

Cravings rarely show up as a polite thought. They arrive with urgency in the body, a pull behind the ribs, a quick surge of focus on the thing you promised to avoid. Most people try to win by white-knuckling through. That works for a while, until stress spikes or sleep drops, then the pattern returns. If you have tried rules, apps, or punishment and still find yourself raiding the pantry, pouring a “just this once” drink, or reaching for your phone at midnight, it is not a character flaw. You are meeting a nervous system problem with a willpower solution.

EFT therapy, also called Emotional Freedom Techniques or tapping, gives you a different lever. Instead of arguing with cravings, you work with the sensations that power them. When done skillfully, you watch the urgency fold. You may still want the cookie or the cigarette, but the feeling that you must have it now changes. That shift alters choices in ways that last.

## What cravings actually are

A craving is not just a thought. It is a coordinated event: a cue in the environment or inside the body, a flash of learned expectation, and a set of autonomic changes that amplify attention and readiness to obtain the target. The heart rate bumps. The mouth waters. The mind narrows. No wonder logic does not land. In practice, I ask clients to name three pieces of a craving as it is happening: where in your body do you feel it, what image or phrase pops up, and how certain does it feel on a scale from 0 to 10. They usually answer with precision: a tight ball in the throat, a picture of the wine glass catching light, a nine that will not budge.

Because cravings are embodied, cognitive interventions alone can fall short. CBT therapy can still play a central role, particularly for mapping triggers and beliefs, but it gains traction faster when the nervous system calms enough to allow alternative thoughts. This is where tapping fits.

## What EFT therapy is, and what it is not

By EFT therapy here I mean Emotional Freedom Techniques, a structured method that combines focused attention on a problem with rhythmic tapping on specific acupuncture-related points, typically on the face and upper body. The process looks a little odd. It also turns out to be surprisingly practical in messy, real life conditions: at your desk at 3:14 p.m., in a parking lot outside a bar, or ten minutes after a tense meeting that lights up every longing for relief.

It helps [Counselor](#) to address a potential confusion. There is also Emotionally Focused Therapy, a well-validated couples therapy for improving attachment security and repairing negative cycles. That is not the approach discussed in this article. If you are a couple working on recurring fights about spending, intimacy, or parenting, Emotionally Focused Therapy or Relational Life Therapy might be your best fit. If your issue is repeated urges toward food, nicotine, alcohol, or [Depression therapy](#) compulsive scrolling, Emotional Freedom Techniques is the one you are after.

## Why willpower fights fail

People often say, I just need more discipline. They add rules, delete apps, throw food out, make strict contracts. Rules have their place. But if the rule is the only tool, it often snaps under stress. Cravings link to state dependent learning. When the body enters the old state, the body anticipates the old solution. The older the pattern, the quicker the automaticity. Prefrontal control, the part of the brain that reasons and holds intentions, goes slightly offline under stress. That is why smart, motivated people relapse on simple choices. You did not forget your goals. Your physiology changed your available menu of behaviors.

EFT therapy bypasses some of that bottleneck. It does not require you to outthink the urge in the peak moment. It helps your nervous system register safety and flexibility, so other options become real again. Think of it as turning the volume down enough that you can hear your own judgment.

## How EFT shifts the craving state

The core moves in EFT are not complicated, but the mechanism is worth understanding. You deliberately bring up the problem enough to notice its felt signature, then you apply gentle somatic input through tapping. That pairing is not casual. If you suppress awareness, you never connect the target with new regulation. If you overactivate, you flood and lose contact with the present. The sweet spot is mindful activation with ongoing signals of safety.

In practice, clients report changes that are easy to measure: the number on their 0 to 10 craving scale drops by three to six points within a few minutes. The image of the drink seems less glossy. The smell of a pastry no longer travels across the office like siren song. The urge that felt fused with identity, I am a person who needs this now, loosens and becomes a sensation passing through.

A few physiological notes, kept honest. Tapping appears to engage parasympathetic responses and reduce amygdala activation to threat cues. Studies using salivary cortisol have found modest reductions after tapping sessions. The evidence base for cravings shows reductions in urge intensity and frequency over weeks when people practice consistently. Not every study is perfect, sample sizes vary, and placebo effects are always a consideration in mind-body work. Still, after working with hundreds of clients and running group programs where participants track daily numbers, the pattern holds with enough reliability to be useful.

## A straightforward way to tap for cravings

Use this when the urge starts, not an hour later. If you are in public and do not want to tap on your face, adapt by pressing points or tapping lightly on your fingers in your pocket. Keep each pass simple, honest, and specific.

- Identify and rate. Name the target as precisely as possible, for example, this 3 p.m. Chocolate pull, and rate your urge from 0 to 10. Notice where in your body you feel it.
- Set a setup phrase. Place a hand on your chest or tap the side of your hand. Say a sentence that pairs the problem with acceptance, such as, Even though I feel this tight, impatient chocolate craving at a seven, I am okay right now.
- Tap the points. Move through points like the eyebrow, side of eye, under eye, under nose, chin, collarbone, and side of the body under the arm. At each point, speak a brief truth, this tightness in my throat, this restless I want it now, this promise that chocolate fixes it.
- Check and adjust. After one or two rounds, pause. Re-rate your urge. If it dropped, good. If it stayed the same or went up, you may need to narrow the focus. Tap on the emotion under the urge, such as, this loneliness after meetings, or the belief, I deserve a treat for getting through the day.
- Future-pace briefly. When the number is down by at least three points, picture the next 10 minutes playing out well. Imagine pouring water, stepping away from your desk, texting a friend, or choosing a small planned portion without backlash.

That list reads simple. The nuance sits in how honestly you name what is driving the urge and how gently you hold the experience while tapping. People sometimes try to bully themselves with positive statements. That often backfires. The body trusts truth.

## A five minute vignette from a real office

A project manager I will call Dana kept a stash of chocolate covered almonds in a desk drawer. Her plan was two a day. Her reality was a slow march through a whole bag between late afternoon calls. We mapped her 3 p.m. Pattern. Trigger, a budget discussion with a client who nitpicked line items. Sensations, a hot band around the forehead and a sinking under the sternum. Thought, I am trapped in someone else's spreadsheet. Belief, I earned comfort because I am miserable. Urge level, an eight.

We tapped on the two sensations first, each getting a brief voice, this hot band, this sinking. Two rounds brought the eight to a six. Then we tapped on the thought, this trapped feeling, and the belief, I earned comfort. That dropped the six to a three. At that point, the chocolate was still appealing, but Dana felt choice. She poured seltzer, ate two almonds, and left the drawer shut. Over the next month she repeated the process two or three times a week. Her average urge rating at 3 p.m. Went from seven to about three. She still enjoyed chocolate, but the compulsion was gone.

## What to say while tapping

Scripting can help at the start, but the best language is your own. Aim for short phrases that match the felt truth. If I could give just three sentence stems that work across cases, they would be: Even though part of me wants it **Mental health service** now, another part of me is here with me. This is the body trying to help, even if the strategy is outdated. Right now I can give my body a different signal of safety.

Sometimes people prefer fewer words, almost a quiet tapping while holding the sensation in attention. That is fine. Some prefer more cognitive content when they have training in CBT therapy, for example, examining thoughts like I blew it already if I had one, so might as well go all in. With tapping, cognitive restructuring lands faster because the threat state is lower.

## Triggers you can expect, and how tapping meets them

Cravings are rarely random. Sleep debt increases them. So does conflict. So does boredom. Social cues are powerful. The drink after a fight with a partner has a different signature than the drink at a celebration dinner. In anxiety therapy, we help clients distinguish between urges driven by avoidance, I cannot tolerate this feeling, and urges linked to reward anticipation, I want to enhance this good moment. Both yield to tapping, but the internal language shifts.

If the driver is anxiety, you target the fear sensations and the catastrophic thoughts attached to them. If the driver is low mood, common in depression therapy, you name the heaviness, the flatness, the thought that nothing helps. When tapping reduces the bleakness by a few points, energy for a non-craving action returns. If the driver is relational tension, couples therapy or Relational Life Therapy can change the pattern that generates the urge in the first place. I often use tapping to stabilize the immediate state, then address the relationship dynamic that keeps supplying triggers.

## When EFT is not enough by itself

A skillful tool is still just a tool. There are points where you will want a broader plan.

If alcohol cravings exist alongside morning shakes, blackouts, or a history of withdrawal, medical evaluation is essential. If food cravings sit inside a restrictive binge cycle, you will need support that addresses both physiology and shame, often including a registered dietitian and psychotherapy. If nicotine cravings are heavy and longstanding, pharmacotherapy, like varenicline or nicotine replacement, can combine well with tapping to lift

quit rates. And when cravings are tied to trauma, tapping can help, but only as part of a thoughtful, titrated trauma treatment that may include EMDR, somatic work, and CBT therapy.

In short, tapping gives you leverage in the moment, but smart care decisions require assessing scope, risk, and history.

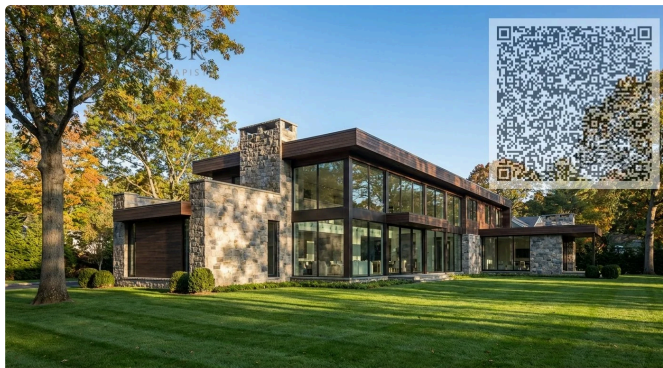
## Measuring progress without turning it into a new obsession

Tracking matters, but not everything that counts can be counted. I ask clients to record three numbers daily for two to four weeks: average craving intensity, number of episodes where they used tapping, and number of episodes where the urge won. For most, you will see a downward slope in the first two numbers within days, then a delayed decline in the third. You will also notice qualitative changes. The pause before acting grows longer. [Psychotherapist](#) The post-urge rebound, that shame spiral after a slip, shortens because you have an active way to repair.

Set realistic targets. A 40 to 60 percent reduction in peak urge over a month is common when people practice several days a week. Total disappearance happens for some, but aim for competence, not perfection. Perfection thinking, particularly in people working on depression therapy, often sets up the kind of all or nothing relapse that undoes months of progress.

## Common snags and how to handle them

Tapping works best when you meet the craving at entry. People often wait until they are already halfway into the behavior. That is like deciding to learn to swim after you are in the rapids. Start earlier. If you miss the early window, tap anyway. Even tapping afterward weakens the pattern by linking reflection to physiology.



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Others get stuck in performance anxiety about doing it right. Here is a useful frame. You cannot break tapping by tapping on the wrong point. Slightly off is fine. What matters more is the degree of honest contact with the target and the length of time you stay with it. Think of it as slow courage rather than precision choreography.

- Troubleshooting quick hits:
- If the urge will not budge, get more specific. Not just I want sugar, but I want my favorite carton of salted caramel after that snide comment from my boss.
- If your number rises during tapping, you overactivated. Shift to purely physical sensations, drop the story, or tap slower. You can also add grounding, like pressing your feet to the floor or looking around the room and naming objects.
- If you feel numb, start with gentle sensory input, a warm drink, a brief walk, or tapping through points while naming neutral facts, It is Wednesday, the chair is blue, my feet are on the rug. Then return to the craving.
- If you keep choosing the behavior even when the number drops, add implementation details. What will your hands do next. What will you say to the person offering you a drink. Write a tiny script and rehearse it while tapping.
- If the same craving returns daily at the same time, pre-tap 10 minutes before that window. You do not have to wait for the fire to start to check the extinguisher.

## Pairing EFT with other therapies

No method needs to be territorial. In practice, EFT layers well with other approaches.

- With CBT therapy, use tapping to settle the body first, then challenge cognitive distortions. For example, after lowering the urge, examine all or nothing beliefs like, if I cannot be perfect, I am a failure. The new thought is likelier to stick because your threat level is lower.
- In anxiety therapy, use tapping on the anticipatory dread that precedes social events or performance reviews. Many clients realize that the craving was a secondary solution aimed at the anxiety, not the primary issue. Treat the anxiety, and the craving drops.
- In depression therapy, be patient. Energy is low. Wins can be small. Celebrate reductions in rumination and shifts from a nine to a six on heaviness. Use tapping to make starting tiny actions feel bearable.

- In couples work, when conflict cycles trigger cravings, combine EFT tapping for immediate state regulation with relational tools. If you work with a therapist trained in Couples therapy methods or Relational Life Therapy, coordinate so both partners learn de-escalation and repair. When the relationship is less incendiary, the nervous system stops reaching for quick fixes as often.
- In career coaching, cravings often spike around role strain, imposter feelings, and late day decision fatigue. Teaching clients to tap before high stakes meetings or during task switching protects focus and reduces reliance on snacks or stimulants as coping.

## A brief word on self compassion and identity

Shame fuels cravings more than it fixes them. People often frame their struggle as proof of weakness. A more accurate story is that your nervous system adopted strategies that worked at the time. Sugar temporarily boosted dopamine and soothed. Nicotine gave you a clean, dependable focus. The drink loosened social fear. The phone gave a drip of novelty after a day of monotony. When you remove those strategies without providing alternatives, your body panics. Tapping is a way of acknowledging the body's intent while offering a gentler route to safety.

Language matters. Instead of I am a sugar addict, try My body learned a sugar solution that I am updating. That small shift invites collaboration rather than war.

## Building a personal tapping practice that lasts

Think of tapping as hygiene rather than heroic intervention. It takes about two to five minutes to run a few rounds. Anchor it to predictable cues. People who succeed treat it like brushing teeth, not like calling the fire department. Pre-empt midday cravings by tapping after lunch for one minute while naming early afternoon restlessness. Before driving home, tap on the residual stress of the day. Before opening the streaming app, tap on the mix of fatigue and desire for stimulation.

Make it social if that helps. When I run groups, we do short tap-alongs twice a week for three weeks. Participants report less self consciousness when others tap too, and they borrow language from each other that fits surprisingly well. If you work in a company, suggest a five minute optional tapping break at 3 p.m. For a month. The data from those pilots is modest but consistent, fewer snack runs and a slight bump in end of day focus.

## Ethical use, scope, and seeking support

Mind-body tools attract big promises. Keep your claims conservative. EFT will not erase grief, replace medical care, or guarantee abstinence. It can lower urge intensity, reduce the frequency of acting on urges, and increase your sense of choice in the moment. For many, those gains are life changing.

If you have a history of trauma, dissociation, or self harm, consider working with a clinician familiar with tapping who can help titrate exposure. If you are under psychiatric care for complex conditions, coordinate with your providers. Combining tapping with structured anxiety therapy or depression therapy rarely conflicts with treatment plans and often enhances compliance by reducing avoidance.

## A gentle closing loop: one more real case

A software engineer I will call Mateo used nicotine pouches during sprints. He had tried to quit three times. Each attempt lasted about two weeks, then a production incident would hit at 2 a.m., and he would reach for a pouch. We built a plan that included sleep fixes, a prescription from his physician, and tapping. On day ten of quitting, a late deployment failed. His urge spiked to a nine. He left his chair for three minutes, tapped on the panic in his chest and the paired image of the tin in his drawer, named the belief I cannot focus without it, and the fear I will let the team down. The nine dropped to five, then to three. He returned to his desk, chewed gum, and got through the night. He repeated that sequence a dozen times in the first month. At six weeks, he reported that urges still visited, mostly around performance stress, but they stayed in the three to four range and left faster. He no longer felt at war with himself, which, in his words, was the thing that freed up energy for better code and better sleep.

That is the heart of this approach. Relief without a fight. You still do hard things. You still face cravings. But you meet them as sensations and learned promises, not as enemies. You bring your body into the conversation, and the body, once heard, often softens.

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Tuesday: 7:00 AM – 9:30 PM

Wednesday: 7:00 AM – 9:30 PM

Thursday: 7:00 AM – 9:30 PM

Friday: 11:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Saturday: Closed

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Jon Abelack Psychotherapist provides psychotherapy in New Canaan, Connecticut, with support for individuals and couples seeking practical, thoughtful care.

The practice highlights work and career stress, relationships, couples counseling, anxiety, depression, and peak performance coaching as key areas of focus.

Clients can meet in person in New Canaan, while virtual therapy is also available across Connecticut and New York.

This practice may be a good fit for adults who feel stretched thin by work pressure, relationship challenges, burnout, or major life decisions.

The office is located at 180 Bridle Path Lane in New Canaan, giving local clients a clear in-town option for counseling and psychotherapy services.

People searching for a psychotherapist in New Canaan may appreciate the blend of therapy and coaching-oriented support described on the website.

To get in touch, call 978.312.7718 or visit <https://www.jon-abelack-psychotherapist.com/> to schedule a free 15-minute consultation.

For map-based directions, a public Google Maps listing is also available for the New Canaan office location.

## Popular Questions About Jon Abelack Psychotherapist

### What does Jon Abelack Psychotherapist help with?

The practice focuses on psychotherapy related to work and career stress, couples counseling and relationships, anxiety, depression, and peak performance coaching.

### **Where is Jon Abelack Psychotherapist located?**

The office is located at 180 Bridle Path Lane, New Canaan, CT 06840.

### **Does Jon Abelack offer in-person or online therapy?**

Yes. The website says sessions are offered in person in New Canaan and virtually across Connecticut and New York.

### **Who does the practice work with?**

The site describes work with both individuals and couples, especially people dealing with stress, communication issues, burnout, relationship concerns, and major life or career decisions.

### **What therapy approaches are mentioned on the website?**

The site lists Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Emotionally Focused Therapy, Gestalt Therapy, and Solution-Focused Therapy.

### **Does Jon Abelack offer a consultation?**

Yes. The website invites visitors to schedule a free 15-minute consultation.

### **What is the cancellation policy?**

The FAQ says cancellations must be made within 24 hours of a scheduled appointment or the session must be paid in full, with exceptions for emergency situations.

### **How can I contact Jon Abelack Psychotherapist?**

Call [978.312.7718](tel:978.312.7718), email [jonwabelacklcsww@gmail.com](mailto:jonwabelacklcsww@gmail.com), or visit <https://www.jon-abelack-psychotherapist.com/>.

## **Landmarks Near New Canaan, CT**

Waveny Park – A major New Canaan park and event area that works well as a recognizable reference point for local coverage.

The Glass House – One of New Canaan's best-known architectural destinations and a helpful landmark for visitors familiar with the town's design history.

Grace Farms – A widely recognized New Canaan destination with architecture, nature, and community programming that many local residents know well.

New Canaan Nature Center – A practical local landmark for families and residents looking to orient themselves within town.

New Canaan Museum & Historical Society – A central cultural reference point near downtown New Canaan and useful for local page context.

New Canaan Train Station – A practical wayfinding landmark for clients traveling into town from surrounding Fairfield County communities.

If your page mentions New Canaan service coverage, landmarks like these can help visitors quickly place your office within the local area.