



Finding Your True Bliss: How to Use Tapping to Live in a State of Joy and Happiness

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I became involved in EFT research in 2005. I realized EFT was an effective method, but unless it had research backing it up, it would never be accepted by mainstream medicine.

Currently we're doing research into the biology of EFT, but the early research on EFT was about psychological change. We looked at anxiety, depression, phobias, and PTSD. After tapping, we saw massive change. In one meta-analysis of clinical trials of EFT for posttraumatic stress disorder, or PTSD, the effect of EFT treatment was so enormous that it was off the scale of most regular analyses.

The scale used to evaluate the effectiveness of a treatment in a meta-analysis goes from two to five to eight, with two being discernably effective treatment, five moderately effective treatment, and eight very effective treatment. On that scale of two, five, and eight, the number for EFT was 29. We were seeing astonishing effects in terms of people's shifts in mood.

These results prompted me to consider: If this is happening in people's subjective experience (they're feeling much happier and stress symptoms are going away), it has to show up in objective biology (brain and body states). I reasoned that we should be able to measure that with tools such as gene chips and hormone assays.

I then began to try and raise money for conducting this objective biological research. It's great when people tell you after tapping that they feel better and they score as much happier on a psychological scale. But if their genes, brain waves, hormones, neurotransmitters, and the biology of their internal cell signaling are changing, those are objective markers that they're getting better. We have now done sophisticated trials with EEGs, MRIs, gene chips, and hormone assays. What they're showing us is that massive biological changes follow tapping.

You can tweak your biology in numerous ways. If you change your diet, it will change your biology, as will changing your exercise routine. The serotonin and dopamine neurotransmitter balance in your brain will improve. Your levels of stress hormones will decrease, as will inflammation. But these will go down by only a few percentage points. With EFT, however,



the biological changes are far greater. In one study I published recently, we found that after a week of tapping and meditating, the participants' baseline level for the stress hormone cortisol dropped by 37%. For just one week of practice, that's a massive change.

When you liberate your body from the impact of stress, positive markers often improve automatically. In that same study we found that immune function improved. Immunoglobulins went up by 113%!

That's the exciting direction that research is taking now. We're using highly sophisticated tools to look deep under the surface and see the objective biological changes that are happening. Studies show that they can add years to your life.

By lowering your stress, you move toward happiness. If you look at the older psychological tests such as the Beck Anxiety Inventory, the Beck Depression Inventory, and the PTSD checklist, the focus was on bringing people back to normal. If you scored 0 on the anxiety or depression inventory, that meant you had zero depression or zero anxiety. That's good, but what about moving toward happiness?

In the study I just talked about, people's happiness levels rose by over 30%. The goal isn't just to reach a plateau where you don't have mental health issues or diseases. The goal, as I see it, is to get to a point where you are feeling vibrantly fantastic and happy. When I was writing *Mind to Matter: The Astonishing Science of How Your Brain Creates Material Reality*, I found some really interesting avenues I couldn't explore fully within the scope of that book. One of those was the effect both EFT and meditation have on the brain.

My new book, *Bliss Brain: The Neuroscience of Remodeling Your Brain for Resilience, Creativity, and Joy*, explores these effects. It turns out that there are seven intensely pleasurable neurotransmitters and hormones that are released when you're in these elevated emotional states. These are measurable neurotransmitters and hormones.

When we measure the biochemistry of people who are feeling over 30% happier after a week of meditation and tapping, we find changes in these pleasure neurotransmitters and hormones. Some, like dopamine and serotonin, are household names. Dopamine is the reward hormone, your "go get it" hormone. Serotonin is your "ah, I've got it" hormone. When serotonin and dopamine are balanced in our brains, we feel really, really good.

Along with serotonin and dopamine, stress reduction can produce an upsurge in the hormone oxytocin, the bonding hormone. We rely on bonding hormones such as oxytocin to create intimacy and love. Even childbirth is based on a surge of oxytocin. In elevated



states, when this bonding hormone is flooding our brains and our bodies, it unlocks two neurotransmitters. One of them is nitric oxide, which expands the blood vessels in the brain's prefrontal cortex—our alertness center. It's a high-performance drug.

The other neurotransmitter associated with elevated states is anandamide. Ananda is the Sanskrit word for "bliss." Scientists actually named the molecule after the word, because having a lot of anandamide sloshing around in your brain feels great. The anandamide molecule docks with the same receptors in the brain as THC, the active ingredient in marijuana. Serotonin docks with the same receptors as psilocybin, is the active ingredient in magic mushrooms.

In elevated emotional states, you're getting all of these highly pleasurable neurotransmitters, which have the same effect as drugs. Alcohol and cocaine, for example, produce an upsurge in the dopamine reward system. With bliss brain, you're flooding your brain with the same happy molecules people are trying to get by taking drugs.

People use alcohol, tobacco, cocaine and other illicit drugs, as well as legal drugs, to feel better. What they don't realize is you can feel absolutely wonderful using your body's own natural internal pharmacy. You can get to bliss brain using your own internal neurotransmitters and hormones.

Research shows, however, that you have to tap away your old stress first. You can't get to happiness without tapping on your trauma first. You have to tap on your childhood and other old traumas. EFT is great for solving the trauma problem. There is a lot of research with people who have been in war zones and natural disasters. When they tap, they release that stress.

At a recent EFT workshop, I worked with a former actress. I can share this about her because she was willing to have her session videotaped. She was abused sexually from the age of two, when her mother found blood in her diaper, until the age of 17. It had a marked effect on her life as an adult. Even though she was able to become an actress, she had a huge amount of trauma and no idea how to deal with it.

Externally, she looked pretty functional. As we sat and tapped in front of a large group of people, layer after layer after layer fell away. Tears rolled down her cheeks and she shared her story. In fact, tears were rolling down my cheeks because how do you even think about someone abusing a two-year-old? So I tapped right along with her. Some of the stories that people tell me when we're tapping on abuse and trauma are unimaginably horrible. What we do is tap with them so we don't get "acquired PTSD" from those we're working with.



The woman stood up in front of the room afterward and said to everyone, "I am strong. I am happy. I have released all this. I am me. I am powerful. I have a great life."

You have to do that inner work first. If you leave all that trauma buried and try and jump over it to happiness, if you go into a monastery or into the desert and try and walk the spiritual path with all this buried trauma, it becomes the shadow. You have to deal with your shadow before you can move into the light.

EFT is an excellent first step. When you can get to a level of 0 emotional disturbance regarding your trauma, score 0 on the PTSD inventory, and score 0 on the anxiety and depression inventories, then you can move ahead to happiness.

This doesn't mean we have to be perfectly healed and not feel any upset before we can reach a level of happiness. Last week, I had a session myself, as a client, with an EFT practitioner. The month before I was working on a project and I realized I had a big blind spot there. I went to a practitioner even though I know a lot about EFT. After all, I wrote the latest edition of The EFT Manual, and I've been teaching EFT for 20 years.

Have I solved all my problems? No. Do I need a practitioner? Absolutely. I tap every day myself. I can tap on my minor issues, annoyances, and upsets, the things that disturb my inner peace, but sometimes I still need another practitioner, even after all these years.

With support from outside, we can shift the things that are resisting movement. We don't have to be perfect, but we have to deal with our residue of trauma. The trauma may not be as severe as being molested from the age of two onward, but it still needs to be cleared.

For example, my friend Rick Hanson, who wrote Buddha's Brain and other books, says he had a white-picket-fence childhood. Everything seemed pretty good. There were a few little squabbles in the home, but nothing major. He said, "How'd I wind up screwed up as an adult? I became a therapist myself and I was still anxious and insecure."

There is often a series of little things that accumulate over time and cause your light to shine less brightly. You do not have to solve every one of your problems to find your way to bliss brain, but you need to reduce the load enough to clear the path.

My wife was catastrophizing recently about events in politics, and I said, "Darling, think back 10 years." I mentioned a big scandal that happened then and another big scandal ten years before that. I went all the way back to the 1930s. There is always stuff to worry you and bother you. You've got to carve out a space for yourself where you feel good and secure and



loved. It's up to you to build that space for yourself. You don't have to solve every problem in your life to have that beautiful internal space.

It's worthwhile to remind yourself while you're dealing with the bad stuff, while you're tapping away trauma, that you have resources, you are powerful, and you have the ability to deal with this stuff now that you're an adult.

EFT's Setup Statement gives us an elegant formula. We put the problem in an imaginary box in the center of the statement. Before the problem, you add the words "even though." At the other end of the problem box, you add the words, "I deeply and completely accept myself." That is a magic formula: even though + the problem + I deeply and completely accept myself. It works so well because you are affirming that you are okay with the problem in place. You aren't saying I will accept myself after I solve this problem or when I meet that goal. You are saying I accept myself right now, and though I might never meet that goal, I am lovable and acceptable. In this way I give myself internal space for me right where I am, whether or not I solve this problem.

The real power of the EFT Setup Statement is not in requiring us to be better, or perfect, or change. It is in loving ourselves where we are.

Carl Rogers, the legendary client-centered therapist of the 20th century, in 1955 called this the paradox of growth. He said that personal growth only begins when you accept yourself where you are. It's a paradox because people think they would be more acceptable if they lost 10 pounds or got a promotion or went to live in Boulder, Colorado, or whatever sign of achievement they have set for themselves.

The paradox is that you learn to accept yourself right where you are. That breaks the struggle in the psyche between you wanting things without having those things. Once that struggle in the psyche is broken, it liberates all that energy for change. When all that pressure to change is gone, you flow into transformation organically and naturally.

Many people feel they don't deserve happiness or they don't deserve very much of it. They may allow themselves little bits but no more. People have a set point for happiness. We also have set points in our brains for serotonin, dopamine, oxytocin, nitric oxide, and anandamide. It can feel quite uncomfortable to exceed those set points. If we want to get past these set points, we need to give ourselves permission to release them. We can tap on that.

We deserve to laugh loud, live big, live our full potential. We can tap on the idea of deserving



to inhabit an incredibly happy life.

The third thing we can tap on is ways to nurture our happiness. It's important to define at least one practical way that you will commit to nurturing yourself in the next 24 hours. What will you do in the next hour to make yourself happier? Will you listen to the next interview of the Tapping World Summit? Will you get a copy of the Summit to have with you all the time? Will you commit to go outside and enjoy nature? What will you do to move the needle and to make yourself happier?

Focus on a definite action you'll take to implement happiness in your life, reinforce your behavior, and you start to shift your set point.

Tapping Exercise 1

Before tapping, close your eyes and do a quick body scan from head to toe. Feel any areas of resistance. Now, in your mind's eye, place yourself in an imaginary future in which absolutely everything in your life is perfect and you are 100% happy. When you place yourself in that imaginary future and you visualize yourself there, what comes up in your body?

The chances are that there is resistance somewhere. You might feel a tenderness in your heart. You might feel a stone in your gut. You might feel tension in your lower back. You might feel a band of energy across your shoulders. Your neck might get tense. What's happening in your body? That's the resistance to being in that 100% happy state.

Imagine yourself there in that happy future, and then imagine the gap between there and here. Continue your body scan. What is your body telling you about where your set points are and where your resistance lies?

In the tapping round ahead, we'll call it "resistance." Amplify that description if you'd like. For example, if resistance takes the form of pressure in your chest, say "resistance in the form of pressure on my chest." Or if you feel an iron bar across your shoulders, where I say "resistance," say "this iron bar across my shoulders." Make it vivid, make it real, and pretend this is your last chance ever to tap all this. Put that much energy into it. Put that much effort, that much focus, into this tapping session, and let's see how much we can shift that resistance.

First, score the resistance on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is no resistance. You imagine yourself



in the happy future and you are 100% congruent with being that future. That is 0 resistance.

If you think of the future and excuses come up in your mind as to why you can't attain that, if you feel resistance in your body, if you feel unease in your energy field, if you feel physical signals that say, "No, I can't do that," score that resistance on the scale of 0 to 10. It might be a 9, it might be an 8, it might be a 10, it might be a 7. But give it a number.

We give it a number in EFT because often we change so fast with tapping that we need the numbers to remind us of how much we've transformed. Write down your number and where in your body you feel that resistance. Just two or three words—like throat, chest, iron bar, or weak knees.

We'll start by tapping on the side of the hand point. We used to call this the karate chop point, but in the new fourth edition of The EFT Manual, it's been re-named the side of the hand point.

Tap on that point now and, as you tap, tune in to that resistance, and say these words with me out loud:

Even though I have this resistance
I deeply and completely accept myself
I accept myself with this resistance
I accept myself without this resistance
I accept myself fully and completely
However I am
This resistance might always be there
This resistance might someday be gone
And whether it's there
Or whether it's gone
I deeply and completely accept myself

Still tuning in to the resistance, tap on the top of your head.
Vividly tuning in to your resistance, tap your eyebrow point.
Tap on the side of your eye, again tuning in to resistance.

As you tap on the stomach meridian point, which is below the pupil of your eye, say the word "resistance" loudly:

Resistance



All of this resistance
My resistance
To happiness
To what I deserve
To changing my set point

Under Nose: I can feel this resistance
Under Mouth: It may never change
Collarbone: It might get stronger
Under Arm: It might get weaker

Side of Hand:
And whether it gets stronger or weaker
I deeply and completely accept me
I am acceptable
I am lovable
With this resistance
Without this resistance
However I am

Tuning in to the resistance, tap:
Top of Head
Eyebrow

Now let's stay for a while on the side of the eye point. As you tap that point, say:

All my resistance, never changing
Getting stronger
Getting weaker
All this resistance
I might always have this resistance
I might release all this resistance

Under Nose: Resistance
Under Mouth: Resistance

Now let's stay for a while on the collarbone point, on the kidney meridian. Tap both sides, if you have both hands free, this time around. Really tune in, again, to that resistance. The resistance may or may not have shifted from the part of your body where you felt it. It may



have increased, it may have decreased, but tune in to that part of your body again as you tap your collarbone point and say this with me:

I have this resistance
I have this set point
And my happiness cannot go above it
I have this resistance to happiness
It stops me from being happy
This resistance
And whether or not I release this resistance
I deeply and completely accept me

We'll finish out this round of tapping with an abbreviated form of the 9 Gamut Procedure.

Find the groove on the back of your hand between the bones that anchor your little finger and the bones that anchor your ring finger. In that groove is a point on the triple warmer meridian.

Tap there and, while keeping your head still, do the following.

Close your eyes. Open your eyes. Look down hard to the left. Look down hard to the right. Imagine a large clock in front of you, an old-style clock with hands. Keeping your head still, move your eyes to look at 12. Your eyes should be straining to the very edge of your vision, as you keep your head still.

While tapping on the back of your hand, look at 1. Look at 2. Look at 3. Look at 4. Look at 5. Look at 6. Look at 7. Look at 8. Look at 9. Look at 10. Look at 11. Look at 12 again, straining your eyes to the very edge of your vision.

Take a deep breath, keep tapping. Look at 11, look at 10, look at 9, look at 8, look at 7, look at 6, look at 5, look at 4, look at 3, look at 2, look at 1. Look at 12 again, and take a breath, stop tapping, and relax.

Tune back in to your body and do another body scan. Tune in to that same area of your body where you felt the resistance before. Give it a score, 0 through 10. What is your new score on your resistance to happiness now, after just one round of tapping?

Amazing things happen when we tap on the Gamut point and perform those eye movements. We didn't know this in the 1970s and early '80s when psychologist Roger



Callahan was first developing tapping and the 9 Gamut Procedure. It worked, but now we're finding out why.

Why it works is that it echoes how we process troubling memories in dreams. When we're dreaming, most of the night we're in deep sleep and we're in this state where not much is happening in our dream world, but every 90 minutes or so we go into light sleep and we have what's called rapid eye movement, or REM sleep.

In that REM sleep cycle, which only lasts a few minutes before you drop back into delta deep sleep for about another hour or hour and a half, our eyes are very active, moving around behind our closed eyelids. Our brain is wiring and firing and making new connections. It's an intense memory, learning, and problem-solving phase of sleep.

When we do the 9 Gamut Procedure, we are reenacting the REM part of sleep. When we move our eyes around in this way, while we're thinking about a problem, such as our resistance, it tends to shift the way our brain perceives the problem, just as the eye movements during dreams reflect our brain's attempts to solve our problems.

The 9 Gamut Procedure mimics the way our brain naturally solves problems during dreaming. As it then solves those problems, it reconsolidates those memories and we experience relief, release, and healing. There's a new chapter in the latest, fourth, edition of The EFT Manual that describes the science behind this.

Tapping Exercise 2

If your resistance number was low at the end of Tapping Exercise 1, you're likely far enough along to turn your focus to the positive.

Let's again picture that ideal future where everything is perfect and we're 100% happy. Everything might not be perfect outside of you, but inside of you, everything is perfect. You're feeling content.

Picture that state. There might be voices of self-doubt saying, "I don't really deserve that" or "I could never really attain that." There are called tail-enders. You have to tap on each because it's like a tail wagging the dog. That voice of doubt is really running the show. You have to tap and release those impediments to your well-being.

First of all, tune in to anything in your psyche, any story in your belief system, anything in



your energy field that doesn't agree with that 100% happy vision. Notice the gap between that vision and where you are now.

Score that gap. How big is that number for you when you think about that gap between that perfect future and today? What is your body telling you? Are you feeling a lump in your throat? Are you feeling pressure in your knees? Are you feeling a sharp pain in your lower back? Tune in to your body, tune in to your psyche, and then really focus on that and score it. Give it a number, 0 through 10. Write down the number and where it is in your body.

Often I'll tap with somebody and they'll have a sharp pain in their right shoulder, which will be a 9. Then I'll tap with them and when I ask what their number is then, they'll say it's gone up to a 10. I'll say, "Oh, the sharp pain in your right shoulder was a 9 and it's now a 10?"

They'll say, "No, the pain my shoulder is gone. It's the pain in my hip that is a 10." That's why we write down the location of the body sensation. In The EFT Manual this technique is called Chasing the Pain.

So you've got your body location, that doubt, and your number. Now tap on the side of the hand point and say:

Even though I might not deserve this happiness
Even though I may never attain this
I accept myself as I am now
I accept all the parts of me
The parts that agree with happiness
And the parts that disagree with happiness
The parts that believe I deserve happiness
And the parts that believe I don't deserve happiness
I focus now on the parts that believe I don't deserve
Even though I don't deserve happiness
I love and accept myself
Even though I may not deserve happiness
I am lovable and acceptable
I am lovable and acceptable
With or without happiness
Deserving or not deserving happiness
Either way
I deeply and completely accept myself



Top of Head:	Deserving happiness
Eyebrow:	Deserving happiness
Side of Eye:	Deeply deserving happiness
Under Eye:	Blocks to deserving happiness
Under Nose:	Deserving happiness
Under Mouth:	This part of me that deserves
Collarbone:	This part of me that doesn't deserve
Under Arm:	All parts of me that don't deserve

Side of Hand:

And whether or not I deserve
I love and accept myself
Maybe I do deserve
Maybe I don't deserve
I might deserve in the future
I might not deserve in the future
However I am
I let myself be

Tap again on the 9 Gamut point, on the back of the hand. Take a breath, keep your head still, eyes closed, eyes open. Keeping your head still, keep tapping, and move your eyes hard down to the left. Keeping your head steady, move your eyes hard down to the right.

Look all the way up, like you're looking at a giant clock, keeping your head still, moving only your eyes all the way up to 12, then 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12, 11, 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, and 12.

Take a deep breath, stop tapping, tune in to your body, and find that same place in your body. Score it again. Focus on the idea of deserving happiness. If it was a 6 before, it's likely that the intensity of your blocks has gone down, maybe to 1 or 2, and perhaps to 0.

Floor to Ceiling Eye Roll

This tapping technique is used when your number down to a 1 or 2, but you can't get it below that. This is the situation in which you use the floor to ceiling eye roll, which is one of the 48 Clinical EFT techniques described in The EFT Manual.



You simply tap on the 9 Gamut point while keeping your head still and looking straight ahead. Then look down at the floor, moving your eyes as far down as possible while keeping your head still.

Slowly, over the course of about 10 seconds, move your eyes in an arc, up to the ceiling as far as your eyes will go. Then slowly move them back down again over the course of another 10 seconds. At the end of the movement, they are back down at the floor position. Repeat the movement to the ceiling again, while tapping and breathing. Stop tapping and relax. You will likely feel a sense of relaxation and your number may have gone down another point or two.

Tapping Exercise 3

Start with the side of the hand point again. Visualize yourself in that perfect future. This is you version 2.0. It's the happy version of you, the bliss brain version of you. Holding that vision of you clearly in your mind, tap on the side of your hand and say, "I am that."

The side of hand point is important because tapping there corrects for psychological reversal. We have to correct for it often. We correct for everything that stands in our way.

Keeping the picture of that ideal future you, tap on the top of your head, visualizing that new person strongly, and say: I walk as that person.

Eyebrow:	I talk as that person
Side of Eye:	I think as that person
Under Eye:	I see the world as that person
Under Nose:	I am now that person
Under Mouth:	Seeing the world through their eyes
Collarbone:	Walking as they walk
Under Arm:	Talking as they talk
Top of Head:	Thinking as they think

Eyebrow:	Perceiving as they perceive
Side of Eye:	Believing as they believe
Under Eye:	Having the experiences they experience
Under Nose:	Seeing the world through their eyes
Under Mouth:	Having their beliefs
Collarbone:	Having their perceptions



Under Arm: Having their thoughts

Side of Hand:
This is me
And I now integrate
My current self
With that reality

Top of Head: Integrate
Eyebrow: Integrate
Side of Eye: Integrate
Under Eye: Integrate
Under Nose: Integrate
Under Mouth: Integrate
Collarbone: Integrate
Under Arm: Integrate

Side of Hand:
That person and this person
This person and that person
All these versions of me
Are fully integrated now
Fully integrated now
And I deeply and completely accept myself
Just the way I am

Take a deep breath. Tune in to yourself and score where you are now.

You can tap on this in the future, scoring your happiness set point, and then tapping to raise it a little bit, maybe 10%, maybe 20%. See if you can embrace that new level, and then gradually raise it more.

Research shows that there is no limit to happiness. I asked myself as I was writing Bliss Brain: How far can we take this process? How far does research show us we can go? Where does the ability to feel these elevated states end? Do we get to a plateau where we can't go any further? Does that monk who has been in the Himalayas for 40 years meditating in a cave become static, getting no happier?



The answer is, amazingly, no. MRI research shows that their brains keep changing. They keep getting even happier.

That could be you. You don't have to go to the Himalayas, a monastery, or a cave. Just tap and meditate, and you can achieve bliss brain.



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