

TAPOUTSTRESS.COM
PRESENTS

A hand holding a light pink rose against a green background. The rose is in focus, with its petals showing a gradient from light pink to white. The hand is visible on the left side, with fingers gently holding the stem. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green, suggesting foliage.

10 Steps to *Tap Out Holiday Stress*

MAKE THIS HOLIDAY DIFFERENT

YOU ARE THE AUTHOR
of your holiday
experience. Make it so!

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Introduction

All holidays bring up beliefs, feelings and memories from the past; that's normal. But the "past," technically, is **over**. Previously lived moments cannot be accessed unless I replay them in my mind. How? With pictures, sounds, feelings, smells and tastes of holidays past. This is called **VAKOG**ⁱ—an acronym for **V**isual, **A**uditory, **K**inesthetic, **O**lfactory and **G**ustatory ways that we process information. VAKOG is an NLP term created by Richard Bandler and John Grinder, co-creators of NLP.ⁱⁱ The pictures, sounds and feelings we hold inside are the ways in which we represent our lives, loves and experiences, especially at the holidays. Boiled down like a balsamic glaze, VAKOG informs our holiday opinions, creates our perceptions (thoughts and feelings) and produces our personal version of "the holidays."

Your version of "the holidays" is what causes your stress. Not *everyone* experiences stress during this time of year! Some look forward to holiday events for an entire year anticipating joy, community, laughter and belonging. This holiday season, you're learning to tap, a tool to change stressful beliefs, feelings and memories of holidays past, so you can let them go and feel better quickly.

What is tapping?

Tapping is a do-it-yourself stress relief tool based on the 5000 year old practice of Chinese acupuncture which uses meridians, or lines down the body to connect points in our hands, feet, arms and legs to our body organs. With tapping we use those meridians and “tap” four points on the face when stress arises. The act of tapping releases stress by interrupting your VAKOG (pictures, sounds, movies, feelings) and positively alters your neural process about “the holidays.”

How to tap

Step 1: identify the holiday stressor. Pre-holiday stress of money, people coming over, food and home needing to look perfect, family that you haven’t seen is coming over or you’re going there, grief that your loved one passed and won’t be with you this year...or you’re alone this holiday season. These are just a few of holiday stresses. **Pick one** stress that is bothering you **right now**. Write it down as a brief, bold newspaper headline, i.e. “Alone at Thanksgiving, *again*.”

Step 2: How do you know you’re stressed?

Is it a picture, movie, sound or feeling? How do you “know” you’re stressed? A feeling in the gut, a pain

in the head, thoughts swirling, etc. This is your personal “How-to feel stressed about the holidays.”

Step 3: What is your earliest memory of a stressful holiday? Go back to your earliest memory where you experienced holiday stress. It is best to use the oldest memory of “holiday stress.”

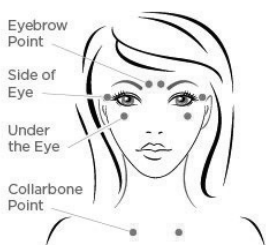
Step 4: Rate “it” and change it.

Using “Subjective Units of Distress” (SUDs) 0 to 10 scale. 0=no stress; 10=high stress, rate the one stress just identified which is triggering you. Write that number down.

Step 5: Tap (see diagram)

FREEDOM IS IN YOUR HANDS!

Faster EFT Tapping Points



1. Identify stressor.
2. Tap each of the 4 points.
3. Say “I let it go, I let it all go.”
4. Squeeze wrist.
5. Take deep breath, say “PEACE.”

Tap between your eyes with two fingers, on the side of your eye, under your eye and on your collar bone saying, “Let it go” (aloud or in your mind) at each point. Take a deep breath, squeeze your wrist and say “Peace.” This is one “round” of tapping.

Step 6: Rate it again.

The stress you previously identified was at a particular number prior to round one of tapping.

What is it now? 0=no stress, 10=high stress. Write that number down. It lowers with each round of tapping. Stress drops even more quickly if you do this next step in between rounds.

Step 7: Think of a happy, peaceful memory

See, hear or feel a memory that makes you feel *really good*. SUDs it 0=not at all, 10=super happy (think bliss). Take a deep breath, say “Peace.”

Step 8 : Continue tapping and rating

Continue with tapping rounds until your stress reaches zero. Go to your happy, peaceful memory between rounds. .

Step 9: Tap IN something you prefer to experience.

This is usually the opposite of the presenting stressor. For example, “Alone at Thanksgiving, *Again*” could be changed to “I have my people. I am loved and included this year.” Imagine a scene with pictures of you being included, sounds of others voices and statements that they’re glad you’re there. Imagine good feelings inside your body. Imagine that this scene happening in real time. **Now**

tap that IN while picturing or imagining your preferred holiday at each of the tapping points. Squeeze your wrist and say “Peace.” I often replace “Peace” with an affirmation about the holiday. “It was such a nice Thanksgiving, Christmas, Hanukkah,” etc. Deep breath, go to your happy memory for quick little dose of feeling good.

Step 10: Check it (the original stress)

Can you “find” the original stress? Close your eyes and attempt to locate that original stress in your body. Are there any pictures, sounds or feelings? If so, rate them and do another round of tapping until that stress is zero. Once it’s at zero, go back to step 9 and tap IN your preferred holiday experience.

Tap Out Holiday Stress story

11/13/18, 3:20-3:30 pm

I overheard Cheryl talking about the holidays and stopped when she said, “My stress is ‘through the roof’ this time of year.” I asked how she knows it’s ‘through the roof.’ She replied, “I’m mentally spending money I don’t have, I second guess all the gifts I get. I can’t focus, and my brain shuts down. I get anxiety and panic in crowds of people and when I can’t go another step, I shut down and go home. Christmas is a very stressful time. Then,

after I buy the gift, I wonder if it's 'good enough.' Often I don't even give the gift away because I'm afraid it doesn't measure up." I asked her if she wanted to tap and yes was the reply.

When was the very first time you felt this feeling at Christmas? Cheryl was 16 and had picked her sister's name in the family gift exchange. The memory was a movie and Cheryl named it "Bad Christmas." I asked her to SUDs rate it, 0=no stress, 10=very high stress. It was a 10. In her movie, "Bad Christmas," the spending limit was \$10 and that 16 year old girl found *four gifts* which she proudly wrapped and put under the tree. One of the gifts was a maternity top. When her sister opened the gift, the maternity top had a split along a seam. She threw the maternity top at Cheryl shouting, "What was this, a blue light special?"

I asked Cheryl what she believed about herself when that happened. She said "I'm not good enough and I don't measure up." Then I asked if she wanted to keep those beliefs or let them go with tapping. She decided to let them go.

I instructed Cheryl to tap between her eyes, to the side of her eye, under her eye and at the collar bone saying, "Let it go" at each point. Then she squeezed her wrist, took a deep breath and said

“Peace.” The stressful memory went from a 10 to a 7 in the first round. We switched to Cheryl’s happy memory--her puppy “Coco” on her lap, very soft fur. Next round, “Bad Christmas” was a 4, then 1 and then 0. After that Cheryl said she couldn’t “find” the negative feelings from “Bad Christmas” any longer!

I asked Cheryl what she prefers to experience this Christmas. “I’d love Christmas to be a serene happy place, with family together.” Cheryl tapped a few rounds of “I love Christmas, it’s a serene and happy place with family together.” The whole “tap out holiday stress” process took **10 minutes!**

Summary

Tapping is an amazing self-help tool to release holiday stress. When you identify what is bothering you, name it and notice how you produce that stress in your body, a shift happens. It’s empowering to realize that each of us creates and plays pictures, movies, sounds, dialog and feelings in our mind, impacting how we feel. VAKOG, is the acronym for **V**isual, **A**uditory, **K**inesthetic, **O**lfactory and **G**ustatory; we unknowingly use it all the time. While VAKOG isn’t a term that you’ve probably heard before today, once you understand and take responsibility for those pictures, movies, sounds and

feelings, **you *can* change them with tapping!**
Slowing down the stress process is important. When you identify and accept your response to a given event or circumstance, you can change it. If you don't like your outcomes from past holidays, change those outcomes with tapping.

Jack Canfield, author of *The Success Principles*, teaches that $E + R = O$ ⁱⁱⁱ. The event + your response = your outcome. The event, "the holidays" + your response, "stress" = your outcome. You are the author of your holiday experience. When you use tapping in the heat of the moment, it changes your mind and frees you to have the holiday of your dreams. Stay in the moment. Be present, be kind and give yourself the wonderful gift of Peace this holiday season with tapping. You deserve it.

Many wishes for the Happiest of Holidays!

Mary Cassidy

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For tapping sessions go to www.tapoutstress.com/shop

Resources

ⁱ Bodenhamer, Bob G., and L. Michael Hall. *The User's Manual for the Brain*. Bethel, CT, Crown House Publishing, LLC, 1999, 2012.

ⁱⁱ "Neuro-linguistic programming." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 28 Aug. 2018. Web. 8 Oct. 2018.

ⁱⁱⁱ Canfield, Jack, and Janet Switzer. *The Success Principles: How to Get from Where You are to Where You Want to Be*. New York, NY, HarperCollins Publishers, 2005, 2015.

ALL HOLIDAYS

Bring up memories & beliefs from the past

PRE-HOLIDAY STRESS:
MONEY, PEOPLE, FOOD,
IT'S GOTTA BE "PERFECT!"

WHAT ARE YOUR
EXPECTATIONS?

WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST
STRESS?

GRIEF & LOSS: THEY'RE NOT
HERE THIS YEAR.

TOO MANY PEOPLE OR
ALONE.

GREAT NEWS! THE PAST IS OVER

Negative projections
about the future.

If you don't like
them, change them!

Rate It & Change It!

Support, simplify,
accept. Make a new
tradition or ritual

Self-care, time out,
connect as needed

BE WHERE YOUR SHOES ARE

You don't need a Harvard Report to tell you that holiday stress begins just after Halloween, peaks at Thanksgiving & reaches a frenzy by mid-December.

Exercise & food habits are out the window--emotional eating & drinking run high. Change it up this holiday season! Tap out your stress & tap IN the holiday you prefer!

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Crush Your Obstacles to
Outrageous Prosperity
w/Tapping (Amazon, 2018)