

TEEN WELL BEING

A Handbook for Optimal Living
by Consummate Health

**REDUCE ANXIETY
and
INCREASE CALM**

PRACTICAL ADVICE |
STRATEGIES | EXERCISES

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INDICATORS OF A LACK OF CALM

You feel uneasy and worried for no specific reason

You can't concentrate

You'd like to improve your circumstances and life experiences, but have no idea how

Anxiety makes you physically sick and unable to function well (you experience dizziness, sweaty palms, stammering in public, headaches, nausea or loss of appetite)

You under-perform due to being anxious

You find it hard to enjoy life on a consistent basis

You wear yourself out with constant thinking

You self-criticise a lot

”

I feel stressed out if I don't have my phone or computer next to me

”

”

I don't really like thinking about the future

”

”

Sure, it would be good to hang out with my friends, but I don't feel like reaching out today

”

I can't 'switch off' my brain. The same thoughts seem to be on a non-stop loop.

”

LACK OF CALM

Anyone can feel nervous, apprehensive or uneasy when facing a new or challenging experience. Sitting down to exams, going out with new people, participating in a sports competition or public speaking. The anxiety felt in these situations is part of a normal stress response designed to help us deal with a tense or anxious situation; to tackle it head-on.

What happens if this stress response doesn't improve things but actually makes circumstances worse? If rather than spurring you on to success your nervousness causes you to fail or even freeze?

Or a feeling of anxiety, worry and dread lingers on after the event for no reason?

This handbook is designed to help you explore these situations and feelings, and outlines strategies and techniques that can assist in overcoming them.

WHAT RESULTS CAN I EXPECT TO SEE WITH THE CORRECT SUPPORT?

As individuals we differ in our response to support and intervention because we are unique. The tools suggested here have been selected based either on scientific evidence, their wide and successful use in clinical practice, or both. All have been chosen for their ease of use.

Results will depend on the extent and duration of experiences, as well as general health, environmental and social factors. With regular practise of exercises and techniques, and by implementing a few of the simple lifestyle recommendations, changes can usually be noticed in 2-4 weeks.

When shifts occur, exercises and techniques can be changed, used differently or gradually stopped. It's a way to adapt the techniques to your own pace and personality.

If you're unsure of your experiences in any way, or suspect an underlying physical or medical condition it's important to seek further healthcare provider or medical advice.

Do not stop prescribed medication without medical supervision.



STEP BY STEP GUIDE TO REDUCE ANXIETY & INCREASE CALM

STEP 1 **Become Aware**

Take time to get in touch with how you're feeling and become aware of surrounding circumstances. Awareness is the first step towards change.

STEP 2 **Accept**

Don't self-criticise or expect yourself to behave differently. Start by accepting yourself, the behaviour that you're enacting and the situation. Try not to judge or analyse, but see that this is how things are at the present moment.

STEP 3 **Take Action**

Awareness and acceptance build a launch pad for action.

You will find techniques, strategies and tips in this guide to help you understand behaviours and to effect change. Read through the guide and review the Action Plan. Choose one self care exercise that seems easiest for you to follow and start to practise it every day.

Be consistent. A little every day is better than more infrequently.

STEP 4 **Check In**

5-7 days after starting an exercise, assess your progress. Take 5 minutes or so to complete the Check In. Do this every 5 days, and refer back to previous Check In results to monitor changes in your feelings and actions.

STEP 5 **Keep Going...**

Review the feedback based on your Check In.

Choose another self care exercise from the Action Plan and add it to your routine, or follow the recommendations based on your Check In.



BECOME AWARE OF CIRCUMSTANCES

Anxiety and fear elicit strong physiological responses in our body. This intrinsic autonomic (automatic) set of responses protects us and enables us to survive. It's the 'fight or flight' mechanism that naturally prepares us for action in the face of danger or some sort of threat.

We sharpen our focus and heighten alertness under these circumstances to best ensure survival. Fear, anxiety and similar emotions inform us that danger is present and prepare us to act. We can choose to freeze on the spot and 'play dead' to deter a predator, to stand up and fight or run away from a threat.

If a tiger starts chasing you these responses can be life saving.

Our bodies are designed to let go of all the tension, come down from the heightened state of alertness and return to a state of calm once the stressful situation has passed. We can chill out and kick back because danger has receded. We feel safe again. Heart palpitations, rapid breathing, shaky legs, sweaty hands, nausea or butterflies in the stomach can now subside.

But what happens if you start to sense danger around every corner where danger doesn't actually exist? Or you hold memories that keep you in a constant state of stress?

Then small incidents can lead to big reactions. You may miss your bus to school and become really annoyed. Your parents may prevent you going out which makes you frustrated or angry. Although neither situation puts your life on the line, your body registers the situation in a 'fight or flight' kind of way. It reacts as if the fearsome tiger is back on the prowl.

The accumulation of daily small stresses has been shown to have a greater impact on health and mental well being than less frequent but bigger stressful events.



ACCEPT

So you get over anxious. What next? Remember fear and anxiety can be an early warning system that allows you to respond to danger or a difficult situation. It can be a signal to self-protect.

Ask yourself two really important questions:

*Am I anxious for a justifiable reason?
Is this feeling trying to tell me something valuable?*

If you answer:

Yes

Respond appropriately to the situation by politely and firmly standing up for yourself, or completely remove yourself from the situation and regroup.

No / I Don't Know

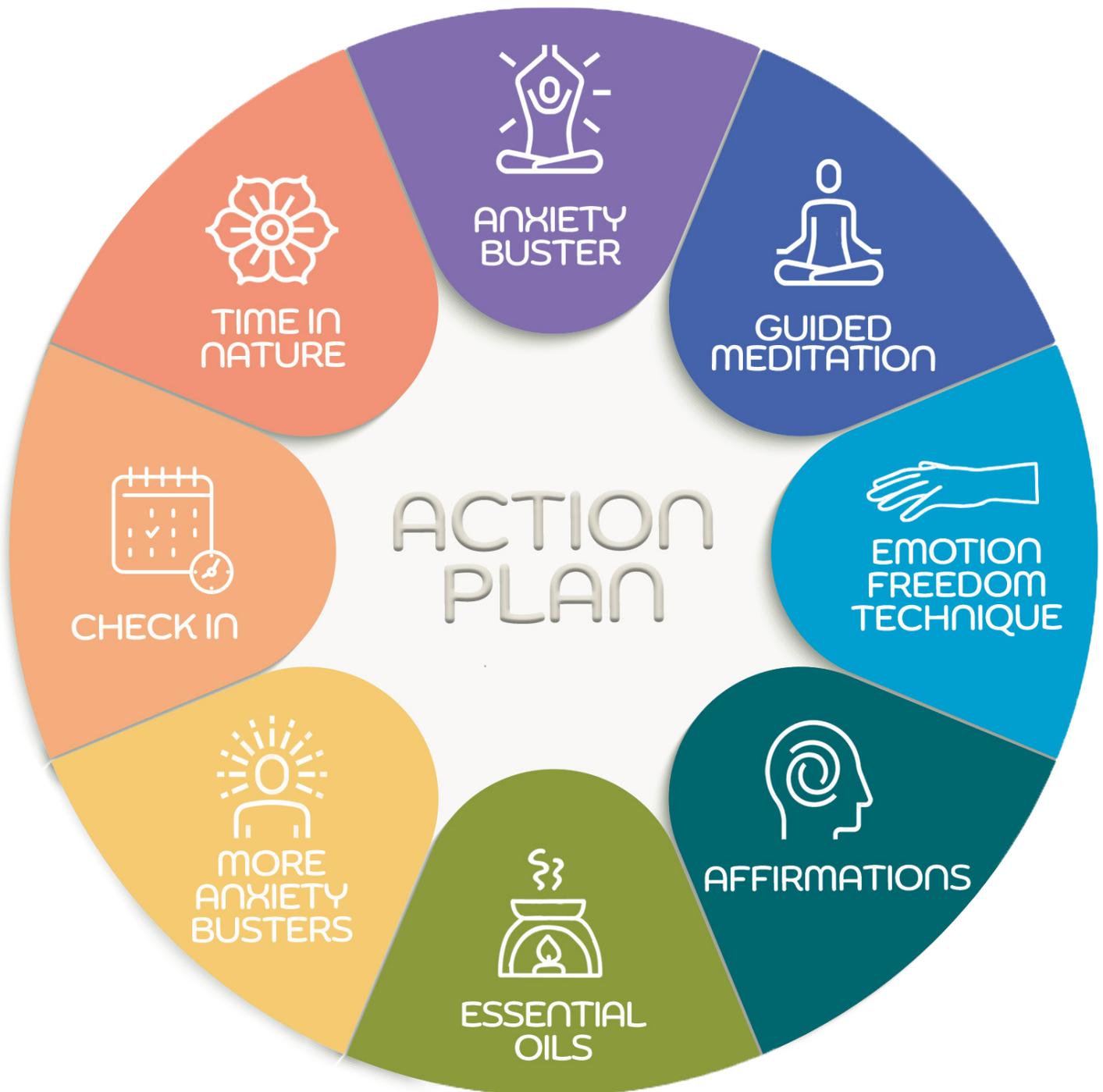
It's time to take immediate action. Start with one of the exercises described in the Action Plan.



TAKE ACTION

Read through this entire booklet then choose one self care exercise from the Action Plan that seems easy for you to follow. Practise and become familiar with it. Then do this exercise every day for 5-7 days.

CALM IN ACTION



MEDITATION

Listen to the De-Stress Guided Meditation that came in your Teen Calm pack.

As 85% of external stimuli is eliminated when your eyes are closed, this is the most effective way to listen to the meditation. With less stimuli to process, your brain doesn't have to work so hard to change its patterns of thinking.

Allow 10-15 minutes for this exercise. Sit somewhere comfortable for you, take a few deep breaths, close your eyes and start listening to the audio.

If initially you find this difficult, the Guided Meditation will still have a positive effect if you have your eyes open. Alternatively, play it in the background while studying, on your computer or device or just lounging around.

Research shows that regular meditation assists physical, mental and emotional health in many different ways and can promote a centred and calm mind.

Start by playing once a day. Over 3-10 days increase to twice per day.

ESSENTIAL OILS

Essential oils have strong therapeutic value and require no real effort to reap the benefits.

An electric oil heater, vaporizer or diffuser makes it simple. Add a few drops of the Teen Calm oil to your chosen heater and leave it to diffuse into the room while studying, socialising, having some downtime and especially when listening to the Guided Meditation.



If you don't have a diffuser or you're on the go, place a few drops of oil onto a handkerchief or tissue, and wave it under your nose as you take 3-4 deep breaths.

Use the Teen Calm Oil daily to help keep you centred and relaxed.

SPEND TIME IN NATURE

Did you know that when you meditate or spend time in nature your brainwaves change? You produce more of a brainwave called alpha. When you stimulate more waves in this band you are still able to think, jog, walk and talk but you feel so much more relaxed while doing so. You feel less anxious.

A predominance of alpha brainwaves is associated with creativity, deductive powers, ideas, solutions, genius, and human intelligence.

How does that sound?

Chopin, a great Polish composer who was born in 1810, used to compose music entirely in his head, during his walks in nature. Within a twenty-minute stroll his next piece of music would be complete - perfectly composed. All he had to do was get it down on paper, for orchestras and pianists to play from. He'd spend weeks after his walks transcribing the piece that already existed, wholly composed, in his mind.

As children, we have a lot of alpha brainwave activity, along with a lot of an even slower brainwaves called theta. Theta brainwaves makes us not just zen but super zen. We produce theta waves on the verge of going to sleep.

As we get older we mostly produce fewer alpha and theta brainwaves throughout the day, which can contribute to feelings of anxiety and stress.

Getting into the great outdoors every day may not possible where you live, but you can spend 15 minutes a day sitting outside, in a park, or community green space, next to a tree or even a plant. Watch clouds in the sky or gaze at stars in the night sky.

Do this consistently and whenever you can, visit more expansive natural places like the beach, nature reserves, parks, lakes or walking trails.



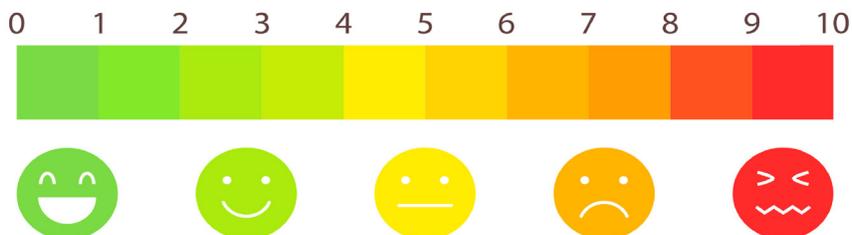
EMOTION FREEDOM TECHNIQUE (EFT)

The traditional form of EFT was founded by Gary Craig and has been used successfully by many to alleviate stress and anxiety, as well as to remove unwanted and self-sabotaging behaviours, even phobias. This tool makes use of acupuncture meridian or energy points to rebalance the body's energy system.

You can choose to do Long EFT or Short EFT. The longer version is really effective but not easy to do subtly in a public place. The short version can be exercised around other people without drawing attention to yourself.

Understanding Long EFT

1. First identify the issue you would like to address and clear away. Often the best place to start is the situation, thought or behaviour causing you the greatest frustration at the moment. Be specific and write this down.
2. Rate your anxiety or state of stress on a scale of one to ten, where one corresponds to a calm, relaxed state and ten is extreme anxiety or concern about your issue.



3. Create a set-up statement or phrase that defines your issue. For example:

"I am anxious when I have to speak out in class."

"I get so frustrated when I am expected to help out at home."

"I hate socializing with my friends at the moment."

"Claire makes me so angry."

"I constantly have a knot in my stomach."

"I am useless at sport."

4. Add 'Even though' to the beginning of your set-up phrase and choose a statement of self-acceptance that gels with you to add at the end.

Examples of self-acceptance statements are:

"I deeply and completely accept myself."

"I'm a good person."

"I like who I am."

"I know that I'm okay."

Here are some examples of how to complete a set-up statement that you can use as a guide to create your own.

From: "I am anxious when I have to speak out in class."

To: "Even though I am anxious when I have to speak out in class,
I like who I am."

From: "I get so frustrated when I am expected to help out at home."

To: "Even though I get so frustrated when I am expected to help out at home,
I know that I'm okay."

Below are further examples of complete sentences:

"Even though I just had a massive argument with my friend,
I deeply and completely accept myself."

"Even though I did badly in my maths exam
I deeply and completely accept myself."

"Even though I'm terrified because my mum is sick, I love myself."

5. During the EFT Tapping Cycle you will repeat to yourself your written affirmation. Read over it a couple of times before starting.

6. It's time for the EFT Tapping Cycle. Read through the technique on the following pages and become familiar with the face and body points. When you're comfortable with the technique, give it a try. It's simple and one cycle will only take a couple of minutes.

Once you have completed your first tapping cycle, take a deep breath and reassess how you feel on the scale of one to ten. If the issue still feels like a problem repeat another cycle.

As you tap, other aspects of the issue you're addressing may pop up. If this happens rethink your affirmation to suit this change and keep going with your tapping cycles until you feel clear of angst, or that the issue has lessened in impact. You can try to do this in one session, or over a week.

After a few tapping cycles you may want to replace your complete self-acceptance phrase with a shorter version known as a reminder phrase.

*"Even though I am anxious when I have to speak out in class,
I like who I am."*

Becomes:

"Even though I am still anxious."

And,

*"Even though I just had a massive argument with my best friend,
I deeply and completely accept myself."*

Becomes:

"Even though I just had a massive argument."

Tap on, repeating the reminder phrase as you do so.

Note: It is important to begin with your complete set-up statement and continue with it for at least two to three tapping cycles before you switch to a reminder phrase.

Long EFT in Action

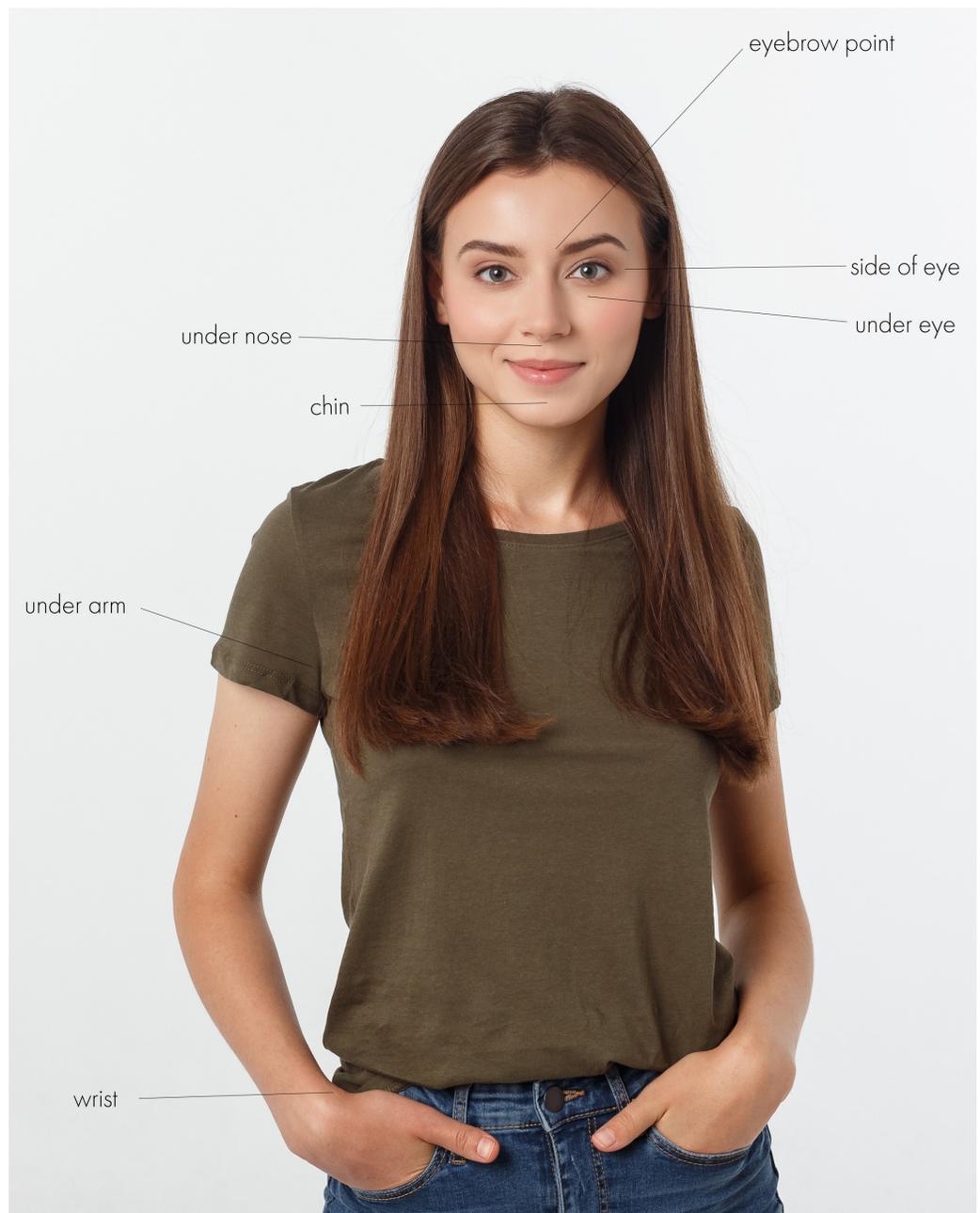
Look at the image below and note the eight points. You will tap each of these points seven to ten times per cycle.

With your dominant hand, use the index and middle finger together to start tapping the first point, the eyebrow, on the dominant side of your body. So if you're right handed, use your right hand to start tapping on the right side of your face. Gently but firmly tap the first spot seven to ten times. Then move onto the second spot, to the side of the eye. Repeat the tapping.

For the first six points you continue to tap on your dominant side.

Switch for the last two EFT points, those under the arm and on the wrist. You now tap the points on your non-dominant side. So the right hand taps under the left arm and then the left wrist.

As you tap repeat to yourself, either out loud or in your mind, your chosen set-up statement.



Short EFT in Action

This is a version of EFT called SET and was created by Dr David Lake and Steve Wells.

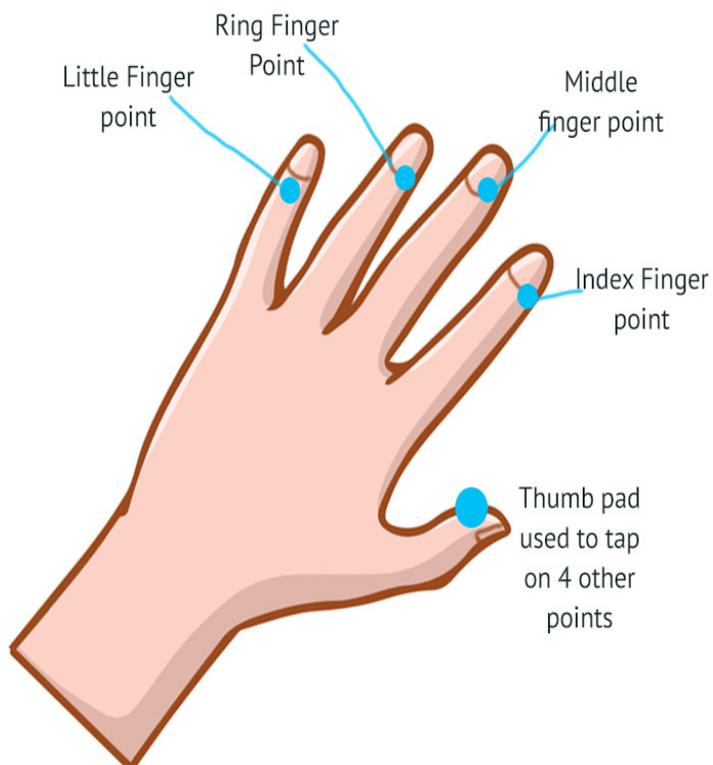
Look at the diagram below to identify the energy points on your hands used in short EFT. Identifying a specific issue is not necessary to this technique.

Use the thumb pad of one hand (dominant or non-dominant) to tap or rub the energy points on the 4 fingers of the same hand. You will start tapping or rubbing the index finger and move down towards the little finger. Tap or rub 2-3 times on each point, located at the side of the fingernail, then move onto the next energy point and repeat. Tap or rub all points 2-3 times to complete one cycle. From the little finger, tap or rub back up towards the index finger, in the same way, to complete another cycle.

Repeat for a minimum of 10 cycles.

The more you tap the better it is – even when talking to others, travelling or involved in other activities.

You can choose a positive statement to associate with the action and repeat it in your mind or out loud as you tap. Otherwise you can use just the tapping alone.



Examples of positive statements are:

“I choose to be calm and relaxed.”

“I have great confidence.”

“My life is amazing.”

“My relationship with my mum is great.”

The beauty of SET is its versatility. You can focus your attention on a specific issue while tapping, or tap automatically while your attention is engaged elsewhere. It's easier to multitask when you tap with SET because one hand is always kept free.

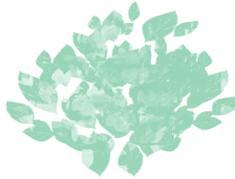
Use the tapping sequence in a general way to help you stay relaxed and 'in tune' with yourself and your life. This way 'bumps in the road' are less likely to show up and make things difficult. Tapping between 30 minutes and 1 hour daily has been shown empirically to help reduce stress levels and stimulate a positive outlook.

Take a few deep breaths after completing several tapping cycles. Tune in and assess any physical changes, shifts in your state of mind or other surfacing or nagging concerns . If you are dealing with a specific issue, carry on tapping until the issue feels resolved. This may involve more than one tapping session and /or a change of your set-up statement at some point.

For a stronger effect switch back and forth between hands every two to three tapping cycles.

ANXIETY BUSTER EXERCISES

After brushing your teeth in the morning and at night, gargle strongly with water for up to 30 seconds before spitting it the water out. This stimulates a large nerve in the body called the vagus nerve, which helps keep you calm and relaxed.



Slowly and gently stroke the back of one hand with the other hand starting at your wrist and finishing at your fingertips. Go from hand to hand using the same calming touch until you start to feel your anxiety dissolve.



Place both hands on opposite shoulders at the same time. Then slowly and softly bring both of your hands all the way down each arm to your wrists at the same time. Take your arms back up to rest on your shoulders and repeat the stroke. Keep doing this until you feel a release of tension.

*One technique, practised consistently
can make a positive difference.*



CHECK IN

It's time to Check In. Every 5 to 7 days, take a few minutes to assess your feelings and behaviours. For each item below, rate your experience from 1 to 5, where 1 is least strongly agree or feel and 5 is most strongly agree or feel. Add together each rating and use the total number to review your progress.

<p>I've experienced fewer physical symptoms of anxiety.</p>	
<p>I've experienced fewer negative and repetitive thoughts this week.</p>	
<p>I am falling asleep easier.</p>	
<p>I enjoyed at least one face to face experience with a friend this week.</p>	
<p>My level of concentration has improved. It was easier to focus on a school project this week.</p>	

TOTAL



KEEP GOING

5-10

Lack of calm is still challenging you. Don't worry, change can sometimes take a little time and persistence. To help you move forward at a faster pace:

- Accept how you are feeling at this moment. Remember not to criticise yourself or be disappointed with your present situation.
 - Choose one of the other suggested exercises to do alongside the one you are already doing, and step up the number of times you do these exercises each week.
 - Stand tall with your head held high to encourage confidence.
 - Set yourself one goal, choose a date to achieve it by and do your utmost to meet it. For example, start an activity that you have been putting off.
-

11-15

You may not know it quite yet, but the foundation of calm is being laid down now.

- Take time to congratulate yourself on what you have already accomplished.
 - Select a family member or friend with a positive attitude and talk to them about how you are doing and feeling.
 - Try another exercise alongside the one you are currently doing and alternate the two regularly through the coming week.
-

16-20

Pat yourself on the back for all the progress you've made. To help increase your calm further:

- Choose one of the other suggested exercises and do it alongside your present one.
 - Bring to mind a time during the past week when you felt a strong sense of accomplishment at your level of calm and then spend a few moments enjoying the memory of it. Completely immerse yourself in the feeling.
-

21-25

What you are doing is working.

- Keep going with your present exercise or switch to another one to enhance calm.
 - If you have achieved your optimal level of calm change the way you use the exercises. Use one or more every so often, say weekly or monthly, to manage any recurring anxiety.
-

“If a problem is fixable, if a situation is such that you can do something about it, then there is no need to worry. If it’s not fixable, then there is no help in worrying.

There is no benefit in worrying whatsoever.”

— The Dalai Lama