



Using EFT to support the IVF process

There are many ways in which EFT can be helpful during fertility treatment and one of these is in the support of clients undergoing IVF (in vitro fertilisation).

IVF can be an extremely stressful time for both partners. The drugs can cause unpleasant side effects such as nausea, weight gain and mood swings, and delivering the medication, usually by self-injection, can in itself be traumatic to many women.

Using EFT as a tool for self management can be a true gift during IVF treatment. Clients are advised to keep calm during the process to maximise chances of success – not an easy call pre EFT. However, we now have a tool whereby clients can self manage their emotional state even from their hospital bed. Alongside teaching clients the short cut version of EFT I also introduce them to the continual tapping technique, first introduced by Dr David Lake (http://www.eftdownunder.com/articles_EFT.html#Continual). This continual tapping allows them to keep calm during the treatment itself and helps them take an element of control during the procedure, particularly during egg implantation. I have received very positive feedback about the power of this, including one lady recently who was sitting in the waiting room before seeing her consultant and was tapping to calm her rising anxiety. When she looked up she noticed that several other people were tapping alongside her in what she described as a Mexican wave effect. On asking whether they knew about EFT they said no, but she looked so comfortable and calm they had decided to copy her! She ended up giving a mini seminar in the hospital waiting room!

In my practise I see many couples at varying stages of the IVF process. Often they will have a history of failed IUI (intra-uterine insemination) or ICSI (intra cytoplasmic sperm injection) cycles. Sometimes there may also be a history of miscarriage. We use a multi-disciplinary approach completely integrating traditional medicine with complementary therapies, in particular EFT, acupuncture and nutrition.

There are often life style changes which need to be addressed prior to IVF treatment such as reduction in alcohol consumption, smoking cessation, over exercising etc. All of these issues can be assisted with EFT.

The stress of fertility treatment can take a toll on a couple's relationship. Sex becomes a means to an end and loses its enjoyment. It can become an enormous pressure for both partners and performance is often affected. Depending on whose diagnostic 'problem' it is, there can be resentment and blame which needs to be acknowledged and cleared. Infertility affects 15% of couples. In 40% of cases there is a female factor, in 40% a male factor, and in 20% both male and female factors co-exist.

Many aspects of modern life impact upon fertility including poor nutrition, pesticides and additives in food, tobacco, drugs, alcohol, stress, long working hours, environmental pollution, allergies, immune dysfunction, genito-urinary infections and the fact that couples are planning their families at an older age. All these aspects and the issues surrounding them can be eased with EFT.

For clarity I will look at my approach to fertility from two aspects, emotional and physical, although in reality the two are one and the same.

The Emotional

In Western society, early miscarriage tends to be swept under the carpet and 'forgotten'. The expectation seems to be that people should just pick themselves up and move forward quickly and easily. In reality this is rarely the case for either partner and there is a natural grieving process to go through as part of the healing. Using EFT and the Tearless Trauma Technique we have a gentle and effective way of assisting this process which gives the couple the opportunity to acknowledge their loss and helps them come to terms with their current situation. It can be useful to begin with some slightly more general rounds before honing in on the specific memories with TTT, using set up statements such as:

Even though I'm not allowed to grieve my baby I deeply and completely love and accept myself

Even though no one understands....

Even though it is not fair....

Even though I will never get over this...

Even though I cant go on...

Even though it's not safe to try again...

Even though I just have to get on with it..

Clearing the negative beliefs and emotional blocks to conception, natural or otherwise, allows the system to relax and rebalance, opening up the possibility of successful pregnancy in the future.

When women have a history of failed fertility interventions it is common for them to feel as if their body has failed them. It can challenge their very identity as a woman. Begin tapping with where they are at:

Even though my body has let me down...

Even though I have failed as a mother...

Even though all I want is to be a mother and I cant do it...

Even though I feel useless as a woman..

Even though it is not possible for me to become a mother....

Even though this is so difficult for me I am open to the possibility I can sustain a happy healthy 9 month pregnancy easily

Even though I feel guilty....

Even though I am too old.....

Etc

When you have taken the edge off this, or if you use SUDS levels reduced it to a manageable level, maybe 2 or 3, then I like to

introduce a specific Choice. I ask my client's unconscious mind to tune into the wisdom of generations of women before her who must have known how to conceive in order for her to be here today:

I choose to harness the wisdom of generations before me who must have known how to conceive successfully in order for me to be here etc

I choose to call on the support of generations of women before me etc

I choose to embrace the wisdom and knowledge of generations of women before me etc

I choose to trust the generations of women before me who must have known how to conceive successfully to guide me etc

Understandably there can be much fear about the IVF process itself. It is an invasive procedure, involves a general anaesthetic and strong drugs. Tap on the fears as they come up, and also on the anticipation about each step. The fears and anxieties may seem reasonable, but they are still not helpful to the client. The ultimate aim is calmness and positivity.

Partners often get sidelined during fertility treatment as the focus, and therefore spotlight, tends to be on the female during treatment. The partner can feel great pressure during this time as they are called on to support their other half. It is useful to meet the partner and teach him/her to tap too as a way of clearing any anxieties, fears etc. Also, if there are physical reasons relating to the partner there is often both guilt and sadness which need addressing.

The Physical

There are many ways in which EFT can positively support the physical changes that need to happen during IVF treatment. Whilst we are still discovering just what is possible with this amazing tool it does seem that, in many instances and with persistence and determination, we can positively affect some of the physical responses to IVF.

Women go through a barrage of tests prior to fertility treatment including those for FSH (Follicle stimulating hormone) and AMH (Antimullerian Hormone), the hormone which measures ovarian

reserve. Dependent on the results, and the way they are delivered, these tests can easily create limiting negative beliefs which need to be addressed through tapping.

For example, one of the first things that needs to happen, pre-treatment, is for the FSH (Follicle stimulating hormone) level to be at a reasonable level. FSH levels are normally low during childhood becoming progressively higher towards menopause. FSH will be monitored in the tests prior to treatment so clients will have an idea of what their level is and whether it needs to be different. If a change is wanted I will create a Choice card:

Even though my FSH is X I choose for it to be Y

I ask my clients to tap regularly on this Choice, many times during the day. Often the results are surprising.

Using a combination of visualisation techniques and Choices, the client and I work together through each stage of the treatment to focus on the next physical step. It seems that it may be possible to create physical change through the combination of instruction, choice and tapping.

During the treatment itself there are many ways of working with EFT at each stage. Once the drugs to shut the reproductive system down have been effective and the follicle stimulation begins tapping starts. Again using Choices, we support and encourage every step of the process from follicle stimulation to blood flow to the womb, hydration. I encourage my clients to visualise the reproductive system as healthy and receptive to pregnancy, tapping on any blocks as and when they appear.

Even though I am anxious about this process I choose to have x healthy follicles in each ovary

Even though I cant believe this will work I choose to produce x healthy follicles easily now

Even though I am worried about this I choose for my womb to be welcoming and receptive to my embryos

Always, of course, using the client's own language in the Choice.

I also teach my client's how to surrogate tap for the embryos as they are fertilising, creating a heart connection to them, and continuing that support whilst they are out of the body.

Even though I am anxious about my embryos I choose for them to fertilise easily now etc

Even though I am anxious about my embryos I send them love

And once the embryos have been implanted in the womb turning our attention to encouraging them to latch on, thrive etc., again also visualising this happening.

Pre treatment I am occasionally asked whether this is not just setting up false hopes. My answer is that if the outcome of the treatment is negative the disappointment is the same whether the client has been positive about the treatment possibilities or not. I will NEVER work to create a false reality, only to open a door to the possibility of success. However, EFT does have a way of empowering people during treatment so that even if it is not successful they do at least feel they have done the best they possibly can. Obviously, nothing I, or anyone else can do, will make the disappointment less painful initially, but the value of having EFT there as a way of managing it is immense and comforting.

Sometimes there will be physical issues which seem to be directly impeding successful conception, such as endometriosis, Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS), and low sperm count. Again, using a combination of positive visualisation the client can be helped to release any blocking beliefs about these conditions and to access a more resourceful place.

The subject of low sperm count is very sensitive and many women find it hard to approach it with their partners. However, again surrogate tapping can be very useful here, using the same Choices protocol as with FSH.

One client recently tapped regularly every day over a period of weeks for her husband's sperm count. They had already had two unsuccessful cycles of IVF with ICSI plus several IUI attempts but we had not met until this cycle and she had only just learned to tap.

She was amazed that not only did her husband's sperm count rise to the exact figure she had been tapping for, but I am delighted to report that the baby is due in the spring!

To conclude, as Gary Craig says, we are still on the ground floor of the healing high rise, although I like to think we may have edged to the first floor now. We don't know what is possible and every day brings with it new learnings and opportunities. Nowhere do I see this more than with my work with fertility. The key elements of this

work seem to be persistence and creativity, both metaphorically and literally.

Emma Roberts

www.theftcentre.com **theftcentre@googlemail.com**