



Addictions and Substance Abuse: A 5 Stage EFT Recovery program

Stage 1 - emergency measures

Stage 2 - down shit alley

Stage 3 - obstacles to peace and sensing our power

Stage 4 - taking action

Stage 5 - 'fearless self acceptance' and The Personal Peace Process

Each Stage uses the **Logical Levels of Experience** template to assist client and practitioner in identifying aspects. Here is a review of the levels and there will be examples of how to use them later.

The neurological levels at which human experience is processed:

Spiritual/Greater System

Identity

Beliefs and Values

Capabilities and skills

Behaviour

Environment

Introduction

Working with addictions/substance abuse is a vastly complex area.

Using EFT in this area it is possible to minimise the time and pain involved in treatment and get the client to take personal responsibility far sooner than has previously been our experience. Our work with clients in this area has evolved into a 5 stage program where EFT is the treatment of choice, supported by the guiding structure of the Logical Levels template. At Stage One, where an addiction may have really taken hold, quitting may have become a matter of life or death, and no movement towards true healing/recovery can begin until the person has survived through this experience. EFT may be the lifeline at this point, in a very practical sense, and will continue to be in new and fascinating ways as the client evolves through the Stages developing a conscious spiritual connection.

Overview of the 5 Stage EFT Recovery Program

At each Stage, a critical skill for the EFT Practitioner is to be able to assist the client in uncovering new aspects, these will evolve (may even seem to repeat at different stages of healing/recovery) - and are essentially all forms of fear, blocking the experience of love, some obvious and others in different guises. By using the Logical Levels template at each of the 5 stages we have a guide for working through this vast complexity. It is a framework within which the skilful EFT Practitioner will find their intuition and inspiration is powerfully free. The 5 Stages use EFT to move from problem or disease state through to increasing wholeness and health. The Program becomes increasingly Self-directed, as it moves from working with the 'problem state' through the process of change at mind, body and spiritual levels. It seems to be useful to think about the state of Dis-ease - as well as Health, having components at all these Levels - and this gives the EFT Practitioner's finely honed critical faculties the opportunity to look at these Levels as if they **are** separate and to work systematically with them. In truth, of course, they are in relationship - like a hologram.

This 5 stage Program can be run alongside a traditional 12 step program or it can be used as a treatment model in its own right. It is suitable for rehab centres, working with individuals, in groups, or you can use it for working on your own. Anyone familiar with 12 steps will recognise the connections and hopefully the compatibility. The basic idea is simple, at each Stage each individual will experience specific challenges, the Logical Levels provides a convenient interface for the complexity of human

experience so we can identify the problem area/s for that person, then use EFT to treat.

Stage 1

When an addiction has become critical the first thing is to deal with the emergency, that is getting off the substance. In some cases this may require hospitalisation or going in to rehab. Many rehabs divide treatment into Primary and Secondary. Stage 1 equates to early Primary level treatment.

EFT can provide a lifeline to the addict at this desperate point - in more than one sense. By using it to deal with cravings, withdrawal symptoms, raw primary emotions - possibly for the first time a person may be taking personal responsibility **and** getting a sense of their Inner (Higher) Power. Working with the Logical Levels is not so important at this stage as the main thing is to put out the fire (and then assess the damage.) At Stage One, whatever the substance or behaviour involved, there will be key issues to address with EFT:

Actual Physical/Emotional pain Extreme emotions eg terror, anger, fear, panic Psychological Reversal - can be all pervasive at this stage and connected to negative thinking around:

Inner reservations to working the program

Fear of pain involved in 'working on self'

Pain and grief of healing

Fear of making a commitment (to change)

Using the Logical Levels

Its important to get all the aspects at each stage, but specificity becomes increasingly necessary and more complex as the surface layers of the addiction come away. Using the Logical Levels template is a simple, elegant way to root out new aspects. It serves the dual purpose of allowing you to use your intuition and as a guide to make sure you have given your client access to all remaining aspects.

Any problem (or change) at any of these Levels impacts on all of those below, so while someone at Stage 1 may have serious issues at the environment level - very often losing homes, jobs, families as a consequence of their addiction - which have to be addressed, any

change will not last if for example the person doesn't believe he or she deserves to have better (Belief - higher level), or is the kind of person who is able to make positive changes (Identity and Capability - higher levels).

Stage Two requires using the Logical levels template to identify and enter into the 'problem state' just as it is now, with the client, and to begin using EFT to realign from the inside.

Stage 2 - beginning the work (corresponds to Step One of Twelve Steps)

Its important to begin right where the client is, with their current experience

What does it look like, feel like, sound like (negative self-talk) ??-

The client may be very preoccupied with the consequences of behaviour, what has been lost - raw feelings, anger, rage, fear

As you work through the surface layers using EFT at Stage 2 typically there will be many issues at the behaviour and environment levels, for example:

Anxiety and fear stirred up, memories, feeling overwhelmed, guilt
What happened? The need to release the past and old wounds without minimising what happened
Realising damage done to self?
Realising what has been lost? Realising have been unable to take care of self?

What is important first will be preoccupying the person and will present itself for healing first, but the 'problem state' will be expressing itself at all the levels, in various forms of fear, and it is important to start working on all the levels.

Examples of work with clients at Stage 2

Environmental Level-

Often there are many triggers for the addictive behaviour at the environmental level (friends, work, family).

What are the external constraints the person has to live within and react to?

What is he or she willing to change here?

Wherever possible include family members and teach them EFT

There will probably be a great deal of Psychological Reversal around this Level at this stage, and you may need to begin by clearing the primary reversals -

"Even if I never get over my (alcohol) problem, I deeply and completely accept myself"

"Even though I don't deserve.."

"Even though its not safe for me.."

"Even though I know I feel deprived..."

"Even though I'm afraid to let go of this problem..."

Behaviour Level-

There may be serious ongoing consequences as a result of addictive behaviours which need to be dealt with eg broken relationships, financial issues, police etc. However there will also be a great deal of raw emotion **about** these issues which can be released using EFT: fear, guilt, anger, hate.

Capabilities and Skills Level -

"I have spent all my life xing and I don't know how to...write a cv...have a relationship"

"I need to x for confidence "

Beliefs and Values Level -

"my life isn't worth living without x"

"x is exciting, glamorous"

"I can't stop xing"

"this won't work for me"

"All creativity comes from x ing"

Identity Level-

"If I don't x I don't know who I am"

"All my friends x..I will be alone"

"No one will want to know me without x"

Spiritual/Greater system Level -

Very often the client will have unconsciously shut down at this level, although paradoxically there may also be a strong free floating sense of fear of punishment, of being found out

"I am afraid (God) will punish me...for what I've done/who I am"

The key thing at Stage 2 is for the client to emerge with a spark of optimism and a little willingness. One client summed this up perfectly when he suddenly laughed out loud and then tapped:

"Even though everything is shit and its all my fault, I choose to have hope!"

Stage 3

Overview of Stage 3

*"Just having the willingness to give it a go - that is, conceive of something outside myself...for me, using this (EFT) **IS** Step Two."*

(a client's words)

From a 12 Step perspective this Stage encompasses Step Two's **"Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity"**.

Just having the willingness to give EFT a go is vital here -

AND this is where fear can really kick in and seem to be all pervasive. So it is important to be able to get a degree of objectivity by differentiating fear through the Levels, then you can divide into aspects where necessary and resolve with EFT. It is possible to collapse an enormous amount of the negative charge of fear in this way very quickly - and it is critical to do so; before EFT many people would have been overwhelmed by the feelings at this stage, back off (use or drink again) and the whole cycle starts again.

Paradoxically, having succeeded this far EFT will have freed up fear enough for the addict to look more closely at issues needing to be addressed, so there can appear to be more fear but as the surface layers have been peeled away there may also be glimpses or sparks of optimism, tiny beginnings of a sense of personal power.

Getting Inside with EFT

The power of EFT is that real healing is going on from the inside as you work systematically through the Stages.

By working through new layers of fear with EFT at each of the Logical Levels real healing, not just treatment, is happening on the inside and the person's own system, by presenting the next thought, feeling, memory etc, will be the guide as to where healing is needed next. While this may be complex, painstaking work there will also be times when you get a spectacular Generalisation effect through resolving a high Level fear - for example at the Spiritual or Identity Level, and witness that in an instant all the rest below are changed as a result.

Examples from work with clients using EFT Stage 3

Change is possible. There is hope as well as a lot of conflicting feelings. Different forms of fear will present themselves at all Levels - begin by tapping on the various fears and it will lead you deeper. The following are typical examples from clients at this stage:

Environment

There may be a real sense of panic as a person realizes that having moved forward, succeeded this far they can't go back, the environment (metaphorical as well as literal) has shifted

I feel trapped

I don't belong

I've lost everything

(Note: examples at Behaviour Level missed out here - BL becomes much more important at Stage 4 where using EFT to change beliefs..leads to behaviour change)

Capabilities

Having succeeded using EFT so far there may have been a dawning of the idea that there is a power **within** connected to/greater than ourselves. May be a scary thought, or produce false sense of superiority.

I'm afraid of my own power/success

My mind is out of control/I can't control my mind

Beliefs and values

7 Vows. The person may be conflicted by internalized vows, living with a conscious or unconscious conflict, supported by defiance, embarrassment. This

7 PR as a result of inner conflict

7 Family rules - secrets. Shame, guilt

I would rather die than leave my children

My mother/sister/partner will hate me if...

I deserve to enjoy myself/I can't trust myself

I am bad

I am useless/I am special

Spiritual/Greater system

Doubt, hesitation, not worthy, fear that can open hearts and minds to a 'Power greater than ourselves'. Not safe to trust.

What other powers have you let you down ? - school, parents, partners, God, therapists.

PR - anger, shame, guilt, embarrassment at ways have looked for help in the past.

This won't work for me

There isn't a higher power for me

I am all alone and I always was

I am lonely

I am abandoned

Stage 4

(Step Three)

Taking Action

12 Steps work as long as a person can sense a true personal or spiritual connection beyond themselves - EFT provides a bridge, some may say, a direct lifeline to that connection. The energy body may be one and the same as our spiritual embodiment or system.

Stage 4 corresponds to Step Three where the decision and the ability to take action is vital -

"Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood him"

At this Stage actual behaviour changes are beginning to manifest in reality as changes in beliefs at all Levels clear the way for a sense of personal power to emerge - maybe for the first time the person begins taking action, internally and externally. Now, since so much has already been cleared it becomes much easier to get at at Core Issues -by using questioning skills at all Levels- its as if they present themselves for healing - then you simply divide into aspects where needed, and apply EFT to each one.

Whenever the person has come to think of EFT connecting him or her to Higher (Inner) Power (is in effect an interface for communication), trust grows and lends power to the process of developing positive choices and manifesting changes in external reality. Stage 4 uses EFT for belief changes and installing empowering new beliefs at all levels, but particularly at the Identity Level, where the sense of self expands and change is now a possibility. There are some examples to follow. (affirmation) tap on tail ends.

Also, learning strategies can now be put in place in those cases where someone may have missed out on education, work experiences, applying for jobs etc - although this is beyond the scope of this article.

Stage 4 examples through the Levels

Spiritual

Tapping while saying the Serenity Prayer is very powerful.

Even though I still have fears I choose to know I am protected/comforted

Even though I'm not sure I have a true spiritual connection I choose to remember my strength/wisdom/courage

Identity

Memories, unresolved issues from the past may surface now

7 Issues of reparenting - EFT feelings as come up

7 Personal Peace Process with all those specific events

Choose a positive specific identity state affirmation:

Eg I am a reliable , loving mother

Use as affirmation and tap with tail enders

Capability

This is a key area now: lack of belief in self being capable in these areas

7 Fear of making decisions

7 Fear of losing control

I don't know how to live a normal life

Even though I can't make decisions I choose to surprise myself by deciding calmly and wisely

Even though I cant control myself...I choose to know I am safe and dependable

Behaviour

Right now - old feelings may be surfacing. Also as the person is beginning to see more clearly there may be intense feelings about what has happened (sense of humiliation, stupidity).

I have wasted my life

EFT directly on feelings of overwhelmedness, buried pain/rage/shame - taking the edge off and will lead deeper into the Core Issues.

Becoming aware of negative self-talk will lead you to global beliefs -

I am no good

...not enough

...not good enough

...not lovable

...abandoned

I am a fraud

- and then skillful questioning will uncover the many specific unresolved events in the past where catastrophic decisions and judgments about the self were made, and now can be resolved with EFT.

It is also really important at this Stage to nurture the receptive place within, the positive response to healing, and deal with any conflict this creates - for most addicts this will be a strange new experience and the feeling of being in a battle, of being pitched against themselves and the world may be more familiar.

Even though it seems strange I choose to take care of myself

Even though i feel sad about me I choose to allow all my feelings

Even though I feel profound loss I deeply and completely accept myself

Stage 5

(Steps Four to Twelve)

Stage 5 is the beginning of a lifetime practice, the beginning of 'fearless self-acceptance' as a way of life. This becomes possible as love for the self grows and so does willingness to commit to a regular practice.

This stage is where we can use EFT to become co-creator and make choices about who we want to be, how we want to behave - a process of becoming, or perhaps of remembering, who we really are?

Logical Levels Process at Stage 5 - belief/life changes

This process is developed from from Don Blackerby's work with EFT and belief changes:

Choose a statement that expresses a new choice at the Identity Level for how you want to be, or want to be more of..

eg I am kind and loving

First of all tap for all the tail-enders (yes buts) that come up just by saying the affirmation out loud.

Then the aim is to integrate powerful change at the different neurological levels by responding to each of these questions at each of the Levels from the bottom to the top. Its important to access the feelings, images, thoughts and sensations connected to the responses as fully as possible, in all senses -TAPPING as each tail-ender (yes but, objection, resistance, fear, need to answer 'I don't know') comes up.

Environment Level - where, when and with whom are you kind and loving?

Behaviour Level - What specific behaviours or actions show you are kind and loving?

Capability Level - What mental states or abilities are you using when you are kind and loving?

Beliefs/Values Level - What values and beliefs are you using use when you are kind and loving?

Identity Level - What kind of person are you when you are kind and loving?

Spiritual/Greater System Level - Who else does this serve, or what greater mission or vision does it serve when you are kind and loving?

Ongoing daily practice

1. Personal Peace Process

Step Four of the Twelve Step Program -

"made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves"

- this equates to the first part of the Personal Peace Process where you make a list of all the memories which still bother you in some way. However, with EFT (and specifically the Personal Peace Process) you work through the list, tapping on each specific past event to release yourself from any remaining negative investment that you may have had in it. This is truly what forgiveness is - releasing yourself, it is yourself you set free by changing your mind about the past.

And so at Stage 5 you can create an extensive 'moral inventory' - include all those negative memories as well as anything you ever said thought or did (or was ever said, thought or done to you) and which still hurts, rankles or is unresolved in some way - follow the guidelines for PPP - and apply EFT until there is no charge left.

2. Resentments and EFT at bed time

Resentments and addictions have a fatal attraction. It is really important to deal with these every day and then the frequency and intensity will start to drop off:

Do a lightning review of the day every night before sleeping and then tap while focusing your mind on the highlights GOOD and bad. Often hidden in our responses to the good things are feelings of not deserving, fear, numbness etc.

Also, especially in the early days more intense feelings may begin to surface simply as a result of more awareness and honest assessment. Notice and tap for:

Guilt

Embarrassment

Self-loathing

Shame

Depression

Sadness

Loss

3. Tap while saying the Serenity Prayer every morning

GOD, grant me the serenity

to accept the things

I cannot change,

Courage to change the things I can,

and the wisdom to know the difference.

Sue Beer

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