



## TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW WITH KATHLEEN WEBER FOR THE TAPPING IN SCHOOLS SUMMIT (OCTOBER 2022)

**ELENI VARDAKI:** Kathleen, hi. Thanks for being here.

**KATHLEEN WEBER:** Thank you so much for having me. I'm excited to be here.

**ELENI VARDAKI:** Why did you think to introduce EFT into the school where you work as a School Counselor? I understand 5th and 6th Grade is Middle School in your school?

**KATHLEEN WEBER:** It is.

**ELENI VARDAKI:** So for our audience then here, what age group is that?

**KATHLEEN WEBER:** Well when they start school, they're 9 or 10 in our building. And by the time they leave, 11 and 12. Age range from 9 to 12.

**ELENI VARDAKI:** Okay, so for that age range, so we'll have people from different school systems around the world, why EFT? Why bring EFT in to introduce them to EFT at that age? What was the reason behind that?

**KATHLEEN WEBER:** You know, like so many people who've experienced EFT on a personal level, it didn't take me long to recognize just how powerful it is, and gentle. And learning that it's really a set of self-help stress management techniques. So I just devoured everything I could find on it once I started learning about it, and I came across Dr Peta Stapleton's work, and Tapping in the Classroom, and so I thought, "Oh, there are people out there who really wanna get this into schools." And as a School Counselor, when students come into my office, they're dysregulated. And you know, I work on listening to them, and validating, and building rapport. And I've incorporated some breathwork and mindfulness...and I still have felt like I'm just putting a bandaid on their issues. And I know, with everything that I had learned about EFT at that point, that if I could use those skills with students, I'd be able to help them heal, on a different level. Not that I do therapy in schools, but even to use EFT on a friendship issue, which is distracting for students, and is something that I can use EFT with, that it would make a big difference for the kids so that they can learn when they're in school.

**ELENI VARDAKI:** I'm curious with regards to the "How", you've got that component of bringing it in through your role of the School Counselor. Are there any other ways that you've also brought it in with regards to that "How" component?

**KATHLEEN WEBER:** Yeah, um, I wanna back up just a little bit. I wanted to make sure that I had the support from the top down in my District. So I met with my Superintendent first, before I introduced anything. I really needed permission. And I backed myself with the incredible evidence that's out there, and really tried to make it easy for him to say "Yes". And obviously he said "Yes". And I got the training, and going through the certification process, I needed to have sample clients, right? And so I reached out to my staff, and asked if there was anyone who wanted to work with me. And fortunately I had a



number of them who did, you know, sample sessions with me, and was able to build like a little support network right within the school, because they had experienced first-hand the benefits of doing EFT in a session.

**KATHLEEN WEBER:** So that was, you know, really instrumental I think for me and having that support. And then my administration, they were supportive also of me using EFT once I had the skill set. And they just wanted me to communicate with parents, which I think was also a really important step. And at first I was unsure, you know, how are parents going to receive this? But they were so receptive, and extremely supportive. Especially when I shared with them, "This is something I use, personally. And it's something that is backed by research. It is easy to use, once the kids learn how to use it, and it works on a somatic level with the body's nervous system." And I think that, that piece alone was really crucial in selling it to parents. So often once I mentioned that part of it, they said, "That sounds like exactly what my child needs."

**KATHLEEN WEBER:** And so I would make videos and send those out to parents so they could see what it looked like. That way they could support their children when they came home. And I also would task the kids, "Go home and teach your parents how to use this", and so they could work together, which is really crucial in the success of EFT with kids. Just to have that support, and encourage them to keep using it. So I did that, and then, of course used it with many students, which was great. They just responded so quickly, which was remarkable to me.

And I was also able to get into a couple of classrooms, which was great. I had a teacher, one of the Band Teachers approached me, her class was at the end of the day. And so you can imagine a large class of, you know, 11-year-olds at the end of the day, you know, might be a little bit difficult to manage. So I suggested coming in and doing some EFT with the kids, and treat it like an experiment. Let's just see what happens. It was 15 minutes, it was very quick. And I did the Hand Model of the Brain, by Dr. Dan Siegel. So I did it like a watered down version for the kids. And we did Tap and Breathe. And I could feel a difference in the kids, just from doing that. And the teacher continued to use it throughout the school year. And the feedback from her was: that it worked instantaneously, that it was easy to incorporate into the class, and the fact that she used it throughout the year - and immediately after I left the classroom, she knew how to do it. So it was just really great to hear that feedback.

And then of course, she talked about it with some of her colleagues. And I was asked to come in to some of the Chorus classes. And it was a similar kind of situation. I did the same lesson, and what she shared with me is that she would just start the class by tapping, she wouldn't even say anything and just started it, and the kids would start joining her, and they stopped talking, and they were ready to go. So it was exciting to hear that feedback. For such a simple technique to incorporate into a classroom setting, just to help the students be ready to learn.

**ELENI VARDAKI:** How powerful to have this rapport where, you know, the teacher starts tapping, the students start tapping. And no words need to be exchanged, no voices to be raised, you know, for them to quieten down, calm down, and get ready for learning. And immediately they're, they're tapping into ways of reducing their cortisol levels, their stress response, almost in a seemingly effortless way.

**KATHLEEN WEBER:** Yeah, I mean, it hasn't been an overnight success story, but every step has been worth it. Worth the effort, worth the persistence of trying to keep hearing those yeses. And I certainly



have heard some nos along the way, but I just wasn't gonna let that stop me. I knew I needed to keep going. And to have that feedback from the teachers and from students about the impact that EFT has had on their lives has just been incredible.

**ELENI VARDAKI:** This gradual, organic approach, how long, you know - was it a couple of months? Was it a couple of years? Like what was the time span?

**KATHLEEN WEBER:** I would say I started this process 2.5 years ago, to where I am right now. So it definitely takes time. But it's so worth it. It's so worth it. As a School Counselor, I feel it's imperative to go through the Level 1 and 2 training, and to be certified. You know? Knowing that students come in, and that some of them have trauma in their background, we need to be very careful about how we approach EFT with them. We wanna be careful in making sure we know our skill set well enough that we can take care of them. Because kids are very likely once they open that trauma capsule, you know, they just wanna dump the whole story, like even adults do. But, you know, kids they wanna connect in that way and are so easily sucked in by that. And to have the skill set to be able to take care of them is really important in my role. As a teacher, it's a little bit different, because there are ways that you can incorporate it in a classroom that doesn't require that you have Level 1 and 2 training. But I just wanted to make that distinction for School Counselors out there, that there's a possibility of knowing just enough...that it's not safe for the kids. So make sure that you have the training you need to be able to take care of your kids effectively.

**ELENI VARDAKI:** Is there anything else you'd like to add in terms of the results that you've seen in these last 2.5 years in your school or school community?

**KATHLEEN WEBER:** I have 3 stories that I'd like to share with you. One of them is a student who was very concerned about grades, had typically done very well in school, and just kind of hit a wall, and was stuck in a Fixed Mindset. "I'm never gonna learn this." "I'll never get this." "It's too hard for me." And very upset by that. So we did some tapping just on looking at the grades. We just pulled them up, and whatever came up, just seeing what the grades were. So it was probably about 20 minutes. That's what I find is with all my students, it was right around 15-20 minutes we would do tapping. And I could see that she was feeling better. She reported feeling better. But the real kicker, for me, was the following week when she came in, and I asked how she was doing just kind of checking in on the grades.

**KATHLEEN WEBER:** And she said, "You know...I think it's OK. I might not get it yet, but I will. I can ask the teacher for help, and I've been doing that, and I think I'll get it." And I thought, "Whoah! That was a huge shift in such a short period of time." And I asked her, "What do you attribute that change to?" And she said, "The tapping!" And she told me how she had been tapping every day, and eventually her grades did come up. We watched as they went up. And it was just clearing out those stuck emotions that she had around, "I'm never gonna get this. I'm never gonna learn this." So, just that little intervention made such a huge difference for her with that. Another example is that I had a student who came in very nervous about seeing another student in the hallway. Just because of something that had happened between them. And the poor thing was losing sleep and had bags under her eyes. And it was very noticeable that she was really struggling. And again, we just did some tapping on anticipating seeing that person in the hallway. And it cleared, I mean again, like 15-20 minutes of tapping, and she, her whole demeanor changed. And the next day she came back to tell me, and I could see she just carried herself differently. She said she had a great night of sleep, and that she really didn't even see the person, but



she wasn't worried about it anymore. And I, ugh! It was just so amazing to be able to help her with that on such a deep and meaningful level.

**KATHLEEN WEBER:** And then finally, I had a teacher who reached out to me and asked if I would see a student because he was rather distracted in class, which was unlike him. And knew that something was going on, but he hadn't shared what it was in the classroom. So when I met with him, I learned that something traumatic had just happened to him just a few days earlier. And so again, 20 minutes of tapping, and he was good to go back to the class. And later on that day, I saw the teacher and she said, "I don't know what you did, but he came back to the class, all smiles and ready to go." (Aw). And I thought it's just such great feedback, 'cause I know it works. And for other people to start seeing that it works is incredible. I have so many stories like that where it's such a quick and easy way to work with them, and it's so easy to incorporate into what I already do. I'm already listening to the students. I'm already building that rapport and that sense of safety with them, and validating what they're saying. So really, it's just so easy to incorporate tapping into what I already do. And it makes what I do so much more effective for the students. So I'm so grateful to be able to have offered this to the kids.

**ELENI VARDAKI:** Anything else you'd like to add, before we wrap up? For teachers or school counselors or school leaders, you know, any recommendations, who are listening right now?

**KATHLEEN WEBER:** Yeah, absolutely. Number One - I mean, just some recommendations about bringing it into school. Number One: Doing your own tapping is really crucial. So if you're presenting, if you are working on getting tapping into a school, and you're feeling really frustrated 'cause the doors keep shut, tap on it. Clear all of that out of your system so that you can open doors for yourself. I truly believe that that makes a difference. And also, making connections.

If you're sending cold emails out to a School District, they will be deleted so fast, 'cause educators are busy. And their email is usually inundated - they get requests from parents and teachers, other educators, and administrators. So people don't have time, and they're not interested in reading something from someone they don't know. So if you have a neighbor who is a teacher, or you know someone on the School Board, or there's someone in your worship group or your exercise class - any way that you can make connections with people, and to be able to share what you're interested in from a heart space, I think that that can go a long way.

And if you are in a school, it's really just I think bringing data, which I think is important either way. Just bringing information from credible sources. Dr Peta Stapleton was really helpful for me. All the research she has done, and just the fact that she has the Tapping in the Classroom program. And Dr Amy Gaesser, as well, I used quite a bit of her research.

So the last thing I wanna share, speaking of Dr Amy Gaesser, is that I am super excited to say that she and I are collaborating on some research in schools this year. I know it will be a classroom intervention, but I really can't say anything more than that. Just please be on the lookout for that information in the future.

**ELENI VARDAKI:** Thank you so much for all the wonderful insights and experience. And being an example of what can be achieved when we do our own work, and we strive to embody this principle of leading by example. And it's not just about "We need to do something to help the kids", but having that



Benefit Mindset of by us doing our own work, then it creates that ripple effect. And your story and your experience shows that. How it's created that ripple effect where you said, "This worked for me." And it's helped inspire parents, and teachers, and students in your community. And you've built those relationships up. So thank you very much.

**KATHLEEN WEBER:** Thank you. I really appreciate being here and helping to get the word out about getting EFT into schools. So thank you. Thank you for all the work that you're doing with the summit.

(To learn more about Kathleen's services and offerings go to: <https://kathleenwebereft.com/>)