

Cross Cultural Newsletter

“Energy Psychology: EFT (Emotional Freedom Technique)

“It’s applications and efficacies, a critical examination”
18th July 2014



Painting of Niulang and Zhinü in the *Long Corridor of the Summer Palace* in Beijing.
“Qixi” (“Qiqiao”) Festival or “Double Seventh” Festival – Romantic festival due to be celebrated on 2 August, 2014. (7th day of 7th month Chinese calendar)

Dear Members,

Once again, we had a fully packed house for last night’s meeting. More than 70 of our members attended. The topic for the evening was **EFT and other Matters**. The speaker was **Ingo Lambrecht, Senior Psychologist**. The following is just a summary of what transpired. It has neither details nor accurate portrayal of Ingo’s presentation. Please consult the full DVD for details.

Ingo began his talk by a pre-cautionary remark that, as with any new technique awaiting for confirmation via clinical trials, the practitioner needs to be judicious in the application. With this, he shared his knowledge and experience under several major headings : **an introduction regarding his experience; the history of EFT; recent evidences for efficacy; Frequently asked questions (FAQ) ; the practice and practice procedures; Demonstration of the techniques ; Issues and problems in practice; Sage (wisdom) of Practice; and training sites for EFT.**

Ingo has 12 years of **experience** and found that the most clinically effective areas for **EFT** are in anxiety or cases of emotional trauma. However, he cautioned that **EFT** is only a technique and should form part of a holistic treatment package for clients.

The **history of development of EFT** stems from the Oriental concept of Qi and meridians. It is similar to acupuncture but utilises, being less invasive, acupressure techniques. In the West, **EFT** started in the 1980s with **Roger Callanhan**. Others include **Gary Craig**, and **David Feinstein (2000)** who registered this technique in the States.

The theory for its effectiveness started with the oriental concept that emotions are regulated by **Qi (energy)** flowing in meridians. Negative emotions cause a disruption of the body’s flow, leading to stagnation and symptoms. Therefore the target of treatment is not solely focussed on the traumatic memory which is often suppressed, but at the disrupted flow. (It is the negative emotions that prevented adequate processing of traumatic memories). **The advantage over other trauma therapies is that the client does not have to go through all details of the traumatic events.** A method to unblock these flows, unlike the more invasive acupuncture, is to tap on the acupressure points. To follow on from this theory, the application of **EFT** is wide, including negative emotions ranging from daily experiences to major illnesses. However, experience so far is that the more focussed the issue, the better the response.

As to current **evidences for efficacy**, Ingo said that as with all forms of currently acceptable practices, techniques began with anecdotal evidence and ending with clinical trials. Currently, (2007 and more recent ones), clinical trials of **EFT** have shown efficacy when compared with other forms (e.g. 90 % effective vs 63% for CBT). Again, Ingo stressed that these were preliminary findings.

With the above, Ingo highlighted some **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)** including **where to tap**; whether there is any difference between the **sequence of meridian points** that are tapped; whether these points are really necessary; and how to reframe such oriental theories in the light of **western neurophysiological understandings** .

With the first question, Ingo felt that the site **where one taps seems important (i.e. meridian points)**. But he thought that the sequencing of the points tapped might be more flexible. Ingo then tried to reframe the oriental theory in the light of **neuro-hormonal changes**—tapping releases endorphins and drop in the **stress hormone (cortisol) levels (up to 30 %)**. Neuro-imaging also reveals that the **amygdala** (brain nucleus responsible for most negative emotions) showed a **“calming effect”** on the latter. **Whole brain imaging (MRI)** has shown quieting down of the hypersensitive brain areas after a course of **EFT**. Again Ingo cautioned that imaging only shows instantaneous responses and not long term effects.

With all the above queries answered, Ingo brought home issues relating to **actual practice**. He laid out **the steps in the traditional EFT practice** viz setting of **start-up problem statement** (targeting where the emotion is); **rating** standard units of distress (SUD); **sequencing of tapping**; **re-test SUD**; and **repeat of the above steps**. **Sequencing of tapping started on meridian points on top of the head, then around eye region, the nose, upper lip, chin, collar bone; “sore points” on chest; the fingers and wrists. (For details of the points, please refer to DVD)**. Having expounded on these technical issues, Ingo then demonstrated effectively with the audience how EFT is practised. (Please again consult the DVD for details). **The most important one is formulating the “statement”**. Ingo shared a formula with the audience: - **“Even though I am (statement of the emotional issues), I am deeply and completely able to accept myself”**

With the practice issues behind, Ingo highlighted **common issues and problems encountered**, including client reluctance; the use of other techniques to facilitate such as the movie technique (cartoon techniques) and visual techniques such as by asking the client to visually shrink the size of traumatic memories. **Other complicating factors** affecting efficacy include lack of hydration (rehydrate); less than optimal use of taps (excessive harsh or under-tapping); too vague a general statement; inability of practitioner to follow the lead from the first statement and explore those hidden ones revealed by such first statements and feelings to explore ultimately the real issues; the presence of secondary gains; and a second problem or belief interfering with progress.

Finally, Ingo gave a **Sage’s wisdom on the practice of EFT** : Be aware of one’s own scope of practice; consider risk and safety issues ; and be prepared to consult, inform and refer on. His final words are **EFT** is a healing technique for all people. It can be used in clients having a variety of problems, from simple to complex mental health issues; and that **“energy psychology”** as **EFT** is known in the west, still remains in its infancy. Lastly he informed the audience of where to train. (Please consult DVD)

The meeting did not end until 2030 hours with Ingo being bombarded by questions and discussions from the audience. The DVD should be out in the next two weeks.

Thank you again for your incessant support. On behalf of our Group, I look forward to seeing you in our next meeting,

S Wong

For Cross Cultural Interest Group

HIGHLIGHT OF FUTURE PRESENTATIONS

In September, Dr Nada Baba-Milkic will give us an overview of EPI services in Singapore.

Late September or October Dr Aram Kim will give us an update on developments in psycho-pharmaco-therapy for Asians.

Flyers due out in August!!



Ramadan, fasting month, occurs in July

Commonwealth Games, Glasgow, 24th July to 3rd August

For a more accurate rendition of the presentation, please request the DVD from Diane Evans at dianee@adhb.govt.nz (please send \$2 stamps to help cover costs)

For ADHB staff, previous newsletters and flyers can be viewed on the Intranet – click on this link http://adhb.intranet/Mental_Health/Resources/CrossCulture.htm