

SPORTS PERFORMANCE

From healing injuries to improving your game

By Stacey Vornbrock

“If you think you can, you can. And if you think you can’t, you’re right.”

Henry Ford



ARE PROFESSIONAL ATHLETES WILLING TO USE EFT?

Absolutely! I explain the use of EFT to professional athletes from a biochemical standpoint. Every cell in our body has up to one million cell receptor sites. It is the job of these cell receptors to take in nutrients, proteins, vitamins and minerals to nourish each cell and keep it in balance.

When an event happens -- that event can be a thought we have, something that happens to us, something we witness happening to someone else, an injury, etc. -- the hypothalamus in the brain releases a cascade of chemicals that are called peptides. These peptides are short chain amino acids that we experience as an emotion. Every chemical/emotion has a specific cell receptor that it fits into. For example, there are cell receptors that will only allow the chemical of fear to dock onto that receptor. No other chemical/emotion peptide would fit into it.

Once that chemical/emotion has docked onto its specific cell receptor site, nutrients, proteins, vitamins and minerals can't enter that receptor to nourish the cell and keep it in balance. If the chemical/emotion isn't processed out of the receptor site, over time the receptors will shrink up and die.

When the cell divides there are more receptor sites for that same chemical and fewer receptor sites for nutrients, proteins, vitamins and minerals. That's also why over time it can feel like a problem is getting worse. That's not your imagination. That is truly a biochemical response your body is having.

Through this series of taps on end acupressure points, these chemicals are released from those cell receptor sites and the cells return to a state of balance. This balance allows your body and mind to do what it knows how to do and allows you to perform at your optimal levels.

Professional athletes, doctors, athletic trainers, physical therapists, coaches and sports massage therapists easily understand and relate to this biochemical explanation of EFT.



IS EFT BENEFICIAL IN HEALING INJURIES QUICKLY?

EFT will speed up the healing time of injuries significantly. Whenever you are injured there are three areas that need to be addressed. The first area is the trauma to the body itself. Let's say you sprain your right ankle. That trauma immediately settles into the cell receptors and will just stay there unless you signal the receptors to release that trauma. This can be done with the set-up phrase:



Even though I'm holding this trauma in every cell of my right ankle, I deeply and completely love and accept myself.

Repeat this three times. Then as you tap one point say:



(First point) I'm holding this trauma in all the muscles of my right ankle.

(Next point) I'm holding this trauma in all the ligaments of my right ankle.

(Next point) I'm holding this trauma in all the tendons of my right ankle.

Use this same wording and go through joints, bones, cartilage, tissues, nerves, fascia, membranes, skin, fibers and fluids while moving to a new EFT tapping point every time. Then end this sequence by saying on a tapping point:



(Tapping point) I give my right ankle permission to release this trauma from every cell.

(Next point) I give my right ankle permission to relax and let go of this trauma.

(Final point) I give my right ankle permission to release this trauma from every cell receptor site.

The second area is all the emotions that you experience as a result of the injury. I call it the “oh damn” moment where you realize what you’ve done and there is a cascade of thoughts and feelings about what this means to you. For example: pain, fear, anger, frustration, fear of death, fear of re-injury and sadness are common emotions that get stuck in the cell receptors. It’s critical to tap on each of these chemicals/emotions using the above format to release them from the cell receptor sites.

Finally, whenever you are injured, the body immediately forms a memory of protection to keep that part of the body safe. You begin to hold yourself in a certain way and the body begins to adapt around the injury. Once that injury heals, nothing signals the body to release the memory of protection. Your body then never returns to a state of balance but remains in that adaptive state.

Through the use of EFT, it’s easy to signal the cell receptors to release this memory of protection. You would start with the setup phrase:



Even though I’m holding this memory of protection in every cell of my right ankle, I deeply and completely love and accept myself.

Case Story 1

Tom is a major league baseball pitcher who has been out on the disabled list for months. He had a torn ligament in his left shoulder from throwing. He came to see me to work on confidence issues related to pitching. In the course of our work together, Tom decided to have surgery on his shoulder after an alternative treatment failed to produce the results he was looking for. Before the surgery we tapped on issues about the surgery: worry, doubt, and fear around rehabilitating his shoulder. I wanted to make sure that he went into surgery without any chemicals or emotions sitting in those cell receptor sites.

Tom's surgery went very well. His surgeons discovered two tears in his ligament. We had an EFT session after his surgery. We tapped for: the trauma, pain, fear, his body not being in harmony with the screws they inserted into his ligament, the anesthesia, doubt he would recover his range of motion, scar tissue, and memory of protection. At his first rehab session Tom could reach his left arm completely across his chest. His physical therapist said, "I don't understand this. I've never seen anything like this."

The therapist explained that it would normally take four weeks for someone to achieve what Tom was doing on his first day of rehab. It normally takes 16 weeks to rehabilitate from this surgery, and we had already cut that time by 25 percent. Approximately one month later, the physical therapist took range of motion measurements and told Tom that some of his measurements were better than normal. Once again, the therapist couldn't understand how. Later, Tom saw the doctor who performed the surgery. The doctor told Tom that his range of motion was excellent and Tom's recovery from this surgery was ahead of schedule.

Repeat this three times.

(First point) I'm holding this memory of protection in all the muscles of my right ankle.

(Next point) I'm holding this memory of protection in all the ligaments of my right ankle.

Use this same wording and go through tendons, joints, bones, cartilage, tissues, nerves, fascia, membranes, skin, fibers and fluids while moving to a new EFT tapping point every time.

Then end this sequence by saying on a tapping point:



(First point) I give my right ankle permission to release this memory of protection from every cell.

(Next point) My right ankle no longer needs to hold onto this memory of protection and can choose to relax and let it go.

(Final point) I give my right ankle permission to release this memory of protection from every cell receptor site.

Substitute *right ankle* for the part of your body where you have the injury. It is important to be as specific as you can for the best results. You will be amazed at how using this process of EFT will speed up the healing time of injuries and insure a complete recovery.



WHAT ABOUT OLD INJURIES?

I have discovered that old injuries never fully heal because the trauma, emotions and memory of protection have never been released from the cell receptor sites. Most athletes who have been injured have a deep fear of re-injury and this significantly affects their performance. They end up holding back to protect their body either unconsciously or consciously. Once the old trauma, emotions and memory of protection are removed, they report an ability to give 100 percent to their performance. Many have reported that aches and pains they've had for years are completely gone once we go through the above process.



HOW CAN I USE EFT TO INCREASE MY RANGE OF MOTION?

It seems that whenever we're injured it reduces our range of motion (ROM). Whenever I tap with an athlete addressing trauma, emotions and memory of protection (as described above), their ROM dramatically and quickly increases.

If you haven't experienced an injury of any kind but are just tight or lack flexibility you can still use EFT to increase your ROM. The first approach to take is to tap directly on the tightness itself. For example, let's say you have a tight hamstring on your left side. You would use the setup phrase:



Even though I'm holding this tightness in every cell of my left hamstring, I deeply and completely love and accept myself.

Repeat this three times.

Then as you tap one point say:



(First point) I'm holding this tightness in all the muscles of my left hamstring.

(Next point) I'm holding this tightness in all the ligaments of my left hamstring.

(Next point) I'm holding this tightness in all the tendons of my left hamstring.

Use this same wording and go through joints, bones, cartilage, tissues, nerves, fascia, membranes, skin, fibers and fluids while moving to a new tapping point every time.

Then end this sequence by saying on an EFT tapping point:



(First point) I give my left hamstring permission to release this tightness from every cell.

(Next point) I give my left hamstring permission to relax and let go of this tightness.

(Final point) I give my left hamstring permission to release this tightness from every cell receptor site.

If you have little or no result after tapping directly on tightness, or whatever word you would choose to describe how it feels, that tells me that there is something else you are holding in that hamstring. The most common

Case Story 2

John is a discus thrower who competed in the 2004 Olympics and placed within the top nine in his event. He felt drained after the Olympics and took some time off. Once he resumed training he felt mentally flat. The men's track and field program at his college had been cut. John was feeling alone because all his friends left when the program was cut. In addition, he lost his coach. John was feeling shocked and fearful. Needless to say his performance was suffering considerably.

We used EFT and tapped on: abandonment, anger, feeling betrayed, feeling alone, shock, confusion, fear he couldn't train on his own, and doubt in himself and his ability. Within a couple of sessions, John started training and throwing again. He reported feeling really free, very confident and feeling like this was the most motivated he's ever been.

things are stress, anxiety, anger, fear, guilt and frustration. Ask yourself what was going on in your life when that tightness in the left hamstring started and guess at the feeling that may be locked in there. Then use the above tapping protocol to address each emotion stored in that hamstring.

I have found that a lack of range of motion is often a barometer for one's emotional state. I know that if I'm not processing my emotions out of my cell receptors, my sciatica joint will act up and let me know. The low back seems to be a common area for many people. They hold stress and tension there on a regular basis. It's a great feedback system -- your body will always let you know when there are unprocessed chemicals sitting in those cell receptor sites.



HOW CAN I USE EFT TO IMPROVE MY GOLF GAME?

You can tap for everything related to your golf game -- mechanics, weather conditions, course conditions and any emotional states. This includes anxiety or lack of confidence, any mental state such as not being able to commit to a club or not being able to focus over the

ball, and past performance traumas. Also, use EFT for limiting beliefs such as “I’ve never been good getting out the sand” or “I’ll never play as good as my best friend,” specific holes you’ve had trouble with and putting your body in harmony with your golf clubs.

For example, let’s say you’re having trouble with your short game, chipping shots to be specific. The two most common errors are the fat chip (chunker) that goes nowhere and the thin chip (skull) that shoots across the green.

To address the problem of the fat chip you could use the setup phrase:



Even though I chunk the ball, I deeply and completely love and accept myself.

Repeat this three times. Then at each point use some of these phrases:



(First point) I hit the ground and the ball goes nowhere.

(Next point) I’m afraid of hitting the ground.

(Next point) I’m trying too hard to get the club under the ball.

(Next point) I try to scoop the ball.

(Next point) I can’t relax and let the club lift the ball.

(Next point) I feel like I have to help the ball.

(Next point) My arms and hands are tense as I try to help the ball.

(Last point) I try to hit up at the ball to lift it.

To address the problem of the thin chip you could use the setup phrase:



Even though I skull the ball, I deeply and completely love and accept myself.

Repeat this three times. Then at each point use some of these phrases:



(First point) I don't accelerate into impact.

(Next point) I'm afraid of hitting the ball too far.

(Next point) I'll hit the shot past the hole.

(Next point) I'll hit the shot over the green.

(Next point) I try to slow the club head down prior to impact.

(Next point) I'm afraid I'll hit into the trap.

(Next point) This is too delicate of a shot for me.

(Next point) I'm afraid I won't hit accurately.

(Last point) I strike the top of the ball with a rising leading edge.



HOW CAN I PUT MY BODY IN HARMONY WITH MY CLUBS?

Every golfer has problems with one or more clubs at some point in time. There are certain clubs you don't like using, other clubs that just don't feel right, and even some clubs that are your favorites, but then one day you wake up and even one of those favorite clubs doesn't feel right. With EFT there is a quick and easy remedy for all these circumstances.

Every living and inanimate thing has a certain frequency it resonates at. For example, all the molecules of a table are moving. They just move so slowly that they appear solid to our eyes. The same would apply to golf clubs.

Imagine you and your clubs are like two radio stations and your clubs are broadcasting at a frequency of 99.9 and your body is broadcasting at 98.7. They are not in harmony or resonance with one another. This would cause a lot of confusion and static for your body if you tried to tune in or listen to both stations at one time. But if you can align these two frequencies with one another, you will experience clear reception and your body will be much calmer while listening to the radio.

The same is true for your clubs and your body. When your body is not in harmony or resonating with your clubs, it causes a lot of static and confusion in your body. You end up feeling anxious and not confident when using certain clubs, or the club just doesn't feel right and sometimes you can identify why and sometimes you can't put your finger on the problem.

Here is the protocol for putting your body in harmony with your clubs. Take one club at a time and first take a couple of swings with it to get a "before" feel, and then lay it across your lap while you tap. Fill in each blank below with the club you are tapping on. For example:



Even though my body is not in harmony with this [name of golf club], I deeply and completely love and accept myself.

After you have gone through the entire sequence with your driver, take an "after" swing to feel the difference. People report a variety of things, such as "the club feels lighter" or "the club feels more solid" or "I feel more comfortable with this club now."

Move on to the next club and do the same thing, substituting that club to fill in the blank. Do this with every club in your bag, even the ones you don't use that often.

Don't worry if these statements aren't true for you or they feel exaggerated. We are speaking to your body and intentionally exaggerating the words to clear the blocks on the cellular level.

Tap on your Karate Chop point and repeat three times:



Even though my body is not in harmony with this [name of golf club], I deeply and completely love and accept myself.

Now say one phrase per tapping point as you run through the sequence:



My body is not in harmony with the grip on this [name of golf club].

My body is not in harmony with the length of this [name of golf club].

My body is not in harmony with the angle of this [name of golf club].

My body is not in harmony with the degree of this [name of golf club].

My body is not in harmony with the weight of this [name of golf club].

This [name of golf club] doesn't look right to my eyes.

This [name of golf club] doesn't feel comfortable to my body.

This [name of golf club] doesn't feel good in my hands.

My hands tense and tighten when I hold this [name of golf club].

My arms feel tense and tight when I swing with this [name of golf club].

As soon as I take this [name of golf club] out of the bag, I start to feel anxious.

My body is not in harmony with this [name of golf club].

I sometimes dread using this [name of golf club].

I'm holding this anxiety about using this [name of golf club] in all the cells of my body.

My mind is not in harmony with this [name of golf club].

The cells of my body are not in harmony with this [name of golf club].

I have discovered that it was possible to tap for:

- Any kind of equipment: training devices, balls, etc.
- Clothing: shoes, gloves, shirt, etc.
- Course conditions: fast or slow greens, bunkers, water hazards, trees on the left or right, etc.
- Weather conditions: wind, rain, cold, heat, etc.
- Golf partners you're playing with: slow play, giving you advice, too competitive, annoying behavior, etc.

Case Story 3

Joe is a tennis player with a ranking of 4.5. He came to see me because he was double-faulting his serves. Angry and frustrated, the harder he tried to correct his serve the worse things got. I discovered he had a past performance trauma from a doubles game where he double-faulted every single point. Joe felt like he'd let his tennis partner down. He was embarrassed and angry about it.

We tapped on his past performance trauma. At the next session, he reported a 60 percent increase in getting in his first serves. He said, "I feel more relaxed and I'm not over analyzing things. If I double-fault, it's not a big deal now. I'm not worried about what others may say." His first serves continued to improve, and we moved on to other issues.

Tapping for any of these has produced great results for all my golfers. This works for every sport and all the equipment connected with that sport. There is nothing you can't tap on to put your body in harmony with it. Try it and see what happens.



CAN I USE EFT TO MAKE MECHANICAL CHANGES?

This is an area I have been working on extensively with my athletes with great success. I've discovered that you can make mechanical changes very quickly with the use of EFT. The standard belief in golf is that it can take up to a year to change a golf swing and in baseball the belief is that it can take up to 5000 swings to change a batting swing. Well, not anymore!

When you are attempting to make a mechanical change, you're fighting against a habit that is literally held in every cell membrane of your body. Every time your body makes the new movement your cells fight to re-establish the old pattern. It feels hard and uncomfortable because you're not only fighting the habit that is trying to re-establish, but also you're directing your body to make a new movement it isn't used to or comfortable with. With EFT it's easy to give your body the instruction to release the old habit and easily adapt to the new movement.

Here's an example of what I did with one of my major league baseball players. His batting coach was asking him to lower his hands to waist level at bat and his normal stance was to have them at shoulder level. This was a significant change and would normally take quite a bit of time to get used to. This is what we tapped on:

- It feels awkward with my hands lowered.
- My arms feel uncomfortable lower.
- I can't keep my arms parallel to the ground.
- I'm holding this habit in every cell of my arms to move them up.
- I can't trust myself to keep my arms down there.
- I don't like my hands there.
- I can't step into my swing with my arms lowered.
- My arms and hands feel tense and tight when I hold the bat lower.
- My arms and hands fight against holding the bat lower.
- It feels natural and comfortable to hold the bat at shoulder level.

The next session he reported the following, "My new batting position feels really natural. I have more squat in my stance and I'm able to explode with my legs with no fear. I'm swinging good and my grip is looser and feels very comfortable." We never had to tap on that mechanical change again.

With one of my Senior PGA Tour Players we worked on the mechanical issues of not getting the club across the line and not taking the club inside. Here's what we tapped on:

- I'm not getting the club across the line.
- I'm not getting my hands inside.
- It doesn't feel comfortable to take my hands inside.
- I do it perfectly and then I revert back to the old way.
- Every cell membrane is holding the habit of not taking the club across the line.
- I take the club outside to avoid hooking the ball.

- Taking the club inside feels unusual and uncomfortable to my body.
- I'm holding this habit of taking the club outside in every cell of my body.
- My body is more comfortable taking the club outside.
- It feels so new and different to take the club inside.
- It feels awkward to my body to take the club inside.

By the next session he reported a considerable difference in his ability to take the club inside and across the line. He was pleased with his rapid results.



IS IT BAD TO FEEL ANXIOUS IN COMPETITION?

I think it's very important to distinguish between anxiety and what I would call a state of "heightened awareness." Every good athlete needs a certain amount of adrenaline and energy to perform well, which creates a heightened awareness. When it becomes excessive, then it turns into anxiety.

The good news is that with EFT you can tap to eliminate the anxiety or you can tap if you feel "flat" and need to increase your intensity. Sometimes athletes have a passive attitude or give in when they play poorly. Tapping can help to clear that passivity or flat feeling and create a "fight back" feeling and attitude, thereby creating the heightened awareness necessary to compete.

Too much anxiety on the other hand will interfere with performance. Adrenal stress hormones constrict the blood vessels in the forebrain, reducing its ability to function. Stress signals will diminish conscious awareness and reduce intelligence. Physical sensations can include a pounding chest, sweating, dry mouth, reduced vision, shortness of breath, tightness in arms and legs, butterflies in your stomach, irritability, the jitters, confusion and loss of concentration.

All of this leads to an inability for the body to do what it knows how to do and perform at peak levels. EFT can easily eliminate anxiety but

you must be persistent and consistent with your tapping. You'll have a superb tool for increasing your sports performance.

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