

Energy Psychology as a Disruptive Technology

Dawson Church

Malcolm McLean sat in his truck at the docks. Behind him, dockworkers were unloading his cargo of wool to put it on a ship on its way to a manufacturer. Out of nowhere he had a thought, “What if they simply lifted off the whole back of my truck and put it on the ship, instead of unpacking it bale by bale?”

The trucker soon put his idea into practice. On April 26, 1956, an old tanker left the port of Newark, New Jersey, bound for Houston, Texas. The SS *Ideal-X* seemed like an unlikely place to start a revolution. But its cargo included 58 35-foot aluminum containers, courtesy of Malcolm McLean. Now head of McLean Trucking, he had no experience in shipping, but he realized that if cargo could be shifted from land to sea in a container, rather than laboriously unpacked item by item, costs would be much lower and efficiency much higher.

His idea took a long time to catch on. Dockworker unions fought containerization bitterly. It wasn't until the Vietnam War, when America needed to transport vast amounts of material half-way across the world quickly, that containers came into widespread use.

Before McLean, the cost of shipping consumed up to 25% of the price of a product. After containerization, it fell to a tiny fraction. A new container ship launched in 2006, called the *Emma Maersk*, has a beam of 180 feet—too wide for the Panama Canal. With only 13 crewmembers, it transports 13,500 containers.

Containerization is an example of a disruptive technology, meaning it replaces an existing method or system, rendering it obsolete.

There are myriad instances of disruptive technology that seem integral to our lifestyles today yet were radical departures from the past. Barcodes. Airplanes. Wi-Fi. Vaccines. 3D printing. Fracking. Transistors. Cellphones. Nanobots. And hundreds more.

Energy Psychology and Extraordinary Healing

At a recent EFT (Emotional Freedom Techniques) tapping workshop, I was privileged to

work with a wonderful psychologist, “Josh.” He had been in the profession for decades, and his compassion and clinical skill shone through every encounter he had with practice clients as he learned EFT.

On the first day of the workshop, Josh worked on a childhood event that had involved his older brother. When he was 5 years old, his brother, then 7, had pulled down Josh's pants in the middle of the school playground. This was just one of many similar events in which his brother had hurt or humiliated Josh.

What was even more vexing to Josh was that despite all his skill, all his training, all his decades of experience, all the psychotherapeutic methods he had tried, he'd never been able to resolve his feelings toward his brother.

During lunch on the last day of the workshop I asked Josh if he'd like to work with me in front of the room as a demonstration subject and he enthusiastically agreed. First we tried simple EFT techniques, such as the Enhanced Basic Recipe, which includes eye movements as well as acupuncture tapping, and the Movie Technique, which is useful for neutralizing the emotional impact of specific events. Josh's emotional intensity around his brother shifted somewhat but not a lot.

I then turned to advanced techniques drawn from the EFT Universe Energy Psychology training. These draw on the Gestalt therapy concept of having clients dialog with imaginary others. Fritz Perls, the developer of Gestalt therapy, would place an empty chair in front of a client and have that person imagine someone sitting there. That someone might be a person who had wronged them in their childhood. It might be an early version of themselves. It might be a part of their personality they struggle against or even hate.

Finishing Unfinished Conversations

In the Energy Psychology certification program, we call this set of techniques “Unfinished Conversations.” When the Gestalt method is combined with tapping, eye movements, and the other

energy-shifting techniques drawn from somatic therapies, its effects can be powerful. People can finish conversations that might have been a source of grief and pain for decades. Once a conversation has been successfully concluded, all the emotional intensity trapped in that memory goes away.

Josh placed a variety of characters in the empty chair. His brother today. His brother at 7 years old. Himself at 5 years old. The part of him that worshipped his brother. The part of him that felt betrayed by his brother. The part of him that was angry at the world. The part of him that had never told his brother how he felt. The part of him reluctant to release his pain because that implied forgiving his brother. Conversation by conversation, over the course of about 30 minutes, Josh completed his past. He resolved all the emotional trauma that had remained locked in that relationship for decades.

At one point, I used a technique from our Advanced Energy Therapies training module. To get the emotional energy moving faster, I asked Josh to stand up, walk around while tapping, and then stand in front of a blank wall. I had him imagine his brother standing there, and then yell out all his grief and pain. As a lifetime of anguish poured out through Josh's voice, his face and neck turned beet red. The walls of the classroom shook. The audience was shocked as the huge well of grief, anger, and pain erupted.

After the storm came the calm. As Josh tapped, the well drained away. We sat down again. We went back and reviewed all the same childhood events, the scars with which Josh had walked into the room at the start of the workshop. We tested the success of the energy work on each event.

Josh could now describe each one without any rise in emotional intensity. He had a cognitive shift and felt compassion for his brother. "He's just never managed to pull his life together," Josh said. "Despite all his potential, he's just bumping along, 50 years later."

The demonstration left the whole audience awed by the power of Energy Psychology. It had worked where other methods had fallen short. Josh could now look forward to a future no longer haunted by the ghosts of his past.

History Repeats Itself—But with a Difference

Energy Psychology is a disruptive technology as much as shipping containers, Wi-Fi, barcodes,

or 3D printing. In the course of training thousands of people over a decade, I've seen the disruption underway hundreds of times. Mental health professionals who have struggled with their own demons for decades, unable to find relief, heal startlingly quickly when we use these techniques.

A century ago, infectious disease was a major threat to public health. Diseases such as typhoid, polio, syphilis, influenza, and the plague killed millions of people each year. In 1917, New York's commissioner of public health, Josephine Baker, wrote an editorial in the *New York Times* presenting some shocking statistics: The mortality rate of children in New York City was higher than that of soldiers fighting on the Western Front in World War I.

Despite opposition and ridicule, much of it because she was a woman in a man's world, Dr. Baker pioneered techniques that controlled infectious disease. She trained teenage girls to care for their infant siblings. Her team tracked down people with infectious diseases who were unwittingly passing them along to others. She standardized the dosages of medications given to children.

Within a few short years, diseases such as typhoid fever were a thing of the past. Her reforms spread to 34 other large cities and eventually across the globe. Diseases that had terrified generations of people, and which had afflicted humankind since the beginning of time, were eradicated in a decade or two. Huge amounts of suffering were alleviated, and within a single generation the disease burden borne by the human race throughout its evolution was no more. Children grew up in a radically different world, one in which the fear of these diseases was unknown. Today words like "typhoid" and "cholera" sound like quaint historic terms to us. But to our grandparents, these words rang of dread.

The revolution in infectious disease is a century old. Today we are at the same point in history with regard to mental health. Research shows that EFT cures 9 out of 10 cases of PTSD in 10 sessions or less. Sometimes in as little as one session. Similar breakthroughs have occurred for anxiety, depression, and phobias.

The Pervasive Effects of Disruptive Psychotechnologies

In the new body-based therapies such as EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and

Reprocessing), EFT, and other forms of Energy Psychology, we have the tools to eradicate most mental disease. These methods are being adopted slowly but surely by the health care establishment. Society is having a Josephine Baker moment. We haven't realized it yet, but we are on the threshold of eradicating most mental disease, as certainly as those 20th-century pioneers eradicated infectious physical diseases.

The ripple effects of this disruptive technology across society will be profound. Children who have the skills to tap away their stress won't need to act out in classrooms. Bullies will be able to relieve their anger without needing to take it out on others. Teachers, students, and administrators will release their stresses quickly and efficiently. Test anxiety and social phobia will decline to negligible levels.

Research shows that as anxiety declines, test scores rise. Not only will children become happier, they'll become smarter too. And that's just the field of education. Technology, law, engineering, government, health care, manufacturing, services, art, science, finance, architecture, transportation, and every other field will undergo similar revolutions.

This will liberate human potential on a scale unsurpassed in human history. All of the human abilities that have been shrouded under a cloak of anxiety, depression, and trauma will be liberated. As individuals tap away their limitations, they will expose their genius. They will accomplish things

they had never dreamed possible. They will break through limitations to create, be, and experience levels of well-being that were impossible before.

Just as the eradication of most infectious physical disease changed the world of a century ago, the eradication of most mental disease will change the world of tomorrow. Research into the phenomenon of emotional contagion shows that every individual's emotions affect all those around them. Those people in turn affect others the next layer out. As people using Energy Psychology to lift their burden of personal trauma interact with others, they will produce massive positive emotional contagion throughout the society around them.

This will in turn affect the entire trajectory of evolution—not just human evolution but planetary evolution. The human genius liberated by the disruptive technology of Energy Psychology will solve global problems that have seemed insoluble to our generation. The disruption will change not just the course of history, but also the fate of the world.

This big picture starts with the smallest of acts. With Josh. With the millions of Josh's who are learning Energy Psychology. With you and me, as we tap away our suffering. With those around us, who are inspired by our positive emotional contagion. By using this disruptive technology to make ourselves happier, we participate in a chain of being that ultimately disrupts the whole world onto a new and positive path.