

## Tapping and Describing

In addition to EFT, the Emotional Freedom Techniques, there are some other techniques that also address negative feelings, sensations, discomforts and emotions. One of them is a standalone technique that is called **the Describing Technique**, which can also be used with or alongside EFT.

Around about 1990, I accidentally found that describing a current feeling, emotion or sensation can reduce its intensity or completely remove it. It all started when I was working with a client and was seeking to get the exact wording of a current feeling or emotion for use in the **Traumatic Incident Reduction technique** (TIR). The TIR has some similarity with EFT (as “telling the story” is part of it).

I asked my client to describe to me the feeling/emotion exactly as it is right now. It soon vanished and, thus, I couldn't use it in TIR. At first, I thought that the feeling might be “going into hiding.” In the following sessions, it happened again several times, reducing the intensity to zero most times.

Over the next few years, I experimented by getting clients to describe their feelings, sensations and emotions and I gradually put together the Describing Technique. It became my primary technique and I finally documented it in 1996 (and still have a copy). I used it through the nineties with over 80% successes (in my then part time practice). It worked effectively (partly or fully) with most things, such as headaches, anxieties, worries, pains, pressures, etc.

### The Describing Technique

The Describing Technique has one objective. It consists of getting a client to describe *a current emotion, feeling, sensation or physical discomfort* exactly as it is *right now*. It helps the client (with some support) to become more Present and to be the Observer.

This requires *relevant* and *suitable* questions or directives **such as** some or more of these questions, **but, not** necessarily in this order, **not** all of them as listed, and there can be **other options**:

*Where exactly is it (in your body)? or Where do you feel it?*

*How intense is it right now? (0 – 10?), and maybe Is the intensity the same all the way through?*

*OK, describe it to me (in detail) and, if needed, help by asking questions to get details.*

*How does it feel right now? or What does it feel like? if appropriate.*

*How big is it? or What is its size?*

*Describe its shape (in detail)? and, maybe, ask questions to help or to clarify.*

*Does it have a colour? What colour is it? More than one colour?*

*Is it doing anything right now (while you're observing it)?*

*How dense (or solid) is it right now? Same all the way through it?*

*Is it painful at all? OK, describe that to me.*

*Does it have a temperature? Is it hot or cold or similar?*

*What does it look like (now)? OK, tell me what you see.*

*What's it doing right now (as you observe it)?*

*Has it moved at all? or “Is it moving (now)?”*

*If it's on the move, just watch and describe it moving as it happens (like a running commentary).*

*If suspected: Has it changed since we started? If so: OK, Describe the change and/or How it is now?*

*Is it doing anything at all right now? such as Is it Shifting? Contracting? Changing? or Moving?*

*Is the denseness (or shape or size or colour, etc.) the same as it was earlier?*

*Is it trying to tell you something? and/or Does it have a message for you? (but, don't ask this early on).*

*And, at appropriate times, ask: What is it doing right now? and/or “Has it changed or shifted?”*

*and/or “Is it exactly the same now?” and maybe, “What's different about it now?” and so on.*

The **often used questions** are: *Describe it? Where? How big? or Size? How does it feel? Shape? How dense? Colour? Doing anything right now? and Changed? or shifted? or moved?*

It can sometimes be very helpful to *also* give the client some *feedback* to *verify, clarify* or *check* if it's still the same or what has occurred or what is happening now. When something has clearly changed or shifted, start again (*newly* and *freshly* as if never done before)!

There can be other questions, of course, depending on what is there and what's going on, and maybe some intuitive questions as well. But, also *know when to be quiet* and just wait for a while and be 100% present. Maybe, after a while, gently ask something like "What's happening now?"

When the shape, size, intensity, position or colour of it has changed or it has moved to another place in the body (which can happen quickly sometimes), then *start again freshly* in a new moment of now, a new beginning.

Strange things can happen sometimes, but not that often. The shape or appearance of a pain or discomfort or sensation can occasionally be unusual (to say the least). For example, a headache may have a box shape or a recognizable shape such as a cylinder or it may even be a perfectly round ball. Sometimes, it shrinks and gets smaller and smaller and then finally disappears. Or, it may gradually or quickly move around the person's body. And, sometimes, it gradually moves down or up or even moves out of the body. Energy is interesting stuff.

A fundamental aim of describing feelings (in this way) is to be the Observer and to be Aware of and Notice what is manifesting or being sent as a message in this moment. The person's thinking, analysing or judging tends to lessen and sometimes, after a while, there's no thinking or analysing at all. Describing helps the person to be present and tuned into the sensation/feeling and often to gradually or quickly cease resisting it.

### Some common ground

The Describing Technique has only one primary target of interest. On the other hand, EFT also addresses emotions, sensations, feelings, pains, worries, memories *plus* a LOT more!

When the Describing Technique is being used, it brings the feelings and sensations into focus, which helps to separate them out (if applicable) and to be more specific. The Describing Technique helps the client to be an Observer of "what is."

Since I came across EFT in the year 2000, there has been some EFT'ers who have used and shared some similar describing questions when applying EFT. These contributions included describing *pain* in detail or some *emotional discomfort* or a *physical issue* or similar and then tapping on each of the specific sensations or feelings or phenomena that make it up. This works very well and helps a lot.

Any feeling, emotion, sensation or discomfort can be observed, described and/or tapped on.

EFT and the Describing technique are separate techniques and the approaches are different. However, they both share some *common ground*. They can both focus on and address physical sensations, negative energy, emotions, feelings, pains or discomforts that are manifesting.

## Uses of Describing

The Describing Technique is not a replacement of EFT in any way. In this context, it's a supportive or partner technique that can be very useful when needed.

EFT is so effective that the Describing Technique isn't needed a lot. However, there are times when it can be very useful and effective. The following are some times, places or circumstances when the use of the Describing Technique may be suitable.

The Describing Technique may help by identifying things that are *more specific*, which can then be tapped on individually. The describing helps to narrow it down, establish the various specifics and it may also reveal the main ones to work on, which can now be handed over to EFT.

When progress in an EFT session is slow or has stalled or the client is overwhelmed, apply the Describing Technique and/or *alternate* the Tapping with the Describing (which may help the client to become more present and more able to observe what is happening).

The Describing Technique can be *self-applied* anywhere and anytime where you're not being interrupted, such as at work with a headache, or feeling nervous about doing something, or can't go back sleep during a night, or up in a plane and feeling very anxious.

There may be times when in a particular hospital room (or some other place) you can't do any tapping for one reason or another, but you can do some gentle describing.

A new client may have some reservations about EFT, which to him/her seems rather strange. It may be best to use Describing to start with and then introduce EFT along the way after some progress or a noticeable shift has occurred.

The Describing Technique doesn't usually work as fast as EFT does, but it has a long history of reducing the intensity of feelings and discomforts. Sometimes, however, a current feeling or sensation can rapidly fade away to nothing.

The Describing Technique can also be gently used "over coffee" with a someone who has a personal problem and s/he may not even notice that such the technique has been used but feels a lot better.

The Describing Technique is a useful and effective technique and well worth having up your sleeve. If you haven't done it before, then experience it and you'll be amazed.

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