

# Abreaction and Transforming Trauma Tears to Healing tears

By Ranjana Appoo, October 2008

After having noticed the concern that some practitioners feel about abreactions, I wanted to share my own experience of dealing with trauma tears, and how they can become healing tears. In my own practice, many of my clients have carried the emotional burden of deep trauma, childhood abuse and/or sexual abuse. It got me thinking about what I do in those situations when a client does have an abreaction. After all EFT is well known as the tearless trauma technique. In my own practice I have noticed that for some clients, tears are a sign of healing and an abreaction may be the aspect that calls out to be balanced.

We might tap on...

*This part of me that is still living the pain/ trauma...This reaction, I accept all of me now, including these feelings, I accept all these feelings, I accept the parts of me that have these feelings...it is safe for me to express these feelings...these feelings can pass through me...I accept all my feelings and myself now....* I find that the most important thing I can do when a client is having an abreaction is to maintain eye contact, ensure that we are both completely present to whatever is happening. We will not require a setup statement (as the client is already tuned in), continual tapping on the collarbone, thymus area and the ankle points will help the client rebalance quickly. It is vital for the practitioner to stay calm and detached and not get involved with the clients emotions.

Some of my clients in their initial consultations have said they felt flat and did not have any emotional charge about their trauma. They had found a way to disassociate from the difficult and painful situations in their life rather than resolve or heal it. It wasn't that they didn't experience an emotional charge; they had replaced all their feelings with what I call a non-feeling shadow to protect themselves from the pain that they had experienced. They might also have an addictive behavior that gives them the illusion of feeling safe or managing their fears or sense of loss. The reason I call it a non-feeling shadow is because they had difficulty in accessing any feelings, unhappy or happy feelings. It was as if the disassociation shadowed every aspect of their lives. The reason they sought me out was to reclaim and rediscover feeling joy. To do this, we would have to heal this non-feeling shadow.

The process of healing the deep trauma scars and the protection mechanisms the client has can release stored emotional pain. The client may experience an outpouring of trauma tears, shaking, rage, (abreaction). However, these trauma tears are a sign of healing as they signify a huge shift and shows that the client has given themselves the permission to feel. These trauma tears can be transformed into healing tears with EFT and so literally wash away the pain, sadness, anger and unhappiness stored within the clients energetic system. I have often used the tearless trauma technique with great effect; however I have found that sometimes the client has created a dam around all their emotions to protect themselves. In such situations feeling intensely can bring about healing and a sense of wholeness.

Below is an example of how we (my client "J" and I) used the trauma tears to become healing tears,

Part of the EFT session with "J" (client) illustrates this transformation beautifully; "J" had a history of severe childhood abuse. But this is not the reason she came to see me. "J" came to see me, because she felt very unhappy in her relationship. She also had difficulty feeling anything. When "J" first cried in a session it was a sign that she was beginning to feel again. "J" first cried during her second session. She had just mentioned in passing that she had been abused as a child and later raped as a teenager. She quickly added that she had dealt with all these events and situations and had no feelings about them and did not want to discuss them. My intuition, whispered to me otherwise. I asked her if it would be okay for us to tap on the fact that she'd been through all this. She agreed with a sideways glance and a nod.

We had just begun tapping on,

*Even though my life has been hell, and it's a miracle I survived, and all these feelings are locked up inside me, I'll never be happy again, maybe one day I'll find peace.*

*Even though I've been through all this abuse, trauma, rape, pain, I don't know how I've managed, it's been hell, I've lost all my feelings I have lost a part of me, I totally accept all of me anyway.*

*Even though I've been to hell and back, maybe a part of me is still in a hell and I can't feel a thing, what if I can heal and be whole and happy.*

At this point "J" looked tearful. I asked what was happening. She replied that she had some feelings coming up but she wanted to continue tapping. So we tapped in, tuning in to these feelings....

*I have no feelings about this*

*It happened*

*I can't feel anymore*

*I dare not feel*

*I refuse to feel*

*All the things I have been through*

*I don't know how I survived*

*I am still just surviving*

*I have lost my feelings*

*I don't know if I will ever be able to feel again*

*Why did it happen to me?*

*What if I could feel?*

*My life was difficult and abusive*

*What if it was safe to feel?*

*What if it was safe for me feel?*

At this point my client started sobbing. Instead of asking her any more questions (she was already tuned in) with her permission I continued to tap on her (a similar situation happened with a client during a phone session, I merely asked the client to keep tapping as I tapped on myself). Her sobs turned into body wracking tears and she seemed to lose control. As I tapped on her I continued to ask her to look at me and maintained eye contact the whole time. The tears seemed to be the key, so the reminder phrase I used was,

*These tears*

*These tears of pain and sadness*

*These tears of anger and pain*

*These trauma tears*

*These trauma tears*

*These trauma tears that I have stored inside me*

*All these trauma tears*

*It's Ok I can let these tears out now*

*These trauma tears*

At this point she sighed, she stopped shaking, yet the tears kept coming and we continued to tap

*All these tears*

*All these tears*

*It is safe for me to finally feel*

*I can feel now*

*All these tears I have stored inside me can now be set free*

*I can be free*

*These tears can wash me clean*

*This river of tears washing away all the pain*

*This river of tears washing away all the grief*

*This river of tears washing away all the anger*

*This river of tears washing away all the sadness*

*This river of tears washing away all the fear*

*Little by little these tears free me so that I can feel again*

*These tears of healing*

*These tears of love and forgiveness*

*These tears of love and forgiveness*

*It feels so good to finally cry like this*

At this point she had a little smile, we continued to tap

*It feels so good to cry, to let all these feelings free*

*These are healing tears*

*These tears of gratitude*

*My tears heal me now*

Now she took a deep breath and stopped crying. It was like watching the rain stop and the sun come out. She said she felt so much lighter and it felt like she had released a huge burden.

We continued with,

*It feels so good to feel*

*I can feel again*

*I can feel all of me*

*It's safe to feel, safe to cry and safe to laugh... It's safe to feel, safe to cry and safe to laugh...*

I have seen "J" for a further 5 sessions, 7 in total where we went through many specific events from her life where she had not been able to express herself and her feelings and the times in her life when she would have liked to have felt good. From a depressed person who was having problems in her relationship, she became a vibrant, enthusiastic person who felt passionate about life. She told me that feeling safe to express her tears was a huge turning point for her. It also helped her share her feelings with her partner.

I have learnt anything can happen in a session, including an abreaction, including a client accessing painful emotions, they are all avenues for healing. With EFT, tapping on the issue of tears can help the client feel whole again. The process of moving from tears of grief, sadness, trauma, and anger to the vibration of tears of redemption, tears of healing, tears of forgiveness, tears of gratitude and tears of joy is transforming. It is a great reframe. The tears become a source positive energy.

In the free EFT self help support group that I facilitate I often encounter self help tappers that uncover a core issue with a high emotional intensity and then feel overwhelmed by the emotion that comes with it. They find that as they tap they feel that they are spiraling out of control and in some cases this is very unnerving and frightening. When faced with such a query I advise them to switch their focus away from the issue, focus on their breathing and tap on the sequence of meridian points from the Basic Recipe while inhaling and exhaling. This has the effect of calming them fast. I then advise them to either continue working on the issue that surfaced with words like;

*Although huge stuff came up for me and I feel out of control, I choose to feel calm and allow for healing to happen for me anyway.*

Reminder phrase, *all this stuff, out of control*

*Although huge stuff came up for me and I feel out of control, I must be ready to heal this now or it wouldn't have surfaced.*

Reminder phrase, *ready to heal*

*Although all this stuff came up for me and I felt overwhelmed, it was easy to feel calm by focusing on my breath...I can feel calm and centred now.*

Reminder phrase, *all this stuff, I feel overwhelmed*

Reminder phrase *I can feel calm and centred anyway*

More often than not the original core issue that had unsettled them would now be manageable.

The tapping protocol outlined above in relation to trauma tears would also benefit them.

In my own life I have used EFT for almost everything, experimenting on myself for more than 9 years now, I still can't get enough of this wonderful unraveling. It continues to be the most exciting process of self discovery and self-realization. I would love to say that I am free from all mental and emotional suffering/stress and anxiety, but this would be a lie. The fact is for me it has happened little by little and yet the shifts happen so rapidly and I am able to maintain a heightened state of joyous awareness sometimes for days. I still experience fear and discomfort...the difference is that they pass through in moments... sometimes hours....I never dreamt I could be this happy, this contented, this free...

Infinite gratitude,  
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