

When Affect Overwhelms:  
*Integrating EFT and Tapping into Clinical Practice*  
Video Course  
Robert Schwarz, PsyD

Video Course  
CPD hours: 3



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**“The moment arrives sooner than expected.”**

The client begins approaching something charged — a memory, an image, a sensation. Affect intensifies. Breath shortens. The autonomic system shifts. You recognise the threshold — that narrow band between therapeutic activation and overwhelm.

Push too far and the nervous system floods.  
Pull back too quickly and the material remains unprocessed.

You regulate. You slow the pace. You return to stabilisation. Yet the underlying charge persists — activated but not metabolised, lodged in the body's continuing registration of unresolved experience.

This is a recurring dilemma in clinical work with overwhelming affect: progress requires engagement, yet engagement risks dysregulation.

How do we move treatment forward without destabilising the very system we are trying to help?

**In this focused three-hour training, Robert Schwarz introduces Emotional Freedom Techniques (EFT and tapping) as a structured, research-supported, bottom-up method for affect regulation and deeper processing.**

Not as a replacement for relational depth, cognitive work, or established trauma models — but as a clinically grounded intervention that helps bridge regulation and resolution.



## **Affect, Regulation, and the Nervous System**

Intense affect is not solely psychological; it is fundamentally physiological. Dysregulation lives in autonomic patterns, conditioned threat responses, and somatic memory. Contemporary psychotherapy increasingly integrates insights from affect regulation research, interpersonal neurobiology, and polyvagal theory to understand how safety and activation are continuously negotiated within the nervous system — what Porges describes as the neuroception of threat and safety occurring beneath conscious awareness.

EFT combines rhythmic stimulation of specific acupoints with structured cognitive and emotional engagement. While the client maintains awareness of distressing affect or memory, tapping is applied in a defined sequence.

This pairing appears to influence physiological arousal while preserving cognitive access to emotionally charged material — a dynamic consistent with emerging understandings of inhibitory learning and memory reconsolidation (Ecker et al., 2012).

Rather than avoiding distress, EFT works within it — but at a tolerable intensity that respects the limits of the window of tolerance while allowing for what Siegel describes as integration across neural networks.

Dr. Schwarz situates EFT within a broader mind–body framework, examining how it intersects with other bottom-up approaches while retaining its own procedural clarity and accessibility.

### **Two Primary Applications of EFT in Clinical Work**

EFT's clinical utility lies in its adaptability across different stages of therapeutic work. In this webinar, Dr. Schwarz describes two primary applications of EFT that support thoughtful, phase-oriented integration.

#### **Application One: Self-Regulation**

In regulation-focused work, EFT is used to reduce acute emotional and somatic distress. The tapping protocol is applied while the client tracks present-moment sensations or affective states, allowing autonomic activation to decrease without requiring deep narrative exploration or explicit memory retrieval.

This approach can be particularly useful when working with:

- **Panic or anxiety spikes**
- Intrusive affect
- **Somatic overwhelm**
- Clients struggling to remain within their window of tolerance
- Early-stage stabilisation in trauma-informed work

Participants will learn the foundational tapping sequence, the structure of the set-up statement, and the therapist stance that supports attuned modulation rather than affective suppression.

#### **Application Two: Processing Emotionally Charged Material**

Once sufficient regulation capacity is established, EFT can be applied to specific emotionally charged memories or events. Using structured approaches such as the “Tell the Story” technique, material is activated in manageable segments while tapping modulates physiological intensity — functioning as titrated exposure with concurrent physiological regulation.



This allows emotional charge to decrease without prolonged flooding or dissociative detachment. Clients remain oriented and engaged, rather than overwhelmed.

Dr. Schwarz will demonstrate how to:

- Titrate intensity carefully across successive approximations
- **Recognise early signs of dysregulation and impending window breach**
- Adjust pacing in real time based on somatic markers
- Maintain dual awareness between past experience and present safety

The distinction between regulation and processing is clinically significant. EFT is not merely a calming intervention; when applied judiciously, it can function as a structured vehicle for deeper emotional resolution — what Janet described as the transformation of traumatic memory into narrative memory.

### **The Research Landscape**

EFT has been examined in more than 200 peer-reviewed studies, including systematic reviews and meta-analyses reporting significant reductions in anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress symptoms.

Randomised controlled trials have documented sustained symptom reduction across diverse populations, including veterans and survivors of large-scale trauma. Neuroimaging research has explored changes in brain regions associated with emotional regulation and threat processing, with fMRI studies suggesting measurable shifts in areas involved in threat detection and affect regulation.

In this webinar, Dr. Schwarz provides a clinically grounded overview of:

- Meta-analytic findings across anxiety, depression, and PTSD populations
- Outcome studies across diagnostic categories
- Neurobiological hypotheses regarding acupoint stimulation and threat circuit modulation
- The integration of somatic modulation with cognitive engagement

He also explores how EFT appears to “stack” mechanisms common to multiple evidence-informed approaches: exposure, cognitive reappraisal, attentional deployment, and direct somatic intervention.

The empirical landscape does not suggest that EFT replaces established modalities. It does indicate that it meets criteria for evidence-informed practice and warrants thoughtful clinical consideration alongside other contemporary approaches.

### **Managing Intensity and Clinical Judgment**

Work with overwhelming affect requires more than adherence to protocol. It demands clinical timing, relational attunement, and ongoing assessment of readiness and relational capacity.

This training addresses the subtleties of application, including:

- Assessing when a client possesses sufficient affect tolerance for deeper processing
- Recognising somatic markers of escalating dysregulation
- Intervening mid-session if activation exceeds integrative capacity
- Working with shame-based or relationally complex material where exposure alone may prove insufficient



- Identifying contraindications, clinical limits, and contexts where alternative interventions are indicated

Participants will also be introduced to structured approaches such as the Personal Peace Procedure, which can support systematic identification and prioritisation of unresolved material across a client’s affective landscape.

EFT is presented here as one clinical tool among many — precise, adaptable, and applied with clinical discernment.

### What You'll Learn

Participants will be able to:

- **Apply the foundational EFT tapping protocol to reduce acute emotional distress**
- Distinguish between regulation-focused and processing-focused applications within a phase-oriented framework
- **Integrate EFT into stabilisation work while maintaining fidelity to attachment-informed and relationally attuned practice**
- Titrate emotional intensity to reduce risk of flooding during deeper processing work
- Understand key research findings and proposed neurobiological mechanisms
- Assess when EFT is clinically appropriate — and when alternative or complementary interventions are indicated

Experiential practice in self-regulation work will allow participants to understand the intervention from a first-person, phenomenological perspective.

### Workshop Structure

#### Part 1: Clinical Context and Evidence

- The regulatory dilemma in working with overwhelming affect
- EFT within contemporary mind–body frameworks
- Overview of the research landscape and proposed mechanisms

#### Part 2: Regulation-Focused Application

- The foundational tapping protocol
- Therapist stance and set-up statement
- Integrating EFT into stabilisation work
- Demonstration and guided experiential practice

#### Part 3: Processing-Focused Application

- Structured approaches to working with emotionally charged memories
- The “Tell the Story” technique and titrated exposure principles
- Managing intensity and maintaining dual awareness
- Working within the window of tolerance

#### Part 4: Clinical Integration and Ethics



- The Personal Peace Procedure for systematic treatment planning
- Contraindications and clinical cautions
- Integrating EFT within your existing therapeutic orientation
- Q&A and clinical discussion

### Who Should Attend

This webinar is suitable for:

- Psychotherapists and psychologists working with dysregulated affect across diagnostic presentations
- Clinicians integrating somatic, sensorimotor, or bottom-up approaches
- Practitioners using phase-oriented trauma frameworks
- Therapists seeking research-informed regulation tools within an integrative, relationally grounded model

### About Robert Schwarz

**Robert Schwarz, PsyD, DCEP, ACAP-EFT**, is a licensed psychologist with nearly four decades of clinical experience. He served for 16 years as Executive Director of the Association for Comprehensive Energy Psychology (ACEP), organising more than 30 international conferences on trauma treatment, Ericksonian hypnosis, and energy psychology, and training over 18,000 clinicians worldwide.

He is the author of *Tools for Transforming Trauma* and has contributed to scholarly discussions integrating EFT with contemporary neuroscience. Known for his grounded and integrative teaching style, Dr. Schwarz presents EFT as one clinical tool among many — precise, adaptable, and applied with clinical discernment.

### Join Us

Expanding one's clinical repertoire requires intellectual discernment — and the willingness to evaluate emerging tools with both empirical rigour and clinical humility.

Join Robert Schwarz on 13 May for this focused three-hour exploration of Emotional Freedom Techniques (EFT and tapping) in clinical practice.

**If working skilfully with overwhelming affect is central to your practice, this training offers a structured, research-informed way to expand your approach — while maintaining fidelity to the theoretical and relational foundations that guide your work.**

**Places are limited. Reserve your seat today.**

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