

Ep #87: What is EFT Tapping? An Interview with Jessica Ortner



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Krista St-Germain

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Welcome to *The Widowed Mom Podcast*, episode 87, What is EFT Tapping? An Interview with Jessica Ortner.

Welcome to *The Widowed Mom Podcast*, the only podcast that offers a proven process to help you work through your grief, to grow, evolve, and create a future you can truly look forward to. Here's your host, Master Certified life coach, grief expert, widow, and mom, Krista St-Germain.

Hey, everyone. Welcome to another episode of the podcast. If you've been listening for any length of time, I'm quite certain you have heard me refer to tapping, also called EFT, which stands for Emotional Freedom Technique. It's one of my favorite tools. I insist that all of my Widowed Mom coaching clients get the Tapping Solution app and learn to tap.

Tapping is a part of the coaching that I offer. Tapping has been such a powerful tool for me, even before Hugo died, I was using tapping to manage stress, to help my children manage stress. It's something anybody can do. You can learn to do it and I am so excited to bring this interview to you with Jessica Ortner.

Jessica is a New York Times Bestselling author. She, along with her two brothers, created the Tapping Solution app. And they really are pioneers in this field. What I love about this story is that really, they're just people who found a tool that worked for them. It changed their lives. And they loved it so much that they dedicated themselves to helping other people use the same tool to change their lives. It's just such a feel-good story.

I also have to tell you – I didn't tell Jessica this, but remember back in the episode I did on overcoming perfectionism with failure? Last year, when I was working on my master coach project and I was really trying to get

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myself past my perfectionist patterns by learning to fail, by failing on purpose. And part of what I was doing was making requests for people to come on the podcast or for me to go on other people's podcasts that felt like a stretch to me. And Jessica was one of those podcast guests.

To me, it was kind of like an, "I'll ask her but it will never happen," kind of deal. Like, who's going to want to come on my little podcast? She's a New York Times Bestselling author and hello, did I have a little bit of maybe imposter syndrome happening there? But she said yes. And now you get to benefit.

And so, I hope that you really enjoy hearing what Jessica has to say. I hope that you go into it with an open mind. Maybe some of you are tapping pros. But some of you have probably never heard about it and you're wondering, what the heck am I talking about?

So, we're just going to jump in. I'm going to let Jessica tell you all about it and let you benefit from her knowledge and I hope you really love it and start using it as much as I do.

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Krista: Alright, welcome Jessica Ortner. I am so excited to have you on the podcast. You have no idea.

Jessica: Me too. Thanks for having me.

Krista: Yeah, and I really do mean it. you have no idea. Because your work and the work of tapping, which is what I want you to tell listeners all about, has been a tremendous part of my healing. It was even a part of my life

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before Hugo died and I've been using it with my kids since they were itty-bitty. But I just don't think nearly as many people know about it as need to.

And you have such a brilliant app that I want you to talk about today. So, I'm just really excited to get into it. So, if you could just kind of tell listeners a little bit about yourself, you know, who you are, what you do, and go from there.

Jessica: Yeah, well hello, everyone. Thank you. I feel honored that you guys are listening in and I'm just going to start with an intention for our time together. My intention is that by the end of this time, everyone feels confident to try something new, to be able to try tapping. Because it really is easy. It's not intimidating at all. It's incredibly forgiving. So, it's something that you can experiment and just notice for yourself, you don't need me to tell you it works, but give yourself, promise yourself that you'll give yourself and experience so you can have some relief. Which I think is what we're all looking for here, is just some relief when it comes to just the fires of our daily lives.

And whether you're in the middle of grief or if you're in a different time in your life, we all have moments that we need to self-soothe and help ourselves feel better. So, I am passionate about tapping because I have been a chronic overthinker since I was a child. I think, think, think. I try to think my way into problems and out of problems.

And someone who's naturally in their head often, their body takes a toll because these stressful thoughts aren't just in our head. When we're feeling stressed, we feel that tightness in our chest, we feel that tension in our shoulders and our stomach. And all of a sudden, we have headaches or rapid weight gain or trouble focusing.

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So, I learnt tapping really out of a necessity, coming into it as a complete skeptic. The very first time I was introduced to tapping was by my brother. And I was going through a really difficult time and I had been struggling with a cold for quite a while. It was just some winters you get that cold that you just can't beat. You know, it's been two weeks, it's lingering, it's not going away.

And he said, "Well listen, I know this is weird but there is a stress relief technique where you tap on acupuncture points to feel better. Why don't we try it and see if you feel better and if your body feels better?" He is my older brother. I have, my entire life, been the victim of many practical jokes and so when he had me use my fingers to start to tap on these points, I did look a bit ridiculous and I looked at him, like, "Wait, is this one of those practical jokes again?" He's like, "No, no just stick with it."

And I started tapping and the real principle of tapping is to actually get clear on the thought that's creating the physical anxiety. So, it's really the opposite of just positive thinking. It's saying, "Okay, there is a thought that's creating a physical response in my body. Let me get clear on that thought that's telling my body that something's wrong, you're not safe." And start to stimulate these points.

As you tap on these points, which help you relax, you're sending this calming signal to your brain because, once your body is relaxed, your brain is saying, "Even though I have this thought, I'm safe." And when we can feel centered in our body, that's when we're in control and not the thought. And that's when it's easier to be more resourceful, creative, you can think differently.

The challenge is, we're in the middle of a panic and we're just trying to talk ourselves out of it and it just feels – we literally don't have the resources in

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our brains. We're not activating the parts of our brain that help us problem-solve when we're feeling that panic.

So, I was going through a difficult time and I'm tapping and I'm talking about how I just tried so much – I felt very lost at the moment and I felt like I was reading all the self-help books and I feel like I was doing everything quote unquote right. And I just wasn't getting the answers and things weren't happening and I was frustrated.

And as I started to tap, a lot of emotions came up. I began to cry. And then I felt this relief in my chest. It was a physical sensation. We carry stress so often. We become so used to it that sometimes we don't even realize the burden it has on our body until we have a moment to relax. And then we go, "Wow, was a stressed before."

And I took a deep breath in and my sinuses had cleared up, my body felt better. The very next day, the cold was gone. And it showed me that this cold that was lasting for so long, research shows, it's clear, any doctor will tell you, stress impacts a patient.

So, if you're trying to recover something physically and you are under such a burden of stress, your body can't do what it's meant to do, which is to recover. So, some of the skepticism around tapping is people say, "Well, you can tap on a headache but you can also tap on grief. How is it that people are using it on so many things?"

Tapping works on stress. There's stress and anxiety around grief. There's stress and anxiety around finances, headaches can result from stress and anxiety. So, you're really working on the stress response when it comes to tapping on these acupressure points.

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Krista: Right, right, right. Yeah, and I find not always, but most of my listeners, they've got a lot going on. They've got a lot going on emotionally. Many of them are now solo parenting young children. There's just a lot happening. And it's not always easy to have even 20 minutes to yourself.

So, what I love about tapping is it's this way that we can self-soothe. We can process through all of this intense yuck no matter what it is with something that's so easy that anybody can do. But you're right, it does look a little weird. It is a little strange. The first time I see it, I always tell people, "Just go with it. It looks a little strange but it's okay. Just go with it." So, what got you so passionate about it? Was it that one experience that...?

Jessica: No, I was a slow learner. I had that experience and then I forgot about it for like six months. You know, it happens. We have a big breakthrough, something works, and then life gets busy and we keep doing what we're accustomed to. And it wasn't until months later that I was going through a breakup and I remember being in bed and just crying so uncontrollably and thinking, will I ever stop?

It's that thing of I just don't know when this is going to end. And I didn't remember tapping perfectly. I remembered maybe half of the points and I just used the points that I remembered to tap and one of the things that you say with tapping – because tapping is this really, it's the acupressure points, but it's also this combination of psychology which is this understanding that our emotions are valid.

We're starting to realize that by trying to push ourselves to feel differently or ignore feelings, it actually makes them stronger. There's something incredibly powerful to say I accept how I feel. This is how I feel. And so, I began to tap saying, even though my heart is shattered, I accept how I feel.

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I accept these feelings. I accept myself, bringing myself to acceptance and tapping on these points.

And I felt such a shift. And what amazed me was that I hadn't done it perfectly. I only remembered half of the points. And that made me go, "Whoa I have to look into this."

At the same time, my older brother Nick was having similar experiences. He became passionate about it to the point where people would say don't tell Nick anything's wrong because he's going to tell you to tap on it and he's going to tap with you on it. So, he started getting really passionate as well.

And then we joined forces, this is back in 2009, and we made a documentary film about this where we followed 10 real people who were struggling with different challenges and we shared their progress and then we showed them six months later. It started with the film and the, from there, we started doing online programs.

And really, in the beginning, we were just talking to other experts before we became the experts. We've been doing this for 13 years, but it really started with us going, "Who are these other psychologists, these other experts that are incorporating tapping into their practice?"

Like you, Krista, before you started recording you said, "Oh, I tell all my clients that they need to tap." And we found that happening all over the place, that people were just bringing it into whatever practice they already had. And that's how it started, just by learning more, connecting with more people. And it's been about 14 years now.

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Krista: Wow. Yeah, and it's interesting because I'm thinking back, 2009, trying to remember how I first came across tapping. I feel like it was maybe Jack Canfield's work, sometime around then.

Jessica: Yeah, well if you remember back then, I mean, this is a long time ago, but do you remember the movie The Secret?

Krista: Oh yeah, absolutely.

Jessica: Right, so The Secret came out maybe a year before, or around that timeframe. And it was, you know, this movie broke all records for DVD sales. And this is still back in the day that we all had DVD players. And as I started to learn about these experts that were featured in this film, a lot of them were talking about tapping and they were talking about how it's not just about positive thinking. You have to honor how you're feeling before you can move to something more positive.

And so, because we were inspired by that success, we made our film. We had zero experience. We put a ton of money on credit cards. My brother was living in a tiny apartment over someone's house. And I remember just opening the boxes going, "This is a light, okay." At least we had YouTube at the time, to look at stuff. But that's really how it started. We just figured it out.

And when we started to ask these other experts who were in The Secret if we could interview them, they were so supportive because they wanted to get tapping out in this way. And so, we really were a bunch of kids, you know, trying to figure out how to make a movie. And we had an incredible amount of support because of the topic.

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Krista: Well, thank goodness you followed that.

Jessica: Yeah. And I mean, part of it is, as corny as it sounds, is the tapping. Because any time you start something, we had all odds against us. There was really nothing on paper that would make anyone want to invest in us, which is why we were putting money on credit cards and getting our own debt. But because we could tap every time that we were scared, it's like we became resourceful.

And there were a lot of blocks and challenges along the way. And what I just realized again and again is you can't stress your way to a solution. And that's what we do. Like, if life is tough, our reaction is, "I need the stress. I need this adrenaline. This is an appropriate way to respond." It is an appropriate reaction, but it is important to pause and say, "Can I navigate through this difficult moment where it feels like all odds are stacked against me from this place of stress? Or what happens when I quiet my mind?" And you start to be more resourceful. That's basically it, that you just become innovative from that place of peace.

Krista: Yeah, you really cannot think clearly, when the emotion is that high. And I notice, for a lot of women who are in grief, because we're never really taught any skills about how to process or allow emotion, we really do go through it. We're either white knuckling it and really resisting it, or we're using behaviors to cover it up.

And I know how we got there, because nobody was taught tapping when they were in elementary school, as I hope that they someday will be. And there are other ways to do it. I'm not saying tapping is the only way. But we can let a feeling flow through us. And even though it is counter-intuitive, as you said earlier, to allow the negative, we do want to honor it because when we honor it, that is what's true for us in that moment. And that's what

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I love about it, just lowering the intensity of that negative emotion by letting it be there.

And sometimes, I also like that it's so customizable. Because once you learn kind of the basic formula, you're really to adapt and do what works for you and sometimes different ways of setting it up resonate with some people more than others and you can just really customize it. I love that.

Jessica: I want to mention just a thought from what you're saying. I think the challenge with grief specifically is this fear of, "Will I ever be able to stand up again? Like, if I really let myself feel this grief, will I ever be able to go on?" And a lot of us have to go on for our children or for other people. And so, there is this fear of really allowing ourselves to have a feeling because of this fear of the inability to recover.

I think what's really powerful about tapping is because you're calming your body, you can ease yourself into a feeling. And a lot of it is realizing that we don't have to fear the feelings. It's often the fear of the feeling that's worse than the actual experience of the feeling. It is powerful to give ourselves those moments to cry.

A lot of people say, "I started tapping and I started crying. Am I doing something wrong?" And I said, "Crying is just one of the best releases of your body." Tears are one of the most toxic things that come out of your body. You're literally letting go of things that you don't need. You're having a wonderful release. And tapping just means that you can do that in a gentler way, where you feel like you're more in your body and you're more in control.

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Krista: Yeah, and sometimes I do hear things like, “Well, if I allow myself to feel how I’m feeling then I’m going to fall into this kind of black hole and I’ll never be able to come out. Or I don’t have time, my kids need me. I don’t have time to feel my feelings because I need to be strong for my kids.” And we don’t really recognize that we’re not really very able to support our children if we aren’t supporting ourselves. But how do we make that happen? It’s not just in a therapist’s office.

Jessica: Right, and it’s not easy for anyone. I think it’s important to say that too is sometimes we think, “Oh, am I doing it wrong or should I be doing more?” And we can be really hard on ourselves when we’re navigating an incredibly difficult situation.

So, even just giving ourselves five minutes to tap or doing a 10-minute tapping meditation, if all it does is help you feel calm and open yourself to a bit more self-compassion, you can navigate it. Because it’s hard. You know, thinking about personal development and self-help in the midst of grief, it’s just so important to give yourself some permission to not do it perfectly.

Krista: Yeah, where do you think it’s served you most in your life.

Jessica: Wow, that’s a great question. I think definitely with my relationship with my body. I think with my relationship with my body was really just a metaphor for my relationship with myself. I really felt like I could hate myself happy and criticize myself thin.

I thought that being mean to myself meant that I had a higher standard and that I’d be able to be better. I definitely was the people pleaser and, you

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know, wanted to do the best I could all the time. And I led to just an immense amount of self-criticism. And with that, it showed up in my body.

My weight would fluctuate just drastically; drastically. And even if I was a thinner size, it felt like I was holding my breath. And then I'd gain the weight all again. I had a hard time with binge eating, you know. I'd buy a ton of healthy foods and I'd open a box of granolas and I'd eat the entire box in a sitting because I just needed a way to feel grounded and centered in my body, and food is a way.

If you're feeling like you're very in your head and you're feeling out of control, food can be a very grounding sensation. It just doesn't last for very long, right? It's like a drug. It's a quick drug that gives you a high before you crash.

And so, I was using tapping for a lot of things, but I wouldn't tap on my relationship with my body because I was just so brainwashed to believe that it was just about the next diet, that it really was about willpower, that I would somehow figure it out and have enough willpower someday.

And so, I needed to go through a lot of pain before I thought, "Wow, I am doing the same thing over and over again since I was 13 years old and expecting a different result. Like, I am just trying to hate myself thin." And when I started to look at that relationship and do the tapping on some of the experiences that I had in childhood about whether I was being criticized for my weight or what someone said, that's when things began to shift.

And I had a shift in my body. I did lose weight. But it became like a side effect that didn't matter because I got to the point where, if I gained 30 pounds, I'm still going to be okay with myself. If I lose weight, I'm still going

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to be okay with myself. My weight doesn't define my happiness or my self-worth.

And coming to that place did lead to a healthier body and to feeling stronger and more comfortable in my own skin. But that was my big journey. And tapping was a big part of that. And I actually wrote a book called *The Tapping Solution for Weight Loss and Body Confidence*...

Krista: I've got a copy right here in my hand.

Jessica: Yeah, and let me tell you, even now, I still can't believe I wrote a book that had the words weight loss in it. I had to call it that because I would not have picked up a book about body confidence because I just wanted weight loss. So, for me, people come in for the weight loss but they stay and have a deeper experience. And weight loss is not my passion by any means. I don't care about anyone's weight or my weight. It's a number on a scale. But I do feel like, in this society, it begins to represent our relationship with ourselves and that's where tapping really helped me.

Krista: Yeah, the subtitle of your book, "A woman's guide to stressing less, weighing less, and loving more." Yeah, you're right. The weighing less is the least relevant part of that. But we all need to stress less. And what a world it would be if we all loved more.

Jessica: Exactly.

Krista: So then, I'd love to hear, because I bet you have some amazing and really powerful stories about how you've seen tapping impact other people and their lives. So, what comes to mind when you think about some of the more powerful things people have used tapping for?

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Jessica: Yeah, there's so many stories. But since we were talking about grief, the one I wanted to share was about a mother, Scarlett Lewis, who lost her son Jesse in the Sandy Hook school shooting. I live in Sandy Hook. So do my two brothers. We didn't know Scarlett at the time of the shooting. But someone connected us. And she had heard about tapping. She had done it a few times.

And my brother went to her house maybe two days after the shooting and tapped with her and her father and her living son. And Scarlett has been so passionate since that day to share tapping and what she shares, which I find so interesting and important is that grief is not this single one-layered emotion.

When you're dealing with a tragedy, there's so many different elements that create stress and anxiety. And for her, it was the sound of helicopters. She remembered that when the tragedy happened, there were so many news helicopters, news vans, the sound of her phone ringing, her home phone ringing, that sound before she picked up the phone.

And so, all of these little things were triggering her throughout the day, besides the grief, was just the constant panic and overwhelm and she was really in a state of shock. And my brother Nick worked with her and really tapped on those different elements that were triggering her. And another big component was anger. She had, for obvious reasons, this immense amount of anger.

And she said that once she was able to tap on the anger, it made room for her grief. And that she needed to be with her grief, that her grief was something that she needed to experience and she was almost avoiding the grief by holding onto the anger.

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And by feeling safe to let go of that anger with tapping, she really started her healing process. And sometimes I try to avoid the word healing because I don't think you ever completely heal from losing a spouse or losing a child. You know, there's always a part of you that will ache for that person and there will always be a part of you that wished it was different.

It opened her up to taking back her life. And she now has a wonderful organization called Choose Love. Because she also found, a few days after the tragedy, she had finally gone home to pick up clothes for her son's funeral. She had not been home.

And she walked into her house, she saw that her son, who was in second grade, phonetically wrote, "Nurturing, healing, love," on a chalkboard. Nurturing, healing, love, a second grader, phonetically on this chalkboard. And she began to realize that that is one of the principles of compassion in almost every culture. And it started her on this amazing journey and she now has an organization which teaches kids about emotional tools. And tapping is a part of it.

So, tapping is in thousands of schools because of her. She brought tapping into her curriculum and she does really amazing work. I love her story so much because it really highlights that we're not going to say "Hey, tap on grief. Let's do a tapping meditation on grief."

But let's look at the other things that might be coming up and looking at this in a different way because there's nothing wrong with grief. And I think it's really important to know that grief is an important experience to have. You want to be able to grieve from a place where you're feeling safe. And that's the difference than feeling like you have to have the anger or the busyness to avoid it.

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Krista: Yeah, and sometimes your body doesn't know that you are safe when you are. That's what happened for me a lot, where I would go back in my mind because of some sort of stimulus in the environment that wasn't a helicopter noise for me, but it was the sight of a car on the road with a flat tire, or watching someone change a flat tire as I drove by, or ambulances or anything to do with an accident, CPR scenes in the middle of a movie where, even though I knew intellectually I was safe, my body went right back to a time when I wasn't safe. And so, to be able to use tapping to remind my nervous system that I was safe.

I don't know – I remember the very first trigger that I had. I was driving and I drove under a bridge. And just as I drove under a bridge, a large semi-truck drove over the top of the bridge. And I think maybe it must have hit like a dip in the road. But it made a crashing noise and all of a sudden, as I was driving my car, I was back at the accident.

And I don't think your app was out then. This was a while ago. But thank goodness I had tapping in my back pocket because I pulled my car over and it was the first thing that I thought to do, was just to tap. And I'm so grateful for that because I think a lot of people are really suffering with perpetual triggers like that that they just can't ever get on top of.

Jessica: Yeah, and sometimes, it's your body reacting and not your mind. And so, it's hard to talk your way out of a physical sensation.

Krista: Yeah, it's impossible. Your heart is racing all of a sudden and yeah, that was my experience. So good. So, you've done a lot of work with people in really, you know, arguably traumatic situations.

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Jessica: Yeah, not intentionally in the sense of we never set out to do that. Obviously Sandy Hook happened in our hometown, so we set up the Tapping Solution Foundation and we, to this day, continue to provide – there are therapists who we trained in tapping who now use it.

It's important that we make a distinction. Sometimes, if you're dealing with something that's really traumatic, it is important to seek professional help. And there are a lot of people who have that background who incorporate tapping. And so, we've been really supportive to kind of send people that way. And at the same time, it's three o'clock in the morning, you don't have your therapist and you need something to self-soothe.

And so, we teach people to support themselves in that way, so they learn how to use it. We began to start working with people with PTSD mostly because a lot of young veterans Afghan, Iraqi veterans were coming back and they were coming to us saying, "Oh my gosh, tapping really helps. I went to Walmart and I saw all these people and I suddenly got triggered and I started just tapping in the moment and I felt better."

So, we started to get those stories simply because people who were going through an experience like PTSD were trying tapping and then coming back to us and sharing how it helped. And so, since we started our journey 10 years ago, it's been approved by the VA, so now therapists in the VA can use it, which is amazing. And there's a lot more research about the effectiveness.

And when I started so many years ago, over a decade ago, we didn't really have a way to explain what was happening. At that point, it was still talking more about the Meridian system and the energy system. But since then, there's been a lot more research about what is happening in the brain and also tracking what happens in your body when you tap.

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There was a great study in Bond University in Australia where they took a group of people who used tapping. They took a group of people and they split them up. One group did tapping. Another group read magazines. They were the placebo. And then the other ones read about stress relief. So, read about strategies and ways to feel better.

And they tested for cortisol. Cortisol is often known as our stress hormone. You can test it in your saliva. And they learned that those who read about stress relief, read about how to better take care of themselves, their cortisol did go down by 19%. The control group, it actually went up by 2%, which I find interesting because they were reading magazines. I think it just shows that you can't really anything these days without feeling a little stressed. They were probably reading some news.

But the tapping group went down 43% in an hour. 43% compared to 19%. So, we're seeing that it dramatically reduces cortisol levels in your body. So, your body is having a response of relaxation and letting go of this, reducing that cortisol level.

Krista: Yeah, which I think we all need, whether we're going through a loss experience or not, we just all need that regularly. So, then how did you start the Taping Solution app and tell me that story?

Jessica: Yeah, we wrote books first. Nick and I both had two successful books that were New York Times Bestsellers and it was an amazing adventure. But what we kept hearing was people telling us, "I did this tapping once and I had this breakthrough and I never used it again. They had that one experience, someone tapped with them or they were following along to an audio and then they just never used it again.

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And so, we thought it was almost out of that necessity. People don't need to read about tapping. It's like reading about tapping is not the same as tapping, the same way reading about meditation is not the same as meditating. We have to help people actually have an experience, instead of just teaching them about how to have that experience.

And so we started to create these - we coined the phrase tapping meditation. So ours right there. Tapping, you could often work with a practitioner or a therapist who incorporates tapping. And they'll guide you through what to tap on, or if you're comfortable with the technique, you do it yourself.

You start out by talking about how you feel, you feel better, you can move on to something more positive. You can get comfortable with the technique yourself. But sometimes when we are so stressed, like we talked about earlier, you don't access the parts of your brain that are resourceful. So when we need tapping the most is usually when we don't do it.

And we all know this, whether it's tapping or meditating or exercising, when we are a lot of stress, we don't do the things that would help us because our brain is not in the position to think clearly. Having an app makes it so easy because all you have to do is press play.

And when it comes to emotions like anxiety and anger and frustration, as humans, we might have different circumstances, but the emotions tend to be very similar. Whether you're living in Japan or France or the United States, getting heartbroken is feeling heartbroken. And so even though it may be more powerful to be specific tapping on your own, being able to keep it general and calling it a tapping meditation because you're listening to relaxing music and you're following along means you're actually doing it. It makes it more accessible.

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The other thing we've realized is through some of the research studies, the key is the tapping. And that was something that they really had to research. Is it the tapping or is it saying I accept how I feel, or is it these words? But what makes the biggest difference is the actual tapping. So even if the words aren't perfect, if you're able to tap, you're calming your nervous system, you're calming your body.

And then we were just inspired and we kind of took the same attitude as the movie. I don't know how to make an app, but let's figure it out. And we just figured it out and we created the app and the last thing I want to mention is that with tapping, you measure before and after always.

You say on a scale of zero to 10, how intense is your feeling? You tap, you check in again. This is so that you can monitor your own progress. You can feel encouraged when you go from an eight to a six, and you think, alright, let me tap a little more. So we put that in the app.

Without realizing at the time, that it would give us this incredible data set. So for example, 500,000 people have played the releasing anxiety tapping meditation. And the average decrease is 41% in under 10 minutes. It's nine minutes something.

Krista: That's amazing.

Jessica: We're able to see that people can cut their anxiety almost by half. And even just going from a 10 to a five of anxiety, you're thinking differently, you're breathing differently, and you can definitely keep tapping. But it's such a major shift.

Krista: And when did the app come out?

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Jessica: It came out March 25th 2018. I'm horrible with dates. I can't remember anyone's birthday. The only reason I remember that is because I was in labor and I was sure that my baby and the app was going to be born on the same day, but I had a 36-hour labor so the baby didn't come until the next day. So it's been two years. It's easy to remember, same age as my son Enzo, who turned two this last October.

Krista: Well, I don't know how long I've had it, but it's at least, I don't know, maybe a year and a half maybe. But just watching how much you keep adding to it, it started seemingly kind of small and now there's so many different exercises inside. How many do you have?

Jessica: I think it's around 300 tapping meditations and what's exciting is we're starting to bring in other people. So we just teamed up with Dr. Damon Silas, who's a psychotherapist who specializes in anxiety and grief actually. And we did a five-part series around depression. Depression support.

So whether you're diagnosed with depression or you just feel like you're in a really low place, it's a really gentle five days to help lift the fog of depression and having him as a psychotherapist who works with so many clients with depression, his insights with the tapping were phenomenal. And he created a really wonderful series and it's nice to be able to follow along for five days and also gain that consistency.

Krista: Right. And you can also - what I love is I get my little nudge in the app. I set my reminder so it just kind of gives me this little floating - here's your little nudge to tap at 6:45 in the morning. I love that. And you've added some content for children lately.

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Jessica: Yeah, so we have tapping meditations for children. The way that you tap with children, it depends by age. The way you'll tap with a five-year-old is obviously different than a 13-year-old. So in the app, it's split by age. And when it comes to tapping with kids, especially younger kids, the nice thing about teenagers is that they love their phones.

So, so many parents tell me my kid won't tap with me but they'll tap with the app because it's on their phone. But for younger kids, oftentimes they have trouble articulating how they feel because they do feel so much with their body. And that's why you'll get the temper tantrums and the punching and the aggression.

It's because we're trying to express how we feel with our body because we're having trouble to articulate how we feel. And so to be able to have the tapping where they're using their body and they're relaxing their body is so powerful and it's interesting. Kids don't need a lot of convincing.

You don't need to tell them the research. I think it's harder for them to kind of sit still and try to meditate, though I love meditation. I think the physical part of actively tapping is easier for them to stick with. And the language changes a little bit because as a kid, saying I accept how I feel might not land. But saying even though I'm feeling bad about this test, I'm still a good kid, that is saying even though I have this feeling, I'm still a good kid, it really helps them feel like they have a safe space for their feelings.

Krista: So good. So good. So I know it probably sounds to listeners like I'm getting paid for this, but I really am just so delighted by this app and by the tool in general. And I just want a bunch of people to use it. Now, if you ever have an affiliate program, I'd probably set myself up for it.

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But really, it's just such a phenomenal tool and I just can't say enough about it. Even it would seem like some of the exercises that may be, I don't know, don't seem that interesting, there's one that you have that's like, peace, love, and light. That's one of my favorites.

I'll use that one on a day where I'm not feeling any particular ick to speak of, but wow, I feel so much lighter and better and sometimes tears will just stream down my face. I have no idea why or what's there that needs to be released, but I'm so grateful to have the way to release it and your voice is just so nice.

Jessica: Thank you.

Krista: Is there anything we didn't cover that you just really wish people would know?

Jessica: I would say nothing specific. Just give it a try. Also, we are talking about the app a lot. The app is a free download and there's over 30 free tapping meditations so you don't have to spend any money to give this a try. And there are people who just stick with the free version.

And as much as I should be selling the upgrade, the truth is I'm just thrilled with people tapping, especially right now with everything that's going on. Just use the free resources, start there. If you are a teacher or you're a first responder, we give free app memberships as just a way to say thank you during this incredibly difficult time. So my biggest piece of advice is just try it. Just give it a try because it doesn't cost anything and the worst that's going to happen is nothing.

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Krista: Right. I tell all my clients they have to give it - it's the instructions they get as soon as they're in my program. Go download The Tapping Solution app. At least the free version, you have to have it. And I think I told you before but I'm pursuing an EFT certification because I believe in it so much and so working with my clients on some more customizable stuff. But I just don't think it has to be complicated to be so useful.

Jessica: Yeah.

Krista: So if people want to find you, follow you, learn more about you, where should they go?

Jessica: Well, our main website is thetappingsolution.com. If you want to read more about the science and research or just more about tapping in general, you can go there. If you want to follow me and sometimes see cute pictures of a two-year-old, you can find me on Instagram. That's @jessicaortner. And also Facebook, Jessica Ortner.

Krista: Love it. Jessica, thank you so much for being on the podcast but for more than that, for just doing what you do. And now that I hear a little bit more about your story, for really putting so much time and effort and love and money you didn't have into something you were passionate about because I bet it's going to make a bigger difference than probably you'll ever be able to measure.

Jessica: Thank you Krista. I really appreciate you having me.

Krista: Yeah, thank you so much.

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If you like what you've been hearing on this podcast and want to create a future you can truly get excited about, even after the loss of your spouse, I invite you to join my Mom Goes On coaching program. It's small group coaching just for widowed moms like you where I'll help you figure out what's holding you back and give you the tools and support you need so you can move forward with confidence.

Please don't settle for a new normal that's less than what you deserve. Go to coachingwithkrista.com and click Work With Me for details and next steps. I can't wait to meet you.