

# How tapping helped me change my life last year

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Over brunch last winter, I asked my happiest, most thriving friend what her secret was. She had her life so together, and success came quite easily to her (she'd had breakthrough-level wins in her business in just two years). "Tapping!" she responded, without a second thought.

Intrigued, I asked her to hook me up with her tapping coach. Since that weekend, tapping has become an almost daily part of my life, and I'll talk about it to anyone who'll listen. Tapping, also known as EFT, or emotional freedom technique, is a tool that can offer relief from stress and emotional pain.

I will in no way pretend that we fully understand why tapping works (there's still so much we don't know about the human body!), but I can tell you that it's absolutely been working for me. Plus several studies have shown that it dramatically decreases anxiety. Basically, tapping combines affirmations with acupressure, a form of needleless acupuncture, using the fingertips to stimulate energy points on the body.

This method seems to be growing in popularity, with thought leaders like Gabby Bernstein, Denise Duffield Thomas and Nick Ortner promoting it to heal issues ranging from food cravings to money worries to unnecessarily judging others. I sat down with tapping YouTube sensation Brad Yates — who've I been tapping with via his short, punchy and powerful videos for months now — to understand how we can use this free, easy tool to better our lives. Here's what I learned:

## **It can make issues less scary.**

It matters that we really clear away issues as opposed to pretending they don't exist. As Yates puts it, "You can have a beautiful living room, but if your dog leaves you a present on the carpet, failing to acknowledge it isn't helpful. You need to clear it away."

As you tap on meridian points, you say statements out loud that you're usually "not allowed" to, such as:

“Even though I’m \$8,000 in debt ...”

“Even though I’m not talking to my dad because I hate him right now ...”

“Even though I feel like a loser because of X or Y ...”

But every negative statement ends with “ ... I deeply and completely love and approve of myself.” There’s nothing like it. It feels like true relief. And because I say things I typically never admit out loud (I’m jealous of this person/I feel behind at life/I feel like an impostor when I ...), sometimes I even laugh. Yates says tapping holds space for all that stuff we’re not allowed to say.

It’s not enough to affirm positive statements over and over again. As a coach, this makes great sense — what we resist persists. But Yates explains that when we face what we resist, “we realize the tiger behind the door is actually a kitten.” We can handle it once we open the door!

### **It lowers stress responses.**

As you face what scares you and address what’s preventing you from moving forward with any issue (procrastination, sadness, anxiety), the level of stress on the body is reduced. “Most of our issues are either caused by or worsened by stress,” Yates says, noting that tapping has been shown to reduce cortisol levels. And it’s a lasting effect too — I feel a natural high that can last all day.

### **It helps you feel motivated.**

“Laziness doesn’t exist — it’s fear,” Yates says. If we’re not feeling motivated to exercise, make money, or anything else that we want to do, it’s because we encounter resistance toward it. “Tapping is the antidote to resistance.” Understanding what’s creating your resistance is key to releasing it.

### **It speeds up healing.**

It’s no secret that the mind and body are connected. Because tapping incorporates a physical tool to support and soothe you, it can help you open up faster, creating a feeling of safety and groundedness and allowing you to explore your issues without panic or shutting down.

We can “change lanes” as Yates says, exploring memories and beliefs without the stress response that tells you what you “should” feel, say, or think. It’s core reprogramming that challenges unhealthy beliefs that keep you stuck (money is the root of all evil, I can’t lose weight even if I wanted to, I can’t be more successful than my parents). You can learn to lose negative associations with beliefs that hold you back, and tapping can even help some overcome PTSD.

Your fear brain wants to keep you safe by playing small.

“Self-sabotage is simply misguided self-love,” Yates says. “If you put yourself out there, there’s pretty much a guarantee that people will criticize you. The more people who see you, the more you’ll get criticized — no matter how brilliant you are.” So the fear brain will say, ‘Don’t do the thing. It’s unsafe.’ It’s a loving intention intended to protect you, but it will keep you stuck. But tapping on what feels scary can help you explore the source of the fear and free you from it.

**A few minutes a day is enough.**

This is basically a form of energy hygiene, in my opinion. And like skipping out on the few minutes it takes to maintain personal hygiene ain’t cute, skipping out on stress maintenance in our bodies isn’t a great idea, either. The busiest person can squeeze it in — I tap around five to seven minutes per day, and it totally works.