



**STUFFED FEELINGS :**

**TAPPING FOR  
WHAT YOU COULDN'T SAY**

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Often in EFT sessions I ask people the question, "What did you want to say that you couldn't say?"



**A highly sensitive person has probably grown up having to put a lid on their expressive spirit all the time.** She or he was “too smart for your own good” “too loud,” “too talkative,” “too energetic,” “too much imagination,” “too dreamy,” too adventurous,” “too honest,” “too intense,” just “too much” in some way. When the parents or teachers around them got upset with how “out there” they were, they began to shut down, thinking that there must be something bad about being who they were.

**Because connection is so deeply important to a sensitive person, they denied their own truth** in order to maintain a connection with the other person through that person's approval. And that became a way of life, an identity. Slowly their own truth became buried. It may have been unsafe to express what they really thought and felt. Eventually those stuffed feelings might show up in emotional or physical pain.

**Here are four examples of tapping sessions that dealt with this question, "What did you want to say but couldn't?"**



**#1**

*"Clenching my Jaw  
So I Wouldn't Talk Back  
to My Mother"*

I was listening as someone was telling me how much better she was doing since our last session. The pain and cramping that had made her hands "stuck closed" had loosened up now. But then she

began to describe how the pain seemed to be "moving up my arms into my neck, back where it used to be, a sharp, burning pain again."

**I asked her when she first started noticing pain like this**, and she began talking about thirty years earlier when she had such terrible tension in her jaw.

**I imagined her jaw clenched closed... and the question popped out.**

**"What did you want to say back then,  
or even earlier in your childhood,  
but couldn't?"**

The answer wasn't right on the surface for her yet. Tapping on the side of her hand, she mused out loud until she got to it:

"There was something in my mind all the time back then...I kept thinking, *'I can't wait to get out of childhood, I can't wait to get out of my family....I wanted to scream....**Let me out of here!!!!...This is a crazy place...I don't belong here!**'* "

"You know what?" she said, in surprise.

**"I was keeping my mouth closed so I wouldn't say that to my mother!"**

*“And I wanted to say 'Why are you hitting me???' I had to control myself so I wouldn't ask 'Why?' when she said NO you can't ride your bike, go for a walk, play outside. She always said no. And when I asked her why, she always said, 'Because I said so.' I had no voice.”*

I had been scribbling furiously as she said all this, and now we had lots of EFT set-up statements that cycled around wanting and needing and having something to say, and not being able to say it.

**As we tapped she was easily able to make the connection with situations in her life ever since then, when she had something to say that was her own, but she didn't say it.** In fact she had only recently escaped from a marriage where she had no voice, and now found herself in a relationship where she could see herself falling into the same pattern, though she was now well beyond the helpless person she had been earlier in her life.

**By the time we were done tapping, this woman had been feeling waves of tension sweeping through and out of her jaw, and it was now relaxed and open.**

Now she could feel what she wanted to say to her current partner with strength and clarity.



#2

*“My Throat Doesn’t Want  
My Sadness to Come Out”*

Another time that I popped this question was when a client was talking about the dreams she was having.

**“Lately all my dreams have a theme of ‘Pay attention to me,’” she said.**

She was feeling as if there was a child part of her that she hadn't acknowledged, that there were "feelings inside that I am not feeling—they are stuck in there."

**I asked her to use her imagination and just start talking.** What could this be about? Often a person says they don't know what is going on, but when I say "Just pretend that you do know," they start talking and something almost always emerges that is a revelation for both of us. Sometimes we just tap through the points while we talk, up and down, up and down, without set-up phrases. This seems to invite the inner mind to emerge with unexpected insights.

In this case, this woman—who is about 35 and has a job that is OK but doesn't really tap her creativity and intelligence—began to talk as she tapped.

**She said: "Well, I have always had a hard time in my life knowing what I want to do. I am always carried along by others' expectations.**

**I feel scared of listening and finding out what I want."**

**This last sentence jumped out at me.**

**Where in your body do you feel that "scared-of-finding-out-what-I-want" feeling, I asked?** Often when we give our attention to something that we have been avoiding, it just naturally begins to open out and explain itself. Giving our attention to the physically held aspect of the feeling is often safer than approaching it directly as emotion or memory.

**"I feel it a lot in my throat—it's tight," she said.** It's tight. It is like there is a lot of heavy sadness stuck in my throat. My throat is contracted around this sadness. It wants to come up and out, but my throat doesn't want it to come out."

**"What if you let it up and out?" I asked. "What would happen?"**

"Oh, I would make a HORRIBLE sound — my head might explode — I couldn't control it!" she exclaimed.

**We began our tapping right there, with the sensations in her throat and the sadness.** To make this a safe experience for her, I invited my client to imagine

that there was an ally in her own belief system — a real person, or an angel, or a mythical figure — that could hold her safely while she tapped, so that her throat could be opening. She had been reading Caroline Myss' book about archetypes, and chose the Angel archetype as "a strong, serene, supportive presence that could guide me and protect me through it." I asked her to build an image of this presence, and how it felt to be held by it. Then we tapped while she felt held by the angel.

**She realized that this strong painful sadness came from feeling abandoned as a child.** She had been holding this deep pain in since then. Her throat had been closed around the fear of feeling and expressing this pain. Now that she had been alerted by her dreams, and knew what they were about, she knew that she could handle working with the issue with EFT.



### #3 *"I Didn't Have a Right to My Own Opinion"*

A client called to say that she (it just happened that these examples are all women, but it could just as easily been men!) wanted to cancel the session because she had this terrible cough that was draining her energy. She felt

exhausted all the time. She had actually had this cough for many years, she told me, but it was particularly bad right now. She had an appointment tomorrow to see a doctor about her hypothyroidism. Instead of canceling, we worked on the cough.

**"What are you trying to cough up?" I was thinking.**

Right away I asked my question. Her answer turned up something interesting.

Her issues came down to this:

**"I didn't have any right to have an opinion, even though I knew inside that my opinion was right.** If I disagreed with her, my mother punished me for saying what I thought. But when I think of it, my grandmother never was able to say, or even know, what she thought. This issue must go way back in my family."

Now, it turns out that in naturopathic medicine, the thyroid reflects a person's voice in their life. When the voice "feels trapped," over time, the accumulated effect gives rise to symptoms that can include poor thyroid function.

**It makes sense that holding in and repressing one's own truth could result in physiological symptoms that are similar to thyroid problems:**

- severe fatigue, loss of energy

- weight gain, difficulty losing weight
- depression and depressed mood
- joint and muscle pain, headaches

**We tapped on her cough. We tapped on several specific events in her life**

around the time that the cough began to show up, times when she had felt that someone was trying to "kill me emotionally," and she hadn't felt able to speak up for herself. It wasn't too long before she said, "Now I know I have a right to see things my way, and I have a right to have an opinion!"



#4

*"I Couldn't Say No to My Mother"*

**Patsy had been telling me how much better she is doing lately.** "My self-talk is much more reassuring," she was saying. I asked her for some examples.

"My self-talk says: 'Slow down. Do one thing at a time.

Do what you can do. You don't have to do it all right now.'

She continued: "I am slower to get annoyed or irritated with myself. I understand myself better now. The only thing I am not so good at is letting go of all the Should's.

**“In fact, it has been kind of a big plus for me to have the disease I do.” (she has Crohn's Disease)**

**Now, statements like Patsy's last one are a huge red flag for me!** To me they mean that some body condition has become part of the client's identity, and is performing a function for them that, inside, they think they can not perform for themselves, for whatever reason. The equation goes like this:

**Physical condition = sabotage of healing in order to protect myself.**

I asked Patsy what she meant by "big plus."

She said: "If you eat wrong, or hold emotional things in, the disease flares up. It gives me power I don't have on my own to say no."

**"So, Patsy," I asked, "Who, in your past, could you not say no to?"**

"I couldn't say no to my mother. Her routine was always 'Mother knows best.' She made my life miserable. I had a very close relationship with her when I was little, but the cost was in saying no to me in order to say yes to her. I tried, I argued with her, but that got me in a lot more trouble. It was just easier to give up, give in."

**To work with this sabotaging set up with Patsy, I mapped the information** so it would all be right there in front of me as we tapped. You can create your own map. Think of some interesting and easy-to-remember shape that has several points, each of which can be a gathering place for certain information. I use a stick figure of the human body.

TRACKING INFORMATION FOR TAPPING WITH EFT

**Belief:**

**Message:**

**Feelings:**



**Example / Event / Story Title:**

**Body and Behavior Symptoms:**

**THIS IS WHERE I STAND:**

**We chose a situation in Patsy's history that illustrated the problem with "saying no" and triggered a reaction to it in her body.**

## Creating a Map of the Issue

We gave the situation a **TITLE**:

*"Mother Knows Best"*

Under that I wrote her statement:

*I had to say no to me in order to say yes to her.*

The **FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS** were:

*anger*

*discomfort*

*sadness*

**These feelings get triggered by:**

*the snide tone in her voice*

*the look on her face*

**Translated into words they mean:**

*You are so wrong*

*I hate you for your choice*

*You shouldn't want this.*

You should want what I want.

The **SYMPTOMS AND BEHAVIORS** were:

*A clenching feeling in my stomach and my chest that moves across my  
collarbone*

*A feeling of bracing myself*

*My shoulders feel like they are weighted down*

*I am waiting for confidence to magically descend*

(I pointed out the interesting fact that the word "shoulders" has the word

"should" in it, and there is the evocative play on words in "wait/weight," all  
of which can be woven creatively into the EFT wording.)

The **BELIEFS** that arose from the experience were:

*I don't have a right to my own opinion*

*What I think doesn't matter*

*I have no power*

*I am not good enough*

The **POSITIVE INTENTION** of the emotions was:

*My anger and sadness want me to acknowledge that I am a person in my own  
right*

*I am free to think for myself*

*It is OK for me to want what I want*

*I can express my own opinion and still be loved and supported*

*I can say Yes to me!*

**Together we tapped for all of these emotions, symptoms, and beliefs.**

For me, one of the good things about having all these words and phrases right in front of me in my map is that it stimulates my intuition and my creativity. I find myself riffing off of unusual combinations of these words and concepts in a way that is fun to do, and often funny. It is a good thing to laugh in the midst of a serious EFT session!

**I concocted various takes on "Mother Knows Best" at one point, playing with:**

*Mother No's Best...*

*How good do YOU want to be at no-ing...*

*The No's of Truth...*

*Your own opinion is as clear as the no's on your face...*

*I should no better...*

*I can and do no better now!*

*I can carry on my own shoulders what my Self Knows about my no's!*

Probably some even better ones are occurring to you right now.

**We completed the tapping session by tapping in all the Positive Intentions.**

I used a similar creative weaving style, sometimes with humor, but more often

with the intention of grounding Patsy's own sincere, powerful sense of Presence and Truth.

**Now, when she looks back on her life, she can recognize that this sense of rightness and strength and trust in her Self has been there always.**

I invited her to remember specific times where she could NOtice that this is true. She has always had an opinion and a voice, and now she KNOWS she can trust it. YES!

**If you have felt invisible or unheard, now is a good time to learn to see and hear yourself.** That is the root of the issue, of course – when there is no one around to mirror to us the goodness of who we really are, we don't learn how to see ourselves. Tapping can help us to do that, and also, perhaps, can help us to begin the process of forgiving and releasing those people who raised us. They couldn't see their own truth, and therefore couldn't see ours.

**Make a list of the most difficult times when you felt unheard and unseen, and note the beliefs that you formed about yourself and your worth in the world as a result.**

Tap for all the aspects of each of these events, and for any throat, mouth or jaw issues you may have, imagining them as symptoms of not being able to speak up for yourself.

*Adopt the intention deep inside yourself  
that you will always seek to  
give yourself  
the benefit of the doubt,  
find the positive intention in all that you do,  
and intend to see and hear and feel  
the goodness in you.*

*You deserve this.*

**Your family would have given this visibility and hear-ability to you if they could have, if someone had mirrored this capacity to and for them.**

**Think of yourself as an ancestor: offer your transforming life as a resource to those who will come after you in the tapestry of your family's ancestral story.**

With my love and blessings to you -

Rue

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## **The Largest Possible Life**

**Alison Luterman**

for Ruth and Gladys

**Building a fire, love;**

**bent low**

**over a flame**

**I am afraid of.**

Coaxing passion  
from dry twigs

and dead leaves,  
the failures of the past, dirty fingers,  
and a moment of sunset

huge orange  
hangs in one eye-  
in my breast a sun

which, if I could see it, if I could  
know it, would  
light the world

with love. Then,  
an unexpected memory  
of my mother in the car, snow piled

along the gray streets  
of Massachusetts. It was my sixteenth year  
and we were fighting a life

and death struggle over my desire to give  
myself away completely to love before  
I had a self to give.

There she was, my block, my barricade,  
my iron grate, my broken door-our one shared  
passion, to hurt each other into truth, and

it was the millionth skirmish  
of our everyday war when she said  
"I don't know if I've ever loved anyone,"

and began to weep. Monks sit  
in the middle of fires  
they set themselves. They let

their bodies bloom  
into suffering,  
in the hope that, like this, they will open

someone's heart.

What do we have to  
see, how close do we need to live by the

beautiful terrible flame of this world,  
flame of ourselves, which is  
the same thing?

How much anguish do we need to pour  
from cup to cup, drink of melted rubies,  
underwater food of the fevers that live

in our blood, in the light of our eyes  
where infinite tears are waiting and still  
you say, "Light a white candle," and I do, asking

whoever it is, Teach me to surrender  
this mind that grasps at shadows  
when the whole house is ablaze, when the only thing left

is to leap, carrying the impossible  
weight in my arms, into  
the heart of our fire, to melt and to bloom.

from *The Largest Possible Life*