

A Woman's Guide to Stressing Less,
Weighing Less, *and* Loving More



The Tapping Solution

FOR **WEIGHT LOSS &
BODY CONFIDENCE**

Chapters 1 & 2

JESSICA ORTNER

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Chapter 1

How Tapping Helps You Lose Weight

Standing tall at six feet five, Dawson Church, Ph.D., is a hard man to miss.

I had just walked into a conference in London where Dr. Church and I were both scheduled to speak on tapping. Happy to see him at the other end of the hall, I stood on my tippy toes to wave hello. (At five feet two, I'm rarely in his direct line of sight.)

I'd had the pleasure of working with Dr. Church several times since we first met in 2007 while I was filming *The Tapping Solution*. I'd always appreciated his jovial nature—he has a laugh so jolly, it could make Santa Claus jealous—so I was excited when he excused himself from the crowd that had gathered around him and came rushing over.

Right away I could tell he had something exciting to tell me. After some quick “how's the family?” chitchat, Dr. Church explained that he'd just returned from a medical conference where he'd presented the test results of his latest study for the first time.

He explained that the research had confirmed the science behind what I'd experienced myself and seen in thousands of others—that tapping is an incredibly effective way to decrease the negative impacts of stress on the body.

Dr. Church's research, which I'll share in this chapter, and several other groundbreaking studies help explain why tapping helps us lose weight and keep it off without dieting, deprivation, or extreme exercise.

Tapping and Weight Loss

Dr. Peta Stapleton is a clinical psychologist in Queensland, Australia, who has spent the past 20 years treating eating disorders in her patients and researching weight loss and specific eating behaviors. At the time of our interview, she had concluded the first (and most important) phase of her study on how tapping impacts food cravings and weight loss. The results were, and still are, incredibly exciting—proof of what I’ve seen repeatedly in my clients and students.

In doing this study, Dr. Stapleton wanted to find out whether tapping affects weight loss and food cravings, and if so, how effective it is. Because of the weight loss success she and her team had documented in study participants, Dr. Stapleton had actually released some of her findings to the international medical community before they were scheduled to be published.

All of the 89 women in her controlled study were between 31 and 56 years old, and had a body mass index (BMI) that qualified them as being obese. Over an eight-week period, they completed approximately two hours of tapping per week, which averages out to just over 15 minutes per day. Just by doing the tapping—without dieting or exercise—participants lost an average of 16 pounds by the end of the study!

While Dr. Stapleton expected that participants would lose weight from doing the tapping, she admits to being surprised by how much weight these women lost. What’s even more exciting is that the weight loss they achieved during the initial eight weeks seemed to last for six or more months afterward, even though most of the study participants stopped tapping once the initial eight-week period ended.

How is that possible? How can tapping lead to such dramatic and lasting weight loss in such a short period of time? To understand Dr. Stapleton’s research results, let’s first take a look at how stress affects the body.

Your Body's Weight Gain Cocktail

You have a pharmacy inside you. At all times, your body is pumping out the hormones and chemicals it needs to function properly. Unfortunately, many of us are taking a drug that, in excessive amounts, causes weight gain. We take it daily, and that drug is called stress.

Stress begins in the amygdala, an almond-shaped component located in the limbic system, or midbrain. The amygdala has been called the body's smoke detector. When it senses danger, it tells our brain to initiate a physiological stress response called the fight-or-flight response. This creates an overproduction of a hormone called cortisol, which studies have linked to increased appetite, sugar cravings, and added abdominal fat. Even mild stress, like worrying about why your jeans feel too tight or that you'll never lose the baby weight, can cause your body to go into the fight-or-flight response. This same stress response happens when you experience common negative emotions like anger, fear, and guilt.

The fight-or-flight response prepares the body for danger, getting it ready to either fight off an attacker or take flight, as our ancient ancestors had to do when they encountered a tiger in the wild. Since this stress response was intended to save you from an immediate threat, all of your body's defense systems are quickly activated. Your adrenaline levels increase, your muscles tighten, and your blood pressure, heart rate, and blood sugar all rise so that you can react quicker, run faster, and climb higher.

Because all of your body's energy is being channeled toward self-defense, less essential functions such as digestion are either slowed down or shut down altogether. (Indigestion doesn't register as an urgent issue when you're literally running for your life!) But that inability to digest food properly and efficiently has a negative impact on your metabolism and prevents your body from absorbing the nutrients it desperately needs. Without essential nutrients and nourishment, your body may then trigger a feeling of hunger, not because it

actually needs more food, but because the stress response has rendered it unable to properly digest the food that *is* available.

Unlike our ancestors, we are subject to a complex assortment of stimuli and stressors that means our stress levels remain higher for longer periods of time, and this means that our bodies are in the fight-or-flight response more frequently and for longer periods of time. That creates more potential for negative effects on our digestion, metabolism, and hormones on an ongoing basis.

So even if you're exercising and eating right, stress can disrupt your weight loss efforts. This is where tapping becomes such a powerful tool. What tapping does incredibly well is disrupt the fight-or-flight response, quickly allowing your body to return to a more relaxed state in which it can digest food properly and support healthier digestion and faster metabolism. Let's take a look at how this happens.

How Tapping Lowers Your Stress

In a randomized controlled study—the gold standard of scientific research—conducted by Dr. Church (the jovial giant you may recall from earlier), he and his team focused on the changes in cortisol levels and psychological symptoms in 83 subjects. The study participants were divided into three groups: one group was led through an hour-long tapping session, another group received an hour of conventional talk therapy, and a third control group received no treatment.

While the control group and talk therapy group showed only a 14 percent drop of cortisol over time, the tapping group showed a 24 percent decrease in cortisol levels, on average, with some experiencing as much as a 50 percent decrease in cortisol.

The dramatic drop in cortisol in the tapping group was so significant that the lab initially believed there was either something wrong with the samples or with its equipment. To ensure accuracy, it delayed the results by several weeks in order to recalibrate its equipment and run the tests again. After running them repeatedly and getting consistent results, it finally released them to Dr. Church.

In addition to having been rigorously checked and rechecked by the lab, Dr. Church's research findings support earlier research conducted at Harvard Medical School over the last decade. The Harvard studies show that stimulating selected meridian acupoints decreases activity in the amygdala, as well as other parts of the brain associated with negative emotions. In fMRI and PET brain scans, you can clearly see the amygdala's alarm bells being quieted when acupoints are stimulated.

Although the Harvard research focused on stimulating meridian acupoints with needles (acupuncture), a separate double-blind study confirmed the same positive impact when acupoints were stimulated without needles—which is what happens during tapping.

Tapping on acupoints while sorting through emotional challenges is part of an emerging field known as “energy psychology.” Much of the existing research in energy psychology is getting more and more attention, partly because it compares favorably to standards set by the Society of Clinical Psychology (Division 12 of the American Psychological Association) as an “evidence-based” approach.

While many psychologists and other mental health professionals are beginning to incorporate tapping into their practice, what my brother and I are so passionate about is the ability everyone has at their own fingertips to experience relief. Once you know tapping, you always have a tool to support you through times of stress. It's incredibly self-empowering.

If you're interested in reading more about dozens of other studies that have demonstrated how effective tapping is for a wide range of disorders and conditions, you can visit www.TheTappingSolution.com/science-and-research.php or check out my brother Nick's *New York Times* best-selling book *The Tapping Solution: A Revolutionary System for Stress-Free Living*.

A Groundbreaking Discovery

Now that we've looked at some of the more recent science indicating how tapping impacts weight loss and stress, I'd like to share a

brief history of tapping, which also shows how effective tapping is at improving overall health and wellness.

It was 1979 when Dr. Roger Callahan, a traditionally trained psychologist, experienced his first major breakthrough using tapping with a patient. It came after he studied the body's meridian points, which are the basis of the ancient Chinese medical technique known as acupuncture. The meridians in the body are energy channels that carry our vital life force, our *qi*, to the various organs and systems in the body. They run up and down both sides of the body, and each meridian is linked to a separate organ—stomach, gallbladder, kidney, and so on. You can access the energy in each meridian through its “endpoint,” a specific location on the body's surface.

These “meridian endpoints” are where acupuncture needles are inserted and also where we tap to balance or increase the energy flow within a specific meridian. They're also places we often touch unconsciously during moments of stress—for example, our forehead, chin, and collarbone—perhaps as a way to calm ourselves down.

When he experienced success in using tapping with patients, Dr. Callahan continued his study of meridian points, focusing on merging traditional psychotherapy with tapping. Over time he developed a set of “algorithms,” or tapping sequences, to address different issues. For instance, he created one tapping sequence to treat fear and a separate sequence to treat anger. He eventually began teaching his tapping sequences to students.

One of his students, a man named Gary Craig, began experimenting with tapping and discovered that it was the tapping itself rather than the specific sequences that was so effective. To simplify the process, Gary created a single tapping sequence, which has since become the basis of what he later called EFT, or Emotional Freedom Techniques. Many different approaches to tapping are based on Gary Craig's EFT model. Tapping and meridian tapping are the generic names used.

The EFT sequence Gary pioneered includes all of the major meridian endpoints and can be used for all issues. The EFT sequence, which we'll explore in detail in Chapter 2, begins with the side of the hand, then moves to the inner eyebrow, the outer eyebrow, underneath the

eye, under the nose, the chin, the collarbone, the side of the rib cage, and finally, the top of the head.

During the same period of time when Craig was simplifying his tapping sequence, Dr. Patricia Carrington, a psychologist and then faculty member at the Department of Psychology at Princeton University, was independently using a single algorithm method and seeing great results in her clients. She created the Choices Method, which we'll explore shortly.

As Gary Craig's and Dr. Carrington's work began to spread, their results caught the attention of psychologists and researchers who have since given us a far better understanding of how tapping helps retrain your brain.

Retraining Your Brain

To understand why tapping works so well—not just for anxiety, fear, and trauma but also for losing weight—it's important to understand the *limbic response*.

The limbic system is the part of our brain that contains that feisty amygdala that initiates the fight-or-flight response when it senses danger. This same process can take place when we experience stress around food. For instance, when you experience a craving for chocolate, you may be in the throes of a limbic response. If your brain has been trained to respond to stress by inhaling a box of chocolate chip cookies, that's probably what you'll do after a long day at the office.

Because tapping quickly halts the fight-or-flight response and lowers your cortisol levels, you're able to change how your brain reacts to stress and chocolate chip cookies. Instead of being made to feel like you must devour every last one of those cookies, you can stop and figure out whether cookies are really the best way to unwind.

If you have intense food cravings, the idea of being able to pause and determine whether you really want or need to eat the food you're craving may sound impossible. As someone who used to inhale a

box of six organic cereal bars in one sitting (a favorite during one of my “healthy eating” phases), I completely understand why you feel that way. In those moments when you feel like you’ll die if you don’t eat that food, you’re at the mercy of a limbic response that’s been ingrained in your brain, probably for many years.

The idea that you can train your limbic system to respond differently to familiar stimuli lines up with recent discoveries about *neuroplasticity*, which shows that the brain’s pathways can be altered. Scientists speculate that when we train our limbic system to respond to a long day at work in a new way, we’re actually changing our neural pathways, training our brain to react differently than it has in the past.

After working with thousands of clients on food cravings and emotional eating, I’m still amazed at how quickly tapping can change behavior. After tapping on the stress they’re feeling, clients will often say, “Wow, it’s actually not about the food.” Once we use tapping to clear the stress that’s causing them to overeat, they’re able to eat less without even noticing. The situations or foods that once triggered them to overeat simply lose their power.

Does that mean they’ll never succumb to cravings and emotional eating ever again? No. But it happens so infrequently that it doesn’t sabotage their goals. They often describe finally feeling a sense of peace around food. For the first time in years, clients tell me they can attend parties and have great conversations with people they’d never gotten to know previously because all they could focus on was the food. And for the first time in years, they can take a walk or go to a yoga class and actually enjoy themselves.

The success stories around tapping, weight loss, and body confidence cover a wide range of circumstances, issues, and challenges. Whatever the specifics of the story, time after time when clients do the tapping, they lose the weight and keep it off. More important, though, even before the weight loss happens, they’re able to feel beautiful in their bodies.

Why Tap When You Just Want to Lose Weight Now?

People often ask me how quickly tapping will help them lose weight. While many of my clients begin losing weight in our first weeks working together, everyone loses weight at their own pace. When we begin tapping to release the stress and pressure we put on ourselves to lose weight, it's counterproductive to obsess about the result. When we are truly on this journey, weight loss becomes a pleasurable side effect of feeling better about ourselves.

The great thing about tapping is that it also works on headaches, backaches, and almost any kind of physical pain as well as insomnia and negative emotions such as fear, anger, and more. You can use it to relax after a long day or to get more focused when you're feeling sluggish. The physical and emotional benefits are endless, so try tapping whenever you want to feel better, and the weight loss benefits will soon appear as well.

Anyone Can Lose Weight with Tapping

As compelling as the science around tapping is, for me it's the incredible results I've seen in my clients, myself, and my friends and family that offer the real proof that tapping is the most powerful weight loss tool I've ever seen.

When I began this process, I was a huge skeptic, and to this day I'm amazed at how well tapping works for weight loss, weight maintenance, body confidence, stress, illness, physical pain, and so much more. But over the years, I've become passionate about tapping as a health and weight loss tool because the results I see are so undeniable. My skepticism had no choice but to admit defeat.

Many clients I work with start out with this same skepticism. I always appreciate that they're honest with me about it. Just like me, they'd already tried countless other methods to lose weight—diets,

extreme exercise, hypnosis, meditation. And with each new attempt at losing weight, they'd either see no change or lose it only to gain it right back. Why would tapping be any different?

But once they start, they lose the weight, not because they're dieting but because they learn to live life and be happy in the moment. Tapping helps decrease your cortisol levels, so your hormones can support your weight loss. Tapping also supports you in sticking with healthy lifestyle changes. I'll share many client stories throughout this book, and the people in them are living proof that you don't have to believe that tapping will help you lose weight for the tapping to work. Whether or not you believe it will work for you, if you do the tapping, you can achieve all of your weight loss goals and keep the weight off. So let's get started tapping.

Chapter 2

Quick Start Tapping Guide

Nancy's stress levels were at an all-time high. A 53-year-old entrepreneur trying to run her business while relocating from New York City to San Francisco, she stepped on the scale one day while packing the contents of her bathroom. She was horrified to see that she was at her highest weight ever. This wasn't the first time she'd felt surprised and heartbroken while looking at the scale.

Nancy had trouble remembering a time when she wasn't stressed about her weight. She ran the pattern of starting the latest diet trend, working hard, losing some weight, and then gaining it back. When she did manage to lose weight, she often felt like "the wolves were at my door," as she put it. One false move around food and she'd be back to her old ways of eating, and then she'd regain the weight.

As she began her new adventure in San Francisco, she decided she was ready to leave her pattern of chronic dieting and stress in New York. "I kept saying to myself that there had to be another way. I wanted to end this pattern." Nancy had heard me speak at an event and soon learned that her brother had been using tapping to manage stress. When she heard about my weight loss program, she decided to take a leap of faith and signed up for it in the midst of her move.

By the time Nancy was settled in San Francisco, she had been tapping for four months, often using my tapping meditations. Although moving was stressful, she was able to use tapping to find relief every step of the way. When she finally got around to unpacking her scale, she was surprised once again—pleasantly surprised! She had lost

weight during a time when she was unable (and unwilling) to follow a strict diet plan.

I came across Nancy's story because she was so thrilled by her results that she decided to blog about it on a website for female entrepreneurs. This is what she wrote:

I no longer crave sugar, sweets, and carbs. I rarely eat them and don't miss them one bit. And when I do, I savor a small portion guilt free, and it's not a big deal. All the drama around food, weight, and body image has simply been unplugged. I've also lost 16 pounds, pretty effortlessly, I might add! And, most important, now I really understand how stressing about dieting and weight—and especially negative self-talk—only fuels the problem. Finally I get what I've been doing wrong all these years! This is the only program I've ever found that nails the emotional stuff that is really at the root of it all.

Are you ready to “nail” the emotional stuff like Nancy did? It begins with learning how to tap.

Let's Start Tapping!

First let me just say that if you're new to tapping, I understand that it seems weird. Here's how I think of it. You know those times when you try to think yourself out of a thought? You're an intelligent, self-aware person, and you feel like you should be able to use positive reasoning to get rid of that thought or emotion, but you can't because you feel it in your body. It might be anxiety in your chest or a panicked feeling in your stomach. What tapping does is bridge that gap between your body and your mind. When you tap while focusing on the thought or feeling, you relax the body and send a calming signal to the brain, telling it that it, too, can relax.

In addition to its effectiveness, one of the reasons my clients have such success with tapping is that it works so well with their busy

schedules. It's easy, convenient, and makes you feel great in a matter of minutes. So let's dive right in. Here are the basic steps for tapping:

- Step 1: Choose your tapping target, and create a reminder phrase (see pages 15–19).
- Step 2: Rate the intensity of your target on the 0 to 10 Subjective Units of Distress Scale (SUDS; see pages 19–20).
- Step 3: Create a setup statement (see page 21).
- Step 4: Tap on the karate chop point (see page 22) while repeating your setup statement three times.
- Step 5: Tap gently through the eight points in the tapping sequence (see pages 22–24) while saying your reminder phrase out loud. Tap five to seven times on each point. Repeat this until you begin to feel relief.
- Step 6: Once you're feeling better, take a deep breath and again rate the intensity of your issue using the 0 to 10 SUDS.

It's that simple! I'll lead you through the process in more detail in the rest of this chapter; however, if you're a visual learner, you can watch a video on how to tap where I cover all of the steps. You can find that video at www.TheTappingSolution.com/chapter2.

Step 1: Pinpointing Your Tapping Target

You're reading this book, so it seems safe to assume that you're anxious to lose weight and feel more confident in your body. Like many women, though, you're probably living a full life, perhaps juggling work, family, and friends, maybe also trying to manage physical pain or illness, and stressed about your finances or the fight you just had

with your boss or husband. Whatever issue is bothering you most is a great place to start with your tapping target.

It might be one of these:

- *Work has been really stressful lately.*
- *I'm so frustrated about my weight.*
- *I have a really bad headache.*

Take a moment to answer these questions for yourself: *What's really bothering me right now? What in my life feels really stressful right now?* You can either write it down or just remember it as you continue reading. Keep in mind, too, that your list doesn't have to seem relevant to weight loss and body confidence. Very often the stress that impacts our weight doesn't appear at first to be directly related to weight.

If several different issues come to mind, just start with the one that feels the most stressful. There's no right or wrong answer, so just go with whichever issue comes to mind first or feels most pressing right now.

Once you've got your tapping target and have started tapping, you'll want to get as specific as possible. For example, if work is your top source of stress right now, why is it so stressful? Do you feel like your boss never appreciates your work? Have you recently started a new job or business?

Tapping on a general issue can certainly improve your mood and make you feel better. But adding specific details—like the fact that you just saw a recent photo of yourself and you feel ashamed of how big you think you look in it—draws the focus more clearly to what you're experiencing. By being as specific as possible, you'll be better able to rewire the brain's response to whatever is causing your stress. You'll notice that you can still have the thought but without feeling physical anxiety in your body. This is when you'll be able to relax and choose a better thought or action.

If you ever get stuck on what to say, just focus on the feeling. You can also visualize a picture of what happened (or is happening) and

then describe it as you're tapping. Do whatever it takes to get a clear memory or feeling while you're tapping.

- Here's an example of a broad tapping statement around being stressed about weight: *I'm so stressed about my weight.*
- A more specific tapping statement would be: *I'm so stressed about my weight because I just saw a recent picture of myself.*
- And an even more specific statement would be: *I'm so stressed about my weight because I saw a recent picture of myself and felt angry at myself for how big I look.*

You can get specific in many different ways. Sometimes focusing on the intensity of the emotion you're experiencing is helpful. For example:

I'm angry at myself for how big I look in that picture.

How angry do I feel? So angry!

What would that be on a 0 to 10 scale? Ten!

Where do I feel the anger in my body? My stomach—it makes me feel sick just thinking about it.

Now you have specific details about the anger you're feeling, how angry you feel, where you feel the anger in your body, and so forth. You can use a similar process for physical pain, focusing on exactly where your head hurts, when the headache started, and so on. Whatever the issue, always try to be as specific as possible.

CHOOSING A REMINDER PHRASE

The reminder phrase is short—just a couple of words that bring to mind your tapping target. You will speak this phrase out loud or in your mind at each of the eight points in the tapping sequence. For example, if your tapping target has to do with your feelings of anger

Finding Your Words

When people first begin tapping, they often tell me they “never know what to say.” To help you break through this obstacle, throughout the book I’ll give you sample statements you can use for your tapping target. I’ll point out common themes I’ve seen in myself and in my clients, but only you can determine what is really relevant for you at any given moment. You and your life are unique, so whenever you’re tapping, I encourage you to tailor your language to your own experiences. There are no right or wrong answers with tapping. The best thing you can do is to trust your instincts. If you do that and follow the process I’ve laid out, it’s nearly impossible to get tapping wrong.

about that picture of yourself, you might tap through each point in the sequence saying, “This anger. . . this anger. . . this anger . . .” Other examples of reminder phrases for different tapping targets might be:

This loneliness I’m feeling . . .

This frustration . . .

This back pain . . .

And so forth.

You’re repeating the reminder phrase to remind yourself of the issue at each point. You want to target the thought that’s creating the physical discomfort in your body. This reminder phrase serves to keep your focus on the target so you don’t get distracted. It also acts as a barometer, helping you determine along the way how true the target feels to you.

Once you get used to tapping, you can change your reminder phrase as you tap through each point. For example, you might say, “This anger . . . this burning anger . . . I feel it in my stomach . . . I feel so humiliated . . .” You will notice that the reminder phrase becomes more specific as you say it. In the meditations at the end of each chapter, I

My Guided Tapping Meditations

Years ago while working with a client who was suffering from insomnia, I recorded a tapping audio to help her sleep. The recording helped her so much that I created more of them to share with as many people as possible.

I've since recorded many different tapping audios, which I call "tapping meditations." People have found them to be very useful starting points for getting comfortable with tapping, which is great. The goal with tapping, however, is always to be as specific as possible, so while my tapping meditations can be useful tools, I always encourage people to tap in response to their own experiences, being as specific as possible about what they're experiencing at any given moment.

To download a copy of a morning and evening tapping meditation for weight loss, visit www.TheTappingSolution.com/chapter2.

provide a tapping meditation that evolves in this way. Feel free to use these tapping meditations as prompts and then tailor them specifically to your experience and emotions. To begin, though, you can focus on keeping it simple by saying the same statement at each point.

Step 2: Using SUDS, the 0 to 10 Scale

Now that you're aware of your tapping target, I want you to give it a number on the 0 to 10 SUDS, or Subjective Units of Distress Scale.

Think about your tapping target and notice what it brings up in your body. What level of distress does it generate in you? A 10 would be the most distress you can imagine; a 0 rating would mean you don't feel any distress at all. Don't worry about getting the SUDS level exact or "right"—just follow your gut instinct. Think about the anger you feel as a result of how you look in that picture. If the feeling is really intense, you might

Self-acceptance is an invitation to stop trying to change yourself into the person you wish to be, long enough to find out who you really are.

—ROBERT HOLDEN

rate it an 8 or a 9. If you're still feeling anger toward yourself but the intensity has lessened a bit since you first saw the photo, you might rate it a 5 or 6. To see a significant shift in an issue, start with something you can rate at 5 or higher.

SUDS is best used to measure emotional intensity, and there are two main reasons we use it. First, when we clear an issue with tapping, we sometimes experi-

ence so much relief that we forget how intense the issue was before tapping. Also, by using SUDS we're able to appreciate the progress we're making through tapping. It's not always a necessary step, but it can be very helpful.

Do I Have to Say "I Love and Accept Myself"?

When I teach tapping to a new crowd, I can see the restlessness in the audience as I begin to talk about the setup statement. For many it feels incredibly uncomfortable and even a bit "out there" to say "I love and accept myself," especially when this is the opposite of how they may be feeling. I can relate. I used to think that people who said it were either narcissistic or just plain corny. But I soon learned the incredible power of this phrase.

We have been taught that in order to achieve something, we need to fight for it. Accepting ourselves supposedly means we surrender to our flaws and never change. But it's our inability to accept ourselves that keeps us stuck in place. We are so busy fighting our feelings that we don't realize that the very act of fighting or trying to ignore negative feelings gives them power over us.

When we don't accept how we feel, we pile on even more emotions. Have you ever been upset at yourself for being upset? *I'm so mad at myself*

Step 3: Creating Your Setup Statement

Now that you know your SUDS level, the next step is to craft what's called the "setup statement." This brings up the energy of the tapping target you're going to be working on. The basic setup statement goes like this:

Even though _____ [fill in the blank with your tapping target], I love and accept myself.

So you might say, "Even though I feel ashamed at how big I look in that picture, I love and accept myself" or "Even though my head is pounding, I love and accept myself" or "Even though I'm stressed out about this work deadline, I love and accept myself."

for being mad! I should know better by now and not let him/her trigger me like this! When we don't accept how we feel, we keep that emotion stuck in place, and over time the pile of emotions we're stuck with gets bigger and bigger. Loving and accepting ourselves releases us from this pattern and gives us the freedom to choose a more empowering thought. Again and again I have seen the profound impact of acceptance. It is the first step to true transformation. As my friend Kris Carr says, "When we truly embrace acceptance, that's when our body exhales and can begin healing."

Still resistant to this concept? While I always encourage people to try saying "I love and accept myself," another statement I often use is "Even though I feel so [fill in the blank], I accept how I feel and I'm okay." You can also use EFT expert Dr. Patricia Carrington's Choices Method of countering the emotion you're feeling and adding "and I choose . . ." at the end. For example, if you're feeling overwhelmed, you could use the setup statement "Even though I'm feeling overwhelmed, I choose to feel calm and confident."

Step 4: Tap on the Karate Chop Point

To begin the physical process of tapping, start by tapping on the karate chop point (see the illustration on page 23) while you repeat your setup statement three times. The same meridians run down both sides of the body, so you can tap with either hand, on whichever side of the body feels best to you.

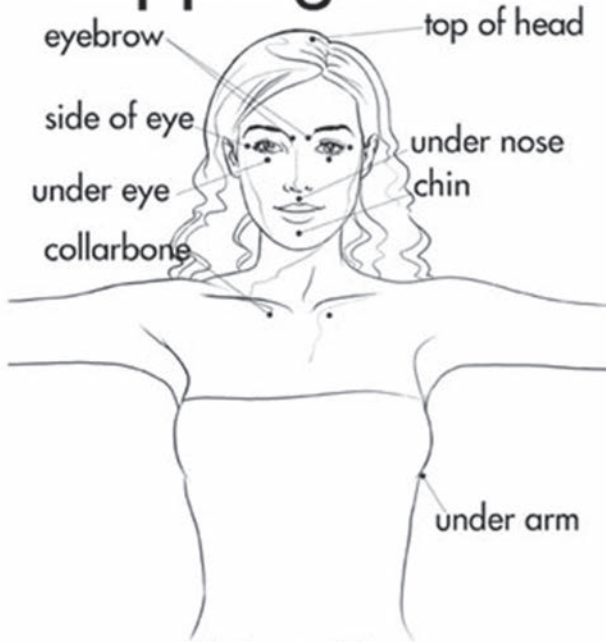
Step 5: Tapping Through the Points

After the karate chop, you are ready to start tapping through the eight points of the tapping sequence, also shown in the illustration on page 23, while repeating your reminder phrase. These points are

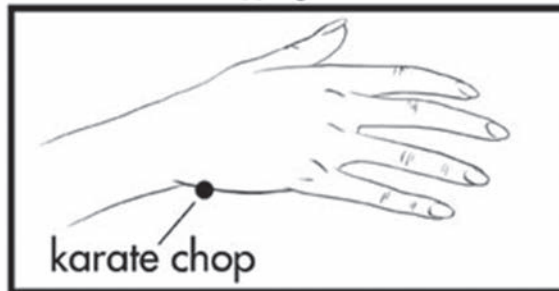
- Eyebrow
- Side of Eye
- Under Eye
- Under Nose
- Chin
- Collarbone
- Under Arm
- Top of Head

Just as with the karate chop point, you can tap the point on either side of your body. You can also tap both sides at once if you'd like (it's not necessary, however, because you'll hit the same meridian lines regardless of which side you tap). Aim for tapping five to seven times

Tapping Points



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at each stop as you work through the sequence, but it doesn't have to be an exact count. If it feels right to tap 20 times—or 100—on one point, do it! The idea is simply to spend enough time at that point to speak your reminder phrase and let it sink in.

Step 6: Check In

Now that you've completed a round of tapping, take a deep breath. Feel your body and notice what's happening for you. Ask yourself these questions: *Did the issue shift? What thoughts came up for me while tapping? How do I feel on the 0 to 10 scale now?*

Go back and think about the issue and see how it feels to you now. You might find that the intensity of your emotions has decreased. In that case, you can tap a few more rounds using the same language and clear the issue altogether.

When Should I Switch to the Positive?

The main goal with tapping is to lower the stress you have around certain thoughts. It's important to focus on the negative so you can process how you feel. This is always the first and most crucial step. Then, when you feel that the intensity is lower than 5, you can begin to incorporate how you would like to feel instead. This isn't a necessary step but I find it very helpful. Only use positive affirmations if they feel true when you tap. If you find yourself resisting an empowering thought, continue focusing on how you really feel and keep tapping. Remember, tapping sends that calming signal to the brain letting your brain know it's safe to relax. When you relax while thinking of a negative thought, it's easier to process the feeling, change your mind, and pick another thought. The relaxation response also makes it easier to accept those positive thoughts that feel good and relaxing.

At times you'll find that, for example, as you were tapping on your anger over how you looked in that picture, another memory or feeling came up. This often happens, and it's actually good news. Just keep tapping on issues that come up. Through this process you "peel the onion," revealing layer after layer of an issue so that, over time, you can create a new relationship with yourself and your body.

My advice is to keep tapping until your tapping target finds enough relief that you feel noticeably better. This may mean getting the SUDS level down to a 2 or 3, which may seem manageable to you, or it may mean clearing it altogether so it's at 0. Tap long enough to release your pain, whether it's physical, emotional, or spiritual. Stick with it. Do five rounds; do ten rounds. Whenever possible, commit to getting the relief you need.

Are you ready to give it a try? Start by saying your setup statement three times while tapping on the karate chop point. Then move on to tap your reminder phrase at each of the eight points in the sequence—eyebrow, side of eye, under eye, under nose, chin, collarbone, under arm, and top of head. Don't worry about getting it perfect the first time around; what matters is that you start tapping! Remember to visit www.TheTappingSolution.com/chapter2 if you need additional support to get started.

Tapping Through the Layers

We began the tapping example by talking about the anger you might feel when looking at a photo. Tapping on an emotion is one way to begin the process of clearing the obstacles that keep you from losing weight. However, as I mentioned earlier, we use a "peel the onion" approach when we tap to address the various layers of any given issue. As we just saw, sometimes you start with one target—anger—and then find something else underneath it.

When an issue has multiple layers, you may need to address each one in order to fully clear the issue. Working through these layers

might seem tedious at first, but the reality is that emotional and physical experiences are often multilayered. Remember: you don't need to do it all at once. Be gentle with yourself.

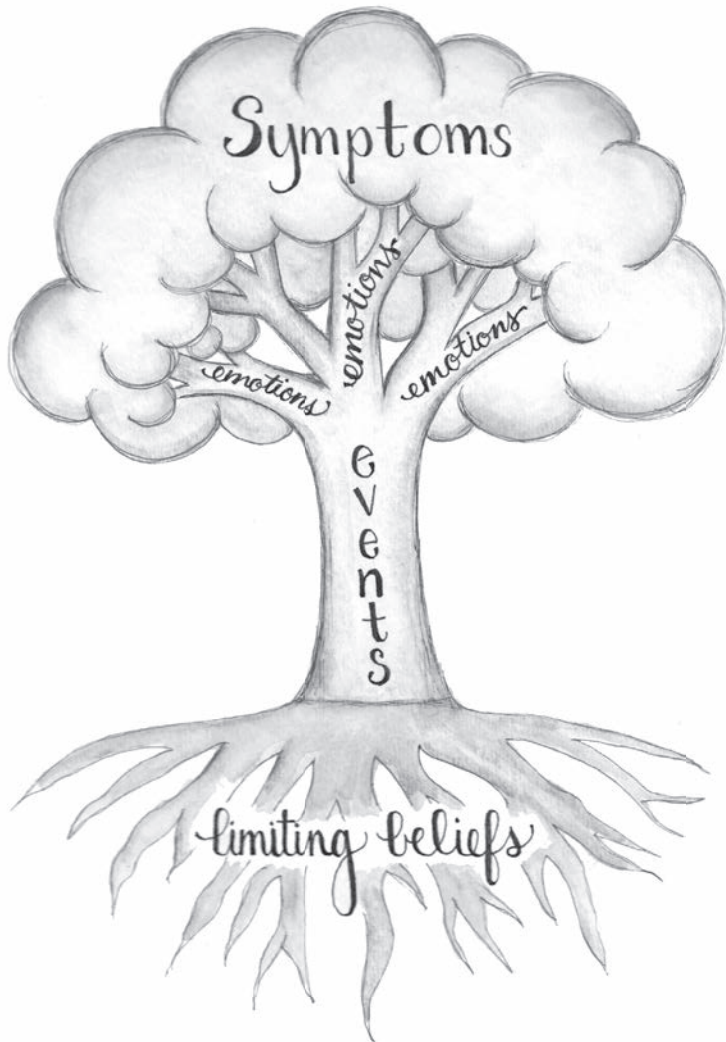
So how do you know which target to choose to start your exploration with tapping? The four most common types of targets to work with are symptoms/side effects, emotions, events, and limiting beliefs. We'll cover each one of these next.

The Tapping Tree: Identify Your Targets

Originally created by EFT master Lindsay Kenny, the Tapping Tree is a wonderful metaphor to help you understand the interconnection between all the pieces of the weight loss puzzle. The roots of the tree are our limiting beliefs—what we believe to be true or not true about ourselves and the world. The trunk represents past events, often traumatic, that still affect us today. The branches are the emotions that come up, including things like shame, frustration, and hopelessness. Finally, the leaves are the side effects or external symptoms that manifest and add to our stress. Keep in mind that we're not saying that everything starts with a limiting belief. You may have experienced an event that later resulted in a limiting belief about yourself or the world.

Throughout the rest of the book we'll tap on all the points of the Tapping Tree. While we tend to want to focus solely on losing the weight, in order to have the kind of long-term weight loss we want, we need to address the underlying issues that have shaped our relationship with ourselves, our body, our weight, and the food we eat.

So often, clients come to me saying that they just need to lose the weight. As we tap together, they remember events—whether from childhood, a divorce, or some other powerful experience—and realize that the pain of that event led to their weight gain and their subsequent struggle with the scale. Others discover that they've been holding on to a belief—that they'll never be good enough, or that weight loss has to be a struggle—and realize that their belief has been preventing them from losing weight.



Sometimes you can handle more than one part of the tree at once. For example, by tapping on a “root” limiting belief, you may also clear a “leaf” symptom or side effect. That’s what happens when you tap around your stress. Let’s go a bit more deeply into each element of the Tapping Tree.

SYMPTOMS AND SIDE EFFECTS (LEAVES)

Difficulty losing weight and keeping it off, avoiding exercise, cravings, constantly snacking—these are all symptoms or side effects. They can be classified into two areas: physical symptoms and behaviors. Symptoms and side effects are often the most bothersome and the easiest to identify because they are so real and present. While they may seem to be problems in themselves, they are often just expressions of a deeper issue. Ideally, over time you will identify the deeper issue and use that as your tapping target.

That said, tapping on an obvious symptom or side effect is a great starting point—and this can produce excellent results on its own. It can work very well for cravings. For example, if you’re craving chocolate, you might use a setup statement like “Even though I really want to eat that box of chocolate, I deeply and completely accept myself.” You would tap through the points using reminder words and phrases like “chocolate,” “this craving for chocolate,” and so forth.

Just by doing this kind of “symptom tapping,” many people find that their craving goes away. One student shared her experience with this:

I SERIOUSLY LOVE TWIZZLERS! I have loved them since I was a little girl. My high school boyfriends would “woo” me with pound-sized bags of them. Yesterday afternoon, my son was asleep on the couch. Next to him on the table was a giant sack o’ piñata candy from a party last week . . . I found myself peering into the sack, looking for my beloved Twizzlers. None in

there. :(But! I remembered there might be a bag way up on the refrigerator. My mouth literally began to salivate. All I could think of was ripping open that bag, smelling that wonderful Twizzler smell, and eating one after another. I made a beeline for the kitchen. But! As I got to the fridge, I diverted to the living room, where I sat on the couch and tapped about HOW BAD I WANTED TO SNARF TWIZZLERS!! Suddenly, I did not want those Twizzlers. I was almost in shock! I actually TRIED to want the Twizzlers, but by that point, I couldn't have cared less about them. Amazing!

When symptom tapping doesn't get the job done, however, that usually means you need to go further down the Tapping Tree to identify a deeper target that will provide the relief you're looking for. A good next step is to look at your emotional state.

EMOTIONS (BRANCHES)

If you tap on a chocolate craving and the craving persists, you can ask yourself, *What was I feeling when I began craving chocolate?* If, for example, you were angry about something your husband said to you, you can tap on that emotion until it has been cleared. Sometimes you may realize you're feeling several emotions. Different aspects of the target may appear, so what starts as anger might move into hurt and sadness, then into grief and loneliness. If you know that you're experiencing intense emotions, you can begin your tapping with what you're feeling rather than with the symptom or side effect.

Sometimes it's easy to get stuck on the emotions we're most familiar with. For example, many of us end up tapping on feelings of anger and sadness, which are easy to recognize. But accessing a broader range of emotions can help bring more specificity to tapping. Here are some key emotions many of us experience. You can use this list to further connect with what's going on for you.

Alienation	Distress	Guilt	Loneliness
Ambivalence	Doubt	Hatred	Paranoia
Anger	Dread	Homesickness	Pity
Anxiety	Embarrassment	Hope	Rage
Bitterness	Envy	Hostility	Regret
Boredom	Fear	Humiliation	Remorse
Contempt	Frustration	Hunger	Resentment
Depression	Fury	Hysteria	Shame
Despair	Grief	Insecurity	Suffering
Disgust	Grouchiness	Loathing	Worry

PAST EVENTS (TRUNK)

Another common category of tapping target is past events. There are two kinds: those that happen and are easy to move beyond, and those that affect us and stay with us. The difference between the two kinds of events is whether or not we have processed them emotionally, energetically, and/or physically.

One person can think back to something that happened in grade school—being scolded by a teacher—and be able to say, “Yeah, I remember feeling embarrassed that she singled me out like that, but it doesn’t bother me anymore.” The memory is there but it doesn’t have the emotional charge it once did. The next person thinks about being scolded in grade school and has a totally different experience. She feels it in her gut; when she recalls that moment, intense feelings of embarrassment, anger, and hurt come up. This is an experience that hasn’t been processed. Addressing that past event with tapping will help her let go of the pain and move on.

LIMITING BELIEFS (ROOTS)

Limiting beliefs are misleading conclusions we make about ourselves and the world based on events or experiences. For example, someone might have a limiting belief about her ability to lose weight and keep it off because her weight has fluctuated so much for so many years. As a result, she anticipates that the same pattern will repeat itself in the future, and that belief limits her expectations of what's possible.

It can be hard to see our own limiting beliefs because, to us, they just seem like “the truth.” For example, you may believe you’ll never lose the baby weight after you have a child because your mom and your sisters never did. As a result of that belief, you may stop exercising because you think, *It’s hopeless so what’s the point?*

Most of us begin unintentionally collecting limiting beliefs during childhood and then keep adding more as we get older. Parents, teachers, and peers often pass them on to us in our early years and from there they color how we see ourselves, our lives, and others. The belief that “I’ll never lose the weight” has profound implications for what and how we eat, whether or not we exercise, even how much effort we make in our relationships and career. That single limiting belief changes how we behave.

Tapping on childhood or past events will often clear limiting beliefs, but when you’re aware of a limiting belief, you can also tap directly on that belief.

Why don't you start believing that no matter what you have or haven't done, that your best days are still out in front of you.

—JOEL OSTEEN

Creating Your Own Tapping Tree

The Tapping Tree is a great visual tool for figuring out what's going on in your life and systematically working through various challenges. It also makes it easier to see how a symptom might be connected to an emotion, event, or belief—how the “leaf” relates to the “branch,” “trunk,” or “roots.” These connections and insights are vital for you to get the best results with tapping. As I'll continue to remind you, it's crucial that you get specific when you tap so you can really focus on what's happening, and the best way to do that is to dig deeper.

As you go through the process laid out in this book, you may want to return to the Tapping Tree and create your own as you discover new

Is Tapping Too Negative?

Clients sometimes mention their concern that tapping focuses too much on negative thoughts and emotions such as fear, anger, blame, and shame. While I understand their concern, the fact is that we all experience negative emotions. By trying to ignore negative feelings or judge ourselves for having them, we simply give them permission to control us and our behavior unconsciously. If we're angry, for instance, we can't just decide to stop feeling anger by ignoring that feeling. We need to directly address the anger, to somehow “blow off steam,” before we can relax and calm down. Tapping gives us an incredibly fast and effective way to address our negative thoughts and emotions so we can once again relax and feel good. The best way to experience less negativity is to tap on the negative aspects of your life—your stress about your weight, your frustration with your boss, your finances, your relationship, and so on. As you tap and clear those negative thoughts and emotions, you'll be able to do tapping using positive statements, which will further lower your stress and improve your ability to lose weight.

tapping targets. You can print out a blank copy of the Tapping Tree drawing by visiting www.TheTappingSolution.com/chapter2. Or you can simply sketch it on a piece of paper. It doesn't have to be pretty; just be sure to leave plenty of space.

Ready to Lower Your Stress and Start Losing Weight?

Clients often tell me how much they end up enjoying the time they spend tapping each day. Although it feels a bit strange when they're first learning how to tap, they find that they're more relaxed and in a better mood after they spend some time tapping.

The best way to get started with your weight loss journey is to take 15 minutes to begin tapping right now on whatever is causing you stress or anxiety, whether or not it seems related to your weight. Just imagine waking up in the not-so-distant future and feeling great in your body. What would that be like?

Every moment you spend tapping counts, so take the time now to learn the tapping points and practice the process for long enough to feel a shift.

Trust me—if I can lose weight with tapping, and my clients can lose weight with tapping, you can, too!