



## **Succeeding at Change**

**David Rourke, EFT Master**

A New Year is upon us. Many of us make decisions to eliminate an unwanted behaviour like overeating or smoking. Maybe we are setting goals to achieve abundance (whatever that means for you). Most of us fail at our attempts to change, even with EFT! Part of the reason we fail is because we don't really have a plan on how to succeed.

We tend to think that if we tap on a few aspects we should be okay. Nothing could be farther from the truth. EFT is a tool, JUST A TOOL! A carpenter cannot build a house with just a hammer, even if it is the best hammer in the world. He needs other tools. When we are making the effort for lasting change of some unwanted behaviour we need more than one tool.

Change is a process. To be successful there are certain stages we all tend to go through.

**START WITH THINKING ABOUT CHANGE** - First of all, we go through a process of thinking about changing (we could get stuck here for years) then we start to prepare or "get ready" to take action. Now, if we don't prepare properly we are setting ourselves up for failure. Taking action too early in our plan will definitely lead to failure and may be too demoralizing for us to want to try again. After we have put a good plan in place we then take action. If we have prepared a good plan it will minimize the risk of relapse. After a period of time, we move into a stage of maintaining the gains that we have made and finally we have successfully changed. Truly successful change is when there is no desire or need to fall back to the undesirable behaviour no matter what the circumstances.

Here are some ideas that will help you succeed. Now, I've decided to use weight loss as the foundation for this article but the process can be applied on any problem (addiction, or any unwanted behaviour) that you have that you would like to change.

### **INCREASE YOUR KNOWLEDGE ABOUT YOUR ISSUE**

When you are contemplating change or in the "Thinking about it" stage, do your best to learn as much about what it is you are trying to change. For example, if you are planning on losing weight, learn about the health effects of being overweight and learn about healthy eating and exercise. For example, do you know how many calories per day you need to consume in order to remain healthy? Do you know how many minutes of cardio it take to burn off a Twinkie?



## CLARIFY THE PROBLEM

Reflect on how you treat food; when you crave it, when you start eating junk. What is going on in your life when you get the urge to emotionally eat? Make a list of what comes up for you during this reflection. These are all 'tappable' issues so tap the crap out of what comes up. Educate yourself on your problem and also look at your past attempts at changing. What got in the way? What can you do different this time? If you are feeling any resistance coming up address it with EFT.

## VISUALIZE YOURSELF WITHOUT THE PROBLEM

Begin to see yourself without your problem. Start tapping and picture yourself in good health, picture what it will be like when you have to go and buy new, smaller clothes. Picture what it will be like to feel energetic, attractive and vibrant. What does that feel like? Do you feel elated? Do you feel scared? Keep tapping. Now, keep tapping and picture your life ten years from now if you decide not to change. What will you look and feel like? Will you be healthy, energetic, happy? Keep tapping and again feel what life will be like when you have successfully achieved your goal.

## FEAR CAN MAKE US STUCK

One of the problems with this "Thinking about it" stage is that we can become stuck. In our search for absolute certainty that we will succeed, we end up paralyzing ourselves with the fear of failure. The fear of failing over-rides our desire to change. So, we keep thinking about it, and talking about it but fail to jump into action. Sometimes, we think so much about what it is we are contemplating changing, trying to understand every little nuance of our problem, that we actually consider that we are taking action on our problem. We make 'thinking' look like work.

## ARE THERE MAGIC MOMENTS?

Another trap is when we wait for the *magic moment*; when all the stars are aligned , the Toronto Maple Leafs are in the Stanley Cup finals and the Cleveland Browns have won the Super Bowl . "When that happens I'll be ready to change", we say. Actually I think if the Leafs and the Browns won, I'd have God realization! We can always find things that keep us from 'the right moment'. "I'm too busy right now" or "I'm going to wait until my life isn't so stressful". Yeah, whatever.

## IS IT A WIN-LOSE SITUATION?

This ambivalence is normal when it comes to making change. You're in the worst form of human conflict, a win-lose situation. A win-win situation is a no-brainer. We just pick which will better suit our needs. A lose-lose situation (although unpleasant) will have us pick the lesser of two evils. But a win-lose situation? Wow,



you're suggesting I give up something that creates pain in my life but still serves me in some functionally, dysfunctional way, for the idea that things could be better for me if I changed to *this*. I'm having a hard time wanting to jump on to that band wagon. What if I fail? What if I'm still unhappy?

**MAKE A PRO AND CON LIST**

Make a pros and cons list: Consequences to yourself (both pros and cons), Consequences to others, Reactions from yourself (both pros and cons), Reactions from others. Here's an example:

**Losing Weight**

<b>PROS</b>	<b>CONS</b>
<b>Consequences to Self</b>	<b>Consequences to Self</b>
Lower blood pressure	No escape with comfort foods
Healthier	May be "visible" therefore possible target
More attractive	May restrict my social life
Nicer fitting clothes	I may get moody with no stress relief
Toned, fit body	
Sleep better	
<b>Consequences to Others</b>	<b>Consequences to Others</b>
Partner find me more attractive	Some friends may feel threatened
People are more interested in socializing with me	Loved ones may experience my "moods"
Kids enjoy playing with me	
<b>Reactions of Self</b>	<b>Reactions of Self</b>
See myself as strong	See myself as conceited
See myself as empowered	See myself as vulnerable
See myself as confident	
<b>Reactions of Others</b>	<b>Reactions of Others</b>
Friends will be proud of me	People may start "hitting" on me
People show me more respect	People may see me as conceited
Partner is proud of me	Partner may feel threatened
	Some friend may feel "left behind"

These are just examples. There are many things that can be put on this list. Create your list and **tap** on any consequences that can stop you from moving into the next stage for successful change. Now, be realistic



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and honest as you write this list. There are pros and cons to every behaviour we engage in. If you find that your list is leaning too much to one side, please go back and do an honest appraisal.

When you have finished tapping on all the stuff coming up on your list you are ready to start preparing to change the behaviour. Don't worry if there is still some ambivalence, it's completely normal. Keep tapping! In my next article, I will offer you some ideas to help you prepare to take action. Until then, try these ideas and tap on what comes up.

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