

Dream To Freedom *Protocol*

Robert J Hoss M.S., Lynne M Hoss, M.A., CHEP

The healing process often begins with addressing the symptoms of what might be a deeper issue and peeling away at emotional layers until the core issue surfaces. By integrating the Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) with dreamwork, it is possible to begin the energy healing at a deeper level. Dreams focus on unresolved emotional events of the day as related to deeper emotional conflicts which may lie within the psyche. Proper dreamwork can quickly bring to consciousness an issue that a person is dealing with on an unconscious level as well as provide cues to the natural restoral process taking place. On the other hand, dreamwork alone - in the absence of other therapies - is not necessarily designed to reduce the emotional stress, or the barriers to healing, as disturbing memories surface. EFT in turn complements dreamwork by providing a method for reducing the stress and emotional barriers to healing, once an issue is identified. Integrating the two disciplines into a therapeutic protocol, provides a healing method that is useful in a therapeutic setting or for self-help. We call this protocol, the Dream to Freedom™ protocol (DTF). DTF has been shown to work well with traumatic memories, phobias or unresolved emotional conflicts and anxieties, particularly in cases where it is difficult to identify the underlying cause with dialog alone.

Design of the Protocol

The creation of such a protocol depended on combining a solid, well-established, and fairly rapid dreamworking approach, designed for revealing underlying emotional issues, with a solid, well established and fairly rapid EFT technique which reduces anxiety, stress and the fear response. The combination of Gestalt role-play and EFT (better known as “tapping”) was chosen. There are three parts to the DTF protocol and worksheet, the details of which can be found in the Dream To Freedom handbook: 1) Part #1 explores the dream using a Gestalt-based approach for discovering the unconscious emotional issues the dream is dealing with; 2) in Part #2, we apply EFT in order to reduce the anxiety surrounding the issue which stands in the way of progress; 3) in Part #3, after the emotional barriers are reduced, the dream is explored for cues as to how the unconscious was attempting to resolve the problem, as a natural aid in defining how best to progress beyond the situation.

Part #1 – Dreamwork/Issue Identification:

Ever since Freud revealed dreams to be the “royal road to the unconscious” many psychologists have augmented their therapies by exploring their client’s dreams in some fashion to understand the inner emotional issues that they are struggling with. Carl Jung, the founder of Analytical Psychology, was one of the first to recognize that “dreams reveal the unconscious aspect of a conscious event” whereby the unconscious meaning (the deeper emotional impact of an event) is expressed as a ‘symbol’ or picture language. Most recently, researcher Ernest Hartmann stated that dreams “picture the emotional state of the dreamer.” Fritz Perls, founder of Gestalt Therapy, developed a method of role-play (giving your dream a ‘voice’) for revealing those emotions. We chose this approach because of its rapid targeting of core emotional issues that the dream is dealing with. We wanted a session to be devoted to the healing process and not be overburdened with the lengthy interpretation of a dream or cognitive exploration which might result only in surface associations. We designed a simple 6 statement scripted role-play to guide the dreamer through the process. Understanding the deeper emotional issues involved, also increasing the effectiveness of EFT in reducing the stress from those emotional memories and reactions.

Part #2 – EFT (“tapping”) for Stress Reduction:

A solid, well established and fairly rapid therapeutic technique was also required, one which works directly on the limbic system to reduce anxiety, stress and the fear response. EFT provides such a tool, due to its simplicity and the wealth of efficacy research which has demonstrated its effectiveness, particularly for anxiety-based symptoms, in a large number of randomized control trials and clinical outcome studies. EFT works by bringing the disturbing emotional memory to mind, while stimulating (tapping on) acupuncture points (herein called acupressure points) for the purpose of providing a calming sensation in the presence of the memory, thus altering and re-consolidating the emotional associations and reaction to that memory. The mechanisms are still being researched; however, it is thought that “tapping” sends calming chemicals to the limbic region of the brain so as to change the memory associations from alarm to calm or neutral. The effect of acupuncture point needle stimulation is supported by MRI studies (along with at least one MRI study with EFT acupressure “tapping” stimulation) which show a direct effect on the limbic system when these points are stimulated. It complements dreamwork by providing a method for reducing stress from emotional memories surfaced by the dream thus reducing the emotional barriers to healing.

Part #3 – Closure and Action:

Once the emotional barriers are reduced, it is an opportune time to return to the dream for possible clues to help the dreamer progress beyond the situation. There is a lot of resolution activity taking place in dreams which can help guide this process. Jung stated that the general function of dreams is to “restore psychological balance by producing dream material that re-establishes psychic equilibrium” and that dreams have a “transcendent function” which operates by “compensating” or correcting for misconceptions that stand in our way, such that we can transition from one state of mind to another. Recent neurological studies during REM are also supportive of the emotional dampening and restorative activity of dreaming. By observing the introduction of alternative scenarios or “counterfactuals” (which Jung called “compensating material”) and the resultant storylines that seem to lead toward a resolution (emotional memory re-consolidation), we gain bits of insight as to the approach our unconscious mind is taking in resolving a problem. Comparing the dream action as an analogy to the dreamer’s waking life situation, might provide some natural clues as to how a dreamer might resolve the situation in waking life. Because these clues may not always be obvious, we augment this phase by engaging the subconscious in an Active Imagination approach for completing the dream. Finally, before applying the insight, testing it to make sure it is healthy, appropriate and doesn’t leave the dreamer stuck again.

The Dream to Freedom Protocol

Part #1 - Dreamwork Discovery (Problem Identification)

Step #1 – Dream Report: re-enter the dream and describe it as if you are re-experiencing it, in the first-person present tense.

Step #2 – Waking Life Situation: describe any emotionally important or impacting situations (positive or negative) in your life around the time of the dream.

Step #3 – Dream to Waking Life Analogies: note any obvious metaphors in your dream narrative (underline them) and describe any waking life situations or feelings that they bring to mind.

Step #4 – Scripted role-play: give the dream a “voice” (derived from Gestalt role-play)

Step 4a – Pick a Dream Image to Explore: re-enter the dream perhaps at the most emotional point and pick something in the dream (a dream image X) that curiously draws your attention - no matter if it is a minor element or a dominant one.

Step 4b – Role-Play: close your eyes and brings that image (X) to your mind’s eye. Take a few deep breaths bringing it closer on each, until you merge with it; or at least can imagine how X might answer the questions below. Stay in the first-person present tense as X might answer:

1. What are you? Describe yourself and how you feel in that role. “I am ...I feel....” (Note: if X is a known person, describe their personality)
2. As X what is your purpose or function? “*My purpose is ...*”
3. What do you like most about being X? “*What I like most is*”
4. What do you dislike, about being X ? “*What I dislike is....*”
5. As X what do you fear the most; worst think that can happen? “*What I fear most is....*”
6. As X what do you desire the most? “*What I desire most is....*”

Step 4c – Relate to Waking Life: Read or play back each response but switch your perspective and listen to them as if it is YOU saying these things about a recent situation or feeling in YOUR life. Note and describe any “connections” and define those feelings in your own words. In particular look at the ‘I like..’ and ‘I dislike...’ and ‘I fear’ and ‘I desire’ statement pairs. Do they sound like an emotional conflict you are struggling with?

Step #5 – Exploring Color (Optional) Research in the field of color psychology has found a relatively common set of unconscious human physiological and emotional responses, specific to various colors which research (Hoss, 2010, *IJoDR*) suggests remain the same in the dream state. A Color Questionnaire (at the end) includes statements representative of those researched responses. They are NOT the meaning of color but rather to be treated as a questionnaire to trigger the dreamer’s own waking life associations with those statements.

Step 5a Color: What color(s) was the image you chose and/or what color(s) stood out in the dream?

Step 5b Associations: Pick the closest color(s) in the Color Questionnaire and read each statement for that color. Ask: which statement(s) most remind you of a recent feeling or situation? Describe the situation. Note: when there is a color pair, consider whether the 2 colors relate to 2 conflicting emotions. Read each to the dreamer and ask whether the ones the dreamer “connects” with most for each color sounds like an emotional conflict going on at the time.

Step #6 – Most Emotionally Charged Statement: Select the role-play statement in step #4, or statement from the color work in step #5, that you feel is most emotionally charged or relates to the most stressful memory. Summarize the situation and if necessary, rephrase the statement to better relate to it.

Part #2 - “Tapping” for Stress Reduction

Step #7 – Specific Incident: At this point we are trying to recover the moment that the stress was encoded. We need to go a level deeper, so think about the feelings surrounding the situation in step #5 above, recall a specific incident when you felt that way and visualize the scene.

Initial Stress Rating (SUDS): rate the level of stress from 0-10 as you picture scene.

Step #8 – Affirmation: You are now going to create two phrases to be used to keep the emotional scene in mind and set intention, while tapping: 1) an Affirmation of your intent, used to “set up” the procedure and 2) a shorter Reminder Phrase of the problem to use while tapping.

Step 8a Affirmation: the affirmation pairs the negative statement of the problem with a positive intention as follows – “even though I have this problem or feel this way (*define the problem*) - or I chose to, or I know I can (*add a positive intention*).” You would derive the negative from the feelings in step #7 and the positive intention perhaps by taking a clue from the positive “I like” or “desire” statements from the dreamwork step #4.

Step 8b Reminder Phrase: this is just a shortened phrase which uses a few words from the negative part of the setup phrase (“problem statement” or “I feel ...”) to keep the memory in mind while tapping (you tap on the negative to provide a calming sensation to the negative memory).

Step # 9 – Initial Tapping Round: The DTF protocol is not dependent on a specific tapping protocol however the standard we use is derived from ‘Clinical EFT’ (*The EFT Mini-Manual* (2nd ed). Church, 2012). See figures 1 and 2 below for tapping points.

Step 9a – Preparation or “Setup” Exercise: tap on the SI-3 meridian point (known as the “karate chop” point) while saying the full Affirmation, three times.

Step 9b – Initial Tapping Sequence: After the “setup” we recommend tapping on eight (8) acupressure points (typically about 7 to 10 times) while keeping the problem in mind by saying the shorter Reminder Phrase. Our standard points include: UB-2, GB-1, ST-2, GV-26, CV-24, KD-27, SP-21 ending with the “karate chop” point SI-3. After two rounds picture the scene again and re-rate the stress level.

Step # 10 – Subsequent Rounds: Assuming the stress level is not at zero, continue the tapping rounds until the stress level is near or at zero.

Step # 11 - Other Aspects: If after any round of tapping the level of stress remained or increased due to another memory, then stop and explore the feelings around that memory. Repeat Steps #7 through #11 with that new memory until the stress level around this aspect is reduced to near or at zero. Then go back to the original problem and check the stress level and if still high continue the tapping on that original memory.

----- REFER TO FIGURES BELOW FOR TAPPING POINTS -----

Part #3 – Closure and Action Protocol

Once the stressful reaction to the memory is reduced you should be able to think more clearly about the situation without reacting. This is an ideal time to return to the dream for guidance in creating an action plan by using any resolution clues the dream might hold, for closure and moving forward.

Step #12 – Dream Guidance: A dream may not only reflect a problem but may often attempt to resolve it in creative ways by interjecting and testing various resolution scenarios, thus providing valuable clues as to how best to move forward. Close your eyes and re-enter the dream and briefly review it until the end. While in the dream try to recall if you experienced any of the following:

Step 12a Did the dream Introduce an Alternative Approach or Viewpoint ?

- **Guidance** – was there a guiding figure or event (advice, action, discovery, written or verbal message)? Define the new direction or insight provided and how it changed your behavior or thinking in the dream.
- **Surprise** - did something unexpected **surprise** you (unexpected twist, action, anomaly, discovery, insight or person or thing acting opposite to their nature)? How did it differ from expectation or provide a different point of view?
- **Known Person** – sometimes a dream will introduce a person you know to picture either how you were acting or more often to illustrate an alternative way of handling the situation – ask how would they manage your waking life situation differently than you have?
- **Decision** - Did your dream-self (or something representing you) make a **new decision, accept** the guidance or **reverse** the prior viewpoint or action. Describe the new decision or viewpoint.

Step 12b Reinforcement? Did the dream seem to reinforce the alternative it was presenting, or the subsequent action of the dream-self, by ending positively or negatively? What specifically happened to bring that about and how might it relate to your waking life actions or views.

Step 12c Life Analogy: How might any of the above actions relate as an analogy to your waking life situation, in terms of guidance, a new perspective, or possible resolution.

Step #13 – Finishing the Dream (optional): If the analogies above are not apparent or if the dream ended negatively or inconclusively you might try Active Imagination; spontaneous imaging that can create a new ending and a new metaphor perhaps analogous to a useful waking life solution.

Step 13a Finish the Dream with a Positive Ending: Re-enter the dream at the end and focus on your feelings and what happened in the dream that brought you to this point. Then without thinking about it, just let the first images that come to mind flow, imagine continuing the dream from that point with a new ending that works out or is positive for you and others in the dream.

Step 13b Life Analogy: How might the new ending provide insight or be analogous to a waking life solution?

Step #14 – Closure: In order to actualize what has been learned, the insight which the dream or new ending presents as metaphor, needs to be converted to a concrete solution.

Step 14a Define the Solution: Based on the insight in steps #13 and/or #14 define a specific solution that will allow you to move ahead in your waking life situation and avoid getting stuck again.

Step 14b Check it Out: Before following any imagined solution, check it out to make sure it is healthy, practical and appropriate, or if it might leave you stuck again.

Step 14c Next Steps: If the solution checks out positively, then define at least one specific next step or step(s) that you can take to bring it about.

Step 14d “Token” Reminder Image: pick an image from the positive dream ending as a reminder of the solution (it helps to recall it if you are confronted with a similar situation in the future)

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Figure 1 Setup - Karate Chop Point with Full Affirmation

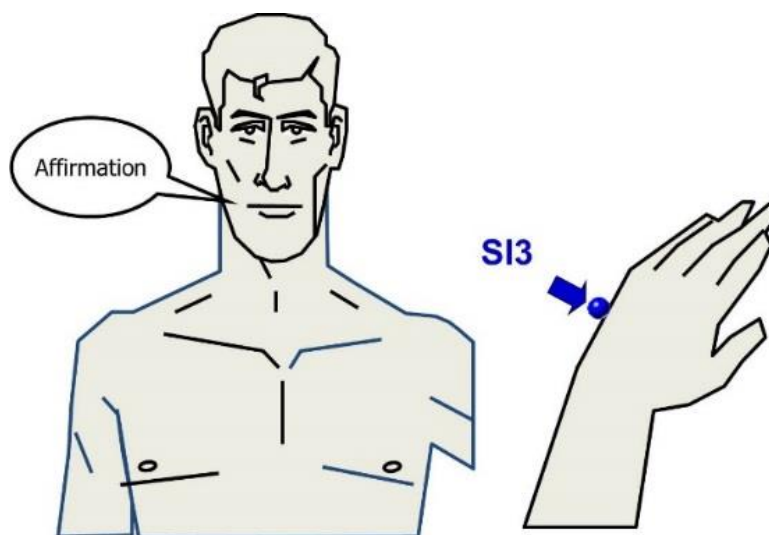
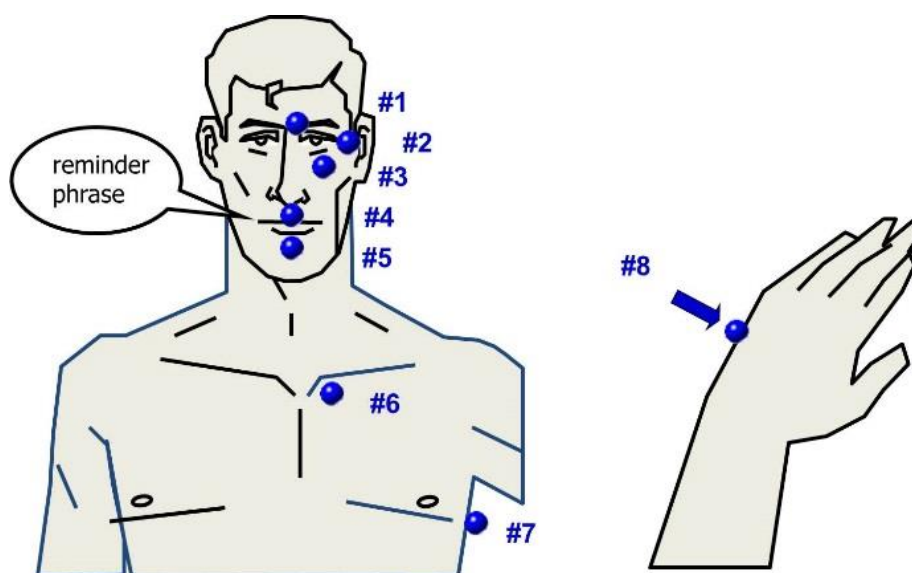


Figure 2 – Tapping Rounds with Short Reminder Phrase



1. **EB or eyebrow point:** at the start of the eyebrow where it joins the bridge of the nose (UB2)
 2. **SE or side of eye:** on the outside edge of the eye socket (GB1)
 3. **UE or under eye:** on the bony ridge of the eye socket under the pupil of the eye (ST2)
 4. **UN or under nose:** under the center of the nose, 1/3 distance between the nose and the upper lip (GV26)
 5. **Chin:** between the lower lip and the chin, in the center (CV24)
 6. **CB or collarbone points:** located in a small depression under each collarbone on either side of the U-shaped groove at the top of the sternum (KD27)
 7. **UA or underarm:** about four inches below the base of each armpit and about halfway between the front and back; for women, this is where a bra strap crosses, for men even with the nipple (SP21)
 8. **KC or Karate Chop point** fleshy outer portion of the hand, upper middle about where the crease is (SI3)
- *Gamut Point (for optional bridging procedure):** back of either hand a half inch toward the wrist from the point between the knuckles and the base of the ring finger and little finger (TH3)

Table 1 - Color Questionnaire

These are NOT the “meaning” of color, they are a listing of common subliminal human emotional responses to color, found in waking studies (brain and autonomic nervous system responses). These associations are observed to be retained in the dream state. Use with step 5 of the worksheet. To explore a dream color **ask which statement for that color triggers your own emotional associations with a situation in your life**. Source: Color Psychology research and literature; the Max Luscher color testing tool; augmented in parts with Jungian theory.

R E D	1) I feel intense, stimulated, motivated. 2) I feel assertive, forceful. 3) I want to live life to its fullest. 4) I want to win, succeed, achieve. 5) I feel sexy, a sexual attraction or urges. 6) I have a driving desire. 7) I need something to make me feel alive again. 8) I am feeling anxious; 9) I am reluctant for fear I may fail; 10) I sense danger; 11) I'm feel intense anger. 12) I need to be more assertive and forceful. 13) I need to get out and enjoy myself. Note: If it appears as blood or inflammation - it could metaphorically or literally picture sickness or injury.
O R N	1) I want to expand my interests and develop new activities. 2) I want a wider sphere of influence. 3) I feel friendly and welcoming. 4) I want more contact with others. 5) I feel enthusiastic, outgoing and adventurous. 6) I am driven by desires and hopes toward the new, undiscovered and satisfying. 7) I feel driven but need to overcome my doubts or fear of failure. 8) I must avoid spreading myself too thin.
Y E L	1) I feel a sense of joy and optimism. 2) I feel alert. 3) I am seeking a solution that will open up new and better possibilities and allow my hopes to be fulfilled. 4) I feel the new direction I am taking will bring happiness in my future. 5) I am hopeful. 6) I need to find a way out of this circumstance or relationship. 7) I need a change. 8) My actions may be compensating for something. 9) I may be acting compulsively.
G R E E N	1) I feel a happy creative energy. 2) I feel more safe or secure. 3) I feel I can proceed and succeed. 4) I feel a healing energy. 5) I need to establish myself, my self-esteem, my independence. 6) I want recognition. 7) I need to increase the certainty of my own value through acknowledgment by others of my achievements or possessions. 8) Hard work and drive will gain me recognition and self-esteem. 9) My opinion must prevail. 10) I must hold on to this view in order to maintain my self-esteem. 11) I want what I am due. 12) I must maintain control. 13) Things must not change. 14) I feel like withdrawing into my own center. 15) I am seeking a way to increase my sense of security. 16) I am seeking healing or better health.
B L U E	1) I feel tranquil, peaceful and content. 2) I feel a sense of harmony. 3) I feel a meditative awareness or unity. 4) I feel a sense of belonging. 5) I need to feel I belong. 6) I need rest, peace or a chance to recuperate. 7) I need a relationship free from contention in which I can trust and be trusted. 8) I need a peaceful state of harmony offering contentment and a sense of belonging.
V I O	1) I like to win others over with my charm. 2) I feel an identification, an almost "mystic" union with someone or something. 3) I have a deep intuitive understanding of the situation. 4) I feel a sense of intimacy. 5) The feeling is erotic. 6) I seek a magical state where wishes are fulfilled. 7) I yearn for a "magical" relationship of romance and tenderness. 8) I seek to identify with something or someone. 9) I need intimacy. 10) I engage in fantasy at times when I am feeling insecure.
B R O W N	1) I seek a secure state where I can be physically comfortable and relax or recover. 2) I am uneasy and insecure in the existing situation. 3) I need a more affectionate environment. 4) I need a situation imposing less physical strain. 5) I want to satisfy the physical senses (food, luxury, sex). 6) Natural or wood brown (Jung): a) I am concerned about matters of family, home, or my "roots". b) I am concerned with a son or daughter. c) I am searching for my true self or natural state of being. Note: If Dirty Brown or greenish/gray brown it might be picturing a physical problem or illness.
G R A Y	1) I want to shield myself from those feelings. 2) I feel emotionally distant, only an observer. 3) It is as if I am standing aside, watching myself mechanically go through the motions. 4) I want to remain uncommitted, non-involved, shielded or separated from the situation. 5) I do not want to make a decision that will require my emotional involvement. 6) I have put up with too much and wish to avoid any further emotional stimulation. 7) I am trying to escape an anxious situation. 8) I am compensating for something.
B L A C K	1) I am anxious and don't know why. 2) I am fearful of or intimidated by the situation. 3) I have been dealt an unacceptable blow. 4) Nothing is as it should be. 5) I refuse to allow it/them to influence my point of view. 6) I can't accept the situation and don't wish to be convinced otherwise. 7) I feel the need for extreme action, perhaps in revolt against or to compensate for the situation. Jung archetypal: Black/Darkness often represents the unconscious realm. Moving into darkness = giving in or going within (initial phase of transformation); or perhaps suppression? Beautiful Shiny Black may be a positive view of the unconscious from which a new self emerges.
W H I T E	1) This is a new experience. 2) I'm becoming aware of new feelings. 3) I'm experiencing a new beginning, a transformation. 4) I have a new outlook, a new awareness. 5) I feel pure and innocent. 6) I feel open and accepting. 7) I feel unprepared. 8) I feel alone, isolated. 9) It feels cold or sterile. Note: White mixed with a color (pastel); adds a sense of calming, or newness/new emergence or unfamiliarity with or re-emergence of the emotion that the color is associated with. White w/red (pink) for example might transform passion into romance or pacify the “red” emotions into nurturing and the discouraging of aggression.

----- Addendum Case Example -----

(ref: Chapter 6 *Dream To Freedom*, EP Press, 2013)

This subject which I will call Karen was struggling with an elusive anxiety response which was altering her life in a detrimental way. She was about to end a beautiful relationship, not due to any rational reason, but driven by a growing anxiety related to helping her boyfriend through a medical procedure. Tapping on the symptom may have been helpful, but without identifying and treating the underlying issue, the problem may have persisted. Fortunately Karen had a dream: *"I am in the home I shared with my ex-husband, looking out over trees that contained black things. My mother is there, and we are trying to decide whether they are birds or bats."* Although this dream seemed unrelated to Karen's situation, as we will see it contained the very origin of her anxiety in explicit emotional detail.

We asked Karen to re-enter the dream and look for something in the dream scene that attracts her attention, curiously draws her to it. She was drawn to *"a lone birds nest"* in the tree. We took her into the birds nest and once there, asked the bird's nest to speak – guiding her with the six scripted statements. Imagining herself as the bird's nest she stated, *"I am a lone bird's nest, my purpose is to be warm, and enveloping, and to provide a safe landing spot;"* and *"my desire is to be there and strong when needed"* - an apt description of how Karen's saw her role in helping her boyfriend through the procedure. We then explored the opposite side of the conflict asking the bird's nest what it disliked and feared. The bird's nest said, *"I dislike getting crapped and fear getting blown out of the tree!"* It is apparent that this is not just a "bird's nest" speaking, but the Karen's own unconscious expression of the conflict - and the fear that created it.

We then asked Karen, to recall a specific incident where she felt she was *'getting crapped on and blown out of the tree'?* She stated, *"The moment I decided to divorce my 'ex'. I had gone all out to help him and he showed up two-hours late and began yelling at me for not having done enough."* This was the moment when the stress reaction was encoded along with a decision to avoiding this vulnerability in future relationships – a decision which had now become dysfunctional. Given a 1 to 10 scale she stated that her stress was at "12" when picturing the scene! It was time to apply EFT. We began by using the words from her role-play to create the affirmation. *"Even though I feel taken for granted, I choose to be there and be strong."* We used this and the reminder phrase *taken for granted* for the "setup" exercise and subsequent tapping rounds. After four rounds of tapping her stress level reduced to zero.

Although she could now recall the traumatic moment without the emotional reaction, the work was not done. The decision she made at that moment, about herself and her relationships required some adjustment so that she would not fall into the same pattern again. We returned the dream for clues. The dream had guided Karen to an important decision point related to identity; deciding whether that aspect of her personality represented by the black things is *"birds or bats."* This metaphor appeared to reflect her own conflicted identity regarding her role in relationships. In order to sort out the metaphor we engaged her in a visioning exercise asking her to "spontaneously let the images flow and finish the dream with a new positive ending." What came forth was, *"I fly away with the bats!"* In sorting out the personal associations with this new metaphor she said, *"Bats, like birds are free, but unlike birds are helpful and come home to the cave at night. I can be like the bat, be there, be helpful and still be me (free)!"* Reflecting on her next steps she stated, *"I will tell my boyfriend today that I have decided to stay in the relationship."* As it turns out her boyfriend happened to walk into the room just at this moment when the session ended. She went up to him and embraced and kissed him.

