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This attachment perspective helps them connect with their tender beginnings. It can also offer coherence and hope for even those most highly escalated couples and partners rigidly entrenched in their reactive positions. Validation of partners' best attempts to maintain their relationship opens

the doorway to relationship repair and creation of bonding moments.

Matt Angelstorf, M.S.
Certified EFT Therapist
Berlin, Germany

The EFT Tango



Rebecca Jorgensen

During the Trainer Talk in November 2011 (a free webinar for ICEEFT members) as Sue and I were discussing EFT basics, she presented the Five Basic Moves of EFT. With her deft ability to use metaphor and explain concepts, this meta-process of EFT instantly became alive and easy to see.

Always looking for ways to make EFT simpler to learn, Sue said, "I've been teaching my students how doing EFT is like dancing the Tango – there are really just 5 basic moves that you repeat over and over." Then she elegantly and simply stated the "how-to" process of moving through the steps of EFT.

These process moves answer the "what next" questions we face when we're working with couples, such as:

- "Okay, we have the cycle, now what?"
- "Oh boy, I accessed primary emotion, what do I do with it?"
- "How and when do I do enactments?"

The Five Basic Moves of EFT

The EFT Therapist constantly:

- 1. Reflects Process – within and between**
(interaction/dance steps/pattern and elements of emotion)

- 2. Deepens / Distills**
(attachment frame – use emotional handles)

- 3. Shapes Enactments**
(clear, simple messages – coherence)

- 4. Processes Enactments**
(“How did it feel to tell her?“, “How does it feel to hear it?“)

- 5. Integrates – Validates – Reflects Process**
(Model of self, model of other, attachment relationship)

In addition to using these basic moves to guide you during the session, you can use the moves when you are watching your own recordings to see how you are doing – keeping a process focus. And, if you get lost in the session, you can just go back to the first move, reflecting present process and you'll be back on track – knowing right where you are and what process move to make next.

Let's review the moves with a bit of description followed with an example. The examples are all taken from EFT training DVDs.

- 1. Reflect the present process (within/between) in front of you.** (“What's happening here, where are we?“) Reflect: the emotional process of one partner (for example, how they move from scared to angry); the present interaction or pattern of the negative cycle; or the interaction – what happened right here in the room, if different from the negative cycle.

For example (from *EFT in Action*):

Sue: So, what I am hearing is this lady says to you, “Even when we are caught in this dreadful pattern that scares the hell out of both of us, there is this moment when all I really need, Matt, is the reassurance that you love me.”

And you are saying to your lady here, you are saying,

"Somehow in these arguments I hear that I am disappointing you. Somehow in these arguments I just get to a place where I want to retreat. I want to go in my cave. Or I want to fight and take control and stop the fight. I want to fix it by taking control".

2. Explore more primary, deeper or new emotions. EXPLORE is emphasized to encourage you to stay there, don't just access the emotion, reflect it again and again and stay there – deepen and distill the experience and the attachment meaning

For example (from *EFT In Action*)-

Sue: [Talking to Matt, reflecting what he says] "...I can't do it. I'm stuck. I'm stuck between running in my cave, fighting you. I'm stuck." Is that what you are telling me? Help me, Matt. Is that what you are telling me?

Matt: Yeah. Because I think what happens for me is I hear everything she says. And I take that and I put it into a compartment because I really, I almost need a copilot to turn to and go, "Hey, what would you do about this?" You know? But I don't have that copilot, so I have to compartmentalize it. And I have to really process my own conflict of nobody is doing that for me. Nobody is helping me. So how can I give that up? How can I — I don't know how to respond. I can't do that. I hear you, but I can't do that.

Sue: I need to understand this, so I want you to help me understand, okay?

Matt: Mm-hmm.

Sue: I love the image that you need a copilot...In a way I really understand you, because we all need a copilot, don't we? Yeah? You are saying, "You help me." This is hard to talk about, yeah, for you? This is hard to talk about?

Matt: I always had a copilot. During the war —

Sue: Someone you could lean on and turn to who was your — you could check, right?

Matt: When things got really hard, really dangerous.

Sue: Right. But suddenly your experience is you are in danger again. You are in danger again. Your lady is upset with you. You don't know how to fix

it...You don't know how to fix it. You are hearing she is disappointed, right? And suddenly you are in danger again and you don't have any copilot and you don't know what to do, yeah?

Matt: Yeah.

Sue: And that is overwhelming for you, Matt? That's overwhelming, yeah?

Matt: Yeah it's overwhelming.

3. Set up/coherent enactments - disclose the felt primary emotion (as accessed in #2 above) to the partner.

For example (from *EFT in Action*):

Sue: So, can you tell her? Because it is different coming from me. Can you tell her? "Rhea, I hear that you need that reassurance but in that moment I am caught in Immediate Action Item and I don't know what to do. I'm overwhelmed." Can you tell her that?

4. Process the enactment. Spend time with each partner checking on how it feels to tell and how it feels to hear the primary emotion. Address the blocks.

Example of Processing the enactment (from *Shaping Change Events*) – How It Feels To Tell/Hear:

Sue: What's it like for you right now to tell her this?

Linda: Well it's kind of scary. Because I'm not sure how, what her reaction is going to be, and I don't want to say things that are going to hurt her.

Sue: Do you want me to help you? (Turning to the partner) What happens for you Linda, when he says that?

Example of Addressing the Block (from *Shaping Change Events*):

Sue: So what's it like for you to hear from this guy that actually you are amazingly important to him? That when he's tossing around on this huge sea of loneliness and this dark, this silent sort of dark place starts to come to him, that you're his safety. Which is ironic for why he gets so irritable and why he shuts down, but that you're the light in that world. That

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he really counts on you and that he gets so panicked that maybe not having you there, that's huge, isn't it? That's really new, that's kind of turning things on their head, isn't it for you?

Linda: Yeah, I mean because we've been together for over 13 years and I've never thought of it that way at all. Unfortunately I've put a very negative spin on why he does the things he does. Not at all from this perspective. So this is more of a positive spin and it's kind of a little bit cognitively overwhelming to even try it on.

Sue: Well, let's not go there cognitively. Let's just stay with the feeling.

Linda: Yeah.

Sue: What's it like to feel, to hear from this man that you matter that much to him, that in fact, he goes into these scary behaviors – scary for you, because you're so important to him. You matter so much that over, sitting over in this chair, there's somebody who needs you that much, for whom you are so important. What's that like for you Linda?

Linda: Well, I feel kind of scared.

5. Summarize the whole thing or "Tie a bow" on the process you just completed while doing basic moves #1 – #4. This allows you to **integrate, validate and reflect the process.** Sue suggests this summarization can include partners' view of self and view of other and the experience of the relationship. 'Tying a bow' is a meta process move – where you review what you've been doing in the session to get you to this new place of understanding. Doing this gives the clients another repetition of hearing how the pieces (view of self/other, primary emotions and triggered response) of their negative cycle fit together. It's also a very nice way to end the session.

After processing an enactment example (from *Shaping Change Events*)-

Processing the enactment:

Sue: You feel connected with him when he tells you.

Linda: Yeah, absolutely.

Sue: You don't want him to hurt.

Linda: No, I don't, and I want this to be fixed as much as you do. That's why we're here, and I know the closeness we can have. I know the closeness we have had, and I hate the, I guess, not the traps, but the traps we've created to try to survive this or whatever, I don't know.

Tying a Bow:

Sue: It's tricky isn't it guys, cause you know John, if I put myself in your shoes I can imagine feeling just the way you do and I'm feeling that the more I cared for Linda, the more important she was to me, the harder I think it would be for me, when you sort of frame it the way you do, to hear that somehow I'm, there's something I'm not doing for her, or there's some way in which she's disappointed with me. The harder it would be, the more important she was to me, the harder it would be for me to really stand and really take that in. It's kind of ironic. And what's also ironic is it seems like it's because you're so important to her that she wants you and the closeness with you so much. That's why she's pushing, saying to you, 'Hey John, where are you, where are you, I want you and this connection,' but you hear that she's disappointed.

End of session example (from *EFT In Action*):

Sue: You have told each other about your deep emotions here. You have risked. Matt, you haven't just landed the helicopter in this session. You have come out and told this lady your feelings. You have been very honest. You are saying, "I get stuck. I get stuck in that moment and I don't know how to respond because my brain is caught somewhere else."

Your lady has come out and told you what she really needs. You guys have done a lot of incredible work here....

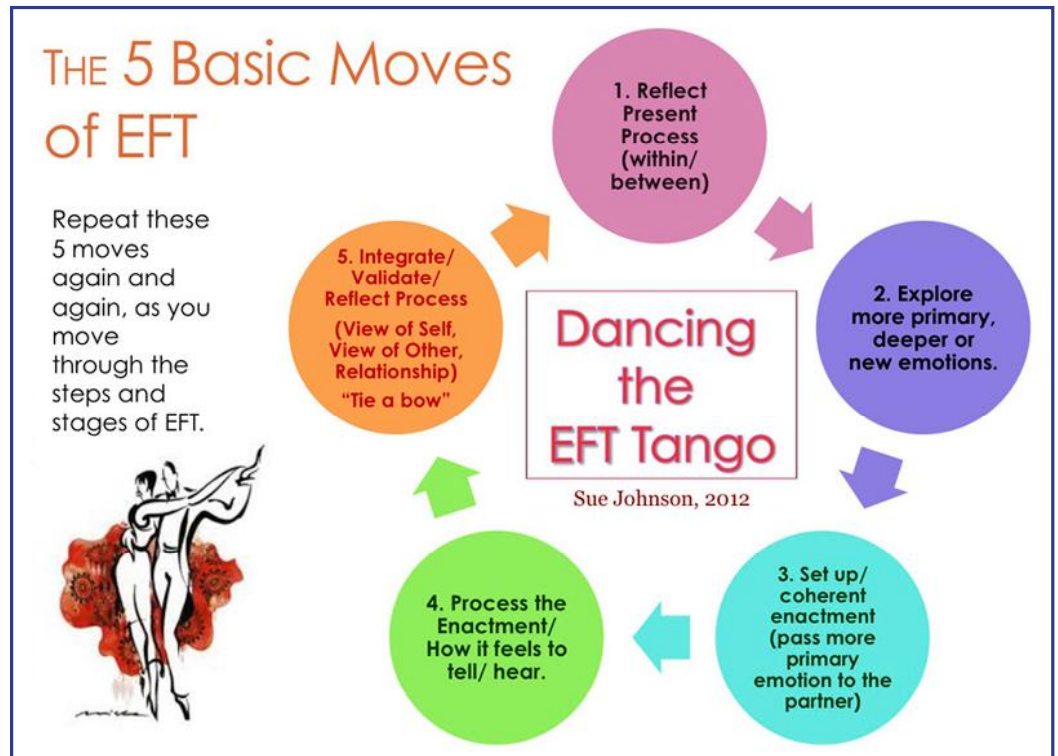
I hope you see the risks that you have both taken. I hope you guys are both feeling good about the risks you have taken here. You have taken some incredible risks. It takes a lot of courage to do that. You don't do that if you don't really care about the other person.

The next move, after completing the summary or linking models of self and other with the present

process, primary emotions and action tendencies, is to go back to #1 above and reflect the present process. Using the example above, had the session not been ending at this point, Sue might have moved into #1 by saying something like, "We're seeing how you both really do care about each other, and this dance between you has kept you stuck. So Rhea, I'd like to check in with you – what's happening for you

right now as we see some of how this negative cycle has played out in your relationship? You look very sad as you sit here." (Then onto move #2)

In conclusion, the **5 Basic Moves of EFT** is a systemized process to do repeatedly each session. Using these moves can help you not only to maintain a process focus, but also to know if you need to focus interpersonally or intrapsychically, and how to shift between the two. You can also



use these moves as an anchor to help you refocus if you get stuck in session and to notice growth areas when you review your recordings. I hope you enjoy "Dancing the EFT Tango" as much as I do – it's the only tango I know and it's got a wonderful rhythm to it.

Rebecca Jorgensen, Ph.D.
Certified EFT Supervisor & Trainer
San Diego Center for Emotionally Focused Therapy

Trainer Talk...Answering Your Questions About EFT



A FREE Q & A webinar with EFT Supervisors & Trainers, Sue Johnson & Rebecca Jorgensen. You can send your Q's in advance or during the event.

Deepening Affect & Enactments

Wednesday, March 6, 2013

3pm EST (Noon Pacific Time) – 60 minutes



Sign up early - space is limited to 100 ICEEFT members!
You only need Adobe Flash (available for free online download).

If you cannot attend the live session (and/or missed the previous sessions), recordings will be available on the ICEEFT Members web site.

Register today at www.emotionallyfocusedtherapy.org/Trainer_Talk.html