

An Introduction to Energy Psychology

As part of my coaching practice, I incorporate methodologies that have promising emotional and relationship benefits and are in process of being researched by the academic community. This article provides you with some basic information about these methods, which together are termed “Energy Psychology”, and how I incorporate them in my business.

“Energy Psychology” is a generic term referring to an innovative family of approaches that build on our understanding of body/mind psychology and utilizes various aspects of the human energy system. This system includes the biofield that envelops the body, energy centers, and the energy pathways.

Positioned on the shared frontier of psychology, biophysics, and spirituality, Energy Psychology techniques show promise and remarkable effects in treating and alleviating physical, emotional, relationship and spiritual distress. These include the relief of traumatic events and memories, phobias, anxiety, stress, addictions, compulsions, allergies, personality concerns, long-standing painful relationship patterns, and learning disorders, to name a few. Energy Psychology tools are also effective in promoting high level health and peak performance on the physical, mental, and creative levels. Often within minutes of using Energy Psychology resources, physical or emotional symptoms are greatly reduced or no longer present.

The prevailing premise of Energy Psychology is that the flow and balance of the body’s electromagnetic and more subtle energies are important for physical, emotional, and relationship health, and there are energy-based methods that help in fostering that well-being.

There appears to be an interactive effect among the following:

- Emotions
- Thoughts
- Beliefs
- Images
- Biochemistry
- Behaviors
- Electromagnetic & Subtle Energies
- Bodily Sensations

These influence each other and each may promote health and well-being. The relationships you have with others, your community, the environment, and spirituality may also impact your health and well-being. Flourish Coaching™ may focus on any combination of these in order to most effectively help you obtain your goals.

What is Subtle Energy?

You may have heard of subtle energy referred to by such terms as life force, chi, meridians, chakras, biofields, or auras. These energies are called “subtle” because they are not commonly detectable through our five senses. However, many people for centuries and across cultures have described seeing or feelings subtle energies to varying degrees.

Measuring energies are the fabric of our existence. Electrical, chemical, and nuclear energies are some of the more common forms of measurable energy with which we are familiar. For example, doctors measure electromagnetic fields or energies of the body through EKGs, EEGs, and MRIs. These measurable energies are clearly an important part of our everyday health and well-being.

Physicists have been dramatically changing our understanding of energy. For example, Einstein proposed that all mass is comprised of energy. That is, all “solid” objects, including our bodies, are comprised of molecules in constant motion that can be influenced by outside forces. Despite the advancement of physics, we still don’t understand certain ever-present fields of energy, such as gravity. Much remains to be learned about the energetic functioning of our world and universe.

Subtle energy is one of those forms of energy still being explored. It is considered part of the ever-present energy from which all matter is derived, in the sense of Einstein’s $E=mc^2$, i.e., matter is a form of energy. Some scientists believe our physical bodies emerge from a field of subtle energies. In many healing traditions, the “life force” that distinguishes life from death is understood as involving the presence of subtle energies. Energy Psychology suggests that by promoting balance and flow in these fields of subtle energy, the health of the entire person—spirit, mind, emotions and body—is enhanced, and relationships with others can be greatly benefited as well.

Despite not fully understanding the nature of subtle energy from a Western paradigm, there are numerous methods designed to influence these energy systems, such as acupuncture, yoga, acupressure, Reiki, and tai chi, to name just a few. Many Asian cultures have studied these energies and methods for centuries and have successfully applied them to both physical and emotional health (e.g., Deadman et.al, 1009).

Subtle energy effects and its healing role are being used in a wide variety of settings in this country. Many hospitals in the United States now include subtle energy methods (e.g., Reiki, Healing Touch, and acupuncture) to help with the healing of a variety of conditions. Further investigation is being conducted by the U.S. National Institute of Health through a center of research called The National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine.

Other examples of the growing professional interest in subtle energy is the formation of an organization for psychotherapists, coaches and others, the Association for Comprehensive Energy Psychology (ACEP), whose annual conference attracts hundreds of attendees from around the world. Their web site, www.EnergyPsych.org, has up-to-date research articles on the role of such energies in psychotherapy and coaching.

A second organization, The International Society for the Study of Subtle Energies and Energy Medicine (ISSSEEM) is also involved in research about subtle energies. Their website address is www.issseem.org. Many of the most advanced, forward-thinking and cutting-edge scientists, researchers and practitioners from many disciplines are members of either or both of these professional organizations.

Role of Subtle Energies in Coaching

Energy Psychology is based on the premise that by affecting electromagnetic and more subtle energies there can be a positive shift in a person’s emotions, thoughts, and behaviors, self-concept

and relationships. There are a number of methods that appear to have an impact on subtle energies that are used in coaching.

A common method is based on the ancient principles of acupuncture. It is a simple procedure that gently balances the energies without the discomfort of needles. Clients recall a troublesome thought or feeling and are taught which acupuncture points on their body to stimulate through tapping, rubbing, or holding (rather than using needles). There are many variations for stimulation of such points, known by such terms as acupressure, or bi-lateral stimulation, and others. They have been observed to reduce uncomfortable thoughts, feelings, limiting beliefs and patterns of many kinds, and to create the energetic foundation and new beginning for what is wanted instead. This is a method I use, and clients learn a variation of as a self-care tool.

Another method targets the energy centers of your body, which are considered to hold emotional memories. To affect these energies, I might move or hold my hands near your body while you sit on a chair, or use an eye directing device to access and move the energy in an energy center, or guide you as you move energy in one of your energy centers. One theory behind energy center clearing is that the electromagnetic charge of my hands is interacting with and balancing the electromagnetic fields of your body. Most people experience a pleasant feeling, while others may recall the old distresses we are targeting and releasing.

The centerpiece Energy Psychology methods I use are Rapid Eye Technology (RET) and Soul Detective® Healing. Developed by Dr. Ranae Johnson, RET is a holistic, spiritual, energy therapy, based on your own rapid eye movement (REM) state of sleep. When we simulate this state while you are awake, we are able to access and release past hurts, unfinished business from your past, trapped traumas and emotions, memories and subconscious beliefs that are often at the root of patterns of pain and struggle in any area of your life. This method includes such techniques as guided eye movement, blinking, breathing, visualization, and activities or exercises, all designed to assist you to release patterns of imbalance in the subtle energies in your body, and replace them with new ones that serve you better.

Soul Detective® Healing, another holistic healing methodology, was developed by Dr. Barbara Stone. This method incorporates Energy Psychology methods with spiritual healing techniques, to find and release the invisible roots of deeply held generational patterns of struggle, pain, or traumatic memories and reset the spirit/mind/body for a new foundation for well-being in the area of focus.

There are numerous other methods, all designed to balance the flow of subtle energies. For a review of these energy systems and the methods used to enhance them, see Eden's book, *Energy Medicine* (1998), Gerber's book, *Vibrational Medicine* (2001), and the web site for the Association for Comprehensive Energy Psychology (www.EnergyPsych.org).

Assessing Your Subtle Energies

There is a method to assess where your subtle energies are out of balance, which I occasionally use. It is a simple procedure where I may apply light pressure to one of your arms. The degree of firmness you experience indicates whether there is a disruption in the energies. This method has a variety of names such as Energy Checking, Muscle Testing, and Applied Kinesiology. It has been

used extensively by osteopathic and chiropractic physicians as well as physical therapists. Coaches started using this tool about 10 years ago.

In summary, there are many studies and reports about the effectiveness of Energy Psychology; it is considered an experimental procedure with growing published research. Energy Psychology methods are beginning to be researched more extensively from a Western scientific framework; it has not been proven effective from this standpoint. As a coach, I also use other methods with clients, and clients have the option of accessing those methods exclusively.

It is possible to experience some emotional distress and physical sensations related to prior life experiences. The reports from Energy Psychology show no additional side effects when used appropriately. As with other forms of coaching, emotions may arise after a coaching appointment, and you are encouraged to discuss such emotions with me.

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References

Below are a few selected sources for additional information. For a more complete list, visit the Association of Comprehensive Psychology's web site (www.EnergyPsych.org) or the Rapid Eye Technology website, www.RapidEyeTechnology.com.

Deadman, P., Baker, K., & Al-Khafaji, M. (1998). *A Manual for Acupuncture*. Hove, East Sussex, England: Journal of Chinese Medicine.

Eden, D. & Feinstein, D. (1998) *Energy Medicine*. New York, NY: Penguin Putnam.

Feinstein, D., Eden, D. & Craig, G. (2005) *The Promise of Energy Psychology*. New York, NY: Penguin Books.

Gerber, R. (2001) *Vibrational Medicine*. Rochester, VT: Bear & Company.

Gallo, F.P. (2004) *Energy Psychology: Explorations at the Interface of Energy, Cognition, Behavior, and Health*. (2nd ed.). New York: CRC Press.

Krebs, C. (1998) *A Revolutionary Way of Thinking*, Melbourne, Australia: Hill of Content.

Wells, S., Polglase, K., Andrews, H.B., Carrington, P. and Baker, A.H. (2003) Evaluation of a meridian-based intervention, emotional freedom techniques (EFT), for reducing specific phobias of small animals, *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 59, 943-066.

Overview of Energy Psychology Research

Research and background information about Rapid Eye Technology is summarized at www.RapidEyeTechnology.com.

For information about the brain-eye connection and eye movement in healing, visit the Library of Congress website: www.loc.gov.

The current state of scientific evidence about Energy Psychology is summarized at www.EnergyPsychologyResearch.com.

Current understanding of the neurological mechanisms involved in Energy Psychology procedures is summarized at www.EnergyPsych.org/article-ruden.php.

Association for Comprehensive Energy Psychology has many articles: www.EnergyPsych.org.

Organizations

Association of Comprehensive Energy Psychology: www.EnergyPsych.org

The International Society for the Study of Subtle Energies and Energy Medicine: www.isseem.org

The National Center for Comprehensive and Alternative Medicine: www.nccam.nih.gov

Developers of Energy Psychology Methods

Roger Callahan developed Thought Field Therapy (TFT): www.tftrx.com

Asha Clinton developed Energy Psychology methods working with the chakras:
www.seemorgmatrix.org

Gary Craig developed Emotional Freedom Techniques (EFT): www.emofree.com

Donna Eden's Energy Medicine has a direct application for coaching: www.InnerSource.net

Feed Gallo, Ph.D has developed Energy Diagnostic and Treatment Methods (EDx™):
www.EnergyPsych.com

Ranae Johnson, Ph.D developed Rapid Eye Technology (RET). www.RapidEyeTechnology.com.

Barbara Stone, PhD, developed Soul Detective® Healing integrating Energy Psychology with spiritual healing methods: www.SoulDetective.net

Sharlene Young developed Rapid Eye methods in working with the chakras:
www.ClearingYour12Charkras.com.