

## **Summary of EFT Research**

*In terms of any “Gold” standard in terms of research validation set out by bodies such as APA for psychotherapy research, EFT epitomizes the very highest level set out by this standard. Over the last 30 years, the EFT research program has systematically covered all the factors set out in optimal models of psychotherapy research.*

The meta-analysis (Johnson et al, 1999) of the four most rigorous outcome studies conducted before the year 2000, showed a larger effect size (1.3) than any other couple intervention has achieved to date. Studies consistently show excellent follow-up results, and some studies show that significant progress continues after therapy. EFT has a body of process research showing that change does indeed occur in the way that the theory suggests. This level of linkage between in-session process and rigorous outcome measurement is unusual in the field of psychotherapy. Subsequent meta-analyses confirm the efficacy of EFT.

EFT is the only model of couple intervention that uses a systematic empirically validated theory of adult bonding as the basis for understanding and alleviating relationship problems. The generalizability of EFT across different kinds of clients and couples facing co-morbidities such as depression and PTSD has been examined and results are consistently positive. Outcome and process research addressing key relationship factors, such as the forgiveness of injuries, has also been conducted with positive results. EFT studies are generally rigorous and published in the best peer reviewed journals.

In brief, EFT researchers can show that, as set out in the Johnson 2004 (3rd edition, 2019) seminal text, *The Practice of Emotionally Focused Couple Therapy: Creating Connection*, EFT works very well, results last, we know HOW it works so we can train therapists to intervene efficiently and we know it works across different populations and problems. It also links congruently to other bodies of research such as those examining the nature of relationship distress and adult attachment processes.

Research includes outcome studies of couples facing trauma and stressful events (the Dalton and MacIntosh studies, and a study on EFT effects on attachment security with an FMRI component.) The FMRI study shows that EFT changes the way contact with a partner mediates the effect of threat on the brain. A short video, *Soothing the Threatened Brain*, summarizing this study can be viewed on [drsuejohnson.com/videos](http://drsuejohnson.com/videos). There are three positive outcome studies of the educational program based on EFT (Hold Me Tight® Program: Conversations for Connection) and the program has been adapted for specific populations such as couples facing heart disease, Christian couples and families with teens. A pilot study has also been completed at the VA in Baltimore on EFT with veteran couples dealing with PTSD.

Completed and ongoing EFT research consistently supports the efficacy of the Emotionally Focused Therapy model.

### **Outcome Research**

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2. Chun-Sing Cheung, J., Suk-Man Leung, G., Lam, Y-M., & Wing-Tung Chan, J. (2022). "[Emotionally focused therapy group intervention for parents of primary school students with parenting stress: an evaluation study in Hong Kong.](#)" *Asia Pacific Journal of Social Work and Development*, DOI: [10.1080/02185385.2022.2092770](#)
3. Tapia-Fuselier, J. L., Ray, D. C., Allan, R., & Reyes, A. G. (2022). "[Emotionally focused therapists' experiences serving interabled couples in couple therapy: An interpretative phenomenological analysis.](#)" *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, advance online publication.
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**Iranian Articles:**

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## **Process & Predictors Research**

1. Myung, H. S., Furrow, J. L., & Lee, N. A. (2022). "[Understanding the emotional landscape in the withdrawer re-engagement and blamer softening EFCT change events.](#)" *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 48(3), 758-776.
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#### **EFT Relationship Education Program Research**

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#### **Reviews of EFT Research / Commentaries**

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## Meta-Analyses

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