



The Power to Truly Transform: Self-Acceptance and Self-Love as Gateways to Healing

Jessica: I've seen people respond to the setup statement "I love and accept myself" with many different reactions, from tears in their eyes to simply rolling their eyes. Why does this statement set us up for the tapping process and is it really that important? Does accepting ourselves mean that we're just surrendering to the things we don't like, doomed to never change?

These questions and many, many more will be answered today. You'll also discover how you can begin to experience the true power of self-love and acceptance for yourself.

To lead the way for us we are speaking to Gwenn Bonnell from tapintoheaven.com. Gwenn is a Certified EFT Practitioner, and has been sharing energy psychology and energy medicine through private sessions and group workshops in South Florida and worldwide since 1988. Welcome, Gwenn.

Gwenn: Thank you, Jessica. I'm so glad to be here.

Jessica: I'm so happy that we're covering this topic, because we've never covered it before and I think a lot of people wonder about the setup statement. I think a great place to start is for you to describe the setup statement and the basic intentions around it.

Gwenn: The EFT tapping setup statement, which is the part where you tap on the karate chop and say something like, "I deeply and completely accept myself, even though I have this problem," includes those words "I Deeply and completely accept myself". Some people even say, "Love and accept myself."

What that does, Jessica, is tapping on that point, on the karate chop point, which is the small intestine meridian, it helps override what is called either psychological or energetic reversals that somebody might have towards getting over a problem. It's overriding it specifically for the issue that your mind is focused on or that you're targeting with the tapping.

Repeating that affirmation, which is the default affirmation, helps balance the energies involved in the first part of the statement, or the part where you're affirming that you have a problem.

You might have been taught to say, “Even though I have this problem, I deeply and completely accept myself,” even if you don’t believe it. For some people that works. For some people, even if they don’t believe it they can just glibly say it and gloss over it and go on with the tapping and that’s fine.

But for some people self-love and self-acceptance is such a big problem in their lives, that’s the problem, that they have some kind of inner resistance about saying that, because truly self-love and self-acceptance colors every decision that we make and every energy that we have, not only inside ourselves, but that’s reflected outside in the world.

Ultimately that self-acceptance – it’s an inside job. That’s where tapping can help, but if you’re not resonating that you’re good enough to be loved or that’s really the underlying problem, then that can be a stopping point right there in the tapping process. You feel that resistance inside of yourself and that self-talk where you’re negating what you’re saying, and it can actually stop the tapping from working.

Jessica: I want to explore this further, but I do want to just ask you about psychological reversal because it’s a term that many of us are hearing. Can you describe it to someone who’s new to the concept?

Gwenn: Sure. This is something that you might be experiencing in your life. We all experience it at some point or another, where we have the intention to change something in our life or we don’t want to be acting a certain way, but we find ourselves acting that way – almost that we can’t control it. We feel like we have no control over it.

The classic example is somebody who’s smoking. They know that smoking is bad for them. They hate the way they smell. They don’t like the smell on their clothes. They just don’t like what they’re doing, but almost subconsciously they find themselves reaching for that cigarette, and they light it without even recognizing what they’re doing, because there’s such an energetic reversal or a psychological reversal going on that it’s almost as if they have no control over it.

That can be involved in something as big as smoking, or usually weight loss, or it can be something that’s really, really specific. Say you’re a student, and you do good in all other classes, except one class you really have a problem.

Say you’re learning French or something and you just can’t pick it up. You’re an A student everywhere else, but you’re flunking that class. You know there’s some kind of reversal going on in your energy system where you’re not able to take a

step forward. Every time you take a step forward you feel like you're taking a couple steps back.

Jessica: Right. I think a lot of people can relate to having had that feeling.

Gwenn: It's not always present. For certain things it is. Certain things where reversal is the symptom, say you're dyslexic and you're reading backwards. Or for a lot of physical problems or things that you might have physically that there's no "cure" for, like cancer or MS, things like that there's a reversal going on in the body. Your energies are reversed and you just can't get it going. You can't heal it. If you have any kind of thing where you've been trying over and over and over again to either improve your life or to heal something, and you're just hitting your head against the wall or it feels like that, then you know you have some reversal and you need to do the setup. The setup normally takes care of that reversal when it's done correctly.

Jessica: When you say the setup, is the power in the tapping of the karate chop point or is it in the words that you're saying or is it about the combination of the two?

Gwenn: I think it's really the combination. The karate chop point, because it's the small intestine meridian, if you think of small intestine energies and even what it does physically in the body, it allows us to make that choice between what the body needs and what it no longer needs and what we can let go, what we no longer need to hold onto and let go out of our system and then keep the nutrients that we need.

Sometimes we are able to do that consciously in our life and say I no longer need that person in my life. I can let them go. Or you know you no longer need that person in your life, but you just keep hanging onto him and you can't let him go. By tapping on the karate chop and the small intestine meridian, you're kind of boosting that energetic principle that you're able to discern between what you no longer need, and you can let it go easier and keep what you do need that does support your life.

Then when you're saying the setup statement, which is "I deeply and completely accept myself", which is the affirmation that overrides the more "negative" problem that you might have, "Even though I have this problem", you're number one, focusing your mind on the problem, which sometimes we feel as if we shouldn't, but the only way we're going to let go of it is to actually focus on it because this is a mind-body-energy connection. Then the affirmation is just to

balance it out, balance out that negative energy we might feel about having the problem.

Jessica: To be clear, we're focusing on it while we're tapping.

Gwenn: Right.

Jessica: Right. So it's not just focusing on it—actually, I want to go into that next. Many people are very resistant to this concept of accepting themselves, because many of us have grown up believing that if we accept ourselves it means that we're just surrendering to the problems and we shouldn't accept mediocrity or bad things in our life, but we should fight and push through and work harder. This concept of loving and accepting ourselves really goes against a way that many people have been raised. What do you say to those people who are a bit resistance to this whole idea?

Gwenn: You said it right there, we're raised. We're raised to kind of ignore our problems. We're not allowed to speak our anxiety, our stress, our anger, things like that, our emotions. I think society just hasn't been able to come up with an answer to a lot of these problems, how to handle your anger, how to handle your resentment, how to handle your guilt, until the tapping. Because we didn't have that answer out there of what to do, we were taught to push it down, push it down, push it down. I know I went through that personally, because that's how I got into tapping was because I had this pain, this terrible burning pain in my foot for 12 years. I was trying over and over again different—in the medical community, in the alternative health community, which at the time was very spiritually based. I was trying everything but nothing was helping, so I was trying to ignore the pain on a daily basis and just pretend it wasn't there because I didn't know what to do. I think that's why we push things down is because we don't know how to deal with them. Where the tapping, that's what is so great about it and transformational about it is it allows you to focus and say, okay, I do recognize that I have this problem, and gently and easily release it. It's a method you can learn to gently and easily release this stuff, because a lot of times we're afraid if I take the lid off the anger I'm just going to burst wide open and I can't control my emotions. That's why we keep pushing them down. The tapping, as you learn the process, and your body learns the process, it's a way of gently releasing. I think for some reason the universe has decided that the past

couple of decades has been the time for us to learn a gentle method, such as the tapping, to release these emotions. We don't need them anymore. Let's get rid of them. Let's move on and create a more peaceful life and a more peaceful world.

Jessica: Many people know about the Law of Attraction, which basically says that what you focus on you attract. With the setup statement, like you said, we're focusing on the negative. A lot of people are a little bit nervous that by focusing on something and saying that they love and accept something that's bad, they're going to create more of that in their life.

Gwenn: I'd tell these people to look at their life and look at what they're creating, because consciously maybe they're not focusing on the problem. Maybe they're not focusing on the pain, or they don't think they're focusing on a bad relationship or their money problems. They might have little sticky things of affirmations hanging all over their mirrors and everything, and that's what they think they're focusing on, but your life is going to reflect what you're really focusing on. If you have a problem in your life, then subconsciously that's front and center whether you know it or not, and bringing that up it's just giving it a chance to release. You're not giving it any extra energy. You're actually allowing that energy to release.

The other thing that can happen, maybe once you start focusing on the problem you start getting other negative thoughts coming in or you start hearing other self-talk, negating self-talk, maybe it's yours, maybe it's something you grew up with. Or maybe you're punishing yourself at some level for the way you're acting or the way you're thinking, and this also can be on a subconscious level. Maybe you're overeating. Maybe there's some other addictive behavior that you're just reinforcing that negative thought and that negative feeling without even recognizing it.

Tapping really helps you disengage from all that. It helps break that vicious cycle of, "I don't know why I'm overeating, but I'm anxious because of it" or, "I have this anxiety because I'm overeating, and I'm overeating because I have this anxiety." Even though you might think you're not focusing on it, subconsciously you are. So let's bring it front and center, tap on it and give it a chance to release.

Jessica: Right. You said before that there are some people who say the "Love and accept myself" statement, they breeze through it without really giving it much relevance and there are other people who really begin to have that powerful experience.

Actually, I think this would be a really great time to hear about a story, or what can we expect when we really get to the place where we begin to experience more self-love and acceptance?

Gwenn: When you asked me to do this interview on self-acceptance, first I thought, “Oh my goodness, what a delicious topic!” Then the first thing that came to mind was one of the first sessions I ever had when I started doing EFT. I had a young girl call me up. I’ll call her Tammy. That’s not her real name, but I’ll just call her that. She called me because her anxiety level was super, super high. She couldn’t function. She was really scattered. She couldn’t get out of bed in the morning. It took her hours and hours to even get to work, and then when she got to work she said she was just in a cloud. She had this brain fog. I said, “Come on in; we’ll do some tapping.” She came in. As soon as she walked in the door my first thought was, “Oh my gosh, she’s such a beautiful young lady!” She really was. She was naturally beautiful. Even with all the anxiety going on in her life, you would have never known it. As we started talking I found out she was going through a really bad breakup. Even though she was going through this breakup, she couldn’t let go of the guy. She was obsessing over him. She knew he was no good for her, and she had a history of unhealthy relationships. We started tapping for that. When we got to the point where I had her say, “I deeply and completely accept myself,” she just could not say that. She couldn’t say the words, “I accept myself”. This was really the first time I came up against that with anybody that I was tapping with because this was early on in the practice. We started talking about that. Here, even though she was so beautiful, she told me she couldn’t stand to look in a mirror and she didn’t even have any mirrors in her house. I’m thinking, “If I looked like her I’d have mirrors on the ceiling, for crying out loud!” But I’m not going to argue with her, that’s the way she felt. So what I did with here is I took her in the bathroom and I had her look in a mirror. It took lots of tapping and lots of crying and lots of releasing to get her to be able to look at herself in the mirror. As we were doing the tapping you could see her transform, right in front of my eyes. It got to the point at the end of the session where she could comfortably look at herself in the mirror and say, “I love myself exactly the way I am right now.” That was amazing to me.

Not only did she feel calmer and more centered after she was able to do that. She actually went back into work. She was able to conduct an interview. She called me a few days later, said she had no problems anymore getting out of bed. It was easy to get out of the house in the morning going to work. The cloud had lifted from her life. She was able to concentrate at work. The ex-boyfriend was out of her life, as well as the anxiety of dealing with him.

She continued to do the mirror exercise a few minutes every morning just to keep reinforcing that, because it's important when you do tapping, if you have a huge breakthrough like that especially, is to keep doing it for two or three weeks on a daily basis over the same issue just to clear up all those tail enders or other aspects you might not have dealt with.

I talked to Tammy a few months later. She was in a new relationship with a man, but this guy was calling her all the time and treating her really nice, was very attentive, completely unlike her other relationships. I saw her a year later and they were engaged.

Jessica: Oh, beautiful.

Gwenn: I know, just one afternoon of looking in a mirror and tapping and crying and tapping. The tapping really helped Tammy, not only learn to love and accept herself, but it totally changed her life. It boosted her level of happiness and her level of peace; work was easier for her. It vastly improved her relationship status. This is the power of really learning to love and accept yourself just the way you are right now.

Jessica: When you're working with somebody new and you're introducing this concept of accepting themselves right here, right now, can you explain some of the resistance or some of the responses that you get?

Gwenn: Sure. Just saying that statement, and that's such a powerful statement really in the EFT process, it usually brings up all these, what they call in tapping language, tail-enders, or "yes, buts". "I can't accept myself, except for my financial situation." Or, "I can accept myself, except for I can't accept those 20 extra pounds I have on my body." Or, "I can't accept that \$20,000 debt I have." It brings up a lot of "yes, buts," and those "yes, buts" are perfect targets for tapping.

Jessica: That's a great thing for the listeners to do as they're listening to this and thinking about the idea of accepting themselves: what is the resistance that comes to mind?

Oftentimes, like you said, we'll say, "I can accept this area of my life," but we have trouble accepting the really dark things or the things that we really want to change.

If there is something specific, like when it comes to weight or when it comes to money or a relationship, do you really see accepting the problem to be the first step to change?

Gwenn: I think accepting that you have the problem, not so much saying the problem's okay. Everything that got you there, it's what you really have to accept. You're in that place in your life because of certain things in your past. It's that past stuff that we hang onto and it builds a pattern.

Maybe you were eating a cupcake one day and your dad passed by and said, "I can't believe you're eating that. It's just going to make you fat." You could have just let that slide off your back, but you internalized it and thought, "Oh my god, I'm going to get fat if I eat a cupcake, I'm such a bad person." Maybe at the time you were too young to mentally even figure out a way to talk to him about it or say, what are you saying? You just couldn't process that to make any sense out of it and have a conversation with him.

Or maybe somebody actually yelled at you when you were too young to stand up for yourself physically or understand that maybe it was their issue and not yours, and it all got tied to that cupcake.

Over a period of time that happens over and over again, and you feel that same anger or resentment or anxiety or misunderstanding or confusion, or whatever, and you keep internalizing it because you don't know what else to do with it. It creates this energetic pattern, and it creates a pattern of behavior in your life that you might feel you can't control. You have no control over.

Or it might even create a thought pattern such as, "I'm no good" or, "I'm not worthy" or, "I'm not good enough so I'll never be loved, and so I might as well just keep eating cupcakes."

Jessica: Let's talk about that thought pattern. Like I said in the beginning, some of us are raised believing that it's not okay to accept ourselves. What are some of the thought patterns and the way that beliefs impact our ability to really accept ourselves?

Gwenn: A lot of times people will say to me, "I can't say I accept myself because I'm just not good enough," or, "I'm not a good enough person to be accepted." They think

that's a truth and not necessarily a belief. It might be true for you. I'm not going to argue what's true for people, but somehow you were taught to believe that. Somehow you were taught to make that a truth in your life, that you weren't good enough, that what you do is not good enough, that you'll never be good enough. You learned this growing up somewhere. You learned it because somebody who had authority over you that you were looking for approval from, it could have been a parent, it could have been a teacher, it could have been an older sibling, it could have been somebody in your peer group, a friend.

Somebody criticized you, or your behavior. Often we even got punished for that behavior. Like I said, we were too young, emotionally, mentally, physically, to even make sense of it in our minds or to argue or to stand up for ourselves. So we pushed it down, we internalized it.

We may recognize, we may even recognize this as a pattern or we may even recognize that I am good enough and I deserve better or that we want to be a better person, but like you said before, thinking that we accept that behavior means we're condoning it.

What we do is we end up being a critic. We end up being that same person that was criticizing us growing up, and that pattern, we keep repeating it on our own now. Now we're the one judging ourselves and criticizing ourselves and punishing ourselves, which we think, "Maybe if I punish myself enough I'll change the behavior."

But it hasn't worked that way in the past, so it's not going to work that way in the future. The punishment or the criticism stresses us more and causes us more of the behavior we want to change, and there goes that vicious cycle again.

It's important to realize, we make mistakes. Everybody makes mistakes. That doesn't mean we are a mistake. Even if we know that intellectually, we might still embody that energy. We might still have that energy pattern in our system that we're not good enough. Tapping really can help break that pattern.

Jessica: In order to get to the place where we can experience more love and acceptance, is it helpful then to tap on a specific belief, like, "I don't feel good enough"?

Gwenn: Yes, we can do some tapping. That's a specific belief but it's still very general, because really where you want to get to, and this is hard to do just in a call for listeners, but what the listener wants to do is while you're doing this tapping that's more on a general basis is to take note of the ideas that pop into your mind.

Maybe you have some memories remembering specific events or specific instances. Or maybe you have a generalized feeling in your body. You feel that resistance or that anger. It might bright bring up some emotions, anger, resentment, guilt, shame, overwhelm.

Whatever happens, either the thoughts that come into your head or the memories or the feelings or the emotions, the feelings in the body or the emotions, note what they are. You can either incorporate them into the tapping as we go along, focus on something specific, or make a note of it and then you can go back later on and tap on those specific events or memories or thoughts or feelings.

If you really wanted to get into it you could sit down and actually take 20 minutes or so and write out the evidence that you have in your life that teaches you that you're not good enough or that you can't accept yourself. Just start writing it down and everything you write down can be a target for tapping.

Jessica: For example, if somebody's first response is, "I don't feel good enough because I'm having financial problems, and I should be further along by now" or, "I shouldn't have these problems right now," then they'd focus their tapping on saying, "Even though I can't accept myself and I am mad at myself..." Actually, see, I'm stumbling. I'm not too sure what to say. Something around, "Even though I have these financial problems, so it means I'm not good enough, I love and accept myself anyway"?

Gwenn: That's a good place to start, but what's the feeling behind having the financial problem? One of the feelings is you're not good enough, but you want to get really specific. Even though when I sit down to pay bills, I have this feeling in the pit of my stomach, how am I going to do this, I just can't make ends meet, I accept the situation and somehow choose to learn how to do better or choose to find a way out of it. That's real specific. Sitting down to pay bills is more specific than I have money problems.

Jessica: That's what we should always go towards, is the more specific...

Gwenn: Right. The feeling in the pit of my stomach when I sit down to pay bills is more specific than I just have money problems.

Jessica: Yes, okay. Then you said at the end of that that you would move towards something. You said a few positive statements. When someone's really working

on this idea of accepting themselves, when they start doing the tapping, when should they move on to more accepting and loving statements?

Gwenn: If you have a sensation clenching in the pit of your stomach, when you feel that ease up. If you rate it on a scale from 0 to 10 and it's a 10 when you think of sitting down to pay your bills, and you feel that clench right away and you're not even paying your bills, when you start the tapping and it goes down and you feel it release a little bit, then you can start putting in something affirming.

Remember, the setup statement has that affirmation in it. If you can't say the words, "I deeply and completely accept myself," there's other affirmations you can use. Things like, "I choose to heal this right now" or, "I choose to somehow accept the situation anyway."

Anything positive, anything that has a positive twist to it you can put in there. "Maybe I'm ready to accept the problem now." "Maybe I'm ready to take a good look at it." "I honor my feelings about it." Something that's positive. Maybe if you feel that resistance to "I love and accept myself," think of something more positive that's a little bit softer and allows you to go through the process.

Jessica: Gwenn, I'd love to use this specific situation of someone who's struggling with money and struggling with the idea of accepting themselves in this financial crisis.

Gwenn: Okay. Even though I'm going to use the words—here we go, even though. I'll use the words "money problem", but you want to insert what pushes your buttons the most with your situation about money. Just pick the one that's the most intense for you right now as you think about your money problems or your money situation, and work on that one now.

There's usually more than one aspect. It's not like we have one bill that causes us to have a headache. There's usually more than one aspect to the situation you're in, but just for now focus on one while we're going through this and keep that in mind when I say money problem. You might even want to insert your own language into that to make that more specific for you.

Jessica: Okay, great.

Gwenn: Let's use a pattern of tapping that is good for beginners to follow. During the karate chop we'll focus on a money problem, and then as we go through the tapping points we'll use alternate—focus on the problem and then use an alternate affirmation, and then focus on the problem and then use an affirmation.

We're kind of balancing out the negative energy with the positive affirmation as we go through the tapping. I'll use some alternate affirmations so you'll get an idea of things you can use besides "I deeply and completely accept myself." How does that sound?

Jessica: That sounds great. For everyone that's listening, I really encourage you to tap along and repeat these statements out loud. Gwenn, I will be repeating and tapping as well.

Gwenn: Okay. Let's start on the karate chop and let's say:

SH: Even though I have this belief,
That because I have this money problem,
I am not good enough,
I've never been good enough,
And will never be good enough,
I'm willing for this to change.

Let's go through and do a round of tapping. On the eyebrow point:

EB: This money problem,
SE: I'm ready to accept that I have this problem,
UE: Feeling not good enough,
UN: I'm willing to honor my feelings and emotions.
CH: Even though I have this money problem,
CB: I forgive myself for having this money problem.
UA: Even though I feel not good enough because of it,
TH: I forgive myself,
And anyone else,
Who taught me how to feel not good enough,
Just because I have this money problem.

Usually with money there's some guilt involve there, so let's go back to the karate chop and say:

SH: Even though I feel guilty,
Because I have this money problem,
And it seems really overwhelming,
To even think about how I can get past it,
I honor all my emotions,
And I choose to learn how to release,
Any emotions,
That are standing in the way,
Of me healing this money problem.

EB: Feeling guilty about this money problem,
SE: I give myself permission to feel this guilt,
UE: Feeling overwhelmed about this money problem,
UN: I allow myself to feel these overwhelmed feelings.
CH: Releasing this guilt,
CB: I've had it long enough and it's time to let it go,
UA: Releasing all these overwhelmed feelings.
TH: Even though I have this problem,
I choose to believe that I can work through it somehow,
I have faith and confidence in myself,
And in my future.

Let's go back to the karate chop one more time:

SH: Even though I still have this money problem,
That hasn't changed,
I choose to realize that taking a good look at what's going on,
Without getting overwhelmed by the emotions,
Is a great step,
To moving past it,
And making different choices,
And growing into the abundant person I know I can be.

EB: Completely releasing the rest of this not good enough feeling,
Tied to this money problem.

SE: I choose to recognize these feelings and these thoughts,
And release them when they come up.

UE: Even though I still have this money problem,

UN: I choose to accept where I am,
And learn from it.

CH: Even though it might not change overnight,

CB: I can change the way I feel about it.

UA: I choose to consider all the options available to me,
With a clear head,

TH: And to make more empowering choices,

Based on the knowledge,

That I am capable,

Of finding resources,

In creative ways,

Of overcoming this money problem.

Take a deep breath.

Jessica: Thank you for that. Powerful.

Gwenn: That just helped us take a look at where we're at, because if you can't look at where you're at you just can't move forward. Release the emotions around it, and instill some hope that you have the resources and the capabilities available to you. The more that you detach emotionally, the more that you rid yourself of those overwhelming emotions, the better capable you are of making more empowering choices.

Jessica: Yes, really important point. I was actually just working with someone today and we were doing some tapping around acceptance. What I find when we don't have the answer to a problem, we criticize ourselves. We put so much pressure on ourselves.

The moment that we can accept that we don't have the answer and we release that pressure to have it all figured out, that's when we get creative. That's when we can at least find some peace. As we go throughout our day, we can begin to notice

and see the little puzzle pieces coming together as we figure out what the next step is.

Gwenn: Right, because when you've got all that criticism going on in your head or you're mired in that, "I can't believe I got to this point," there's all those thoughts going through your head, all these emotions rushing through your body where you're pushing them down, there's no space for anything else to come in. When you release a lot of that stuff then there's space.

If you go back to the Law of Attraction, the universe is always giving you opportunities to change. There's space to bring those opportunities into your life and to recognize them, and to creatively make different choices or to get creative ideas. You have to empty yourself.

Luckily, I'm a creative person. Before I got into EFT tapping I was doing graphic design and layout. So often I would be with a blank computer screen and just have to let it flow through me. I think that's what made me so good at EFT is I could just be blank, and let the thoughts and everything flow through me. Let the tapping flow through me.

That's where you want to get. You want to get your emotional resistance and all those thoughts going through your head and all that criticism, you want to just get it out. If you have to be your inner coach and tell yourself I can do better, I just need the opportunity to do better, just let go of the criticism, let go of the resistance, and just open yourself up to the possibilities that are out there because there are a zillion possibilities out there. We're just sometimes too filled up with our own gunk that we can't take them in.

Jessica: One thing I'm getting from everything that you're saying is, to begin to really feel like we're accepting or loving ourselves... One of the first steps is to find a way to silence that inner critic.

Gwenn: Maybe not silence. Maybe have a conversation with them and tell them, okay—

Jessica: Simmer down.

Gwenn: Not simmer down, but—the only reason that we took on those critical voices is out of love. Somebody that we loved or somebody that was an authority figure that we wanted approval from was criticizing us, and we took it to heart because we loved them and we wanted to change because of them.

Then along the way we really do love ourselves and we want to change because we do want to improve ourselves, but we learned to be critical. We're thinking that's the loving part of us, but there's another part of us that's even more loving and knows how to be supportive.

If you allow those two parts to have a conversation by acknowledging that the critical part of you is there and there's a loving part of you there, and let them talk it out. Don't just say, "I'm wrong for being critical." Then you're criticizing your critical part. It's there for a reason.

At some point in your life it thought it was keeping you safe. It was doing it out of a good intention. It just got out of control. There are times when you do need to be critical. You need to look at opportunities that come up with a critical eye too, and not just jump into the first thing that comes along. "Oh no, the Law of Attraction is working for me so I'm going to jump into this."

You want to do it critically without the negative connotation of being critical, but you want to be able to weight things that come into your life and say, "Is this a good opportunity, is this a bad opportunity?" But you do it unemotionally, without the fear, without the anxiety, without the guilt, without the anger, without the resentment.

Just from a more peaceful place, being able to detach and saying, "Is this good in my life, is this going to be able to help me, is this something I can follow through with?" If you can't, instead of treating it negatively and saying, "Oh, there you go, you never follow through with anything, just coach yourself along and say, "Maybe I should. Maybe I should take this step." Just be more giving to yourself either way.

Jessica: You just shared an example, a certain way that we can do the tapping, which is giving a voice to that critical side and then the other side, and go back and forth.

Gwenn: Right. Let them have a conversation. It's an energetic back and forth. In the energy world there's no good energy or bad energy. There's just energy that's disrupted, energy that's blocked or energy that's flowing. You want to get that energy flowing. You want it to flow back and forth.

I don't want to get too Yin and Yang on you here, but really what the tapping on the different acupuncture points does is it gets the energy flowing. What you're holding onto too hard or too tight to release, it allows the body to take over on its own wisdom, it's own inner wisdom. The answer is always inside of you, and you just have to give it a chance to flow and to happen.

Jessica: Yes. That's a really simple and very powerful technique, that back and forth. Thank you for sharing that with us. I think it's also important to have this conversation that we're never going to get rid of the inner critic, but to be able to not let that voice have total control over us, to have some discernment instead of feeling like it hijacks us.

It's great to hear you say that, because I think as we look at different experts in this world it's easy to look and say, "They have it all figured out. They don't have the same critical voice or conflict that I do." But we were all born with that voice. We've all had our own experiences. The difference is, have we learned how to find balance among the chaos and then take steps forward?

Gwenn: Right, because in reality, Jessica, if you're looking at an expert and you're thinking they completely love and accept themselves... If everybody completely loved and accepted themselves, we'd all be floating three feet above the ground. So everybody's got their stuff.

When I saw the young girl Tammy walk in I was like, "Oh my god, she's beautiful!" She didn't think she was, so you just can't tell looking at somebody what their inner demons are. We all have our inner demons. It's just recognizing. That's one of the pitfalls, too, is comparing ourselves to somebody else.

Jessica: Right.

Gwenn: You've just got to let yourself shine. You've got to let your inner light come out. That's my daily wisdom.

Jessica: Thank you for that. Gwenn, another question: How does someone begin to incorporate this idea of really loving and accepting themselves, especially if they are incredibly busy or they find themselves at Thanksgiving with the annoying aunt? In some real world situation where there are a lot of different things going on, it could be a little bit tricky to feel like we're at peace and loving and accepting ourselves.

Gwenn: I totally understand that one. All the work I've been doing through the years and that still happens to me. We all have situations where we just don't want to go there. It might be a meeting at work you just don't want to go there, or you just don't want to deal with your teenagers coming home from school and fighting you over doing their homework.

Or, like you said, going somewhere for a long weekend with the in-laws where you feel that resistance in your body. That thought in your head where, "I just wish I didn't have to go through this!" Right away there's a resistance. You're stopping the energy from flowing, so things tighten up.

In my case, six months ago I had one of those situations, and by the time I was through the long weekend I had this incredibly intense pain in my neck and shoulder, because that's where I hold my stress, is my neck and shoulder.

I had to come home and tap and tap and tap and tap and tap to get rid of it, so when that same situation arose, and I had to go back into all that drama and everything; just thinking about it I had that resistance, "I just don't want to go there." I could feel my neck and shoulder tighten up before I even took a step on the plane.

We all have that. What I did was I tapped before I left for not wanting to be in that position, not wanting to be in that situation, and my neck and shoulder tightening up, so that when I got there the first couple days I was fine. I felt maybe a little bit of a twinge, and I did some tapping in a minute and it went away. I was there for a few days. Came home, never had a reoccurrence of that pain in my neck and shoulder.

It's great that if you recognize you're going into a situation that would normally cause you stress, maybe you get a headache, maybe you're like me, you get that tension in your neck and shoulders, maybe you end up being angry or resentful or guilty, whatever situation you're going into and you know is going to upset you, it's great to do tapping before you get into that situation.

Not only do you calm yourself and get your energy flowing so that you're more balanced going into it. While you're into maybe you can maintain that sense of personal peace, of being calm when everybody around you is losing their head, and being able to, like I said before, detach emotionally and stand back and see what's going on and being able to make critical decisions without criticizing yourself and everybody else involved.

Jessica: Yes, so important. What a relief. That's a reality, is that sometimes we have a mother-in-law or a certain family obligation or an obligation with work that we don't have immediate power to not show up and not do it. There are certain responsibilities in life, but what an amazing thing to know that if that triggers us we can do the tapping so that we change our relationship with that experience.

Gwenn: Right. You don't get down on yourself and say, "Look what I did, I got angry again, I did it again." You start criticizing yourself for the way you reacted. Tap before you go into that situation, so maybe you're more calm and you don't do something that you beat yourself up about.

Jessica: Gwenn, as we wrap up can you share some key concepts that you want us to take away from this experience? I definitely want to know more about how to move forward and discovering that love and that acceptance at a deeper level.

Gwenn: Sure. It's all about being aware and making choices. The more aware you are of the problem you have, accepting yourself, accepting your situation in life, accepting situations you have to go into, and where you feel that resistance, maybe it's a thought pattern, maybe it's a voice you hear in your head, maybe it's a feeling, tightness, a tension in your body, or maybe it's an emotional reaction, the anxiety or the resentment, whatever it is, use the tapping in that moment to release it.

The tapping that we did with the positive and the negative back and forth, that's a great way to start using tapping when you're first starting out. Even if you just say the same part of the sentence as they used in the setup statement over and over again, it's going to release. It's going to help get the energy flowing. It's going to help calm you.

Accept the things that are happening. Accept the way you react. Use the tapping so that you don't beat yourself up so much about it, and you'll find yourself a lot calmer. You're working with your subtle energy system. Do something, like the mirror exercise like I did with Tammy. Once a day, look in the mirror and say something, "Even though I have to go to this meeting at work, I choose to somehow accept it and get through it calmly." Do a minute or two of tapping.

Or just look in the mirror and say, "I accept myself the way I am right now." The first thing that pops into your head like, "Oh, but I'm wrinkled" or, "Oh, I have the gray hair" or, "Oh I'm too fat," do a minute or two of tapping on that, "Even though I'm too fat, I can learn to accept myself. Even though I'm too fat, I know there's a loveable person inside. Even though I'm too fat, I can be happy just for today."

Whatever works for you, just do a minute or two of tapping and you'll find, maybe not instant transformation like we had with Tammy. We did some very intense Tapping and crying and releasing. That was an intense hour-and-a-half, two-hour session.

Maybe two or three minutes a day looking in the mirror and doing some tapping, over a period of two or three weeks, you're going to find yourself looking in the mirror and saying, "I look good today," or, "Oh, look at that sexy lady looking back at me. Oh, I feel good about myself today." You're going to find the change come up a little—it might be a subtle change, but over time you're going to find that that happens.

I can't emphasize enough just the daily tapping. Even if you say, "I don't know what to say," or, "I don't know what to tap on," at the end of the day if you're stressed wherever you feel that stress in your body, whatever critical voice you hear, just do the tapping and say, "Even though I'm beating myself up for not having enough money to pay the bills, I'm okay. I'll get through this, it's okay, I

choose to feel calm about this situation.” Whatever, and just do a round or two of tapping. It only takes a few minutes.

The effects, they’re only positive. The side effects are positive. The good thing is they’re cumulative. So after two or three weeks, a couple months of doing this, you’re going to really notice. You’re going to look back and say, “Wow, I would have really reacted differently in this situation and look how I stayed calm!” You’re going to notice shifts in your life, energetic shifts, because that’s just the way the universe works.

If you’re going into a real stressful situation, do the tapping before you get into that stressful situation, just to balance your energies and set yourself up for a more pleasurable experience.

Jessica: Fantastic. You’ve really given us so much. I know personally with the statement “I love and accept myself”, you can’t accept yourself and criticize yourself at the same time. The only time we ever criticize ourselves is when we’re focused on the past. This whole idea of loving and accepting ourselves really gives us power in the present moment to make better choices. I feel like throughout this whole interview you really inspired us to take back our power so that if we’re calm and we’re clear we can think better thoughts and make better choices.

But also you’ve given us such relief to be able to honor the way that we feel. I can imagine a lot of people taking a big deep breath, a sigh of relief that they’re allowed to express how they really feel.

Gwenn: Right. Recognize too that the real power in acceptance is that once you completely and totally do accept a situation, it loses its power over you and you gain your power back. Don’t be afraid to just go there and say, “Okay, I accept this is the way it is.” Allow yourself to just fall into that, and you’ll be totally surprised at the difference in the power that you feel because that takes the power away from the past, like you said.

Jessica: Yes. So powerful. Gwenn, thank you so much. This was a real pleasure.

Gwenn: Thank you, Jessica. Keep tapping.