

# EFT In The Classroom

Introduction EFT tapping techniques to a school group of 27 children

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**D**uring a recent networking meeting, I gave a presentation about my work with EFT.

A teacher of an elementary school asked me, "Could this EFT also be a good thing for using in school?" That is a great question, as I know EFT, I am sure it will be so good in schools!

Elmie, the teacher, brings the idea to start EFT to her school board and gets the green light! I can get started with a group of 27 children of eight

to nine years old, group 5a.

I call the project: **Emotional health at school with use of EFT, a wondrous beautiful technique!** The aim of the project is to strengthen the self-esteem and emotional resilience of the children, thereby increasing their ability to learn. All learning has an element of taking risks and that creates tension. The safer children feel in the group and with themselves, the more risk they dare to take.

The build-up of the project is to first focus on the group, belonging together as a group. That will give mutual support and leads to harmony. 27 children are one group. My task is to come back later with a group of twenty-seven children, who all may be themselves and still all belong together.

It is not new to this group to focus on strengthening the coherence and the sense of security in the group. The children also have learned to massage each other. I find myself in a great school that offers the children more than 'school learning'. EFT fits in nicely.

I start the project as a pilot project. I have my enthusiasm, my faith in EFT and what it can do for a group and for the children individually. But, I'm not a teacher; I'm a child therapist and normally work one on one with children. A group of 27 children is really a new experience.

After an initial interview with the interim and deputy director, I start with a letter and an information evening for the parents, about EFT and the project. During the evening, parents experience EFT! Of course it is a challenge for parents to tap along -but they do it. Reactions vary. The parents say, "we are going from feeling it working and being surprised, to not feeling a difference, being too busy to follow". And that is allowed;"not feeling it yet is ok too", I say.

Then I start with the group. The first thing is to let the children experience the cohesion of the group and improve confidence in the group.

EFT and breathing belong to each other. I use the Hoberman sphere (a special ball) in my practice as a child therapist, to support abdominal breathing. I have several of these balls and take them to the school. That is, and remains, a success. Before we start, I put three balls on the table. The children are fascinated by them and take them in their hands and practise breathing with them. We practise calm breathing into the belly; your belly is fat - and back out - your belly is thin. At the beginning, that is not so simple. "I do it the other way around", is, at first, a common claim. I immediately leave one of the balls behind, in the classroom.

Later, more and more kids let me know that now they can breath to their belly. They experience, with the balls, the inhaling and exhaling to make themselves calm. The group can also be calm with each other by evenly breathing in and

out, as a child in front of the group opens and closes the ball.

I am inspired by my experience with the assignment in the AMT's EFT Master Practitioner course. Tap for a group entity. Therefore we start with the question: 'Together we are a group, and if that group would be a being, what creature would it be?' To find the fitting creature, the question is: 'What is special about this group?'

The kids respond with: 'sometimes we are busy and noisy', 'we are kind to each other', 'we laugh very much', 'we help each other if someone does not understand something or is sad.' They name all kinds of creatures and, by voting, they come to: 'If the group would be a being, it would be the elephant!'

Then they learn the tapping and we address it to the elephant. The setup is: 'I am a great kid and belong to this group and the teacher. I belong to the elephant'. They take three breaths in and out, stating this three times. We talk about what makes the elephant happy and tap along together. The elephant will be happy and excited when we take care of each other, if we all belong to the group, if we do our best on learning, say nice things, work together, if everybody is allowed to play along, and more.

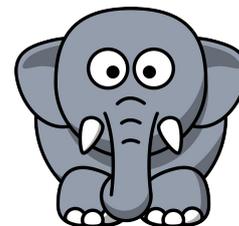
The children learn tapping, which, of course, is something new and strange at first. There are, however, children who indicate that they already know the tapping points. At home, they have heard about the project from their parents, who have read the information or came to the information evening. I am glad and find it fascinating that it is directly passed on to the children. Not every child is following the tapping right away, but because we all belong to the elephant and the elephant is happy when we have respect for each other, it is ok. And being together, the part of the group that is tapping helps the other children borrow benefits.

After some tapping, I ask what is it that they feel? 'Nothing', the first boy states out loud.. and then another child says: 'I feel calm at some point', another: 'I feel calm - a bit tired even...', 'it is a bit like yoga', 'you can close your eyes with it'... The whole group noticed that they really got worked up with the Tarzan point. We agreed on tapping on that more gently, next time.

After the first start, the group made a start with a mood board about the elephant and then they made a limerick:

**The elephant  
The elephant is our class  
That we have only just discovered  
We are all belonging together  
That makes the elephant happy  
We put him in our backpack**

**De olifant  
De olifant is onze klas  
Dat ontdekte wij pas  
Wij horen er allemaal bij  
Dat maakt de olifant zo blij  
We stoppen hem in onze rugtas**



Every time I meet the group for a session, we start with the setup: 'I am a great kid and belong to the other kids and the teacher. I belong to the elephant!' three times and we breathe gently in and out.

## **Evolving the program.**

We do work around tension (I prefer to speak with children about tension instead of stress) and emotions. I assist the children with EFT in learning to understand feelings and how

to deal with and express them. So they learn when and how they can use EFT within the group, with each other and use it for themselves.

I start work around feelings with pictures like this: 'What can you see on it?'

'That it is difficult', 'Working on something that is very hard'. I ask, 'where can you feel that?' Things they mention are: 'In my heart', 'in my head', 'in my tummy'.

We talk about tension. What is it, tension? 'Then it is very busy inside you', 'all kind of thoughts are in your head', and 'you cannot concentrate'. 'When do you feel that?' I ask. 'When there is a table test or lecture in front of the class'. We tap on tension and the feelings, emotions and thoughts and what they want to feel. The teacher will do EFT with them too, before tests they have to complete.

Then we go and work on emotions, such as sad, angry, afraid, happy, self-conscious, and their feelings and words. I start with an activity whereby the group performs an emotion that they choose out of two opposites. Two children, (not knowing which of two feelings is chosen) and I, stand in front with our backs to the group and feel what is in the energy of the classroom. It was amazing how children can express their feeling inside. 'Soft squeezings are felt in my arms', a boy says while the whole group presents the happy feeling. Sad feeling is felt in the hands. Fear in the tummy. Prickling and tingling in hands and fingers were mentioned too. The children loved this activity. Not only were the children in front expressing their feelings. but also all the other children are expressing and experiencing different feelings.

We tap on rounds of tension, on bad and sad feelings and self-consciousness. We also talk about sharing feelings with others, not just the unpleasant ones, but also the happy ones.

We come to the point that we are one group: the elephant has 27 children, who all belong together, but also are themselves and that is allowed. Now we start with the heart-healing position and the setup is: 'I am who I am and I am a good kid , I am ok. I belong to the elephant', breathing in and out and stating this three times. A set-up that, even without the tapping, works to connect.

At the last session, we look back and talk about experiences. It is remarkable that the children, who at first were not so involved, become more and more present and interactive. We talk about what they have learned and these are their responses: 'we learned about feelings and tapping -that we were not tense when we had a test because we tapped -that I can feel insight if I feel happy or sad, or mad or afraid.'

Is it not wonderful when you are eight or nine, and have got this in your backpack already?

As a last activity I let two children team up and give a demonstration of tapping as a team, on how you can help your friend. I made instruction cards with what to say and for them to fill in. It is wonderful to see how they just pick up on this.

### Summing up my experience.

Tapping and breathing ensure relaxation. From relaxation there is more cohesion. Children experience a safe environment and can focus on acting adequately in the situation, both in schoolwork and in dealing with themselves and others. With EFT tapping, we learn to start focusing on

the group, the elephant, on all belonging together. We work on feelings of tension, anger and sadness and also address happiness and other positives.

Your feelings can help you to know what is going on for you. If you know what is there and you have learned and experienced that you have the ability to help yourself, or ask for help, then that creates resilience. Then you know what comes with tension also goes. You can process nasty or even overwhelming experiences faster. You build up confidence in yourself and in others.

That is emotional health!

The information flyer the children get at the end of the project may, in fact, be seen as a summary of the experiences they have learned on the project so far.

### Follow up for the project.

This coming school year I am able to carry on with the project, still as a pilot but to make a solid foundation to follow.

What I learnt from this first trial is: I have to provide the teachers with more information, knowledge and experiences of EFT. This increases the possibility to work between sessions and makes transfer in the group, during the week, stronger. At the start, it is useful to have material to use with the group, to hang in the classroom. I develop instruction cards for the children to use on their own, or as a team. The length of concentration of the group is 20 minutes maximum, so that is a challenge. It is important to keep the meetings short and sweet.

Six meetings over eight weeks to start, is a minimum. A follow-up is planned for later in the year.

To be continued!

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**GREAT, CANNOT BE BETTER**  
I FEEL IT... (where)  
IT FEELS... (how)

**GOOD**  
I FEEL IT.. (where)  
IT FEELS.. (how)

**I FEEL CALM**  
I FEEL IT.. (where)  
IT FEELS... (how)

**I FEEL MMMMMMAH**  
I FEEL IT.. (where)  
IT FEELS.. (how)

**I FEEL DREARY**  
I FEEL IT... (where)  
IT FEELS.. (how)

**I FEEL TERRIBLY GRIM**  
I FEEL IT.. (where)  
IT FEELS.. (how)

**How do you feel?**  
It is as it is.  
Of course not all is nice.

Feeling inside can help you, to know what is going on for you.

What do you feel inside?  
How does it feel?  
Soft, prickly, itchy, tingly, cold, loose, strong, magical, poor, red or blue....  
All words coming up to you, for naming your feelings, are fine. It is as how you feel it!

Tapping can help to feel calm and well as things are difficult, and even better than that!

Tap softly around and say:  
I feel.. I feel it... It feels ...  
I think.. I would like..  
And say too:

I am a great kid,  
I can do a lot and..  
I am allowed to ask for help if necessary.

That, I will not forget!

Breathe calmly in and out