

## FasterEft – Meridian Tapping as an intervention and self management tool for individuals with ASD and their families.

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This brief document proposes that meridian tapping is as powerful a tool within the ASD community as with any other group, and at the very least provides a fun, fast and powerful way of reducing stress and sensory overload. More than that it can provide a powerful tool which can give the child or adult with ASD more control over their own responding. Parents can easily be trained to practise the tools on their children and themselves. Anecdotal evidence reports how tapping increases sociability and promotes an increased communication and sociability for the person with ASD. The author cannot find any published research demonstrating the effectiveness of EFT or Fastereft for the ASD community, however her own work and that referenced by this document provides some evidence. There are many many hundreds of examples of live work available on youtube across a wide range of problems for a diverse range of people. (Smith 2012) A comprehensive review of research undertaken around the world evaluated acupoint stimulation treating psychological disorders such as post traumatic stress disorder, and concluded the methodology rapidly produces desired changes in the neurochemistry involved in that problem (Feinstein 2012).

As an example of my own experience Tommy was brought to see me by his Mum Jane who was exhausted from the endless effort in managing Tommy's 'hyperactive' stimming. When he arrived he was highly active, couldn't sit still, jumped up and down and went round the room repeatedly trying out everything. His bouncing on the gym ball was endless and insistent and at one point he fell backwards. Jane was worn out and very close to tears as she described some of the ways Tommy's behaviour was challenging everyone in the family. She was very concerned how he would cope with the rigours of transfer to secondary mainstream. Using the simple fastereft tapping protocol Tommy settled and became still and could report the stripes having gone away. Clearly he had calmed down and knew how to ask. Asking Tommy to check in his body when he felt the need to jump up, he was soon able to describe the 'funny feelings in his head' and could describe these as red and white stripes running across his head. He felt different. Each time the urge to 'stim' returned, tapping brought it down and he became calm. Over 2 sessions I taught his Mum the basic protocol for working on Tommy and also worked on her to relieve her own distress and quiet desperation. They went home ready to apply the tapping and to develop it as a routine, to build Tommy's own skill in using it as he needs. The author has numerous such examples in her own work. She has found a significant part of the success of the method with young people lies with the motivation of the parents to do their own tapping work on their own emotional challenges regarding the child with ASD, and to be ready to do the homework routine of tapping with the child to develop habit.

Meridian Tapping was first created by Callahan (2002), Carrington (2012) and called Thought Field Therapy. He discovered that very simple tapping on the stomach meridian below the eye, of a US veteran soldier with severe posttraumatic stress, caused all the feelings to disappear. Continued tapping over a few minutes made it

go completely and the symptoms and effects never returned. Callahan's work was followed up by Craig (2008) who developed Emotional Freedom technique (EFT), a simpler more available protocol for addressing all kinds of pain and distress, physical and emotional, and dependant on the affirmations used as tapping progressed. Thousands of EFT practitioners now practise across the world. Gary Craig remains an inspirational practitioner and his work is carried on by his daughter Tina Craig.(2012).

EFT and now Fastereft(Smith) addresses the entire mind/body system which includes what you think and how you process your thoughts, along with the body's response. It taps the meridian points that control the mind-body highways for our fight-flight response, and great changes happen. The work operates through the individuals own personal system for holding emotional experience in the mind/body, usually by accessing the memories that have set up the response, and aiming through the personal sensory experiencing, to access and transform that memory. In each of these tapping methods release is often profound and lasting change happens naturally in the whole system of mind body and emotions. It is usually obvious inside and from the outside that release has happened.

There are many EFT and fastereft practitioners around the world and much evidence that significant release can be achieved very rapidly with anyone, whatever the problem. This author believes it is worthy of research to back up the experience in the field, to examine how fundamental and lasting reframing of memory can be achieved for those with an ASD, which will in turn generate greater lasting social and communication abilities.

In the meantime families and practitioners in health and education deserve to be introduced to this powerful protocol as a valid, and visibly effective intervention for those with ASD. While there is much confirming research in the EFT field (Feinstein 2012) this writer is seeking support to undertake some formal large scale research into its effectiveness with the ASD community.

Nuala White is happy to present short talks and active workshops demonstrating the power and accessibility of the fastereft method.

December 2012

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