

Release  
Restore



Sue Klassen

Stress, Trauma and Conflict Transformation Services

Greetings.

December 2020 presents challenges within and around us, *and* opportunities for us to find strength, resilience and calm. In this newsletter, I share some stress, trauma and conflict transformation resources I find helpful. Stress and trauma are stored in our bodies and nervous systems—not just in our heads. This newsletter focuses on resources for **taming food cravings, calming our nervous systems**, and moving towards **anti-racism** by calming our bodies/nervous systems.

## Food Cravings

Many of us feel cravings for special foods around the holidays. This year, with COVID putting big gatherings on hold, opportunities for indulging will be different, but the cravings may not rest. **Extensive research shows EFT's effectiveness in curbing cravings**—actually rewiring the associations with craved foods in the brain's reward centre. (For information on EFT/Tapping, [click here](#).) Following tapping, people can still enjoy a once-craved food, but don't *need* to indulge. Here are three video resources you may want to explore:

- EFT trainers Craig and Alina share [how to curb cravings with EFT](#) and why it works (22 min)
- Dr. Peta Stapleton talks about [research on cravings and weight loss with EFT](#) (5 minutes)
- Jessica Ortner offers an example [EFT tapping script for overcoming cravings](#) (15 minutes)

Try it out! Tapping on food cravings can bring quick results when you're specific about how you feel.

## Calming our Nervous Systems

I was glad today to see advice for mindful breathing "to reset the parasympathetic nervous system and trigger the relaxation response" printed in a retirement home newsletter where a loved one of mine lives. From young to old, we all need these reminders. While we need cortisol to energize our nervous systems, most of us pump too much cortisol into our systems, perpetually experiencing "fight or flight" symptoms—stuck in our sympathetic nervous system. **It's only in our calmer parasympathetic state that we can rest and digest, heal, and think with focused clarity.**

EFT quickly lowers cortisol levels. For example, a [recent study found cortisol levels dropped by 43%](#) in a one-hour group tapping session. Many things, including tapping, can calm our nervous systems. What helps you? Talking a walk? Meditation/Prayer? Yoga? Music? Talking with a friend? Dancing? Here are a few tools to consider adding to what you already find helpful:

- Support and ground yourself with the [Butterfly Hug](#) (3 minutes)

- Do you find yourself “**doomscrolling**”—continually reading stressful news without being able to step back? [Self-havening is another simple body-based technique to reduce stress hormones](#) and find calm. It’s similar in some ways to the Butterfly Hug, but uses humming and movement to help calm the nervous system. (2 minutes)
- Scott Berinado reminds us that, “**emotions need motion.**” Whether through tapping, or simply naming our feelings, helping our emotions move supports well-being. Scott discusses the [importance of naming grief during the pandemic](#) (blog)

## Nervous System Steps Towards Anti-racism

Trauma specialist Resmaa Menakem, author of *My Grandmother’s Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Mending of Our Bodies and Hearts*, powerfully shares how trauma is stored in our bodies. To move towards healing the ongoing harms of racism, he says, strategies and thinking differently are not enough. **Our national political work is to settle in our own bodies**, he notes. “Your body — all of our bodies — are where changing the status quo must begin,” Resmaa says. We need to notice what we’re feeling in our bodies around race issues, and learn to soothe ourselves to make shifts. Resmaa describes some grounding and orienting exercises for us to practice on our journey.

Hear Resmaa in On Being with Krista Tippett: [Notice the Rage. Notice the Silence](#) (52 minutes)

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I’m passionate about supporting people in moving through the hard places in life with strength and resilience. Let me know if you find any of the above resources helpful, or if there are others you’d like to share with me.

If you would like my support working through stress, trauma, conflict, or other hard spots, contact me at 226-792-8200 or [sue@sueklassen.ca](mailto:sue@sueklassen.ca). Or visit my website, [sueklassen.ca](http://sueklassen.ca) to learn more, including [rates for individual sessions or packages](#).

Take good care of yourself, and be kind (especially to yourself) this holiday season.

Best regards,  
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*Peace.*

*It does not mean to be in a place where there is no noise, trouble, or hard work.*

*It means to be in the midst of those things and still be calm in your heart.*

*(unknown)*

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