

EFT Eliminates Unnecessary Emotions and Softens the Grieving Process

I am a hospice social worker and grief therapist. Before I used EFT I spent a lot of hours hoping I was making a difference providing grief support. It's a proven fact that people that are grieving need to tell their stories so that they can process their grief, but this is slow work. And even though I am skilled in helping someone step through the wilderness of grief, I often felt like I wasn't really helping that much. When I started using EFT on all my grieving clients I saw a remarkable change in everyone involved.

I am often asked, "Why would you use EFT on grief?" For some reason, there is a belief that we must suffer if we really loved someone who died. There are racks of books about recovering from grief, and its slow process. Elisabeth Kubler-Ross tells us that we'll experience different stages; from denial, anger, bargaining, depression and then eventually acceptance. But the books often forget about regret, old hurt feelings, guilt, hate, shame, feelings of letting the person down, unspoken words, and a myriad of other emotions that assault us when someone we love dies.

Recovering from the loss of someone we love is a difficult task and it doesn't completely go away with tapping. But in my experience EFT removes the unnecessary emotions that can inflict terrible pain and suffering and lengthen the time it takes to recover by eliminating those unnecessary emotions with EFT. Grief can be softened.

Sara was a mother of twin boys, 3 years old. She worked part-time at the local grocery store and had been happily married for 5 years until her father died unexpectedly. After his death Sara had quit her job, left her boys at the babysitters all day long and stopped having anything to do with her husband. I met Sara 2 months after her father died. Her husband was threatening to leave her and she had heard that hospice might help her with the grief of her father. Sara came to her first appointment wearing baggy clothes, dirty, greasy hair covered with a ball cap, looking down at the floor with no eye contact. She had obviously been crying.

I told Sara a little about EFT and how it works, but I kept it short because I could see the emotional pain she was in. Grieving people are usually dehydrated, from lack of self care, so I gave her a 20 ounce bottle of water. I asked her to drink half of it. She complied without question. I asked her to tell me a little about why she was seeing me and she immediately started to cry. I asked her to measure her SUD's level and she stated it was a 10+. We started tapping. I asked her to follow along as I tapped but it was obvious that she wasn't going to be able to, so I asked her permission to tap on her. She agreed.

KC Point: Even though I am so sad, sadness consumes my thoughts, my sadness is so big that I don't know if I will ever recover, even though I am so sad I totally and profoundly accept myself.

KC Point: Even though this sadness is so deep, this sadness about my father's death, this sadness can't be described, this sadness is never going to go away. Even though I feel this way, I totally and profoundly love myself and honor my journey as I sit here today.

EB Sadness around my father's death.

CE This sadness that threatens to consume me.

UE Sadness, I am so sad I can't breath.

UN This sadness, it means I really loved my Dad.

UL how can I live without my father in my life?

CB My father was everything, nothing was more important than my father.

UA This sadness about my father's death; I loved my father very much.

LV This sadness stops me from loving anyone else.

WR This sadness keeps me from my children and my husband.

CR I can't stop being so sad.

She started to take some deep breaths and relax. We did another round, giving her permission to let some of this terrible heavy sadness go.

When we finished, I had her take a deep breath and a drink of water. She was no longer crying and looked a little less tortured. Her SUD's level was a 5.

I asked, other than the fact that your father is gone what major emotion can you identify that is causing this terrible sadness? Her face turned red and she said she was so guilty for not spending more time with her Dad. He had called the day before his heart attack and asked if she would bring the boys over and spend the day with him but she had just finished work and had a dirty house to clean, so she told him she was too busy. She said she just couldn't forgive herself for being so thoughtless. Her SUD's level on guilt was a 10.

We started tapping. This time she was more in control and she tapped on herself.

KC Point: Even though I am so guilty, I let my father down. It makes me so sad that I didn't recognize that was the last time I would talk to him. Guilt now defines who I am. I was really tired and my house was a mess and my boys were crabby, but I should have gone to see my father. Even though I feel this intense guilt and sadness I totally and profoundly love myself.

KC Point: I am so guilty. I knew my father wanted me to come over but I didn't take the time. I didn't know he was going to die. He and I planned to get together the next weekend; I didn't do it when he asked. I probably caused his heart attack. This guilt and sadness is consuming my life and even though I feel this way I totally and profoundly honor myself for coming to this grief session.

KC Point: I'm so guilty. I can't look anyone in the eye. How could I have let my father down? I'm so sad. I don't deserve anyone in my life. My husband and children don't want my love. I wish I had just gone over to see him. Guilt will be mine forever more. I should have known he would have a heart attack. We always had such a great time together. I'm so guilty I didn't know. Even though I feel guilty that I didn't drop everything and go see my Dad, I totally and profoundly love myself.

EB I am so guilty. How could I have been so thoughtless?

CE This guilt that haunts my life.

UE My Dad expected me to drop everything, and I should have.

UN He had called before, just to see what I was up to.

UL Sometimes we just talked, he said he understood when I was too busy, and we made other plans.

CB I should have known, but he wasn't sick; but I still should have known.

UA I can see the future concerning everything else. Why didn't I know he would die the next day?

LV Guilt is making me drive my husband away. I should have known my Dad was going to die.

WR Even though I made plans with my Dad and he knew how much I loved getting together with him, I didn't go to see him and he died.

CR He was a great Dad. I have so many wonderful memories.

We stopped and I had her take another deep breath and blow it out. Her face was looking so much more relaxed. Her guilt was at a 2. We started again

KC Point: I loved my Dad. He was a great guy. I think I could let go of some of this guilt if I knew he was OK with me not coming over that day. I think I might be able to forgive myself. My Dad knew that I really loved him. Even though right now I still have a 2 guilt inside me I totally and profoundly love and accept myself.

KC Point: I think I can let go of this 2 guilt. He knew how much I loved him. I loved my Dad and I can replace the guilt that has been blocking my vision with funny memories of him and me. I believe I am ready to forgive myself and embrace the love that I have for my father and with that love show myself the love he would have given me if he was here. I am ready to release all of the remaining guilt and I totally and profoundly love myself.

EB All the remaining guilt;

CE I'm letting it all go.

UE I'm letting any remaining guilt go.

UN I loved my Dad and guilt has no place in my life when I remember him.

UL All the remaining guilt is eliminated and replaced with his love.

CB Any remaining guilt; I release it, it does not serve me.

UA I am washed with the love of my father.

LV I release any remaining guilt and fill my heart with love.

WR I wash my body with warm love and know that I will share this love with my family the way my father did before.

CR Love flows through me from the top of my head to the tips of my toes. Love flows up through my feet, filling my body with comfort, and flows out the top of my head spreading through to everyone that I meet. Love flows into me providing comfort to my heart and through me to give comfort.

I had Sara take a deep breath and slowly blow it out. Sara was now smiling and had a definite glow about her. I asked her about her guilt and she sat dumbfounded, she said not only could she not find the emotional trigger she couldn't even spell the word now.

We talked a little about her experience with EFT and she was delighted. Her feeling of loss with the death of her father was not gone but now she wasn't torturing herself about something she couldn't have predicted or controlled. She was anxious to finish her appointment, she said she owed her husband and kids a big hug and some extra special love and she wanted to get right to it.

Two months later Sara came in for a follow up appointment. She was beautiful, no more hiding under the ball cap and ill fitting clothes. She had good eye contact and looked like a different person. Though it had been difficult for her getting used to her father not being there, she said after she got rid of the guilt she was able to cope much better. She filled her heart with wonderful memories of him and initiated sharing those memories with her loved ones. She found that her husband was a wonderful source of support and she was seeing her father in her little boy's everyday.

Four months later she called to say she was expecting, very excited, and wanted to make an appointment to address morning sickness; but that's another story.

EFT eliminated guilt, an unnecessary emotion from Sara's grief. It allowed her to experience her grief as a process of adjustment rather than something that has to be suffered through. It also allowed her to see the wonderful love that she had shared with her father, and with that strength she would recover. In my experience it's never too early to use EFT on grief, and the people who do use it recover faster in a healthy loving way.

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