



## TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW WITH YOLANDA SAEZ CASTELLO FOR THE TAPPING IN SCHOOLS SUMMIT (OCTOBER 2022)

**ELENI VARDAKI:** Yolanda, hi. Welcome. Thank you so much for being here.

**YOLANDA SAEZ CASTELLO:** Thank you so much for having me.

**ELENI VARDAKI:** Why did you introduce EFT into schools? 'Cause you came from a different background, didn't you?

**YOLANDA SAEZ CASTELLO:** I did. See I realized, Eleni, that above everything else that I am, I am a mother.

And having pivoted into mental health work from a career in Finance where I traded for an exchange in the billions for the biggest bank in the world. And graduated from London Business School with a Masters of Science. And then pivoted into helping women like me who had corporate jobs who were all very stressed out and finding it all a bit much, and so on. Having done all that.

And having helped quite a few London Business School alumni themselves not that different from me, I just realized - it became very evident to me - that for so many of us (I won't speak for everybody, but for so many of us), above all those that we are, we are mothers.

So I often ended up, all through the many years I've been running Tap it Better (see <https://tapitbetter.com/>) since I created it back in 2014, I've always ended up helping these women's children. You know:

- "Will you help my teenager, because he's very stressed out."
- Or "Will you help my young one, because she can't sleep?"

So I ended up working with more and more children. And it occurred to me that it would be a terrible shame if I did not make this amazing tool more widely available. That's why schools got on my radar.

**ELENI VARDAKI:** I love it. So it was a very natural, organic process. And I'm curious then in terms of the next step, how did that actually start, working with schools? Did you go straight in and started tapping to groups of children? What was that process like?

**YOLANDA SAEZ CASTELLO:** I always start with working with the teachers, first. Because teachers are very stressed out. There's so much expected of them. In various types of schools the stresses might look different, but there's invariably a lot expected of teachers. So I always start by speaking, perhaps at a staff meeting, where I introduce tapping as a stress relief tool for teachers in the first place. And then explain to them the potential that it has in helping the children they teach as well.



**ELENI VARDAKI:** What about bridging that from-teachers-to-children, how do you do that?

**YOLANDA SAEZ CASTELLO:** The way it normally works is, I would say - in the interest of time, I'll just **describe very briefly the four types of sessions** that I find work really well:

1. **FOCUS SESSIONS:** So one session is Focus Sessions with children that really need it. That are anxious. That are going through something, and they are nominated by the Head Teacher, with Parental Permission. These children see me in a small group. I personally set a maximum of 6.

And these children all hugely reduce their readings in the little half hour I spend with them. Because as you know, children respond amazingly to tapping. So their intensity drops a lot. I always bring my chart, and show it to them, and they tell me which one they are at the start, and then they tell me which one they are at the end. That's the Focus Sessions.

I remember the first school I did this in, once children knew there were Focus Sessions, everybody was asking "Well when do I get tapping? When am I going to the tapping?"

2. **DROP-IN SESSIONS:** So for that we created Drop-in Sessions, which started in a Library. And everybody knew "The Tapping Lady" as they called me, was there to help them if they were feeling off-color.

This all turned into the most wonderful experience when the good weather came, whereby I'd walk around the playground. They knew me, I was The Tapping Lady. They could tell I was around, and if they were feeling a bit unhappy, they knew to come to me and just tap around me. I would always carry this, and they would tell me which one they were. I never touch any of these children, for Safeguarding purposes.

In the Focus Sessions, there's always another adult in the playground, everybody is out in the open. But I never touch any of them. They always mirror me. And they become really good at tapping their "Magic Points", as I call them. They become really good, very fast.

3. **WELLBEING WEEK SESSIONS:** So as I was saying, in the types of sessions, there are sometimes Wellbeing Weeks that the schools run. Sometimes they'll be just 2 or 3 days. Sometimes they'll be an entire week. And in those occasions, I can come in and tap with the entire school. Often group by group, classroom by classroom. And then they timetable it for me, and I will up with the entire school.

So there could be many hundreds of children that have tapped with me within 2 or 3 days.



4. **OCCASSIONAL SESSIONS:** And so apart from those Drop-in Sessions, those Focus Sessions and those Wellbeing Weeks, there's also always Occasional Sessions - in this case, more often Secondary schools. So children perhaps 12 to 17 or 18.

They have very important exams in this country, and they can get quite nervous about it. They can get quite anxious. Sometimes the schools contact me, and I do one-off sessions with them with larger groups, where I simply teach them the technique and show them:

- how to use it before the exams
- how to use it before they revised, and
- how to use it in any other moment that they might need it, of course.

**ELENI VARDAKI:** Love the diversity, the approach that's very much based on what the schools need. And it's based on building those relationships with schools, gradually, and in a way that is of service to the teachers. And then the teachers then see the benefits for students, and they then want to call you in to help because they're seeing the benefit.

**YOLANDA SAEZ CASTELLO:** Absolutely. For EFT Practitioners that might want to introduce tapping in schools, there is already a different video, which is more detailed than is in your blog, or people find it in Eleni's blog, and you can find a little bit more information there (<https://elenivardaki.com/bringing-eft-tapping-into-schools-interview/>). Because I've just gone over the different types of sessions here, but there are, what I hope, are some useful tips for you in the other video if you'd like to check it out.

**ELENI VARDAKI:** I'll have a link below so people can go to that previous interview that we did on this topic. But it was just for EFT Practitioners, it's more specialists in that "How?" part. So moving onto this last question here of the results. What have you noticed in terms of results and outcomes of these different interventions in schools?

**YOLANDA SAEZ CASTELLO:** Well, I'm a woman of science. It says MSc after my name for a good reason. I like my numbers, apart from being a chartered Accountant and \*inaudible\* trader in a prior incarnation, I quite like my numbers. So I make sure I measure things.

Of course, not every circumstance lends itself to measuring. When I'm teaching a whole lot of people and just letting them know about how to use Tapping for Exams, I'm not measuring anything.

But some of my sessions lend themselves quite neatly to measuring. So in the Focus Sessions, with these maximum 6 children, I take the reading at the start for every child. Never use any names, always use initials. And they tell me if they're at 8, or 9 or 10, or whatever at the start. And then we tap. And then I ask them again, and I write the number again. And eventually, everybody always goes to either 1 or 0. I have all that documented, and the Head Teacher gets to see it, every week.

I also have it initialized by another adult who's always present, for Safeguarding purposes. So it's all very transparent, and very clear. The children have gone to 0, and the teachers can see it. And of course



when they are Occasional Sessions that I do in other schools, sometimes they (the group sizes) are small enough that they allow for the initials to be written, and the readings to be written.

And in that case, it's also a very easy and quick way to show that people have gone to 0 or have great - I mean the objective is not to go to 0, as we know. The objective, here, is to help. And to teach people a tool. And to widen the reach of its potential. But more often than not, people do go to 0, and it's a wonderful way to just document it and be able to show it to anybody that might wonder.

**ELENI VARDAKI:** One quick question. I'm wondering when you were talking about going to 0, is it usually anxiety and worry or fear that are the emotions that you're reducing? Like fear of failure for exam or anxiety or worry? Or could it be anger? What are the emotions that you're usually tapping to see if they'll go down to 0 when you're working with children in these school settings?

**YOLANDA SAEZ CASTELLO:** These are the typical emotions we will be working with. Of course, because it's a group setting, it wouldn't be appropriate to go into any level of detail. So all I ever ask for, say in the Focus Group, all I ever ask for is one word. And of course it hugely educates them on what it is that they're feeling. So every time they do this tapping with me, they have to choose one word. It's either, they're either "angry" or they're "sad" or they're "upset" or, or they're whatever.

The typically emotions that you would run through. Depending on the age. If it's a particularly young group, I might use gentler words. If they're teenagers, I might use the words feeling "anxious" or feeling "depressed", which I would not do with a 5-year-old, obviously. But they are your typical emotions.

I never would go into trauma. The teachers know to not send me, in a group setting, to not send me a child that's going through trauma. Those get referred to me as well, but they get referred privately. (Yeah). Because trauma, you know, is not something that should be dealt with in a group. (Yeah).

Those are the emotions we normally deal with. Of course, I wish I had the time and the resources to do a huge piece of research on exactly what happens when tapping in schools! But you know what, for that we have the absolutely wonderful Dr. Peta Stapleton who is being interviewed for this summit as well. So people go over to the video of her and check the science out (see <https://elenivardaki.com/tapping-in-schools-summit-day-1/>).

**ELENI VARDAKI:** Yes, I encourage people watching to watch that interview with Dr. Stapleton so that you have that background introduction to research on EFT Tapping in schools.

Before we wrap up, is there anything else you'd like to add?

**YOLANDA SAEZ CASTELLO:** I would like to thank you for the opportunity to share my experience with other people, of course. And I would only say to other EFT Practitioners: go for it. Because right now, suddenly, there is more the need than ever to support our children. And if you just send that email. If you just pick up that phone and make that call...tap on yourself, first. If you do that bit, you might just



be surprised at just how much interest there is. And how your wish to help children in the hundreds could well be happening sooner than you think.

**ELENI VARDAKI:** I love how your story shows that you don't have to tap in the hundreds all in one room in a big assembly. But when you go from class to class to class to class to class, that you've got schools, you know, all these schools like you do, calling you in...it adds up to the hundreds.

Hundreds of lives that you're helping to empower with this tool for self-regulation. This powerful and gentle tool for self-regulation.

So thank you very much, Yolanda, for these wonderful experiences that you're sharing with us, here. I really appreciate taking the time here to do this.

**YOLANDA SAEZ CASTELLO:** It's a pleasure and an honor. Thank you, Eleni.

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