her level of intensity was 3 out of 10. Tapping on the unsettled feeling brought that down to 0 out of 10.

The feeling changed to tension and the pain went up her spine. It felt like stress but she was not sure why and her level of intensity was 8 out of 10.

Even though I feel this tension and pain up my spine, it feels like stress but I am not sure what it's about, I am open to knowing and I accept myself.

The pain in her back went away but her attention was now fully back to her head. She described the headache now ... and we tapped, *Even though I have a raw, red swollen brain...*

Her level of intensity came down from 8 out of 10, to 4. It was now not raw and red but still swollen. She said 'my brain feels panicky and scared but I have no idea why.' It sounded to me like she was referring to her brain as having a personality of its own and I checked with her. She said yes, its feelings weren't hers, it was no part of her or her life now, it was her brain's problem not hers.

Even though my brain feels scared and panicky, I don't know why ... it knows, I don't, it has nothing to do with me ... I accept myself and my brain.

Her brain now felt cornered ... it wanted to hide ... it had been found out. Something was in there that didn't want to come out. Her level of intensity was 10 out of 10.

Even though my brain is so scared, it wants to hide, it doesn't want to show what's in there I accept myself and my brain.

She was now aware that her brain was trying to protect her from something it didn't want her to see. I suggested that perhaps we could acknowledge to her brain that it has been protecting her from something very painful and it has done a great job but that's before she knew EFT. And maybe we could promise her brain that we would be very gentle and careful and not let her be hurt, because she has been hurt enough. She thought this would be a good idea so we tapped on:

Even though my brain has been protecting me from something so bad I don't want to see it ... I acknowledge the good job my brain has done looking after me but I choose to let my brain know I trust the EFT process ... and I know that I can do this gently and don't have to be hurt again because I have been hurt enough in my life already and I accept myself and my brain.

The headache was now only on her right side but tapping around her eye made a spike of pain in her head over her eyes. We did some tapping around her eyes keeping open to what came up.

Even though there are pictures in my brain, I don't want to see them, I know they are there, but I don't want to look, it can't make me look, I am too scared to look but I accept myself anyway.

The pictures she was aware of now felt like polaroids flashing up ... they were flashing up but she couldn't see them, although she 'knew' what they were about.

Even though I have polaroids in my head I don't want them, I want to burn them, I don't want to look...

Even though I am dirty, I have dirty pictures in my head, I don't want to look, people get put in prison for looking at pictures like that...

Her eye pain cleared, and a feeling of shame at a level of intensity of 8 out of 10 came up.

Even though I feel a sense of deep shame... Her level of intensity regarding the shame went to 0 out of 10.

The feeling changed to sadness for herself and others but at this point she still could not verbalize who. We tapped on this and there was no change at all. I asked if it was OK to let the feeling go ... and she said no, her sister was still suffering. She didn't feel it was right to get treatment for only seeing something and not having had it done to her when her sister was still suffering the consequences.

We tapped on all this and I included a reframe about the possibility that if she dealt with it she could let her sister see it was possible to get help with her problems. As her sister was skeptical of EFT, the only way she could help her was by letting her see how well it worked for her.

She reported that her headache had begun to undulate with tendrils twisting round. As she had a good dialogue going on with her 'brain' I invited her to ask what was wrong. She said it was angry with her, if she let go of the pictures it was accepting what happened and saying it was OK.

Even though what happened was wrong, unacceptable and unforgivable I accept that letting go of the pictures and the pain is not the same as accepting that what happened is OK...

Feelings of fury, loathing, rage and hatred toward her dad came up. I suggested some words:

Even though I hate, and loathe my dad for what he did, these feelings are hurting me and not him ... he is not in my life physically now but he is still taking up so much energy and causing me so much pain and I could give that energy to better things. Being angry is like drinking poison and hoping someone else will die.

Even though part of me doesn't feel he deserves for me not to feel this hatred I am willing to accept the possibility of letting this anger go for my sake.

She felt much calmer and was able to talk about how he tried to destroy the family. The nucleus of suffering was him abusing her sister while she had to look on (first time she could say this out loud). But with the gambling, the beating, the alcoholism, he tried to destroy them all ... while all the time telling them how great a dad he was and how much they needed him.

Whilst up until now I had pretty closely followed her words and only allowed intuition to work a little, I suggested tapping on some stuff as I knew a fair bit about her and if I was way off she should let me know.

Hey dad, you tried to destroy us, but guess what, it didn't work. You beat us, abused us, hurt us, but we are still here, we are still alive, we are good people, we all have someone to love us and can love so we have everything we need. You were destroying yourself and tried to take us down with you, but we are still here. We survived, we were stronger than you thought, and we made it on our own.

She said this was great and spot-on but now was aware of a feeling of compassion for her father, realizing that he must have suffered a lot himself to have all these problems. Indeed she was aware of the fact he had had a horrible life but along with this sense of compassion, she felt that didn't mean he was not responsible for his actions and he was being punished now by not having them in his life.

I asked her to visualize a room with her family. She placed her husband beside her, her kids in front, her sister behind her, her brother was farther away, her mum (dead) was also behind her and her dad was outside by the wheelie bins. She laughed at this and said that felt right. He had no place in her life now and she could let that all go.

She now had a band of pressure over her forehead. This represented the current issue of how what happened to her affected her and her kids. She felt all alone. She'd had no example of parenting ... was having to make it up every time ... had no idea what to do and no one to ask for help.

And for the past few days she had overwhelming feelings of not wanting to be there and having no idea how to respond to her daughters. She cited some examples which to me sounded like a perfectly normal situations encountered in every family with teens.

Even though I had no parents to guide me ... show me how to be a good parent ... my dad abused us and mum let him ... so how am I supposed to know how to do this, I am so alone. Everyone else knows what to do except me ... everyone else had perfect parents who help them, who they can turn to for advice ... but I am all alone, messing it up...

She realized that she was not alone. She had a supportive husband - her children's stepfather who helped her to see she was doing a great job and had 100% faith in her. And she had her kids who sometimes told her they thought she was great (but they are teenage girls so it doesn't happen often - but in truth she knew it) and realized how many of her friends, including me, often had times when they felt the same way.

She now had a strong sense of wanting to forgive herself for her past mistakes.

Even though I made mistakes raising my girls I forgive myself and choose to know that I did the best I could, and the best I can is all I can give. I am healing now and by healing I can help them heal.

Even though I have made mistakes my girls are happy and healthy and maybe I can accept that MY best really is good enough.

By now her headache was completely gone and all arm, back, shoulder and neck pain was gone.

I rechecked through all the above. There was still some intensity on the phrase, "Good things can't happen ... it won't last." She said that still felt a level of intensity of 3 out of 10, but the feeling had changed and she thought it was something to do with grief.

When thinking of her dad, she did not feel furious, she felt detached, cool, but felt he could not touch her now. He had lost out on something good and he would have to live with the consequence of that, but it was not her fault or her problem. She is planning to continue tapping with these issues but could now understand why painkillers and self-tapping would not help if her brain had all these issues.

Interestingly it has been about 6 months since she first mentioned that the one thing she could never deal with was her memories of what her dad did to her sister. This is how long she had been having the headaches.

I have checked in with her, and her headache had totally disappeared and did not come back. This was a definite improvement and she had been experiencing good memories about her dad.

However, she was aware of a fear that something may happen to her husband and she would be totally alone then. This had brought up feelings of deep loneliness and sadness. She worked through that herself to a degree with EFT but she has booked another session to carry on working through the grieving and loss that she is now experiencing with the absence of hate.

Gillian

Follow-up session

I thought you might be interested in the follow up session . The original session resulted in total cessation of migraine and she has had another cycle with no hint of a migraine. She had reported dealing with feelings of loss and a terrible fear her husband might die and she would be alone, although this was familiar, it had intensified after the original tapping session.

We started tapping for this fear and I asked her if this feeling was a familiar one. She had a memory of being in a car with some people who were friends of her sister just after her mum had died and she was feeling intensely alone and afraid. At this point she started to sob uncontrollably and cried out that the feeling she was experiencing was too overwhelming she thought she might die.

I started tapping on her immediately

"Even though I think I am going to die if I , this hurts too much, I am here now, I am safe and I am OK"

The feeling came down to a manageable level, it was within the 0-10 scale rather than way of the scale. At this point I got her to get up and walk around and asked her to come out of the memory, not to try to experience it but to think of it as a movie. It had actually been a different memory that had come up. She called it "The Nightmare". SUDS were 10. We tapped for this using the Movie technique and her SUDS lowered overall but there was a peak of intensity. She called this the 'telephone call.' We tapped on this and she was then calm enough to start telling the story of what happened on that night.

I used the Story Technique and we tapped on everything that came up as she told me the story of what happened on the night her mum died, and subsequently. There were some very intense feelings of anger, loneliness and despair and some guilt over actions that she took at the time.

At this point we included a Choices tapping.

"Even though I have felt so lonely many times and have chosen to be alone, I choose to know I am connected to so many people and am never truly alone, I choose to be connected"

Within $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour this entire memory of this very difficult time in her life went down from a feeling that she would die if she had to remember it to an absolute zero. Her feelings about herself and the rest of her family were also in a much healthier place and she had a sense of belonging and knowing she was connected to so many people and could never be lonely.

I asked her to think about the possibility of her husband dying now and she said it no longer felt like something that would definitely happen and she felt no fear thinking about it. I also asked her to revisit the memory of being in the car and this time round she could see all the concerned faces around her and realised if she had told them that she was not coping they would have done everything they could to care for her. She felt their love and concern not loneliness and fear.

A week later she visited me and mentioned her husband had a very bad chest infection. Normally this would have made her feel so scared she would have stayed at home unable to cope, but she found she was very calm and able to function normally. We talked about ways to help him and she did some tapping with him and he had a good nights sleep and started to improve immediately.

This is her comments in her own words

"I had been terrified for longer than I can remember that my husband was going to die, and if he did I wouldn't want to live any more. After a very intensive EFT session that dealt with grief over losing my mother 11 years ago, I am struggling to recall ever feeling that way. It feels like a heavy burden has been removed from my chest and I am a lot less anxious."