



Conscious Life presents

# ANXIETY SUPER CONFERENCE

## EFT tapping for anxiety relief

Guest: Nick Ortner

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### **[00:00:10] Alex Howard**

So welcome, everyone, to this interview where I'm super excited to be talking with Nick Ortner.

Firstly, Nick, welcome. Thank you so much for joining me.

### **Nick Ortner**

Alex, thanks for having me. I'm looking forward to this.

### **Alex Howard**

So we're going to be exploring EFT, otherwise known as tapping, as a modality for working with anxiety.

And I think we'll talk about it, both from the point of view of how it can be used if someone's in a specific moment of anxiety, like as a way to respond in the moment, but also as a way to deal with some of the underlying factors which could be driving anxiety in the first place.

Just to give people a little bit of Nick's background, Nick Ortner is CEO of The Tapping Solution, a company with a mission to bring into the mainstream a simple, effective natural healing method known as Emotional Freedom Techniques, otherwise known as tapping.

He is a *New York Times* bestselling author and produced the breakthrough documentary film *The Tapping Solution*, which follows ten people who used tapping to overcome significant challenges, including chronic back pain, fibromyalgia, insomnia, devastating grief, and more.

Most recently, Nick has developed The Tapping Solution app, which has had over 10 million, that's quite something, 10 million tapping meditations played and has been downloaded in over 130 countries.

Nick's goal is to empower people to create healthy, abundant and stress free lives.

So maybe a good starting point, I'm sure that people watching this that will be familiar with EFT or tapping and maybe others thinking, are we talking about tapping on doors or what are we talking about?

**[00:01:58] Nick Ortner**

Tap dancing. I would say tap dancing.

**Alex Howard**

It could be that. At which point Nick is going to offer some interpretive dance for us to start.

For people who are not familiar with EFT or tapping, what are we talking about?

**Nick Ortner**

We call it tapping because we are literally physically tapping on these endpoints of meridians of our body.

And what the latest research shows is that when we tap on these meridian endpoints, while focused on the stress, the anxiety, the overwhelm, the fear, whatever is going on in our lives, we send a calming signal to the amygdala in the brain. And a lot of viewers will know the amygdala is that fight, flight or freeze response center.

So when you're anxious, when you're angry, when you're stressed, when you're overwhelmed, that part of your brain is lighting up. It is saying there is danger out there. There's something going on, big or small, the brain is interpreting it as danger.

And with tapping, we interrupt that signal. So that's why people can go from anxious and overwhelmed to, 10 minutes later, potentially feeling significantly better.

**Alex Howard**

I'm curious how you discovered tapping? I think you've been responsible for a lot of other people discovering this methodology. I'm curious as to what was your journey into this area?

**Nick Ortner**

It's a great question. I've been a lifelong searcher. I discovered some of my mom's Tony Robbins tapes in high school. She had bought them off TV of course, she's a big QVC shopper, and this was a very good purchase. And a lot of you will remember those infomercials with Tony Robbins. and I just started playing those audios, and they got in my head.

And I was always looking for something to feel better, looking for something to be able to change my life, to create the life that I wanted. And it just so happens, I was probably about 24 years old when I attended my first Tony Robbins event. I went by myself to a weekend UPW, and I just came out flying high. It was a transformative weekend.

A lot of people ask me about that weekend and what the change was. And I think it's important to note because it's such a big part of the tapping work I do now and what I think creates change in people's lives. And for me personally, that weekend was the first time where I realized that I had control over how I felt, that I had control over the decisions I made in my life.

**[00:04:21]**

And it seems a little obvious in retrospect, but if you look at personal development, the journey of changing, the journey of showing up to this Anxiety Super Conference, it begins with that step. Like, oh, wait, this doesn't have to happen to me. I can do something.

And that's what everyone here is doing. They are taking actions to change their lives. But for most of the world, people will just say, well, I have anxiety. It's just the way it is. It's just part of who I am. It's part of my identity.

So I went deep into Tony Robbins and at one of his events, he actually did a short demonstration of tapping. He handed out a little sheet and he said, I'm really into this technique. And you go like this, and you go like that. I was really curious. Anything Tony mentioned, it was like, let me go explore.

And I went and I bought books. I went online and I learned about EFT from Gary Craig, who is the originator of EFT. And I spent a couple of years just using it, using it with friends and family. It's such an easy tool to pick up.

And the running joke at the time was, don't say anything is wrong around Nick, because he's going to make you tap on it. It's like, you got something? We've got to try it.

Again, Alex, the times when it would be like, well, I have a cough that's lingering. Oh, I have pain in my shoulder. I'm dealing with this. I'm dealing with that. And I'd say, hey, I just learned this thing. Let's try it. And again and again. It moved. It moved the pain. It moved the cough. It transformed people. They said, well, I don't know what just happened, but I'm not anxious anymore. I don't know what just happened, but I'm not angry about that anymore.

So I just took that passion and then in 2007, really with that passion, on a whim, on inspiration, decided to make a documentary film about tapping.

And people usually say, oh, so this is your third or fourth film. Are you a filmmaker? No. I had nothing to do with the space. I was in real estate. I was buying, fixing up and selling properties. I bought \$40,000 worth of camera equipment, had it show up at my house, unpacked boxes not knowing what anything was, and just set off on this journey with my younger sister Jessica and a good friend from high school, Nick Polizzi, to document what was happening.

And that's what you mentioned in the intro, that film documents people's experience. Ten people came together for 4 days and we showed here's what happens when you do this technique.

And that is to me, underneath everything and all the work I've done 14 years since the release of that film, it's all about real people getting real results. It's not the thing where you have to wait 6 months for results or you have to believe in it. You'll know today, if you stick with us to the end and we do some tapping together, you will know by the end whether you feel better or not. And odds are that you will.

### **Alex Howard**

I think one of the things that's really cool as well, Nick, is that, of course, those of us have been working with tapping for a number of years, we see the impacts in our own lives, but also with the clients that we work with. But the scientific research has also been really following that and starting to grow the evidence base behind this work.

**[00:07:24]**

Maybe you can say a little bit about some of the research that supports the principles of how this seemingly very simple technique is so effective.

**Nick Ortner**

Yeah, absolutely. We're now over 300 research studies on all sorts of things. So some will be on anxiety, others will be on phobias. So there's so many different things to research.

And as you know, research takes a lot of money. So it's really only been in the past decade where we've raised some money, other people have chipped in, we're just trying to slog our way through. People say, well, where's the research? It's like, where's the \$3 million to fund the research? This isn't a big money making thing where we can run ads and sell little white pills. So we've got a different little battle, but we're getting there.

A couple of studies that stand out to me, Dr Peta Stapleton down in Australia, she did a study on food cravings, and she actually had people in an fMRI machine, so you go in a machine and it does a brain scan.

And what she had people do is look at food that they craved. And when they looked at, say, a piece of chocolate or a piece of candy, they would see the places in the brain that would light up. Okay, I have a craving. This part of the brain lights up and you can see it in this output.

Then you had a control group, and then you had the group that did the tapping. They did tapping, I think for 6 or 8 weeks, maybe a couple of times a week on food cravings. So even though I'm craving this food and looking at the food, again, trying to desensitize that brain to turn off that response.

Sure enough, she puts them back in the machine, shows them the chocolate, the brain doesn't light up. So the distinct, and what I love about that is the visuals are out there, so you can see the brain is lighting up red, brain is not lighting up red.

We have plenty of anecdotal evidence. I have thousands of stories of people saying I overcame food cravings with tapping, but until you see that image and go, oh, here's what happened in the brain. Something turned off where now that response doesn't exist.

Another study that's really interesting, Dr Dawson Church, and then actually duplicated by Peta, where they measured cortisol, salivary cortisol before and after tapping.

And they had the control group, they had a group that did psychoeducation, so they learned about stress and its impact on the body. And then they had the tapping group. The control group, the poor, sad control group that hopefully learned tapping later, with 1 hour sitting there reading magazines, they had an increase in cortisol of 2%. So just sitting there, they got more stress, probably because they were bored.

**Alex Howard**

I wonder what magazines they were reading.

**[00:10:03] Nick Ortner**

That is another very good point. And I'd like to see that with social media or the news. So that does matter.

The psychoeducation group saw about a 19% decrease in cortisol. So, hey, just learning about things. And right now, our conversation, we're not doing any tapping, but we're learning about the possibilities. We're hearing about ideas about how we can create change in our bodies. Maybe that drops the cortisol where we start going, I've got some control over my life. I can do this.

The tapping group blew them all out of the water with over 40% decrease in cortisol in that 1 hour. So just plummeting and taking it right down.

And that's been replicated. So with the replication studies it's always really important to go, hey, this group of people did it, and then this other group of people were able to pull it off, too.

So those are two that stand out to me that have, what I like about both of those, you have the brain scan and you have the salivary cortisol. So it's not just self-reported.

Now, self-reported is great. You mentioned our app. We're actually over 11 million completed sessions in the app. It's flying every single month. And for those 11 million sessions, we do a 0 to 10 scale before and after. So how anxious are you? I'm at a 7. I do the tapping, I'm at a 3.

So we have 11 million data points on every single one of those sessions and can show between a 40% to 50% decrease in anxiety, pain, like all the markers. Every session you see how dramatically it drops with such a big data set.

**Alex Howard**

I think what's also interesting in terms of the research side is that, as you say, doing research is expensive, it's difficult, it takes time, but also you get to 300 studies and you start to get some of the meta-analysis that are starting to see that there are clear effects that are happening in certain areas.

And I know you wouldn't say, and no one's saying that EFT or tapping is the answer to everything, but it's enough of an answer to enough things that there is clear evidence which is demonstrating that, which I think is really exciting.

**Nick Ortner**

That's beautifully said, because I do worry at times. I think with anything that people tend to latch on to one thing and they go, well, this must be the answer for my anxiety. And what I love about what you're doing with this conference is like, hey, here's the tools. Try a little bit of this, try a little bit of that. Maybe it's your diet plus tapping. Maybe it's this supplement plus tapping.

So these are all tools that when we stack them on top of each other, that's when we create great change. And not only do we have a preponderance of evidence with 300 studies, 11 million completed sessions, case study after case study, individual after, I mean, at some point the end of one matters, when someone says, this is what I did and this is the result I have. Well, that's a real thing. That's a real person who had a real result, who documented it.

**[00:12:51]**

But on top of all that, what's really important is what's the downside to any therapy? To anything you do? Is there a downside? Is there a side effect? Is there a cost? Is there some downside to it? And with tapping I just don't see it.

We certainly want to be careful if we have serious psychiatric conditions. If we're under the care of a therapist, we want to do it with them. We want to be aware of if we have PTSD not going where we potentially don't feel comfortable going alone. But beyond that, it's like, for a normal person, the downside of trying it is so minimal and the upside is so big.

**Alex Howard**

That's well put.

So before we come into using tapping for anxiety, let's come into some of the key principles of tapping. So for someone that's new to it, where do they start and how do they start to move into the actual technique?

**Nick Ortner**

Absolutely. So we always start with, what are we trying to work on? So if it's anxiety, I'm feeling anxious, and this is something I want to shift. If I've had pain in my right shoulder for 10 years, we go, well, this is what's in the way right now. If I'm thinking about something that happened this past weekend and I just can't let go of it, running that loop again and again. If I'm worried about an upcoming speech or presentation.

So we are looking to identify the places in our lives where we feel stuck, where we want to feel something different, where we want to shift something. And we all have something. It's rare that we don't go, you know what? I'm a little stressed about that thing, I'm a little anxious about that thing, or I'm totally overwhelmed, my system is overloaded, and I need help with a million things. We just pick one.

So we start with where we are, anxiety, anger, stress, pain in the body. I've seen incredible results with pain in the body. They always blow me away as to how quickly pain can shift if we approach it the right way.

So we start with what it is. We check in, we give it a number on a 0 to 10 scale. So I'm anxious at a 10. I'm having trouble breathing, I'm overwhelmed, this is borderline panic attack, I'm not feeling good.

I'm angry at a 5. I'm just kind of simmering there and I can't let that go. I've got pain in my shoulder at a 7. We give it a number and then we do the tapping.

Should we just do a basic tapping process to get started?

**Alex Howard**

Yes.

## **[00:15:11] Nick Ortner**

I listed a lot of things, so just pick one thing. We'll do this together so you can have that experience for yourself. We'll do a general tapping, and then we'll go dive deep into anxiety.

So I mentioned pain, pain is an interesting place to start because you go, oh, this is something that's concrete. Like, I felt this pain and then it shifted. You can also, I've seen a lot of results, especially in the last couple of years with COVID and people having trouble breathing and all that congestion in the chest. So you can tune in, like, how deep is my breath? So if you take a breath in and you go, is there any constriction there? Am I holding on to anything there?

So go ahead and just pick one thing. Anger, anxiety, pain, stress about work. The thing that you want to move. And then give it a number of intensity on a scale of 0 to 10. So 10 would be most angry, most anxious, most pain in the body. So we have our target, we have a number, and then we'll do some tapping together.

We start tapping on the side of the hand. It's called the karate chop point. And whatever hand feels comfortable for you, you can go back and forth, you can just stay in one place. And then repeat after me, either in your mind or out loud. I'm going to use very general language because I don't know what you're working on at home, but it'll work just great.

So, even though I'm holding on to this stress, I choose to relax and feel safe.

I'm going to do that two more times.

Even though I'm holding on to this thing, I can't seem to let it go. I choose to let it go now.

And one more time, still on the side of the hand. Even though I have this stress in my body that I've been holding onto, it's safe to let it go now.

Now we'll tap through the points. The first point is the eyebrow point. Inside of the eyebrow, right where the hair ends and it meets the nose. You can use two fingers of one hand, the other hand, or you can do both hands. The meridians run down both sides of the body.

And I'd like you to just tap gently, eyes open or closed. Once you get the points, people like to tap with their eyes closed so they can really focus in. And if you're just learning them, eyes open is great.

But as you tap gently, just think about the thing you're working on. So the pain in your body, just notice it. If you're angry about something, go ahead and think those angry thoughts. You were thinking them before, think them now in order to let them go.

Now we move to the side of the eye. It's not at the temple, right next to the eye, on the bone. Again, one side or both sides. Tapping gently.

And we want to think about this challenge, the anxiety, the anger, the overwhelm, the stress, the pain in our bodies. Breathing gently, tapping gently.

Now moving under the eye, we're looking to actually activate these thoughts in order to send that calming signal.

**[00:18:24]**

So if something is coming up that you've been stressed out about, think about it now. We're looking to activate it in a safe way and then let it go.

And moving under the nose, tapping gently, breathing gently, thinking those thoughts, those anxious thoughts, those angry thoughts. The overwhelm, the pain in your body. Just being present to your mind. Everything that's been going on.

Now we move under the mouth. It's above the chin, below the lip, in that little crease there. Tapping gently. If you get distracted or you're trying to figure out the points, that's okay. It's your first time, you're just learning. Just bring your attention back to this challenge. Think those thoughts, feeling safe in your body.

For the collarbone point, just feel for the two little bones of the collarbone. You can go right below it, tap with all ten fingers of both hands or one hand, whatever is comfortable for you. Bringing your attention back to the stressor.

What have you been holding onto? And is it safe to let it go?

Two more points. Underneath the arm. You can't really see it here, but it's right underneath the armpit, about two inches below it, on the bra line for women. Tapping gently. Tuning in.

And the last point at the crown of the head, bringing your attention to that stressor, that overwhelm, that fear, letting it go.

And you can gently stop tapping, take a breath in and let it go.

And now we tune back in.

So that was one very quick, very general round to have that experience, but tune into how you feel. So if you're working on some pain, you might go, I was a 7, now it's a 6 or a 5 or 4.

If you're anxious or angry, how did the feelings change? How did your body change? What else came up?

A big part of this process is, I was tapping on anger, I thought I was angry about this one thing, but I'm really overwhelmed about this other thing. As we allow our mind, the body to relax, we get that clarity about what's really going on in our lives. What can we let go, what can we change? And then we do the physical process to support that change.

### **Alex Howard**

Firstly, thank you for walking through that. What's interesting, I was quietly tapping along, not wanting to make too much noise so I checked my microphone as well as my camera. But what's interesting is, I wasn't feeling particularly anxious before, but I'd come from doing a live Q&A, and my system was definitely amped up.

And what I noticed was going from what I thought was a neutral but probably was a little bit overstimulated, just feeling more grounded and more spacious. I think sometimes what happens is we don't even realize the state that we're in. We might be aware of the mental experience of racing



thoughts and anxiety. We don't necessarily realize what's happening in our nervous system until we actually shift state, and then we have the contrast with that.

### **[00:21:34] Nick Ortner**

Beautifully said. You're absolutely right. I think it happens to all of us. So even the people that feel like, hey, I'm in a pretty good emotional state then, yeah, it's really easy. Because when we're ramped up like that, especially if we do that often, that just becomes our default state. So we just go, well, yeah, I'm going, I'm doing things, but I feel normal because I'm so used to feeling this way.

And then it's like, oh, let me drop down further. And to me, when we drop down further, a lot of people, especially high achievers and people who just want to get things done in the world, they worry about dropping down. They go, I need the coffee, I need this. I need that. I need to be high octane.

But first off, you can still be high octane and be in that settled place. And when you release that just subtle stress, that subtle anxiety, that extra level, the blood flows back to your brain and you make better decisions, you think more clearly, you're more present. So it's certainly a state that even the highest of achievers want to move into.

### **Alex Howard**

And of course, people that have just done this for the first time, there could be a range of experiences. There could be people that go, wow, like something shifted. Other people might be, I'm not sure much happened. And others might be, actually, I feel a bit more anxious.

So maybe you can just speak to some of what is and isn't okay. Speak a bit to what people might be experiencing.

### **Nick Ortner**

Look, that was a very quick round, like I said. We did one round and using language that I'm guessing I'm trying to make it very general to the different things that people are working on out there.

So if you feel more anxious, well, great, we're going to do some more and then you can do some tapping and you could settle it down. It probably means that you locked in on something. That it was like, oh, okay, I actually stopped for a second. I mean, I get a reaction often where people just say, I just started bawling and I have no idea why and doesn't know what happened. Don't be scared that you're going to instantly cry. But it happens for people.

And I think it's because there's such a release of that nervous tension that all of a sudden it's like, oh, the system that was just, like you said, going this, but their system is going like that. So used to being so amped up, so high all the time, pushing, pushing, fighting the negative thoughts, getting things done, that when we settle for a second, it's like there's all this emotion that we buried down.

So if you're feeling a little more ramped up, it's probably that some of that is happening. And if you felt nothing, great, we've got to lock in more on, you might have been distracted, you're learning the points the first time, where is it exactly? So it doesn't let you really concentrate on your issue.

It's what I love about the process, it's very simple. Once you get it down, you do it a couple of times, you know it, and then the process gets out of the way and you can have your own experience.

**[00:24:16] Alex Howard**

And how about for those that might be worried, they're not quite doing it right? What if I'm not tapping on the right point? Or am I tapping hard enough? Maybe just speak some of the specifics of the mechanics of the process.

**Nick Ortner**

So you want to have some firm pressure like you're drumming on a table. You don't want to just want to... and don't bang yourself. Some people actually find, especially at night, that pressing on the points is very calming to them. So that also does a similar thing. So you can try that as well as you're doing it to see if your body resonates with that.

In terms of getting it right, we want to be in the general area. It's not like, okay, it has to be right in that little spot there. Our fingers are big. So we can do that. We don't want to be here. So we want to be close enough that we're getting it right. So if we go side of the eye, we go, okay, side of the eye not here.

So just pay enough attention to go, alright, I'm in the general area and I'm going to do well there.

When my first book came out, there's a UK tabloid, of course, they love their headlines, and it said, 'Can tapping on your cheek cure stress? No, it's not on your cheek. At least you covered it.'

**Alex Howard**

I think the UK has some great exports, but the newspapers is not one of them.

Shall we come to another round? So whatever someone's experience has been, let's take another step with it.

**Nick Ortner**

And we can focus in on anxiety, or we can just go deeper on that experience. What do you think? Go right to anxiety?

**Alex Howard**

Let's go deeper on anxiety. I think that will be good.

And one of the things that might be helpful, if this is true for people and if it's not, that's also okay as well, is sometimes people can have, something we've talked about quite a lot through the interviews is anxiety about anxiety. Often the experience of anxiety in of itself is anxiety inducing.

So maybe to bring into the frame here a little bit how someone can find a softer relationship to just the experience that's happening for them.

**Nick Ortner**

Perfect. I've got some ideas. So let's do it.

**[00:24:16]**

So let's take a moment to tune in. As always, we're going to be focusing on anxiety. So if it's safe to do so, you can close your eyes and take a gentle breath in and let it go.

And just tune into this idea of anxiety. Notice how your body feels. Are you holding onto any anxiety in your body? Are you thinking anxious thoughts?

And if you're not now because you maybe shifted a little in doing this great work together, think about how you felt before you did this or what life might look like when you're done listening to this interview.

Again, we're looking to bring it up. Normally, we don't want to experience anxiety, but for the purpose of moving through it, we want to really connect to it here as opposed to bearing it down and try to move past it in a non healthy way.

So go ahead and just feel that in your body and give it a number on a scale of 0 to 10.

And when you're ready, you can gently open your eyes and we'll do some tapping.

Tapping on the side of the hand. Repeat after me, either in your mind or out loud.

Even though I have this anxiety. I've had it for so long. So used to feeling it, and I'm not sure how to let it go. All these feelings. I love and accept myself.

Still on the side of the hand.

Even though I'm anxious about my anxiety, I choose to let it go now.

And one more time on the side of the hand.

Even though I have this old pattern of anxiety, I'm open to changing the way I feel.

Tapping through the points, eyebrow.

This anxiety.

Side of the eye.

I've felt it for so long. It's part of who I am.

Under the nose.

But maybe it doesn't have to be.

Under the mouth.

What if I release this anxiety?

Collarbone.

**[00:29:31]**

How would I feel?

Under the arm.

Who would I be without this anxiety?

Top of the head.

All this old anxiety.

Back to the eyebrow.

It's safe to feel it.

Side of the eye.

And it's safe to let it go.

Under the eye.

What if my body felt safe?

Under the nose.

What if my body could relax?

Under the mouth.

What if I could release this anxiety?

Collarbone and become anxiety free.

Just stay on the collarbone and just tune into how all that feels. Bringing up a lot of possibilities.

Who would you be without this anxiety? Does it feel safe to let it go? Some people say, I've had this anxiety for so long, I don't know who I would be without it. It's just how I operate in the world. We're beginning to explore letting it go.

How would you breathe if you were free of anxiety? What decisions would you make in your life? Is it safe to make those decisions? Begin to imagine yourself free of this anxiety, open to the possibility.

Underneath the arm.

Feel into that deeply. What if you let this anxiety go? What if you felt safe, grounded and strong in your body?

Top of the head.

**[00:31:53]**

Strong, grounded and safe.

We'll do one more round.

Back to the eyebrow.

It's safe to feel safe.

Side of the eye.

Releasing all this anxiety.

Under the eye.

From every cell in my body.

Under the nose.

Programming my mind.

Under the mouth.

To be calm and peaceful.

Collarbone.

Grounded and safe.

Under the arm.

Letting go.

Top of the head.

Right now.

And you can gently stop tapping, take a breath in and let it go.

So now let's tune back in. Go to that original number. The anxiety was a 7, an 8, a 9. And what is it now?

And then, what came up for you?

So, Alex, part of this process is beginning to imagine what I could be like without this anxiety. And sometimes we let go of something and we want to move in a different direction and then it feels foreign. Like I'm not used to operating in the world this way.

**[00:33:35]**

So we actually have to practice these things. People say if you quit smoking, you've got to replace it with another habit. Replace it with a healthy habit because it's such a part of people's lives.

So the same thing, anxiety is a habit. It's something we've been doing for a long time. And it can feel a little strange. It can even feel uncomfortable. I know it sounds funny, but it can feel uncomfortable to be free of anxiety. It can feel uncomfortable to be free of these negative emotions because we felt them for so long.

And that's why as we do this tapping, we begin to imagine that new possibility. Who would I be? How would I move? How would I talk? What are the decisions I would make if I was free of this anxiety?

### **Alex Howard**

I think it's also helpful to speak a little bit to some of what you're saying as you're guiding people through.

Because I think, firstly, something that is interesting is you're, beginning particularly, not shying away from connecting to the feeling. And often people have learnt to try and push away those feelings or kind of bypass those feelings.

And actually welcoming the feeling in, but then also there's a gradual often evolution, let's say, in terms of the relationship to it. Particularly if we're practicing by themselves, they can sometimes get overwhelmed or I don't know what to say or what should I be saying?

### **Nick Ortner**

Yeah, absolutely. So we start with the negative feelings, feeling the feelings. Then, look, if you don't have a tool to move past this feeling, it makes sense to ignore it. If I'm going to be stuck in anger and I don't know how to move it out of my body, I might as well swallow it down or just push it aside so I don't have to feel this thing that I don't want to feel.

Same thing with anxiety, what's happening, it's safe to feel the feelings because we could let them go as we move through it. There's a natural evolution. It's different for every person. So somebody watching might have felt like I turned to the positive too quickly for them because they were still feeling it and needed a little more time to just be there and feel it and speak to it.

And other people might have felt like it was too long on the negative and they want to move right to the positive. So you'll figure out your own cadence as to when it feels good. Generally, that turn from the, quote unquote "negative to the positive" is when you can begin to contemplate the positive without going, no, there's no way that's happening.

So when the door opens, I love affirmations and positive statements, I think they're wonderful and can be life changing, but if you try to say, "I am anxiety free", no part of you believes that's the case, or your physical experience doesn't believe that, then it can actually backfire because then you go, your brain is going, no, you're not. This is just total BS.

So we want to make it so we open that door to that positive. And you'll see, you'll feel into it and go, yeah, you know what? I can see myself feeling that way. I can see myself being positive. And then

when that door opens, it's like, okay, now we can go. We can go in that door. It's like the door is open to the positive and we can really feel the positive.

### **[00:36:32]**

I think a shift that I've made, at least in my work in the last couple of years, is really spending more time. It's important to feel the negative, to let it go, to turn it, but then also to really practice the positive. Because if we're not used to doing it in these places, we've got to just practice that mental state. Who would I be if I was anxiety free? What would my life look like? How would I move? What would my body feel like? So we can begin to become more comfortable with these new positive states.

### **Alex Howard**

That's awesome. Can you say a bit more about, I touched on this in the intro, there's two ways of using tapping with anxiety. There's those moments where it might be as extreme as a panic attack or it may just be like a really intense moment and almost like a of mini crisis intervention tool. Versus really working on an overall calming and retraining of the nervous system.

So that's two quite different, obviously related things, but both which can be impacted.

### **Nick Ortner**

Yeah, absolutely. Both massively. So I love sort of the emergency response side of it because it's incredible in times of need.

I know that I live, where I'm recording now is in Newtown, Connecticut. So it's the site of the Sandy Hook school shootings almost a decade ago now, which is sadly extra fresh again with the Uvalde shootings and just everything that's been going on in the world.

When the shootings happened we mobilized our resources and started The Tapping Solution Foundation to help and to work with people on the ground, with parents, with children, with first responders. And probably the best work I've ever done, being able to help people directly on the ground.

And someone that I worked with who I'm still really close with is Scarlett Lewis, who lost her son Jesse in the shootings. I was at her house 3 days after the shooting, and she was very responsive, she was familiar with tapping and Hayhouse and Wayne Dyer and Louise Hay, and she was really into this possibility.

And we worked together. And I taught her the tapping and a couple of months later, we went through all sorts of work, but a couple of months later, she woke up in the middle of the night in the middle of a panic attack. Like 3am, full blown panic attack. And she'd had them before, so she was familiar with what was happening and she knew she was going to have to call 911.

So if you have a full blown panic attack, it's not something you can just wait out. It was just overwhelming. Her son JT was in the room sleeping. He was 14 years old at the time, or 13. And she said, alright, maybe I can call 911, get to the hospital, get some meds, and come back before he wakes up. She had a plan in mind to try to figure out what to do here.

**[00:39:14]**

And she found that little space in that moment to go, alright, before I do all that, which is a big deal, let me just try some tapping. So on her own, she started tapping on the side of the hand, "Even though I have this panic attack..." And just went through the points. 10 minutes later, she was back asleep.

So it's like those are the moments, that if someone in that position can so dramatically change their physiology and help out the situation. I've seen it time and time again in those emergency situations.

Now, what we want is to not get to those places if we can. It's not always possible, but if we can. And that's the other side that you speak to, the daily tapping, just lowering the stress levels on a daily basis. Ideally as well, when you first learn the technique, at least the case for me was 20 years ago, I learned it and I said, okay, I've got stuff to let go of. Where are the things in my life? Where are the things from the past?

If I think about a high school girlfriend and I'm still pissed off about something, maybe there's something that needs to change there. If I'm holding on to something someone said to me when I was 12 years old, if I'm angry about something from last week. So I looked around my life and I said, it's just time to clean up.

And that's what I did. Probably spent the first 6 months to a year just doing a lot of tapping to go. I want to just recreate who I am. It's not like I was a different person, my personality was different, but I wanted to let go of those things that were weighing me down.

So that's what a lot of people do. They'll get super into it and go, I've got to rebuild this. I've got to rebuild the system. I've got to lower the stress and anxiety. I've got to get healthy again. I've got to learn to be a person free of anxiety. So a lot of people do that tapping, a lot of tapping in the beginning to reset everything.

### **Alex Howard**

It's almost like it becomes a daily practice. That it's not just what one does, I feel bad therefore I'm going to use this tool. That it's a habit that you're looking to create.

### **Nick Ortner**

It's a habit, yes. And even if it's 5 minutes a day, you can also go right to positive tapping. So you can just go, hey, I'm feeling pretty good today. And you know what? I want to feel even better, so I choose to be focused and calm now. I'm looking forward to having a great day, bringing the best out of me. We can say, just positive intentions and affirmations while tapping and relaxing our body at the same time.

### **Alex Howard**

Fantastic. Should we do one more round just to have to integrate and bring together what we've been talking about in this piece?

### **Nick Ortner**

Absolutely. Let's do it.



**[00:41:41]**

So go ahead and just check in again to see if there's any remaining anxiety. And we always want to check that we're going to actually really lean into the positive. But if you're like, you know what? It's a 3 or 4, I got it down from an 8, let's just check in and give it a number and see if we can move past it even further.

Once we have our number, tapping on the side of the hand.

Even though I might still have some anxiety left.

I've had it for so long.

I'm open to changing this now.

Still on the side of the hand.

Even though I've got some residual stress in my body, I wonder what it would feel like to let it go.

And one more time.

Even though I'm used to being stressed and anxious, I feel safe letting this go now.

Tapping through the points, eyebrow.

What if I was free of anxiety?

Side of the eye.

How would my life change?

Under the eye.

How good would that feel?

Under the nose.

I'm doing the work now.

Under the mouth.

And I'm so proud of myself for showing up.

Collarbone.

And I commit to doing what it takes.

Under the arm.

To release this anxiety.

**[00:43:51]**

Top of the head.

I deserve to be free.

We'll do one more round and really feel that.

I deserve to be free.

Side of the eye.

I deserve to be free of anxiety.

It no longer serves me.

Under the nose.

And it's time to let it go.

Under the mouth.

Releasing all this old anxiety.

Collarbone.

I deserve to be free. Really feel that in your body.

Under the arm.

I deserve to be free.

Top of the head.

And I'm ready to make it happen.

You can gently stop tapping, take a breath in and let it go.

And now we tune back in. So what's our new number? Where did we move that anxiety from? From the original number to where we are now. And just tune into how else you feel.

Is the energy opening up? Do you feel a little more possibility, a little more hope? That's part of this process too. It's like, oh man, there's hope. And now we can take that energy and do more with it. We can take that energy and listen to every single one of these sessions.

We've done our Tapping World Summit for 14 years now, so next year will be the 15th year that we've done it, and one theme that I see time and again, the people that get the best results are the ones that listen to everything. They just make a point of it.

**[00:45:46]**

And the other thing that I hear all the time is, I didn't think that session applied to me or I thought I knew what it was going to be about or what they were going to be talking about but I listened in anyway, and that session transformed everything.

So make it a point to just dive deep. Like you're here. You want to move this anxiety, you want to change the way you feel. Just go all in and make it happen now.

**Alex Howard**

Thank you, Nick. I appreciate you saying that.

What's the long-term potential? So people that really commit to tapping as a practice and as a way of life, and perhaps someone suffered or struggled with anxiety for many years, what do you see as the potential for someone really to transform and change that?

**Nick Ortner**

I certainly feel that there's no guarantees, but that you can be absolutely anxiety free. That the way the person, we all think that we're a certain way, this is who I am, I'm an anxious person, I'm a shy person, I'm a fearful person. Really, what we are is we're a collection of experiences.

And usually that is a collection of experiences that caused fear in the body, a collection of experiences that cause anxiety in the body. Things we learn from our parents, things we learn from society, things we learn from our friends.

I believe that we can reshape that. And if we have an intention, if we say, I want to feel differently, I want to be a different kind of person, it's not always going to be overnight, but it's certainly possible. And I think that's what we should all be going for.

Yes, step one, get rid of the anxiety, but for what reason? Get rid of the anxiety to feel joy, get rid of the anxiety to be productive, get rid of the anxiety to fill it up with something else. And that's what we can do here.

**Alex Howard**

That's awesome. For people that want to find out more about you and your work, what's the best place to go and what's some of what they can find?

**Nick Ortner**

Thank you. So the [tappingsolution.com](https://tappingsolution.com) is just our main website where you'll find both research studies and blog posts and all sorts of free resources.

And then we mentioned The Tapping Solution app a couple of times, which is a free download. There's a bunch of free sessions, and then there's a premium subscription for those that choose to get the premium. And wherever you get apps, just search The Tapping Solution and that will pop right up.

**[00:47:55] Alex Howard**

Awesome. Nick, thank you so much. I really appreciate you taking something that can sometimes be a little overwhelming of, where do I start? What do I do? And just making it super simple. So, thank you so much. I really appreciate it.

**Nick Ortner**

Alex, I really enjoyed our time together. Thanks everyone.