

The Neurobiology of Trauma and Its Application to Successful Treatment

Presented by

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Non-financial disclosure

I, Judith Swack have no relevant financial relationships to disclose.

I, Wendy Rawlings have no relevant financial relationships to disclose.

The Presenters

Judith A. Swack, Ph.D. president of Healing from the Body Level Up, Inc., is a scientist, teacher, healer, visionary, and originator of Healing From the Body Level Up methodology which synthesizes biomedical research with NLP and Energy Psychology techniques resulting in an innovative and powerful methodology with transformative results. She is published and cited in professional journals.

The Presenters

Wendy Rawlings, MS LMHC of Wendy Rawlings Counseling, is a therapist in private practice for over 35 years. Wendy counsels adults, adolescents, couples, and children with trauma. She also counsels bariatric clients, veterans with PTSD and their families, and practices collaborative law. She provides counselor supervision, serves on professional organization boards and is a past president of WMHCA.

Learning Objectives

- List the two major categories of trauma and define the differences between them.
- Describe the layers of trauma with their components.
- Use a meridian tapping technique for releasing eliminating traumatic emotion

Introduction

Trauma is structured and needs to be cleared in layers. It has neurobiological underpinnings that need to be accurately mapped to be successfully treated.

In this class you will learn:

- How trauma is structured
- An evidence-based technique from the field of Energy Psychology for rapidly clearing trauma from the conscious mind, unconscious mind and body.

The Body's Neurochemical Response to Trauma

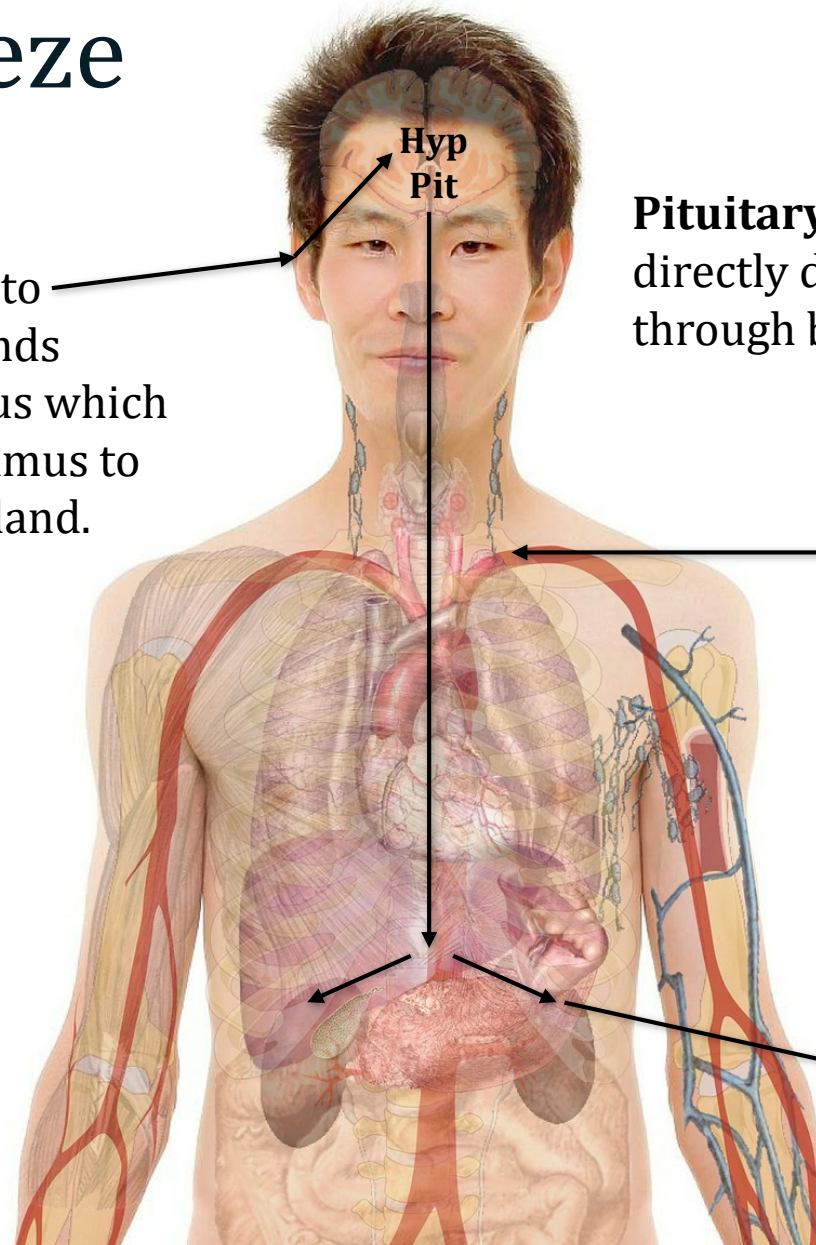
Flight/Fight/Freeze Reflex

Amygdala responds to perceived danger, sends signal to hippocampus which stimulates hypothalamus to stimulate Pituitary gland.

Hyp
Pit

Pituitary sends **ACTH** directly down spinal cord *and* through blood stream.

ACTH stimulates adrenal glands to release
[Adrenaline
Cortisol and
Endorphins.



Physiological responses to the Fight/Flight/Freeze Reflex

Adrenalin stimulates muscle contractions.

Cortisol stimulates release of glucose from the liver and raises blood fatty acid levels.

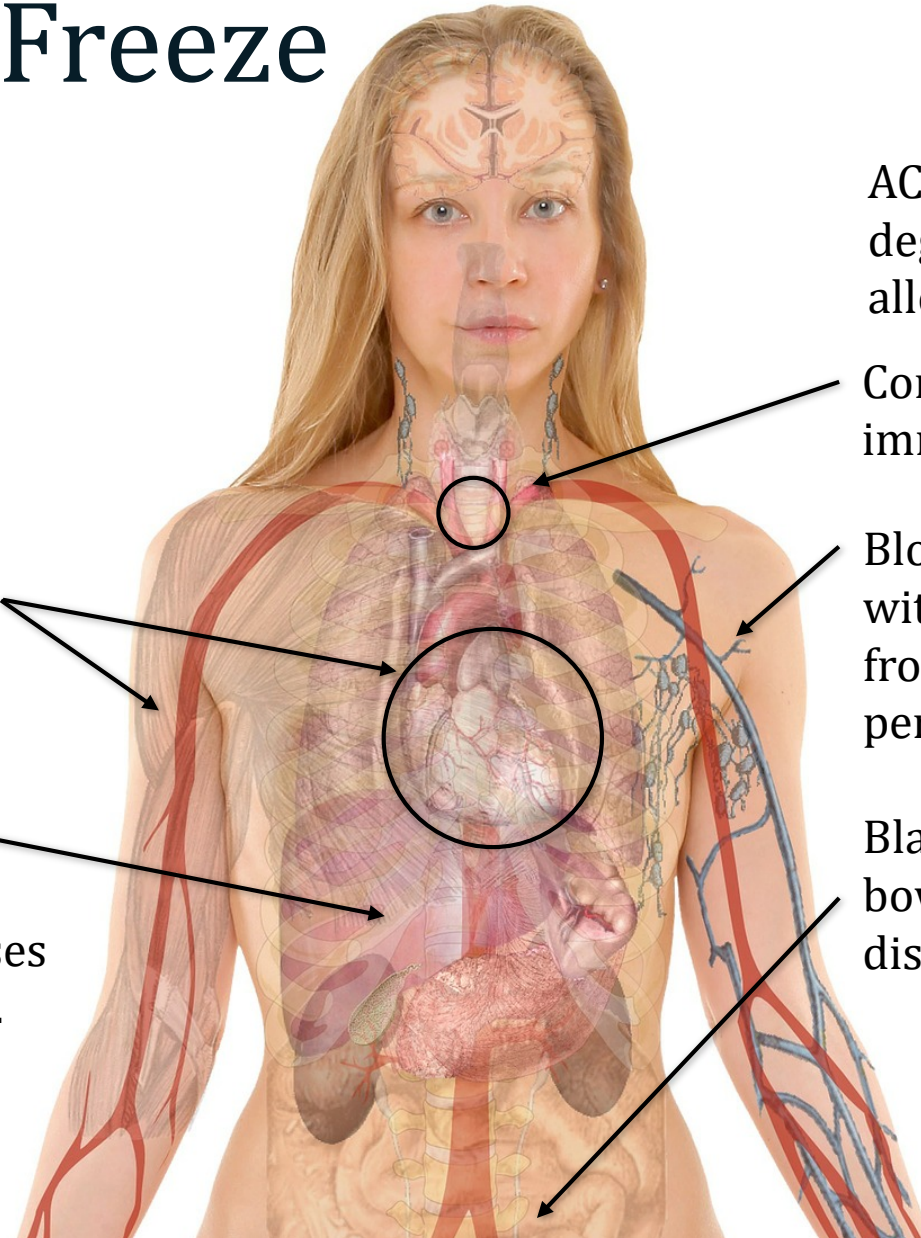
ACTH stimulates mast cell degranulation causing an allergic response.

Cortisol suppresses the immune system.

Blood withdraws from the periphery.

Bladder and bowels discharge.

Endorphins cause numbness.



The Brain's Response to Trauma

“*While the left brain
does all the talking, the
right brain carries the
music of experience.*”
—Bessel van der Kolk

Van der Kolk, B. *The Body Keeps the Score:
Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of
Trauma*. New York: Viking, 2014

Left Brain Right Brain

Linguistic, sequential,
and analytical

Remembers facts,
statistics, and the
vocabulary of events

It helps us explain
and order our
experiences.



Intuitive, emotional,
visual, spatial, and
tactile

Stores memories of
sound, touch, smell,
and the emotions
they evoke

Reacts automatically
to voices, facial
features, gestures
and places
experienced in
the past

Trauma is a Right Brain Activity

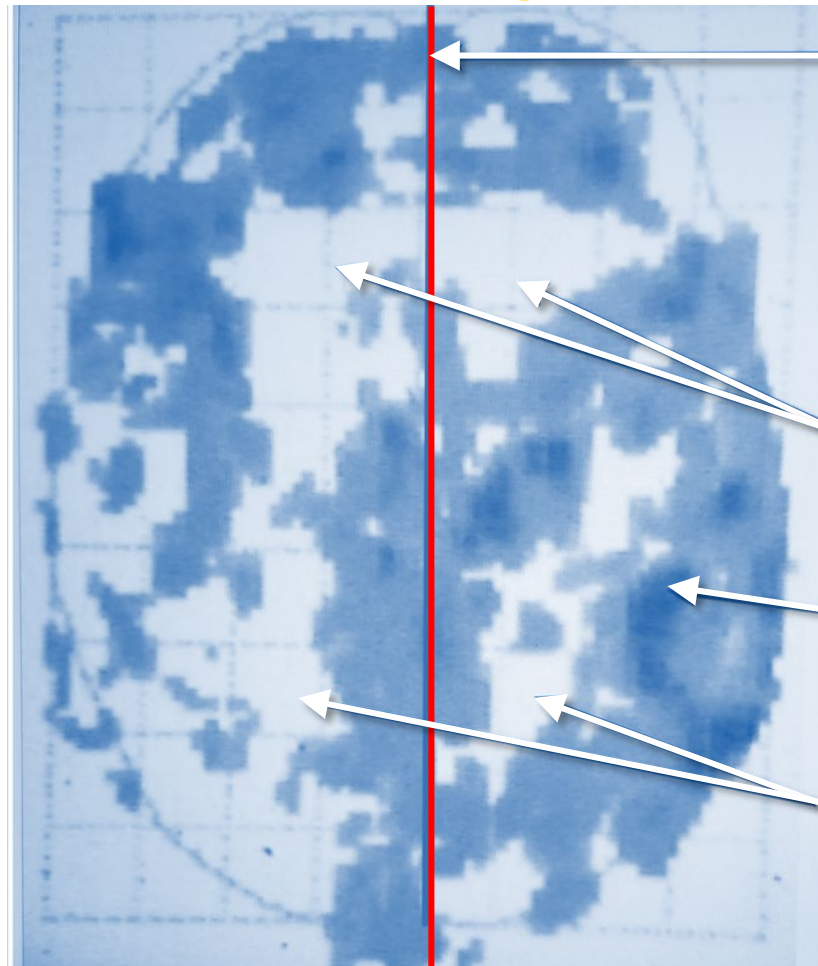
- When we are traumatized or remembering trauma or *undergoing an experience similar to the original trauma*, it is a right brain event.
- The resources of logic, order, speech, and memory located on the left side of the brain all but shut down (that's why we get so scared or angry we can't "think straight" or speak).



Flight|Fright Brain Scan

White areas show decreased activation.

Left Brain Right Brain



Prefrontal Cortex struggles to maintain rational control.

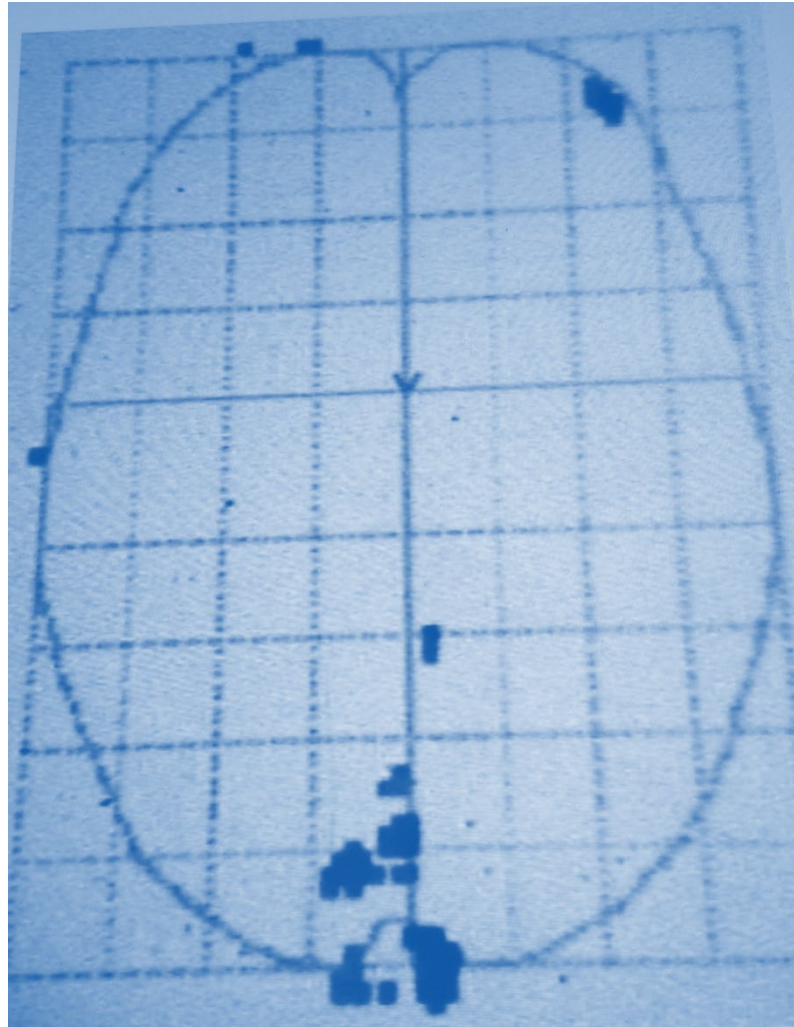
Dorsolateral Prefrontal Cortex shows lost sense of time i.e., the feeling that "this will last forever."

Right Amygdala can't distinguish past from present and reacts as if the trauma is happening now.

Lateral Nucleus of Thalamus shows inability to filter information, i.e. flooding.

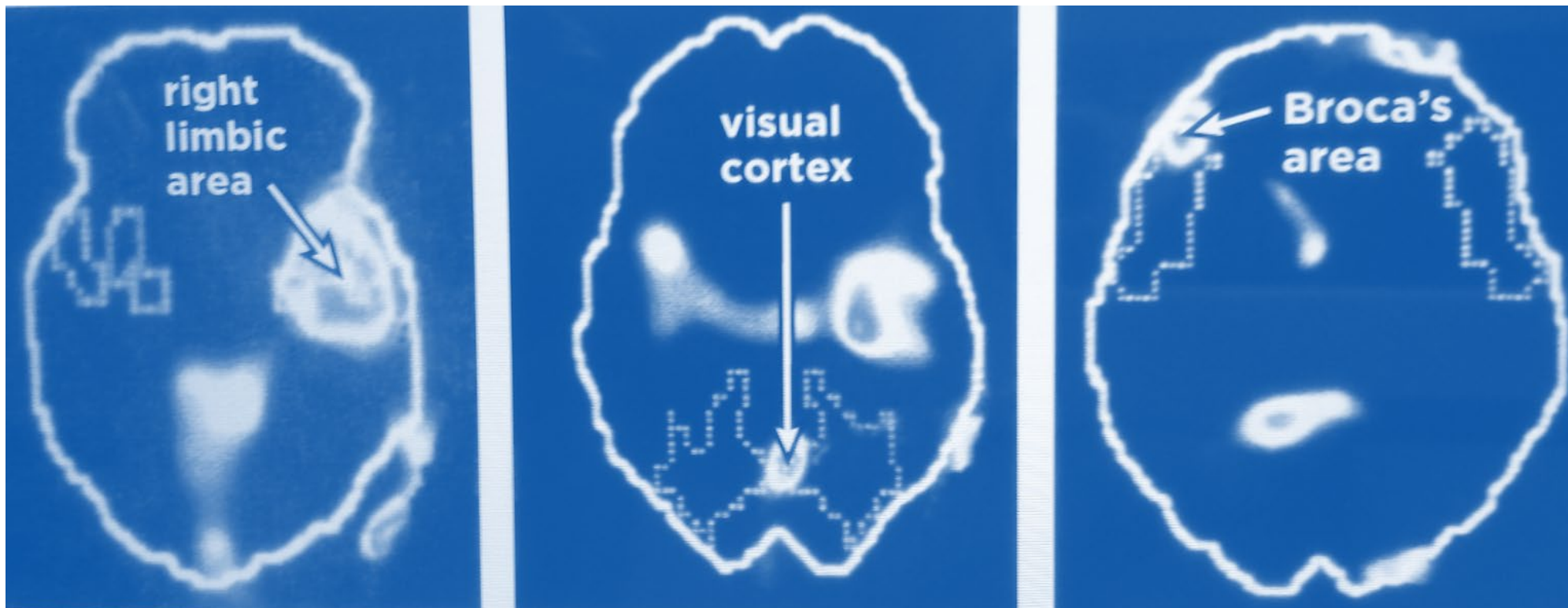
Freeze Brain Scan

Complete disassociation and paralysis



Scan showing the Right and Left Brain in Trauma

Bright spots in (A) the limbic brain, and (B) the visual cortex, show heightened activation. In drawing © the brain's speech center shows markedly decreased activation.



Because the brain is essentially offline, traditional “talk therapies” that rely on prefrontal cortex interaction become ineffective.

We need to get to the place the trauma lives (and the thinking brain has no idea of the address) and heal the trauma. The intervention you will learn is a **complementary therapy** and can be used with any type of therapy you currently practice.

The Emotional Response

Anchor Point

Reprinted from Anchor Point Magazine - March 1994
The Magazine for Effective Neuro-Linguistic Communication

The Basic Structure Of Loss And Violence Trauma Imprints

by Judith Swack, Ph.D.

As an NLP practitioner specializing in Mind/Body healing, I have worked with many clients who presented with a diverse set of physical or emotional problems. Despite the variety of symptoms, I was fascinated by the discovery that a large proportion of these problems were primarily caused by only two types of trauma imprints, loss and violence. Some of the diverse manifestations of these trauma imprints included physical illnesses or symptoms such as immune system deficits (repeated infections, cancer, allergies, asthma), body pain (headaches, residual pain or weakness from physical injuries), cardiovascular irregularities (heart palpitations), neuroendocrine irregularities (infertil-

I initially assumed that the "frozen" quality of the problem was phobic in nature and would resolve after a simple phobia cure treatment. I soon discovered that loss and violence trauma imprints have additional components that require healing in order for the client to obtain complete and lasting results. I decided to study and characterize the core structure of loss and violence trauma imprints in order to develop a thorough and successful treatment protocol. The trauma patterns and treatment protocols described here are the result of in depth study of more than eighty clients that I have treated over a period of ten years. I was intrigued to discover that all loss traumas have common core structures; all violence traumas have common core

- Conclusion, and
- Appendix containing the procedure for the Callahan Technique™ for Phobia.

Characteristics And Importance Of Trauma Imprints

Trauma imprints occur in individuals' minds and bodies at the moment they first feel shocked, surprised, and/or frightened during a traumatic experience. This imprint is phobic in nature in that the learning occurs instantaneously at the moment of the initial shock. The imprint remains frozen in the body, and environmental cues can trigger "flashbacks" of the event unless the trauma imprint is specifically released by interventions that



where science
& miracles meet

Loss and Violence Trauma

Loss and Violence Trauma

I. Negative Emotions

A. Shock/Fear

B. Anger/Rage

C. Sadness/Sorrow

D. Hurt/Pain

Loss and Violence Trauma

Loss and Violence Trauma

II. Limiting (Core) Beliefs

A. Responsibility (guilt/shame/blame)

1. It's my fault because_____.
2. It's other people's fault because_____.
3. Disconnection from God. It's God's fault because_____.
(How could God let this happen? There is no God.)

Loss Trauma | Violence Trauma

Loss Trauma	Violence Trauma
II. Limiting (Core) Beliefs	II. Limiting (Core) Beliefs
B. Who will take care of me?	B. Safety
C. People leave me. I can't trust them	1. My boundaries have been violated or breached.
	2. I don't feel safe/I feel vulnerable
	3. I am a victim/I am a target
	4. People/men/women are dangerous and/or crazy
	5. I don't trust anyone
	6. I can't receive from anyone.

Loss Trauma | Violence Trauma

Loss Trauma	Violence Trauma
D. I am powerless or helpless/have no control.	C. Power and control issues
C. I am bad/unlovable/unwanted/ undeserving/unworthy	1. I am powerless/helpless. I have no control
	2. Power is bad.
	3. I am afraid of power (mine and/or other people's.)
	D. I am bad/unlovable/unwanted/ undeserving-unworthy.
III. Feelings of emptiness (loss or grief)	III. Feelings of pollution

Loss and Violence Trauma

Loss Trauma

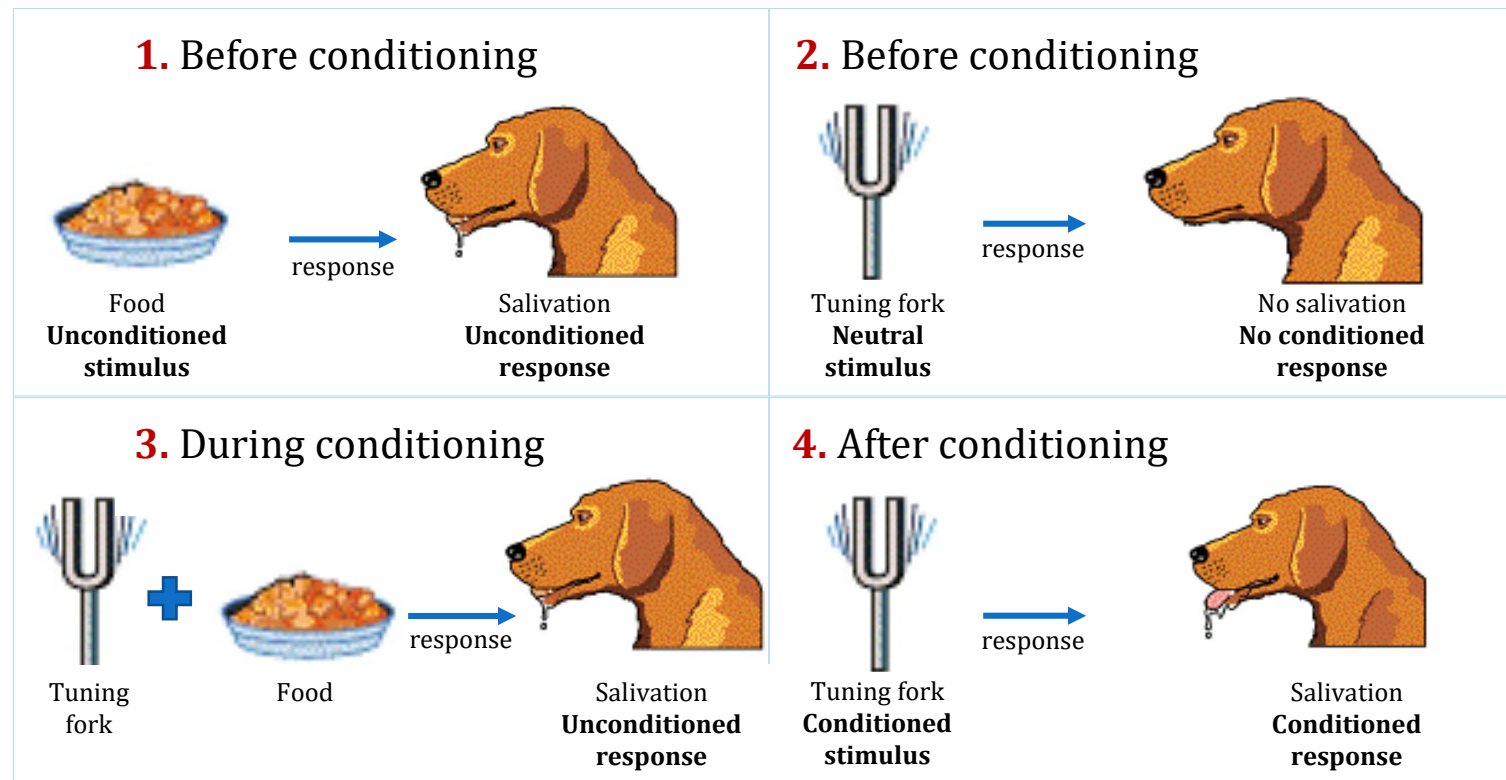
IV. Optional

- A. Bitterness/hate
- B. Other negative emotions (disappointment, loneliness, etc.
- C. Parts that feel that I'm already dead
- D. Other limiting beliefs
- E. Irrational thoughts
- F. Limiting decisions (I decided to do _____ because of this trauma.
- G. Limiting identities [I am _____(something negative)].
- H. External messages
- I. Amend making/forgiveness
- J. ROOT CAUSE: the Setup

V. ANTICIPATORY PHOBIAS

What is a reflex?

Pavlov's Experiment



What fires together wires together

<https://www.age-of-the-sage.org/psychology/pavlov.html>

What is phobia/trauma?

A phobia is a ***conditioned response*** of the fight/flight/freeze reflex that starts when a person experiences a traumatic shock (physical or emotional).

At the time the flight/fight/freeze reflex fired off, anything that was in the environment can become the conditioned stimulus and trigger the original reflex reaction, (like a body flashback).

Depending on the circumstances the shock may imprint as a phobia, or in more severe cases, a trauma.

What is a person to do? Homeostasis.

For every “on” system in the body there’s an “off” system. We have natural stress-relieving mechanisms in our bodies and techniques that we unconsciously use all the time to neutralize the fight or flight reflex.

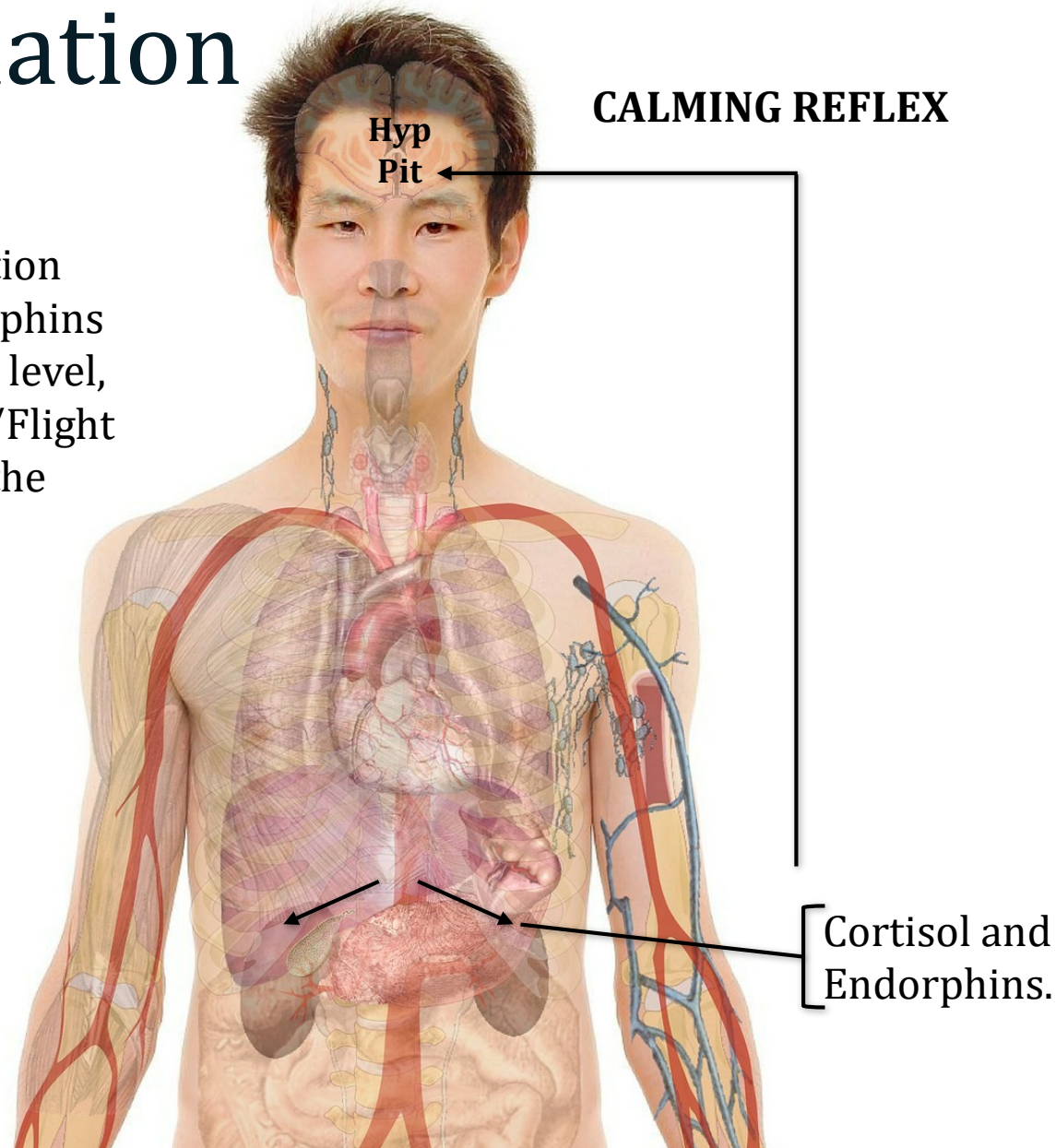
Sustained stress carries many health risks!



The Body's Neurochemical Response to Trauma

Feedback Regulation

When the concentration of cortisol and endorphins rise to a high enough level, it shuts off the Fight/Flight reflex at the level of the hypothalamus and pituitary.



Energy Psychology

Not surprisingly, all the places we stimulate to calm ourselves correspond to the ends of **acupuncture meridians**.

Acupuncture has been shown to stimulate the release of cortisol and endorphins.

This group of techniques are now generally called “**Meridian Tapping Techniques**.” The field is called “Energy Psychology.”

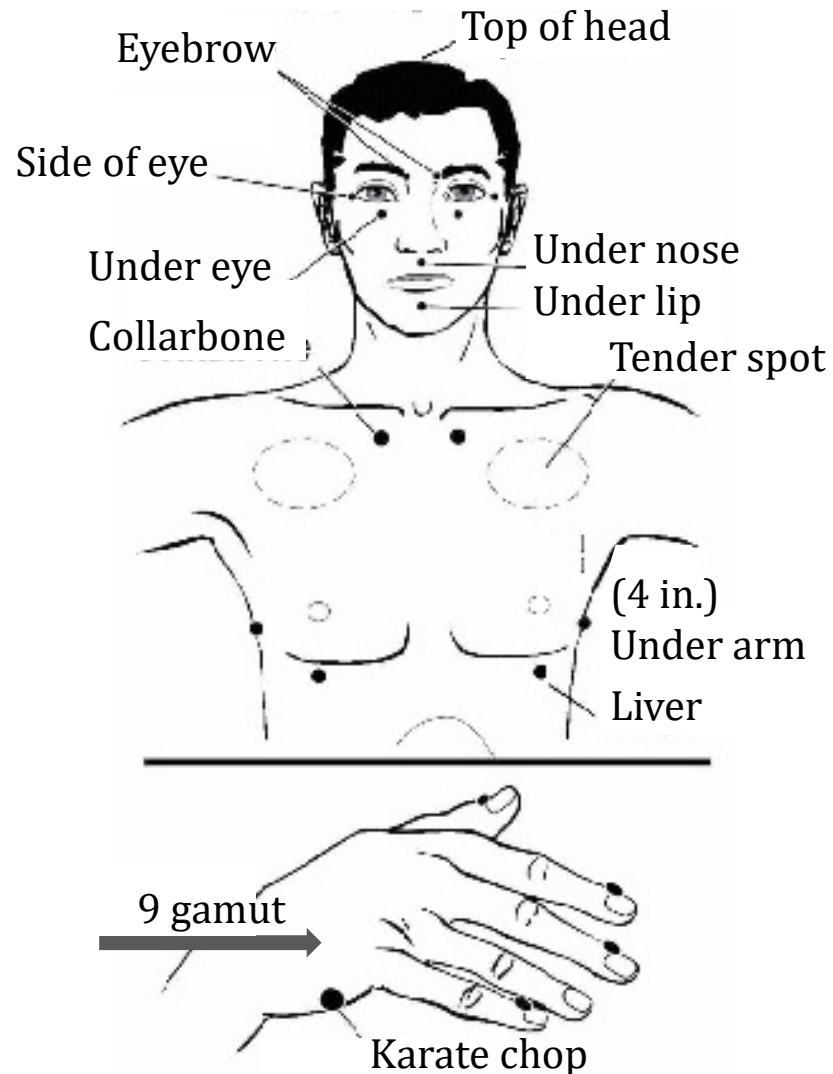
Emotional Freedom Technique, EFT, Thought Field Therapy, TFT The Natural Bio-Distressing Technique

In the Natural Bio-Destressing Technique you can clear a phobic reaction by:

1. focusing on what's frightening or upsetting you and
2. intentionally tapping all your *natural* stress relief points to activate the calming reflex.

This neutralizes the fight/flight/freeze reaction and deactivates the triggering stimuli.

The Tapping Points



SET-UP

Karate chop point Tap outer edge of hand in fleshy part below the pinky finger while saying 3 times,

"I deeply and profoundly love, accept and respect myself even though I have this ____ problem."

TAPPING POINTS (listed in order we tap them)

A. Top of head Crown of head

B. Eyebrow Inner edge of eyebrow, just above nose

C. Side of eye On the bone, just outside the outer edge of the eye

D. Under eye On the bone directly under the pupil

E. Under nose Center point under nose, above lip

F. Chin Center of chin, right in the crease

G. Collarbone Under collarbone, about 2" to either side of midline

H. Chest wall rub the tender spot on the chest wall

I. Under arm 4" below armpit

J. Liver At lower edge of ribs, just outside imaginary line down from the nipple

K. Finger points All the finger points on the outside edge by the nail starting with the outside edge of the thumb

9 Gamut Tap back of hand in the indentation between the pinky and ring finger and:

1. Close eyes
2. Open eyes
3. Look down to one side
4. Look down to the other side
5. Roll eyes around in a circle in one direction
6. Roll eyes around in a circle in the other direction
7. Hum a tune out loud
8. Count to 40 by 2's
9. Hum again

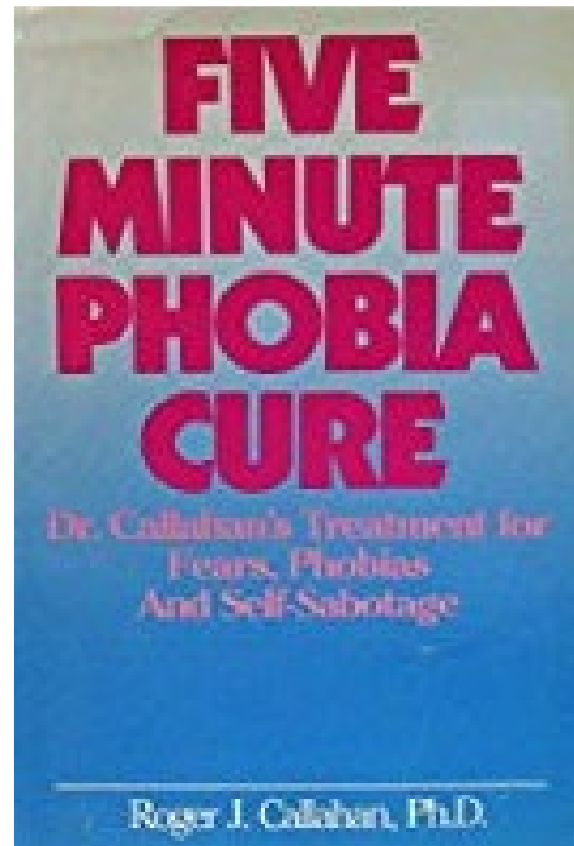
Repeat A-K. Finish with karate chop point.

So Tappy Together | Group Practice



Five Minute Phobia Cure: Dr. Callahan's Treatment for Fears, Phobias and Self-Sabotage

February 1, 1985



Thought Field Therapy

*January 2016: After 34 years, Thought Field Therapy (TFT), the grandfather of energy psychology was recently listed as an **evidence-based practice** in the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) registry (NREPP). It was found to be effective or promising in 6 different areas:*

Thought Field Therapy was found to be *effective* for:

- Trauma and Stressor-Related Disorders and Symptoms
- Self-Regulation
- Personal Resilience/Self-Concept

Thought Field Therapy

Thought Field Therapy was found to be *promising* for:

- Phobia, Panic, and Generalized Anxiety Disorders and Symptoms
- Depression & Depressive Symptoms
- General Functioning & Well-Being

VA Approves EFT Treatment

Emotional Freedom Techniques (EFT) has been approved as a “generally safe” therapy by the US Veterans Administration (VA). After reviewing the extensive evidence for the safety and efficacy of EFT, a group of experts in the VAs Integrative Health Coordinating Center published a statement approving EFT and several other complementary and integrative health (CIH) practices.

The approval means that VA therapists will be able to use EFT with their clients suffering from PTSD, depression, anxiety, pain and other conditions.

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Additional Resource

The *Science of Tapping* designed to offer tapping professionals an asset that they could share with colleagues, with clients and their family members along with web-based support to explain the research on how and why tapping works.

Additional Resource

Two websites were created for the field:

www.scienceoftapping.com for the tapping practitioner and www.scienceoftapping.org for those we wish "to educate and influence."

The **.com page** has a membership site for practitioners with the streaming videos, discussion forum, practitioner directory etc.

The **.org site** is for the public and has the top research (i.e. meta analyses, RCTs, review papers with commentary), Tapping in the news and more.

Q&A

Any questions?

Contact Judith Swack at: Judith@HBLU.org

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