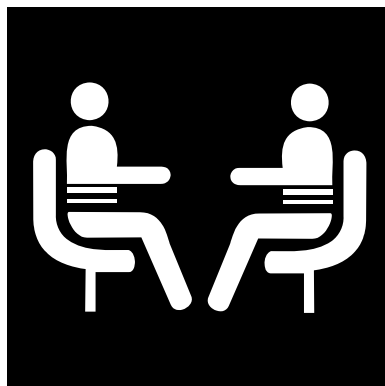


“Emotional Freedom Therapy and Aspergers: An Interview with Marian Mills”



By
Dave Angel

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Hi there and welcome to this short interview which was conducted via email with Marian Mills who is the parent of a child with Aspergers and also a trained practitioner in a therapy known as Emotional Freedom Technique. All will be explained in the interview so here it is:

Who are you and why are you qualified to talk about children with Aspergers?

My son, now 12, was diagnosed with Aspergers when he was 5. I have since trained as an EFT practitioner and use EFT daily for myself and my family to help us all to deal better with the frustrations and fears we experience having an Aspie in the family. I've also used it for his anxiety, when he allows me to!

As I began to understand the character traits of Aspies or neuro-diverse people, it became increasingly apparent that both myself and my partner could identify a very great number of these traits in ourselves. In fact, if I particularly wished to, I felt sure I could have had myself diagnosed with Aspergers Syndrome too.

I have been using EFT for several years now to overcome many of my own issues from a difficult past and can identify readily with the anxiety and anger that so often arises from feeling like a square peg in a world full of round holes.

What are Emotional Freedom Techniques and where do they come from?

Emotional Freedom Techniques, EFT for short, was created by Gary Craig and is based on the energy meridian system that Chinese acupuncture uses, first discovered over 5,000 years ago. It is a relatively new form of energy psychology, working with the chi energy blockages that cause negative feelings and upsets.

Are Emotional Freedom Techniques a recognised scientific approach or more of an un-tested (at least in mainstream science) alternative approach?

There have been some scientific tests, details of which are on Gary Craig's web site at www.emofree.com. Mostly, it is viewed by health practitioners as an alternative approach, although becoming more recognized and used by GPs and hospital staff in both USA and UK.

How can these techniques be used to help children with Aspergers?

EFT has already been used to help with 'leaky gut syndrome', which has been linked to autism and ASD disorders, where it has greatly improved the body's ability to digest various foods. It has also been used successfully for developmental delays, to improve speech and functioning, physical co-ordination and social interaction. Probably its greatest application has been to calm the many fears and even phobias that Aspergers children often suffer, and to help with anger and rage.

Parents can use it with their children, and even very young children can be taught the simple tapping routine to use for themselves. And, of course, parents can use it themselves to calm their own frustrations.

The work of Stephen Porges, a psychiatrist specializing in brain operation, particularly his [Polyvagal Perspective](#) was very influential in my ability to

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overcome many anxieties. In a very small nutshell, his work shows that many ASD kids and adults view the world as though they are like soldiers in hostile enemy territory, they don't feel safe. Therefore their neural system that controls social engagement, e.g. eye gaze and listening, is turned off and can only be reactivated when they feel safe again. The question is how to get kids to feel safe? Telling them repeatedly that they are safe doesn't work as I'm sure many parents of ASD kids know. It is not a conscious reaction but a physiological one. They just can't turn it off.

This is where EFT can also help as it is a powerful technique for releasing the link between external events and feelings of anxiety or insecurity. It also works at the physiological level to stimulate the 'relaxation response' in the body that effectively downgrades the alert status from red to green.

Are there practical techniques that parents can use themselves without needing to see an EFT therapist?

Absolutely Yes. EFT is very easy to learn and the manual is free to download from Gary Craig's web site. Parents can start using it straight away with no worry about side effects. There are many practitioners who are freely sharing their experience and knowledge through teleclasses, YouTube videos, articles and Gary Craig's EFT forum.

Can you give several examples that parents could use straight way?

The first thing parents need to do is to learn the basic tapping procedure which takes around 10 minutes.

See YouTube videos: [EFT Master explains the tapping points \(http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b15Zhu6fEdg\)](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b15Zhu6fEdg)

I can outline it here using an example for a parent who is feeling anxious about their child who is experiencing a meltdown or similar rage.

Tap the karate chop point on the side of your hand using two or more fingers of the other hand. Say the following phrase, out loud preferably, or in your head, three times:

Even though I feel anxious about my child's anger and rage, I deeply and completely accept myself.

Then tap the points indicated, again using just two fingers of one hand and say the reminder phrase:

Inside edge of eyebrow ~ *feeling anxious about his anger*

Outside edge of eye ~ *feeling anxious about his anger*

Under eye ~ *feeling anxious about his anger*

Under nose ~ *feeling anxious about his anger*

Chin ~ *feeling anxious about his anger*

Collar bone ~ *feeling anxious about his anger*

Under arm (approx one hand's width below armpit) ~ *feeling anxious about his anger*

Top of head ~ *feeling anxious about his anger*

Take a deep breath and tune into how anxious you feel now – it will probably have reduced.

Being specific about your feelings gets much better results so it's always worth taking a little time to notice what is it about his meltdown that most upsets you.

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It may be your feeling of powerlessness, or your distress at his evident upset, or it may be your own anger that he won't be told not to do this in the supermarket!

Are there specific types of behaviors/situations that EFT works better for than others?

Not really. Sometimes EFT works amazingly fast – unbelievably so! Other times it takes more persistence and maybe some detective work to uncover the underlying issues. This is where an EFT practitioner can help most effectively.

EFT can be used for physical pains, aches and other bodily symptoms. It can be used for food allergies and intolerances, and it can be used for emotional issues.

Can these techniques also be useful for parents themselves if they are stressed?

Definitely so. In fact, because many autistic spectrum children have a particular sensitivity to those around them, this alone would be of huge benefit to them. Parents feeling more relaxed and calm always makes for happier children.

Where can parents go to find out more on this subject?

The first place to go is the main EFT web site at <http://www.emofree.com>
Download the [Free Getting Started package](#)

There is a comprehensive and lively [EFT Forum](#). When you have registered you are able to post questions to which EFT professionals and enthusiasts will respond.

There are now several articles written by practitioners and parents where they share their story of how EFT has helped them and their children with Aspergers or ASD.

Impressive results with Autism - <http://www.emofree.com/Articles2/autism-relief-steve.htm>

EFT brings relief for leaky gut syndrome -

<http://www.emofree.com/Articles2/leaky-gut-asd-relief.htm>

Emotional Underdevelopment-

<http://www.emofree.com/children/underdevelopment.htm>

Using EFT on Asperger's Syndrome brings remarkable results for social anxiety
<http://www.emofree.com/Articles2/aspergers-syndrome-relief-nikki.htm>

Asperger's Boy's Fear of Others

<http://www.theamt.com/modules.php?name=Testimonials&op=view&id=41>

Visit Gene Monterastelli's EFT Q&A web site to sign up for his newsletter. He is going to be sharing a number of audios on the topic of EFT and leaky gut syndrome in the next few months.

<http://eftqanda.com/enews.html>

Suzanne Zacharia is an EFT practitioner and has Aspergers Syndrome herself. Although now resident in South Africa, she has a free e-book for Aspies at

<http://www.eft-scripts.com/sensitiveisok.php>

She says "The world can be a difficult place to be sometimes, and this is even more so for the sensitive person. Many sensitive people are neurodiverse, for example, and a neurotypical often speaks a different language, leading to many

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misunderstandings, rejection (unjustified), and ensuing feelings and limiting beliefs. Whether you are a sensitive person, have a child who is sensitive, or are merely interested, I would like you to have my FREE book, based on my own personal journey and those of my clients. I hope you like it."

Well that wraps up this short interview and I would like to say a huge thank you to Marian for providing this information and would urge you to take a look at some of the great free resources that she mentions.

Take Care

Dave Angel

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