

## Using EFT with Addictions

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There are 3 important things to understand when beginning to work with addictions: The **context** in which it occurs, the **purpose** it serves, and the importance of **giving an alternative** (EFT).

Addictions are 'context bound'. There is always a context (internal or external) within which the problem behaviour or pattern takes place - a place, a person, a mood, a thought, a particular time. Addiction can appear to happen TO us, on autopilot, seemingly against our normal will. A first step in undoing the power of the addiction is to become really aware of the context. Questions are very helpful:

**What exactly are you doing?**

**Where?**

**When?**

**Who with?**

**What for?**

***And then what?***

Careful responses to each of these questions will give you information, thoughts, feelings and possibly physical sensations to begin tapping on. For example;

*Even though 'it' always happens when I'm with Lucy...I deeply and completely love and accept myself..."*

*Even though 'it's' somehow connected with that strange feeling in the pit of my stomach...*

*Even though I just have to eat as soon as I get home...*

Addictions have a **purpose**. Our addictive behaviours appear to be the solution to our problem. When we are overwhelmed or are beyond our threshold to cope the addictive behaviours are an attempt at a solution to the pain of thoughts such as:

*'I am not ok/safe/valuable/loveable/confident enough as I am'...*

The behaviour(s) occur when the hope for a solution gets disconnected from the negative consequences - we have to temporarily 'forget' those negative consequences. Otherwise we would not be able to do the addictive thing again!

Filling in the blanks to the following statement will give you very useful responses to tap on, often an Ah ha moment!

Exercise: I have to...(what?) to...(feel/be/have what?), and then...(the negative consequence).

For example, a binge drinker might respond like this:

*I have to (drink) to feel confident socially), and then (I feel guilt and remorse.)*

Or an over eater:

*I have to (keep on eating) to (stop from feeling alone and scared), and then (I feel guilty, ashamed and stupid.)*

We need tools to help with our craving for the behaviour. Our clients find it helpful to have a tool to use between sessions for cravings. By the way, check to see if the word "craving" is meaningful, for some people it is not a useful concept. Some may prefer a word like 'anxiety' or 'jitters'. Teach your clients the short cut EFT, using a simple setup:

*Even though I have this craving (anxiety/fear/irritation)...I deeply and completely love and accept myself*

Sue Beer offers intensive 3 day workshops - *Healing the Addicted Heart: the 5 Stages of Transformation* and is the author of the soon to be released book with the same title. She and Emma Roberts show excellent demos and creative use of EFT in [EFT in Action](#) DVD.

Sue is featured on the [Healing the Cycle of Addictions](#) DVD package.