



EFT and Cravings, Addiction, and Recovery

For those working on cravings, or recovery from addiction, Emotional Freedom Techniques (EFT) can be a valuable tool.

Habitual **cravings** for chocolate, sugar, or salty foods are common. EFT can help with the cravings themselves, and also can help address the underlying feelings that can drive cravings of all kinds. Here are a few ways to use EFT to help with cravings:

- During a time when you're *not* feeling the cravings for, let's say chocolate, create a Set-up phrase that's as specific as possible. Check and see how high the craving would 0-10 be if you had some chocolate in front of you; do several rounds of EFT until the craving level of intensity is down to a 1 or 0.
- You can then try putting some chocolate in front of you and see if the level of intensity rises. Your Set-up phrase may change; make it feel right for the moment, and do several rounds of EFT. For many people, the chocolate becomes easy to ignore! This may happen after the first round, or you may identify several aspects to tap down. Keep at it; you can free yourself up!
- For most of us, a craving isn't just about wanting a specific food, it's also about pushing down difficult feelings. See if you can name some of those feelings – you can also start with something as general as "this getting overwhelmed feeling" or "all this anxiety." Find the intensity level, and do several rounds of EFT. Another feeling may come into awareness once the first one is tapped down; for some people, a chain of feelings is easier to address with an EFT practitioner, who can help shape and pace the process. If you're continuing on your own, take each feeling that comes up the same way, be specific in the Set-up phrase, and do several rounds. Be gentle with yourself as you pace this work.

Addictions to alcohol and other substances also involve cravings and feelings that are hard to feel. If you've identified some of those areas, EFT may be helpful, and you can use the approach above. It's often important to tap on the discomfort of feeling more emotions in the first place, as substances are often used to numb overwhelming emotions. This can be helpful to do with a therapist's help and support.

From a 12-Step view of recovery, addiction reflects a basic spiritual disconnection. From that perspective, tapping on cravings may not be as helpful. However, identifying and tapping on the areas of emotional intensity around recovery, (resistance at any Step; fear coming up, etc.) and the various disconnections from your spiritual center, can help clear out areas of negativity and difficult feelings. That's where tapping can also help with reconnecting to your spiritual self.

For more specifics on using EFT with the 12 Step approach to recovery, see the website: www.TappingintoGod.org