

Review of the EFT Spring Gathering, 21/22 May 2011

by John Bullough, PhD, MBACP, co-editor of 'EFT & Beyond'

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Executive summary for those in a hurry: The impressive success of this first EFT Spring Gathering clearly identifies it, alongside the already established EFT North Gathering in Yorkshire, as a key annual convention for the EFT community in Western Europe, representing superb value for money and packed with leading edge material; an unmissable pair of events for all serious practitioners and students of EFT. And the organisers of both Gatherings promise even more ambitious plans for 2012 (dates for diary: 19th/20th May 2012 for the next [EFT Spring Gathering](#) and 28th/29th January 2012 for the next EFT North Gathering, both with all day workshops before and/or afterwards).

Who was it for?

This first EFT Spring Gathering was attended by over 80 people, including a number of doctors, psychologists, counsellors/psychotherapists, practitioners of EFT, newcomers and lay people alike. There was something for everyone, and encouraged by the positive feedback they received, the organisers tell me they plan a similar format for future years.

What was the main theme?

Although not explicitly stated in the documentation, my sense is that this Gathering and its sister event in Yorkshire closely followed the ethos laid out by Gary Craig, originator of EFT. Everyone involved, attendees and [speakers](#) alike, attended as equals within the broader EFT community, all approaching the weekend with a sense of willingness to share their experiences and learn, reminiscent of Gary Craig's 'healing high rise' metaphor. The Gathering itself was run by a group of volunteers enthusiastic about the spread of EFT, aiming to keep the cost to an absolute minimum whilst still providing a first class event. All available recordings and handouts of the sessions were provided free of charge on the [EFT Spring Gathering website](#) (please click link for details), and all profits dedicated to furthering the cause of EFT via research and community projects. These features alone ensure the Gatherings a key place on my annual EFT calendar.

This all sounds very nice, but what's in it for me?

The theme I heard most in discussion with colleagues over the weekend was: *"Where is EFT (in its broadest sense) going, what are my peers doing and what might this mean for me and my practice?"*

As far as I am aware, there was no planned overall theme for the presentations, and yet it seemed to me that the keynote addresses by [Grant Connelly](#) (from Canada) and [Robert Smith](#) (from USA) fitted closely with a theme of 'negativity release'; a manual if you like for how to identify and let go of unwanted patterns of thinking, feeling and behaving without necessarily spending much time on understanding why they exist or what might be keeping them in place. It was a privilege to hear these two talented and accomplished speakers laying out their own recipes, in this case [Z Point](#) and [Faster EFT](#), for this vitally important aspect of personal growth. Also, they both clearly subscribe to the ethos of the EFT community, providing their materials at very reasonable cost, and in Robert Smith's case, backed by several hundred videos of his work provided free of charge on YouTube.

What were the most compelling topics?

Research and PTSD: A question on many people's lips was *"What about EFT research?"* and in this context it was a privilege to have a preview of [Rangana Choudhuri's](#) intriguing presentation on the science of EFT and the status of EFT research to date, a presentation she intends to repeat worldwide. Among other things she explained that randomised controlled trials (RCTs) of EFT for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) represent perhaps the most evidence-based data available today on the effectiveness of EFT vs other approaches. It was therefore a rare treat that [Eric Huurre](#),

producer of the acclaimed documentary '[Operation Emotional Freedom – The Answer](#)' which deals specifically with the treatment of PTSD was there to give us an after dinner address on the making of the film and answer our questions. Working closely with Gary Craig, Carol Look and others, Eric has produced a film that makes a compelling case for the effectiveness of EFT in the treatment of this notoriously intractable and debilitating condition¹.

Cancer care: It is becoming increasingly common to hear of traditional doctors turning toward a more integrative approach to medical practice these days, and it was therefore a special delight to hear [Dr Kate James](#), supported in a very personal way by her children, speaking about how she integrates EFT and nutritional advice into her own practice, specialising in the care and treatment of patients with cancer. You may be interested to know that Kate has recently been appointed director of integrative medicine at her old medical school, which bodes well for the introduction of EFT into mainstream medical practice in the future.

EFT in business and sports performance: [Sejual Shah](#) gave an excellent review of the potential challenges involved in introducing EFT to companies, reminding aspiring practitioners to make sure they speak in terms and in a language that their business clients are likely to be able to relate to. [Sean Grey](#) eloquently described the important work he is doing with musicians and sports people to help them deal with performance anxiety. Social anxiety disorder, which includes performance anxiety, is arguably the most common and least diagnosed anxiety disorder in society and in business today, and I know from discussions in the breaks that many attendees at the Gathering found Sean and Sejual's work an inspiration for where they might take their own practice in the future.

Novel approaches: I found all the presentations interesting in their own right, not least [Safaya Salter's](#) fascinating work with animals, [Fiona Truman's](#) illuminating perspectives on Matrix Reimprinting, [Megan Smith's](#) unique insights into medicines and the treatment of minor ailments and [Cath Riley's](#) very personal account of her own struggle with irritable bowel syndrome. But of greatest interest to me in terms of where EFT might be going in the future were [Linda Wood's](#) pioneering work with stuffed bears (as surrogates for issues to be worked on) and [Philip Davis and Christine Sutton's](#) work with Picture Tapping, drawing on ideas from Art Therapy. Listening to these presentations helped me to remember that the older I get, the more I realise how little I know! I felt like a child in a sweet shop, wanting so much to eat all the sweets at the same time!

Conclusion

Overall, the EFT Spring Gathering 2011 was a great success. If wishing to be supercritical, one might mention occasional difficulty with microphone sound quality, a degree of overlap in content with the EFT North Gathering and one or two other teething troubles reflecting the relative inexperience of some of us involved. But overall, especially considering the smooth orchestration, the conscientious presentations, the friendly atmosphere, the dedication of all concerned, the keen pricing and the quality of the venue and food, in my view these small criticisms pale into insignificance.

In summary, I can recommend both Gatherings without hesitation for anyone who feels ready to learn from the experiences of their peers in the EFT community and at the same time take the temperature of the water as to where the field is going and what it may mean for us all and our individual practices in the future. The next [EFT Spring Gathering](#) is to be held on 19th/20th May 2012 at the same venue (Ramada Hotel, Sutton Coldfield) and the next [EFT North Gathering](#) is to be held on 28th/29th January 2012 at The Royal York Hotel, York, location of this year's classic [EFT Masterclass](#). Looking forward to seeing you there.

¹ Following the Spring Gathering, [a new RCT](#) has demonstrated the effectiveness of EFT vs EMDR for the treatment of PTSD. EMDR is one of the treatments of choice listed in the NHS's NICE guidelines for the treatment of PTSD, giving some grounds for optimism that EFT may also find its way into this guideline in the coming years.