

Tap for success!

Behind the scenes at a most unusual business networking event

• JUDITH SEGALOFF

When Pearl Lopian, EFT master trainer and therapist, described her networking venture for self-employed women to me, explaining that it involved “tapping,” Fred Astaire came to mind. That’s one cool icebreaker, I thought, but then she told me how attendees were releasing their toxic inhibitions and finding new leads and closing deals without a tap, tap, shuffle, step-heel, heel-step – and I had to see it for myself.

Tapping began in the 1970s when doctors began assisting patients with stress, fear and other psychological issues by stimulating points in the body that were initially used by the ancient Chinese in acupuncture, according to WebMD. Tapping techniques were refined in 1995 by Gary Craig, who focused on the end points of acupuncture meridians together with the emotional component of a physical symptom; he developed it into what is now known as EFT (Emotional Freedom Techniques).

According to Dr. Peta Stapleton, Australian professor of psychology, Ph.D. and author of *The Science Behind Tapping*, the stimulation of tapping on acupressure points sends a signal to the amygdala, the stress center of the brain, signaling it to calm down. She adds that studies comparing it to cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) indicate that results take far fewer sessions and the effects last significantly longer.

I asked how networkers made the jump from tapping on acupressure points to forging business leads, and Pearl invited me to sit in on one of her monthly free networking events.

The sign on the gate of Pearl’s beautiful home in the German Colony reads “The Tapping Café.” Behind the tall stone gate was once Café Peter, a coffee house in the 1950s and ’60s frequented by dignitaries, academics and their paramours. The Tapping Café, Pearl explains, pays homage to her home’s rich history.

The networking event began with approximately 15 people, some brand new to the experience, others seasoned “tappers”. This group was all immigrants, some new, some veteran, all English speakers.

“I developed the networking group specifically for women entrepreneurs,” Pearl explained. “Women, particularly, frequently have challenges when it comes to dealing with money. EFT is a retrieval tool that helps people identify their subconscious inhibitors. By tapping, we change the state of our brainwaves. And by tapping in a group, the energy is shared and the benefits multiply.”

With that, Pearl asked each person to give a two-minute introduction, keeping in mind what they would like from others in the group.



EFT TRAINER Pearl Lopian at her German Colony home, aka ‘The Tapping Café.’ (Photos: Marc Israel Sellem)

Hila Bar, an *olah* from South Africa, and a translator who worked on translating websites, books, correspondence, legal briefs and in the arts and humanities from Hebrew to English, introduced herself. This was not her first time at the networking group, and she said the last session she attended boosted her confidence level so much that she wanted more.

“When I am confident, it projects on to my clients and they feel secure working with me.”

One participant announced, “I quit my job today!” to a smattering of applause. She explained that her vision was always to have an art space for artists and art therapists. Her request was for support and for help finding a space. A number of fellow “tappers” threw out suggestions.

AFTER ALL the intros, Pearl addressed the issue of money. How willing are women to declare, “This is what I do. I am worth the money.” People were encouraged to tap themselves, first with one hand tapping the side of the other hand, next on the forehead, then the chin, the collarbone, the side of the arm, the top of the head, the temples and below the nose. I tried it and after several minutes, it felt oddly relaxing.

Pearl went around the room again and asked people about the feelings that were surfacing.

“I have a fear of taking risks,” admitted one entrepreneur.

“On a scale of 1 to 10, how frightened are you?” Pearl asked.

“An 8,” offered the woman.

“I am afraid to take risks, I am afraid to take risks,” intoned the room full of women, tapping a sequence on their bodies.

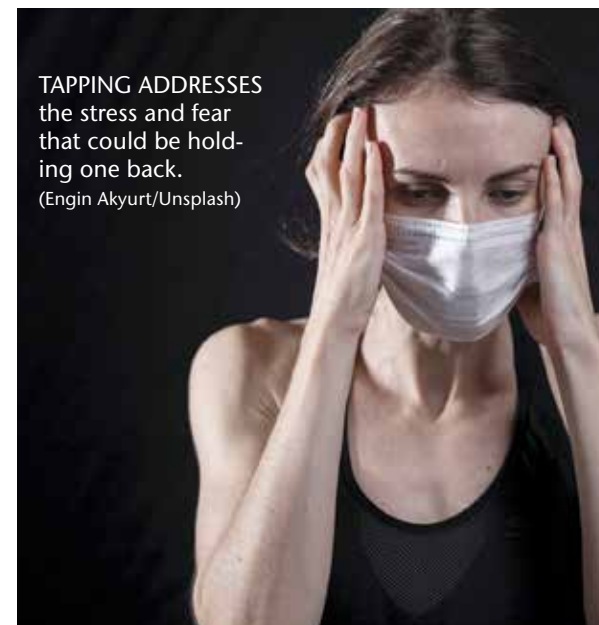
“And it is okay, and I love myself anyway. It is okay, and I love myself anyway...” the chorus echoed.

The originator was asked how she felt afterward, and her stress level number had dropped down to 4.

“I get huge accolades for the quality of my work, but the paycheck just doesn’t reflect it,” offered another entrepreneur. “I can’t compete with others, and it feels impossible to make money in my field.” Her feelings registered a 9. Again, the room tapped it out, repeating the woman’s words over and over.

“I feel it is impossible to make money, and I love myself anyway. I feel it is impossible to make money, and I love myself anyway...”

After a few rounds of repeating these challenges, along with validation of her worth, the woman suddenly shared a breakthrough.



TAPPING ADDRESSES the stress and fear that could be holding one back. (Engin Akyurt/Unsplash)



HOW DO participants make the jump from tapping on acupressure points to forging business leads?



Pearl Lopian's tapping fundamentals

- It is very important to say, "I love and accept myself anyway." Even if you may not like saying it, your body loves to hear it.
- Tapping *always* works. If it doesn't appear to be working, you are using the wrong words.
- It is possible to tap for your child. By tuning into your child energetically, you can help relieve his/her fear and anxiety. The child doesn't need to do a thing. They just benefit.

"I just remembered that as a young girl, I was angry at my mother, who was in a service profession, for rendering services to her community and asking people for payment. I felt that community services should be given for free," she explained. "It made me really, really angry at her."

As the revelation dawned on her that she might be sabotaging her own efforts to make money because of her sense of guilt for taking money to serve her community, the woman's eyes widened.

It was followed by another round of rhythmic tapping, as Pearl tweaked her words with reassurances that affirmed her "right" to make money by rendering services.

"And that," Pearl said later, "is exactly the type of breakthrough we look for. It was a memory buried deep in her subconscious that was released by the tapping exercise. It helped her to understand that her attitude toward making money was being influenced by triggers deep within herself. And we hopefully helped her acknowledge and address the challenges."

REVELATIONS like this one are normal with tapping. Pearl recalled one client who used to experience rages when his children would climb on his back. Normally

a mild-mannered man and unexcitable father, he was puzzled by his own behavior.

In a private tapping session, the man had a sudden memory of being bullied in boarding school. The school bullies used to knock him down and jump on his back. The memory explained the trigger and he was able to let his children ride piggyback with no emotional response after that.

Pearl admits that much of what she does is intuition, honing in on what people aren't saying.

She ended the session with messages of strength, asking all participants what they choose to do for themselves. The participants responded.

"I choose to exchange frustration for opportunity."

"I choose to welcome success."

"I choose to forgive."

And the group, happily networked, left with business leads, new connections, visible confidence and a new tool to help them address their deep-seated inhibitions and business challenges.

The writer is the author of The Ups & Downs of Raising a Bipolar Child (Simon & Schuster) and Joining the Thin Club (Three-Rivers Press).