

USE YOUR DREAMS TO ELIMINATE DISTRESS

**Applications of Dream Memories and Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT)
to Eliminate Stress, Anxiety, and Negative Emotions**

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Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) has become the self-help method of choice to eliminate stress, anxiety, fears, phobias, post-traumatic stress syndrome, depression, and addictions. It is based on the stimulation of the energy meridian end points on the body while mentally focusing on a negative emotion one wishes to eliminate. No needles are required. It is effective, easy to apply, fast, and most importantly, it is free! Unlike most "talk therapies," EFT does not require months of painful and expensive sessions in which the user must relive the past trauma. Most standard psychological therapies offer the patient a method to "manage" the distress. On the contrary, EFT takes a few minutes to apply and for many negative emotions it offers a permanent cure. For a short illustrated introduction to EFT please read the book ["It is in Your Hands: Emotional Freedom Technique"](#) (Salomon, 2007)

A key component in the successful application of EFT sessions is the user's ability to focus on a very precise emotion associated with a distressful event. Several techniques have been proposed to achieve this, including Gary Craig's "movie technique," where the client mentally visualizes and replays the historical occurrence of the event. With the "narrative technique" the client relates a story of a past situation that triggers a negative emotion. These methods constitute a conscious effort to search for the disturbing feeling.

I would like to propose an alternative method that relies on our natural dream activity, and thus on our unconscious nocturnal expression of feelings, rather than on our will-driven or systematic efforts to locate them. Excluding the very rare premonitory and lucid dreams, most dreams are essentially spontaneous attempts by our unconscious to communicate a feeling or an affective point of view on a situation in our wakeful lives. During wakeful times, the conscious mind rules our thinking and actions by using its logical, objective, and deductive abilities. However, during periods of sleep the conscious mind rests and the unconscious mind is free to express its feelings, many of which are negative. The problem is that the unconscious mind is illogical, deductive, and uses symbols as a way of communication. Most of us do not pay attention to our dreams, and when we do we regard them as incoherent stories unrelated to anything we know. On the contrary, a correctly interpreted dream reveals an accurate unconscious feeling about a very relevant aspect in our lives. When this emotion is negative, an EFT treatment effectively eliminates an important fixation, complex, or distress behind it.

The important point to remember is that it is not necessary to learn the complex language of symbols, or to spend time reading books about dreams interpretation, or even to attempt to interpret our dreams. These skills may help us understand the causal relations of our distress with our daily events in our lives, but "understanding" is a logical feature of the conscious mind, which is unnecessary for the elimination of a negative emotion. What is important is to recognize the value of dreams as expressions of our inner feelings, to remember them immediately upon waking up, and to focus on the feeling underneath a dream, while doing an EFT treatment. Most dreams are forgotten within a couple of minutes of awaking. Therefore you must replay the dream, as with the "movie technique," as soon as you awake, while focusing on the feeling that the dream evokes, and simultaneously doing an EFT treatment.

I will share one experience, amongst the many I have had while exploring the use of EFT

to eliminate negative emotions attached to dreams. In my dream I walked through the interior of an unfamiliar building with white walls. The building was empty, devoid of any furniture or decor. I experienced a strong feeling of emptiness and sadness. This dream recurred with many variants over the period of several months, indicating a strong message my unconscious wanted to communicate. Sometimes the dream showed me an unfamiliar train station with white walls, empty, dilapidated. Each time the dream appeared, it was accompanied by a feeling of emptiness and sadness. The interpretation of the dream pointed at my profound dissatisfaction of having to return to regular university work after an enjoyable sabbatical leave in Europe. The white walls and the persistent feelings of emptiness and sadness correctly expressed my feelings. I remark again that it is not necessary to interpret the dream. I do it here for the purpose of illustrating the exact correspondence of a dream with a wakeful reality.

Even though the dream recurred over a period of months, it disappeared entirely after just one EFT treatment: As soon as I awoke in the middle of the night, I quickly went to the adjacent restroom to avoid disturbing my wife. I sat on the tub, closed my eyes and begun to mentally replay the dream I just had, while repeating the set up phrase “Even though I have this feeling of sadness and emptiness, I love and accept my self.” I performed several rounds of tapping while repeating the reminder phrase “This feeling of sadness and emptiness,” while carefully replaying the dream as I remembered it and focusing on the negative feeling. A key factor here is the mental picture of the dream while focusing on the feeling behind the dream. There is no need to spend time recording the dream, to analyze the dream, or to understand its meaning or the reason why certain symbols appear. As with any other EFT treatment, measuring the intensity of the emotion before and after the treatment could be done. However, it is paramount that we get to apply the treatment as soon as we awake, since most of its memory is forgotten within seconds of awaking. The most objective way to assess the success of the EFT treatment was the fact that the dream, or its distressful feeling, never recurred again. The conscious or unconscious feeling of sadness disappeared completely.

The routine application of EFT treatments to dream contents every time I awake in the middle of the night (i.e., almost every night) is now a routine habit I have. Most of us have to go to the restroom at least once in the middle of the night and drink water. Take advantage of this natural need and spend a couple of minutes applying an EFT treatment to the last dream you had. Over time you will find it is an efficient way to uncover and to eliminate layers of distress that hardly ever emerge in wakeful times, and yet they constitute important negative emotions to banish. You will also discover that with time you will sleep better and become more peaceful during the day. These are sure signs of progress in the systematic elimination of negative emotions.

Here is a summary of a simple routine to follow to apply EFT treatments to dream contents:

1. Before falling asleep every night, tell your subconscious that dreams are important and that you wish to remember them *if you wake up spontaneously* (you do not want to program your subconscious to awake you).
2. As soon as you wake up in the middle of the night close your eyes and begin to mentally replay the dream, as vividly as you remember it, while simultaneously focusing on the

feeling that best describes the dream, and doing several EFT tapping routines with phrases that best describe the feeling. Do not spend too much conscious effort on identifying appropriate setup and remainder phrases. The important thing is to stay with the feeling evoked by the dream, even without phrases. Do not spend time, recording, analyzing, or interpreting the dream. For a short illustrated introduction to EFT please read the book ["It is in Your Hands: Emotional Freedom Technique"](#) (Salomon, 2007)

3. Go back to sleep as soon as the negative feeling recedes.
4. Optionally, the following day record what you remember from the dream and the attached feeling. Do not do this at night, since you do not want your logical mind to interfere with your sleep. The next day, if you want, spend time analyzing and interpreting the dream. This step is important to measure your progress and to understand negative patterns of behavior you have. It implies taking the time to learn about dreams, dreams' interpretation, symbols and their meaning. It is a long but rewarding endeavor to get to know yourself. For more information on the use of different parts of our minds for health and prosperity please read the book ["The Three Spirits"](#) (Serrano, 2008).

Remember the conscious mind, and the body, needs at least eight hours of sleep per day. Sleeping, and dreaming, are essential components to good health. However, the subconscious mind never sleeps. Here you are letting it "request" an EFT treatment each time it feels distressed when your conscious mind is not there to repress it. I wish you will use your dreams and EFT as valuable tools of personal growth. Happy dreams!

Dr. Sergio E. Serrano is the author of

[RIDING THE WAVES OF THE STOCK MARKET](#)

[Applications of Environmental Astronomical Cycles to Market Prediction and Portfolio Management.](#)

[THE THREE SPIRITS](#)

[Applications of Huna to Health, Prosperity, and Personal Growth](#)

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[AN ART OF LIVING](#)

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