

## EFT Workshop at Puvudham, Dharmapuri district, Tamil Nadu

(Facilitated by Jayashree for the teachers, Komala and Rashmi with the children. Reshma Madhusudan greatly assisted with the pre-workshop preparation.)

Just wanted to share with all of you our experiences with an EFT workshop at Puvudham – a rural school near Dharmapuri in Tamil Nadu. We facilitated a 2.5 day EFT training workshop in Tamil/English for their 12 teachers and middle school children. The school has 150 children studying there.

For the past couple of months or so – Reshma, Rashmi, Komala and I have been working systematically in figuring out all the different scenarios in which EFT can be utilized within a school setting. This included looking at how teachers can use it on themselves, on children they work with. We also looked at creating guidelines for children to use EFT by themselves. EFT has vast uses in not just releasing negatives emotions that block us but also in releasing pre-conceptions and biases that come in the way our own learning and interaction with children and others. It is a very effective tool to help nurture an empowered environment for teachers and children. We have been documenting the use of EFT to address specific school conflicts as well as learning blocks in children.

We went to Puvudham last week since Meenakshi – the founder of Puvudham school invited me to teach there. She had heard about EFT from others who had benefitted deeply from it. When we went there – we did not quite know how the school would receive a tool that basically asks everyone to not just look at the cognitive side but also at the affective (emotions, ways of being) side of learning. It was also the very first time I found myself in a situation where I had to try and explain relatively complex terms such as the sub conscious mind and its effect on us in Tamil. I struggled initially but soon the flow of the workshop really brought out the Tamil I did not know existed inside me! Pretty soon I was able to switch entirely into Tamil with plenty of help from the teachers. I guess I must have relaxed with all the tapping as well.

In the beginning some of the male teachers were skeptical. They did not think that emotions or certain ways of thinking were an issue for them. I offered to work with each one individually on areas they felt challenging. Towards the end of the workshop every teacher changed his mind! Each of them could apply it to issues they were having and experience tangible progress. Every single teacher in the school was able to relate to EFT. I made sure that every one of them got to use it on issues that were relevant for them. We could deeply explore the integration of EFT/mindfulness about the emotional aspects of learning into their schooling approach for cognitive learning. Some teachers could work on their own images of children they were having difficulty with and release this.

Rashmi and Komala simply jumped in and worked directly with the middle school children who understood English. They were able to open up the children and get them to experience releasing. The children released many incidents of sadness, beating from parents/peers, loneliness living in a hostel and so many different issues. Both Rashmi and Komala could help the children experience release from blocks they were having. They also gave concrete suggestions to teachers on integrating EFT for the children. Thanks to their presence we could give richer and fuller experiences to everyone involved.

Overall, we felt we did our best and hope that the school is able to gradually increase their awareness and use EFT effectively.

### **FEEDBACK FROM TEACHERS**

“Through this I learnt something unique. I like EFT. I like it very much. It gives my mind a good relief. I do not want to only do EFT for myself. I want to do it with the children. If they do it, I will be very happy. With a daily EFT practice, my mind will be tension free.” – P. Kariyaperumal

“Through this EFT, I have gained many friends. With other practices, one cannot free up. However, with EFT, we can open our minds and express what is there in our minds freely. There is nothing to dislike in this practice. EFT is the right medicine to bring out my negative emotions and the heaviness within me. Doing an EFT session with a friendly facilitator helps us shed most of our worries then and there. EFT helps us developing affection towards children.” – Rajeshwari

“I gained a lot of self confidence through it. I had severe hand pain. Through EFT, this has reduced greatly and almost gone. It has given me the confidence that I can cure myself. Whatever be the pain, I feel confident to handle it. I will use it for myself and for others as well. I want to experience it fully and learn it completely to be able to use it with children in my class and home. I will never forget you!” – S. Rani

“With EFT I am able to let go of the worries in my mind. I like to do EFT. I will use it by myself and for children.” – V. Rameshwari

“It has given me the hope that I can handle any of my problems without tension. I like to do EFT. I did not like to say the affirmation out aloud. I will be able to use it myself and have a 50% confidence that I can use it with children. – A teacher at Puvudham

“I learnt to solve my problems on my own. I liked the tapping and solving my problems. I will use it myself and for my children.” – K. Samanthi

“I have learnt the EFT tapping points myself and could experience using it on myself. I could experience the effects of EFT. I liked the way the facilitator is willing to listen to other people’s needs and giving the comfort to them. I am practicing it on myself and started with my mother. I also plan to use EFT with my wife. I am finding it very useful, particularly with children. We would like to have another refresher session with Jayashree.” – Madhavaraj

“EFT is a technique that helps handling my emotions appropriately. I learnt EFT so that I will be more effective in handling human relationships. Using EFT, I liked the connection between the emotions and the body. I will be using EFT with myself. After a few weeks of practice, I will slowly start with my children. It will be good to fix a follow-up meeting now itself. WE can try and experiment with this technique and discuss with you again.” – Ram

"I learnt that many of my direction of thoughts are valid and can be built though EFT. I like the simplicity of the practice. I plan to use it on myself and with kids. We would be happy to have you visit us about a month hence." - Meenakshi

### **WORKING WITH CHILDREN**

Working with the children at Puvudham was an enriching experience for Komala and Rashmi. They worked with the Middle School kids. There were 36 of them. First, they gave an intro about emotions, energy channels, and how EFT can help us feel better when we are not feeling so good. They talked about how the mind and body are so well connected. Gave examples of how when we have to do our homework, we may feel very tired. But if the very next moment, a friend comes in, we rush out to play. The same body, depending on our mood, feels very tired or very energetic.

They also talked about how we feel that we are too short or too tall or not smart or don't have beautiful hair, poor in Maths etc. The kids could relate to the examples very well.

#### **Children's Apprehensions about their Emotions**

One boy said "Why should I talk about my feelings? I should control them." Clearly, this is something a lot of kids are told. I explained that we are told this because some of our ways of expressing our emotions may not be most appropriate and can harm others and us. For example, if someone hits us, we may hit back and in the process both can get hurt. EFT is a process wherein you learn how to recognize and release the emotion so that you feel better and do not have to do things which could harm others and you.

We also talked about how, many times, we are feeling so sad or angry or helpless that we don't know what to do to make us feel better. EFT is one way that can help us in such situations.

### **EFT WITH CHILDREN**

Children were very open about trying it out. We asked them to think of anything that makes them sad or angry or helpless. (In groups) The kids could experience a great relief after tapping. They felt better and, in many cases, could see their own mistakes in the right perspective.

After the session was over, I saw a couple of other ones practicing the tapping sequence. It was so heartening to see this!

No more suppression of feelings. No more expressing them in violent/ inappropriate ways either. Truly empowering!

### **FEEDBACK FROM CHILDREN**

The most common issues for them were the scolding/ punishments that they got at home and in school. Another was fights amongst themselves, pushing, hitting, and other children not talking to them. Another one (for those in hostel) was missing their parents.

One girl was very sad that when her mother left her in the hostel, she promised that she will be back in 2 days to see her, but had still not come. This girl felt visibly better after a few rounds of tapping.

For a couple of kids who were having headaches, after tapping, their headaches went away. This was their observation though they tapped on a different (emotional) issue.

For one girl who was very angry because her mother shouted at her, after a couple of rounds of tapping, the feeling shifted to that of sadness and then she was able to release this too.

A boy who was sad that his friends didn't come to him, after tapping, said "It's ok. I will go to them".

One boy was very precise with his feeling. He said that he felt heavy as if a needle was pricking his chest.

Overall the kids were very happy and felt that it was a very useful technique. As one girl put it, "Now, I can take out my emotion without harming others." :-)

One girl, pointing to the younger kids, asked "Can I teach it to them?" What a delight it was to hear this!