

Trauma Tree™

By Lindsay Kenny, EFT Master

Whether you are new to EFT (tapping) or an old pro at it, the concept of the “Trauma Tree” can help you understand the relationships between troubling events and the emotions they create.

Any significant traumatic event, or series of unpleasant events, causes disruptions in the body’s energy system and creates negative emotions. Left untreated, those events and resulting emotions can wreak havoc with our organs, immune system and emotional

well-being. Knowing how to identify the different elements that cause these problems and issues can significantly help in “tapping away” their effects on us.

Please get a pen and paper (a computer won’t help much with this one,) and sketch this along with us. It will help if you “create” your own Trauma Tree as we work through this process. You’ll understand it more clearly and remember it better if you do it experientially, rather than just reading about it. Really. 😊

1. **Ultimately you’ll be drawing a large tree representing the entirety of your negative life experiences, using the graphic above as an example.** It will be more meaningful, however, if you draw it in segments, as we go along, making it personally relevant and easier to relate.

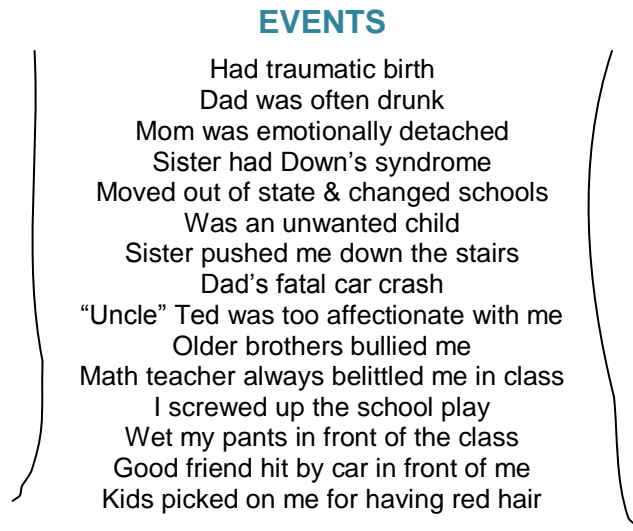
First, draw two vertical, parallel lines in the middle of a big piece of paper or chart. This will represent the trunk of your tree. Make each vertical line at least 3-4” long and put them about 3 inches apart, in the middle of your paper. See above or below example.

There isn’t a person on the planet that hasn’t experienced some kind of trauma or significant emotional event in their life. In fact, through the course of a lifespan most people will have experienced hundreds or thousands of negatively-impacting situations. The most transforming events occur in our childhood, since it’s during our formative years (before the age of 7) that adverse events can mold us into who will we become. So for the simplicity of this demonstration, please restrict the traumas or adverse event to those of your childhood.

2. **List life's traumatic EVENTS or repetitive adverse events from your youth:**

Within the lines of the 'trunk', list several negatively-impactful events from your life. It's easier if you pick your childhood only (or your teen years or 20's etc.) Use only a few words to remind you of the event, such as; "almost drowned in the lake, parents divorced, held back in 3rd grade, dad was always drunk, grandmother was critical" etc. Make sure you list *repetitive* events or circumstances that accumulatively had a negative effect on you; mom was a raging alcoholic, dad was emotionally detached, parents fought all the time, brother bullied me.

See other "trunk" examples below: **The "Trunk" of the tree; the events:**



Don't worry if you miss several things. You can't possibly list them all. For one, it's unlikely that you can remember all of them.

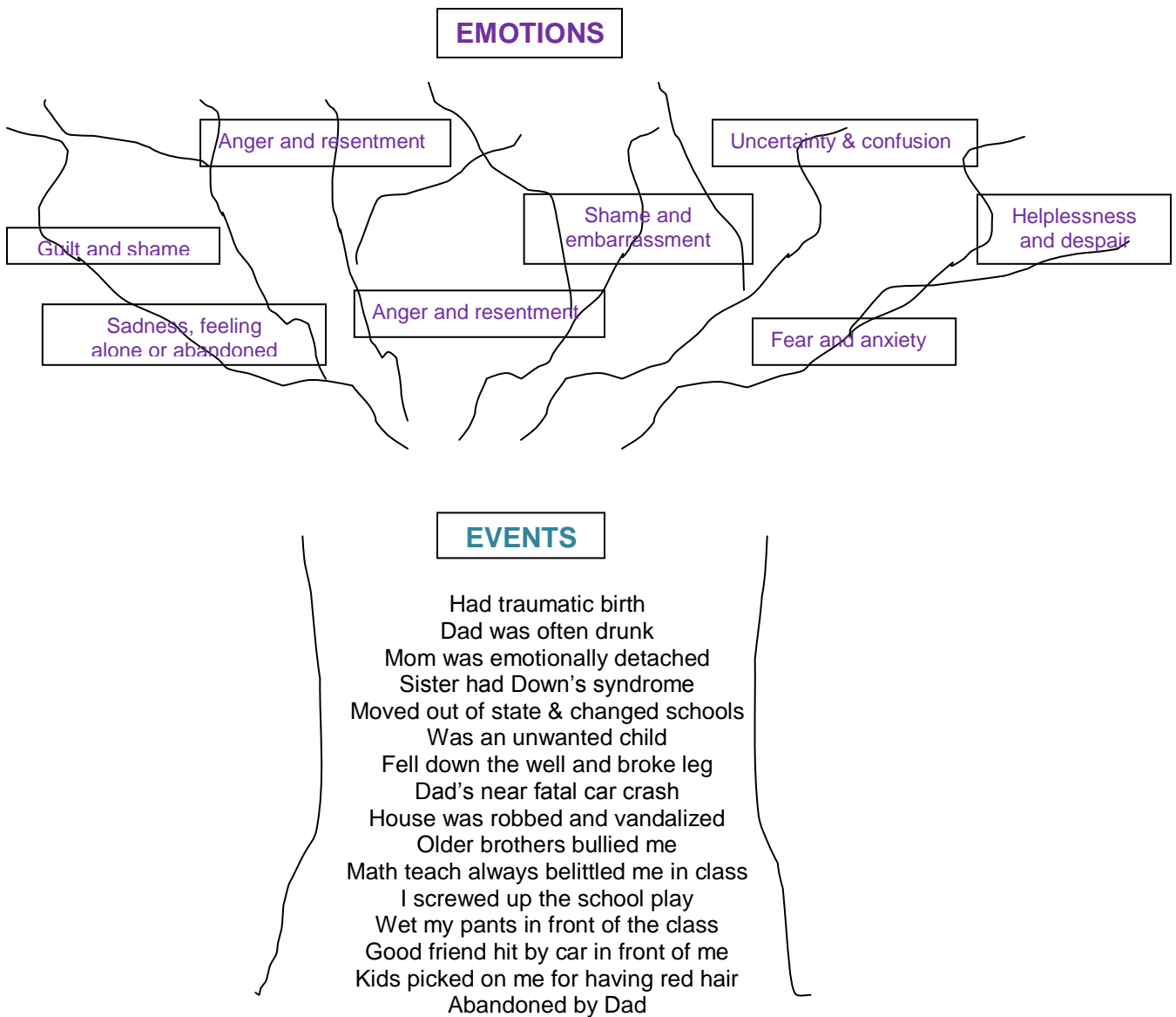
Your intention to neutralize all of these traumas and their effects is the most important element.

It would take a very large tree trunk to list all of the remembered hurtful events of life. Most of the ones we gave as examples are childhood events so we'll stick with those for this example. Just keep in mind that most people would have an entire giant redwood of negative events if they listed everything in their life. You can do that with process, but just like learning to play the piano. Let's stay with the basics for now.

3. **After listing some of your negative childhood events** (which represent ALL of them,) **draw 'branches' on the tree.** Then, on each branch write down an emotion or two that you most likely experienced as a result of any one of these events. Some examples that are sure to come up are; fear and anxiety, anger and resentment, shame and humiliation, feeling abandoned and alone, grief and anguish, sadness and

regret, frustration and helplessness etc. Most people would list dozens of possible emotions that were experienced. Once you list an emotion, you don't need to repeat it for other events. So your 'branches' might look something like this, but with many more emotions filled in:

The Branches:



- Next, enter some of the 'side-effects' or symptoms of these unresolved events and emotions.** We can represent these conditions or issues as leafs on the Trauma Tree, or other nodule-like growths. Remember that this isn't your normal, healthy tree. The "leafs" may not be things you have ever associated with a problem or issue that you have today. However, just about every issue or illness can be traced back to a significant emotional event or repetitive events.

Side-effects or symptoms might include *issues* such as: procrastination, self-sabotage, weight issues, clutter, chronic pain, illness, migraines, addictions, feeling stuck and so on. These side effects can be almost any physical pain, bad habit or challenging condition. Other examples include being habitually late, hoarding, eating disorders, excessive drinking, smoking, debt, depression etc.

You don't need to know what event(s) caused which side effect or issue. Just represent some of the problems you are experiencing today as leaves.

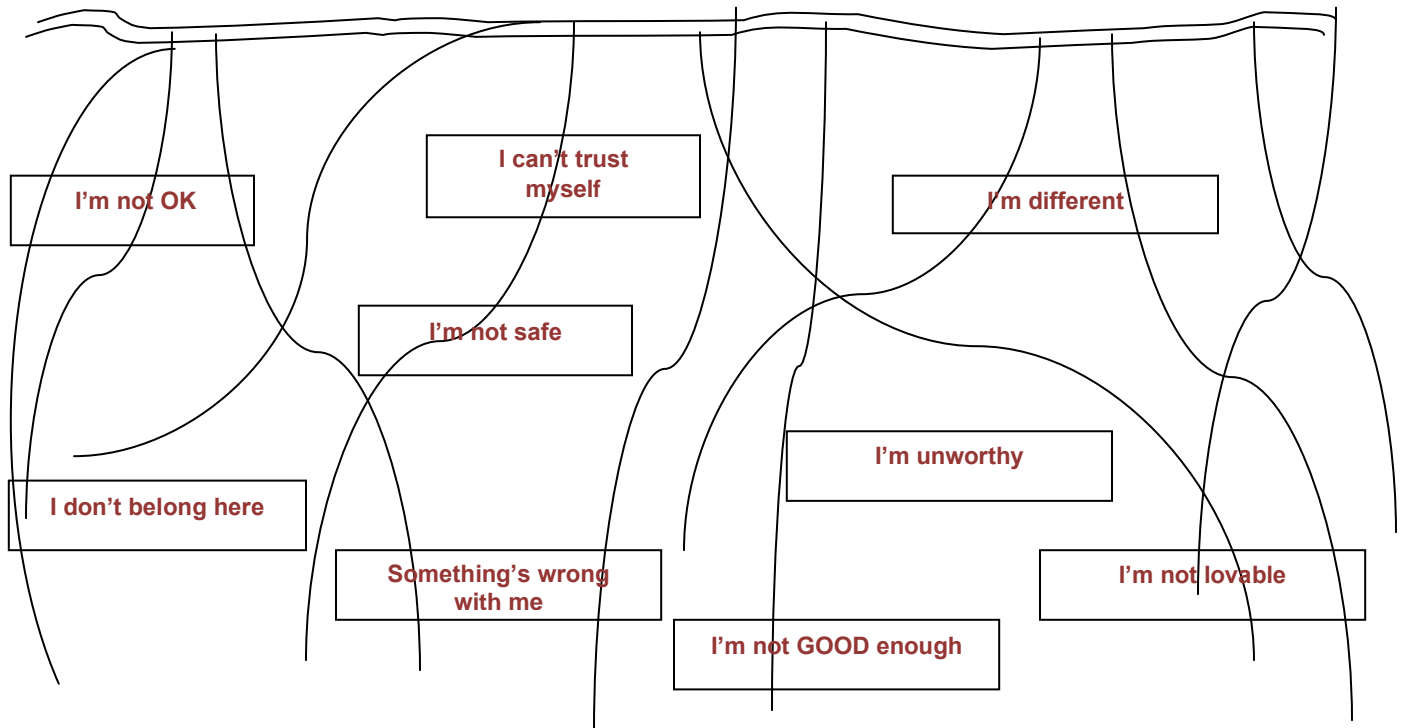
5. **For every bad habit, issue or condition there is almost always an underlying cause.** It's an element that shapes us in life, and again, it's usually formed in our childhood experiences. These underlying causes are usually expressed in our subconscious, in the form of **limiting beliefs and fears**. These are based on our unique experiences and are usually reinforced later on in life. The 'roots', however, begin in our early childhood.

These limiting beliefs from childhood, along with others you form along the way, become the foundation upon which you build the rest of your life.



Speaking of which, now let's draw some 'roots' at the base of your tree that branch out in all directions. Once you draw the lines, start listing some beliefs you started to form as a result of your upbringing, such as; *Something is wrong with me, I'm not OK, I can't do anything right, I'm not lovable, I'm different, I'm not safe, I'm not worthy, I'm unwanted, I'm a screw-up, I must be stupid, I'm not good enough.*

LIMITING BELIEFS



The Roots: As a child these beliefs start as random thoughts, such as “*I wonder if something’s wrong with me?*” Then, as more adverse experiences pile up, these thoughts are reinforced. Each time you fail or make a big mistake or you’re criticized or rejected, it changes the original belief to “Something IS wrong with me” or “I can’t do anything right,” “I’m not good enough,” and many more.

When I was a little girl my mother never missed an opportunity to tell me that I was doing something wrong. “What’s wrong with you child?” she’d say, or “Lordy girl, can’t you do ANY thing right?” “Keep this up and you’ll never amount to anything!” Whoa! What a message to give a child. The good news is, even though those words profoundly affected me and did become my own limiting beliefs, I was able to get past it easily with tapping.

I didn’t have low self-esteem I had no self-esteem. I’ve suffered with depression, self doubts, fears and physical ailments most of my life. But now, thanks to tapping, I have an incredibly happy life with a loving husband, lots of friends, a thriving Pro EFT practice and a wonderful tool to help others regain their confidence and personal power.

Cleaning up the “Tree”

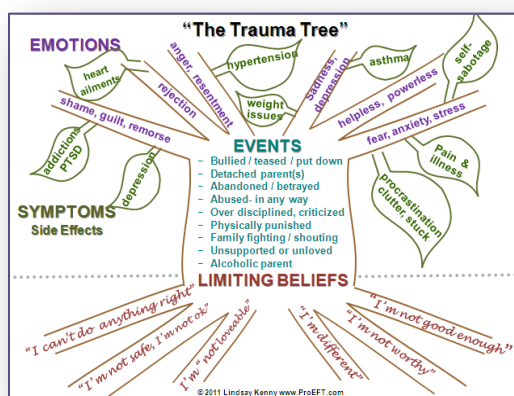
Now, let’s look at how to start working on *your* Tree. There are many options and opinions about how to approach issues. Most issues have many aspects, as you can see from the tree. In fact, the whole purpose of the tree is to see how many elements one event can evoke. And there are still branches and roots springing off from the original events. But one thing is for sure, in order to eliminate an issue, symptom, pain, habit or whatever; the causes need to be addressed.

The good news is twofold:

1. You can “Bundle” many of the similar events, emotions or beliefs and tap them away at one time. We’ll explain more about this later.
2. Also, once we tap away one section of the tree, sometimes one or two of the others will dissipate on their own. For instance, if you tapped away the *traumas* and *emotions* associated with your mother being an alcoholic, your belief that you’re not good enough might fade away. Or if you tapped away your shame and guilt about having red hair and freckles, your need to be perfect might be neutralized.

NOTE: Each individual case is different, so even skilled practitioners need to be aware of all of the elements, making sure every branch and root of the “Trauma Tree” has been addressed and neutralized. It has to be eliminated by dealing with supporting aspects or core issues or by tackling groups of events, emotions or beliefs. At the end of this article you’ll find a bigger graphic of how your tree might look as a completed **Trauma Tree**...representing a lifetime of events, pain, emotions, traumas and beliefs.

But first I want to give you an example of how the Trauma Tree process worked with one of my clients:



“Brook” was really stuck in her life. She lived in a state and city she hated. She was running out of money, couldn’t get a job due to a disability and had Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (along with all of the physical symptoms of PTSD) resulting from years of severe torture by her family. Brook’s tree was huge, in events, emotions, symptoms and limiting beliefs.

Using the Trauma Tree as a guideline, we tackled the tremendous negative events from her childhood. Contrary to traditional EFT, I knew we could “bundle” many things together.

There were just too many multiple incidences of emotional, physical and sexual abuse to remember, much less deal with specifically.

I won't endeavor to describe how to do "Bundling Baggage" here since I have a treasure trove of information about it on my website (find it on this page: www.ProEFT.com/ProEFTprocesses.html)

Brook and I were able to neutralize the trauma of beatings, rape, abandonment, ritual sexual abuse and more, along with a myriad of emotions that came with the baggage. It took a couple of sessions, frankly, since it was quite extensive. We were able to tap away all of the traumas and emotions, except for two exceptionally horrific ones which we dealt with separately.

With the trauma-causing events neutralized, along with the emotions generated, we tackled the fallacy of her limiting beliefs. They included "I won't ever be safe, there's something wrong with me, I am worthless (not just unworthy), I can't protect myself, I'm being punished, I can't do anything right and I'll never be good enough."

Brook had been *severely* mistreated as a child and teenager and it was such a tragic scenario but I knew her beliefs were way out of line with her reality. She was a very bright, resourceful, compassionate, creative woman. How she felt about herself, however, was entirely different.

We *bundled* her limiting beliefs about herself and tapped those away. It seems odd, frankly, that you can change someone's beliefs by tapping, but since I've done it literally thousands of times I know it works.

The most important element, however, is to address the subconscious resistance to change, which I call Reversal Neutralization. Here's a link where you can read more about Reversals and watch a free video.

<http://tinyurl.com/ReversalsGift>

Here's how we neutralized Brook's subconscious resistance of letting go: (Do this yourself as you read along, using the same words or your own.)

I had Brook tap on her KC (Karate Chop) point saying *"Even though these limiting beliefs keep me stuck, there's a part of me that doesn't want to let go of them. And I want to love and accept myself anyway."*

Repeat three times, and feel free to add this phrase, if applicable; *These beliefs and fears are part of my identity, they keep me safe (except they don't,) and I don't want to change them."*

We repeated a form of this statement three times. It's very important to give a voice to the part of you that doesn't want to let go of your issues or your past. Sometimes it's an identity issue, sometimes worthiness or safety. But it must be dealt with, which fortunately is very easy to do. Again, I explain more on Reversals in my video and eBook on the subject.



Just remember that it's extremely important to do the Reversal Neutralization step. Otherwise the subconscious can keep you from getting the results you want. Addressing the subconscious resistance right away shortens the tapping time substantially.

Once the Reversal was handled with Brook, we simply “tapped away” the limiting beliefs and installed new, correct beliefs about Brook. It was quite an eye opener for her since she couldn't see what a jewel she was.

With those three elements out of the way, we went back to the branches and picked out some of the present day symptoms related to the Events, Emotions and Beliefs of her childhood. Procrastination was a big one for Brook. She was afraid to move forward in anything for fear that she would somehow be punished if she got it wrong or failed.

Using my Ultimate Truth Statement we went on to outline and define how her life would be different if she got everything done on time. Brook then saw how much easier her life would be. She would have more time, more energy, more personal resources and more credibility with herself and others if she would get things done on a timely basis.

But what was in the way of her just getting things done on time? Well, in my experience, it's usually limiting beliefs and fears. So we listed Brook's: Fear of failing, fear of getting it wrong, fear of being 'punished' in some way and even fear of success. There were also more limiting beliefs, specifically relating to procrastination; I don't know how to be on time, people will expect more of me, I don't have the energy or resources to get everything done, I don't have enough time to get everything done, etc. You know how that feels, right?

We tapped away her limiting fears and beliefs about (after doing a Reversal Neutralization about part of her NOT wanting to let go of the fears and beliefs. Brook had a very constrained, uninspired life before tapping and was extremely unhappy. Today, however, she's a very happy woman. She is doing something that nourishes her soul, has moved to another state. Her life is full of love, friends and warmth. Brook is now healthy, balanced and grounded. She stays in contact regularly and assures me she is living the life of her dreams!

It can happen for you too. In fact, the purpose of this eBook was to introduce the Trauma Tree and give you hope that tapping can work for you if you know what to look for. As always I recommend seeing a skilled practitioner for difficult issues and a few workshops to deepen your understanding and appreciation for this wonderful energy tapping tool.



Good Luck and Good Tapping,

Lindsay Kenny

Find some of the Pro EFT tapping techniques that Lindsay mentions in this article on her [Pro EFT Processes page](#) of her website or on the [Products Catalog page](#).

