

EFT Tapping in London Schools

Eleni Vardaki interviews Emma Arden for her Guest Speaker blog series.

ELENI VARDAKI: Hi Emma. Thanks so much for being here.

EMMA ARDEN: Hi, lovely to be here. Thank you.

ELENI VARDAKI: Everyone, I'd like to introduce you to Emma, who is an Advanced EFT practitioner. She is here today to talk about EFT Tapping and why she started introducing it now into her work with children.

EMMA ARDEN: Yeah, I'm really excited to work with kids. It's something, it's very new for me, actually, working with kids. I've worked with adults most of my career. And then last year I had this light bulb moment, like, "This is the job I should have been doing all my life!"

ELENI VARDAKI: You're a therapist. You've been doing this for many years, but why - what is it about EFT that clicked for you?

EMMA ARDEN: Oh my goodness. EFT was a game changer for me when I first discovered it. I discovered it first in Thailand when I was on this detox retreat. I met this guy, I mean it helped he looked like Brad Pitt - never hurts the eye! We did some amazing sessions, and those sessions that we did, in the very short amount of time, the amount of emotional baggage that I was able to clear in such a short amount of time was so incredible. But not even just that, it was how I got to so many of these core root issues that I had just never even found before in any other sort of therapy. So I was like, "This is a game changer." You know, this like element of cognitive and somatic therapy working with energy. I mean I'm a Reiki Master Teacher as well, so I work with energy.

EMMA ARDEN: I've always worked with energy. I used to do Thai massage, which is all energy-based. So when I found this therapy, which was a talking therapy, but had so much evidence behind it and so much scientific evidence behind it, and also was so, so effective, I was like, "Yeah, I've gotta do this." So I came back to the UK, found a teacher and started training pretty much straight away. I've been working with adults mainly for all of my career until last year and last year I started collaborating with this beautiful company who work with kids doing yoga and mindfulness. And I was like, "Why don't we add EFT into this?" EFT with kids is so effective, it can be so fast. You know, their brains are just like little beautiful sponges and they can just take on this information and they can regulate their nervous system.

EMMA ARDEN: But the main reason really is I'm actually Neurodivine myself, so neurodivergent. And I really struggled with processing the world when I was a kid. And if I'd have had this technique when I was a child to navigate my own world and all of the internal stresses that I was trying to deal with, my life would've been so much easier. So I suppose it's like how can I empower children to have a technique which can help them navigate their world? Whether it's empowering, giving them

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confidence, or just helping them process chaos when it arrives. As I'm healing my Inner Child, through the work I've done, I want to really empower children right at the root before they get to the point where they're gonna do all of this! Yeah, it's that kind of, I want to go right back to the where it started really.

EMMA ARDEN: So yeah, I started going into schools and doing workshops with teachers and kids. And realized that I probably should have been doing this all my life 'cause it's so much fun! You know, the way that we engage is very different with children. The energy that I can bring is very different with kids. You know, it can be really uplifting, it can be really fun, but also very, very centered. Very clear what we are doing. There's no sort of mess. And kids are really brilliant to work with because they just ask me questions. They don't have any filters. So you're just there like, "Okay, that's a great question. Let's get right into that." And we just start tapping. It's fantastic.

ELENI VARDAKI: And it's like you don't have that, you know, resistance, any psychological resistance. You just get into it and you can get going and work on the actual issue itself and tap on that. Could you give us any examples of the sorts of things you've tapped on with children in school?

EMMA ARDEN: I tend to work in groups in schools. So what I do is I don't work in a one-to-one basis with children in the schools I work in. I go in and I'll do assemblies, or tapping workshops. So in that regard, with EFT, normally with EFT, I don't need to tell you this, but normally with the EFT to anyone else who doesn't know you work very specifically with aspects and issues and you're sort of filtering through every single aspect. I like to call it sort of lifting up the stones and seeing what's underneath and clearing out all of that. When I'm working with a group with kids, I'm not gonna single out anybody. So I work in a much more global way. So what I tend to do is get the kids to sort of shout out as various things to me.

EMMA ARDEN: So it's a very interactive way of working. So "What are you struggling with?" Or "How are you feeling? Do you feel brave? Or do you feel strong or are you worried about an exam? Or are you worried about maybe being left out at school? Or is there some kids who are not being so nice to you?" And we make it quite global, and then we all tap on it together. So we'd be saying things like, "Even though I'm feeling left out, I choose to feel strong and brave." Or "Even though I'm struggling with this test, I trust that I can do my best." So that's the kind of thing that I'll do with them in the group. So we're getting this what we call borrowed effect. So everybody in the group is getting a bit of everything they need, rather than a specific one-to-one.

ELENI VARDAKI: In terms of group sizes, what kind of group sizes would that be?

EMMA ARDEN: It really depends on the school and the class. So the last tapping workshop I did, there was probably about 30 kids, maybe more. But all the teachers were present as well, so that I got the teachers to tap along as well. So they were all present and the Headteacher was there. I actually got the teachers to sort of get involved as well. So the teacher would then start to sort of throw in some interesting - I like to sort of go around the group and be very in spontaneous with my tapping workshops. I don't have a formula. I know roughly what I want to do, but I like it to be very live and present. So I kind of get the kids to sort of almost shout out what they wanna work on, and we'll do that together.

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ELENI VARDAKI: What have the school teachers, the heads, you know, people who participated and who observed, what have they fed back? What feedback have you got from them?

EMMA ARDEN: This particular one I was telling you about, I went back a few weeks later. I did a specific workshop just with the teachers, so the teachers could actually start to introduce it. If we could get this into schools every day, 5 minutes of tapping before the day starts, and maybe 5 minutes at the end of the day just to sort of start the day, day and end the day just to really regulate the children. That would be my absolute dream. So I was teaching the teachers. And it was a few weeks after the workshop, and a couple of them came up to me separately and said, "This has been wonderful." There's two or three kids in their class for example, who are really struggling with Maths or certain subjects, and they were getting really frustrated. So we would just do some tapping together, and it just lifted their confidence so they were able to go back into the classroom in a very different way.

EMMA ARDEN: So that was really amazing to hear. And also, a couple of teachers that have said that they've got this beautiful little corner that they use, you know, as like a sort of "Go and have a little think about what's going on" corner. Not a Timeout, but you know what I mean. They have this little corner. And a couple of the times, the kids would go into the corner and they'd start tapping. And I was like, "Beautiful, that's the child regulating themselves 'cause they're feeling frustrated, or they're feeling sad, or they're feeling whatever they're feeling." And I showed them these, I've got these fun techniques that I use with kids and I call them Magic Buttons rather than Tapping Points. And we change all the names, you know, to make all the names fun. So that was amazing, having that feedback from the teacher say, "Yes, I've already noticed the children are using it to regulate themselves." Or "I can help regulate them with it" is just music to my ears.

ELENI VARDAKI (7:10): Yeah 'cause, and a lot of times, I mean there, are kids will have meltdowns. Teacher is like, "Well what do we do in these situations?" And sometimes, because there's two or three kids having, you know, they're all having their own experience and they can't - you just can't be there. When there's 30 kids in a class or 24, or whatever. It's not one-to-one. (Yeah) So you can't always be there and help them regulate when they're struggling. And so it is important that they have a tool that they can go off into the Calming Down Corner, or whatever they call it. Or you know, just take a moment to help themselves and not just be dependent on whether the teacher has the time - trying to fit in going to the loo before, like, the next class or the next assembly, or whatever. And so they just don't have the time to help the child regulate. Not humanly possible. So having these tools that empower kids, you know, that they can use themselves when they wanna just have a moment to like process something, it's just so beautiful. And your work is already having those results. You're seeing that from the feedback you're getting.

EMMA ARDEN: Yeah, it is beautiful. And actually, to add to that, on top of this empowering aid, the skill they'll have, I think what's really important is validating their feelings. And I think having the children realize that they are allowed to feel upset. They're allowed to feel angry. They're allowed to feel scared. They're allowed to feel sad. They're allowed to feel all these things. And it's very empowering to say, "I feel angry right now, and I'm allowed, and that's OK, and I'm still a good kid". "Even though I'm feeling angry, I'm still a good kid." "Even though I may be frustrated right now, I'm still a good kid." I think that's really, really important. Like for me, that's a really key element of EFT with working with kids is actually gifting that empowerment. And giving permission to have all the feelings. And teaching them that all their feelings are valid, and they're important. And actually, all

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their feelings can move and flow. They don't have to just stay there feeling really pent up. And that's what EFT is amazing for. It's like, "I'm feeling angry, and I'm allowed to feel like this, and I trust it will change, and I trust it will move." Or "I choose it to flow." But just giving them that ability to let that energy move within them, that's the really beautiful part of EFT with the kids.

ELENI VARDAKI: Yeah, and I love that you're also doing these tapping workshops for staff because sometimes, you know, it's those blind spots we just don't know we have. Like some teachers might judge certain feelings as being bad and so it's like "We mustn't feel our anger." You know, "Keep calm and carry on, we must feel our...." whatever it is. Maybe they've been socially conditioned to suppress their emotions for cultural reasons, for whatever it might be - beliefs about emotions, and so on. And so it's like, allowing them to do their own tapping and acknowledge their feelings, and learning to be okay with that. It basically also helps with Social Emotional Learning, because then they don't pass on some of their beliefs about negative emotions being bad onto kids, which can stunt social emotional development.

EMMA ARDEN: Yeah, absolutely. Funnily enough, actually, the last workshop I did with teachers, I had a few teachers who for various religious and belief systems, they weren't going to participate with EFT. And so they sat in the room while we were doing the group, but they weren't participating. And then one of the other teachers who was there, who I suppose at that time was going through the motions, right? Because she'd been told she had to do the workshop. By the end of the workshop she was like, "OK I'm going to, full disclosure, when I first came in here I thought, 'What is this? Why are you...what...this is annoying that I've got to be here for an hour.'" You know, like that kind of thing. And by the end of it she said "That was incredible. Like, I didn't realize that I could really monitor my emotions, and watch them shift and change because I used - we, in EFT, we use this system called SUDS to know where you start, whether it's really intense or not very intense at all. So we use numbers. Or with kids I use like hands, you know, (demonstrates) "How much stress do you feel, this much or this much?" So I was doing that with the adults, and the teachers, and she said, "I had no idea that I could regulate myself as well. So this is not just brilliant that I can do this with the kids. It's like, as teachers, it's really stressful, you know?" So having that tool for themselves, so they can go into the classroom and be really present with the children, and not bring all of their own stuff into the classroom each day. It's just as important to have a really present educator, as well as having the children have their own way to navigate themselves. So, everything about this is just beautiful, isn't it?

ELENI VARDAKI: Yeah, yeah. Oh, I love it. I love it. I love the work you're doing. Before we wrap up, is there anything else that you'd like to add? Maybe, if there's a Headteacher thinking about, you know, 'cause they're the ones who are often responsible for who to bring in for workshops and training for staff, or Wellbeing Weeks, and so on for students. So like, anything that you'd like to add, maybe, if they're thinking about bringing you in to do some tapping with their staff or their students?

EMMA ARDEN: I've got a workshop that I've collaborated with Beam Academy. Beam Academy is the company I'm working with, 'cause we do Mindfulness and Yoga as well, and now EFT. So we've got a - I've got an online workshop that is a one-day CPD workshop. So it's Continual Professional Development, and that's online. So wherever you are in the country, in the UK or in the world, the last course I had, we had people from Switzerland from there. So wherever you are in the world, you can come and do this online course. And by the end of the day, you'll be able to very confidently be

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able to use tapping with your children in school. So it's a one-day course, and you can do that online. So I can come to your schools if you are local-ish. If not, then I can easily do this kind of work online and it works really beautifully.

ELENI VARDAKI: Is it live? Is it prerecorded?

EMMA ARDEN: No, it's live. Oh gosh no, live. I like energy! I like to be in the room with people, even if it's on a screen. So yeah, it's live. So the next course is February the 10th, on a Saturday and it's like a one-day workshop. You could go book it through Beam Academy. We do that sort of three or four times a year. So that's a course that happens all the time. But then equally, I'm very happy to do anything bespoke for teachers, or kids, or you know, anything the child or the teacher feels they need, I'm very happy to go in with Beam Academy and we can do something a little bit more bespoke. But anyone who wants to understand and know a little bit more about this, this one-day workshop is perfect because you'll have an understanding about it and then you can actually use it with the kids straight away.

ELENI VARDAKI: Wonderful, wonderful. Lovely. And I'll have a link below for anyone who's interested, you can check it out. Thank you so much, Emma, for your time. (Thank you!) and sharing so generously your beautiful energy and all these experiences that are really educational. Thank you. Thank you.

EMMA ARDEN (13:23): You are so welcome. Thank you. Thank you.

To learn about Emma and Beam Academy's EFT Tapping services for schools:

- <https://www.beam.academy/eftherapy>
- <https://www.elanendrahealth.com/eft-tapping-therapy/eft-training-for-schools>