

**Jenny DeMarco: Horse Case Study (Includes three sessions)**

**Submitted to Mentor: Betty Moore-Hafter**

**Client: Buddy (Horse)/Caitlin (Trainer/Owner)**

**Client's Background Information**

Buddy is a 6-year-old chestnut thoroughbred horse who has had two owners. His current owner is a close friend of mine named Caitlin. She is a horse trainer/boarder and is very respectful of him, however, Buddy's previous owners had renters on their property who apparently drank alcohol and harassed Buddy in various ways when his owners were not around. Caitlin



was told this individual would go visit Buddy when in his stall while inebriated and do unknown things to him, which may have included scaring him on purpose. These experiences led to Buddy's current disposition; Caitlin describes him as a "worrier" who is frightful of quick movements and slow to trust people and his surroundings. He is very sweet, but Buddy he tends to be jumpy and skittish around adults, unpredictable/fast movements, when someone approaches to touch him, and many new things. The desired outcome of working with Buddy is to help him trust again; to know that "people are good", to trust his rider and what she is going to do when she is on his back, and to know that he is safe and can trust his surroundings.

I did not tap with Caitlin on Buddy's disposition, however I spoke with Caitlin about the fact that this may take multiple sessions considering Buddy has some automatic responses to fear because of his experiences. We discussed the importance of Caitlin speaking her authentic feelings to Buddy out loud - especially if her internal feelings are doubtful or negative. Horses know when the "outside

doesn't match the inside" so the tapping process is much more effective when the rider is honest about their feelings with the horse. Buddy seems to be very intuitive and sensitive so this will be extra important in his case. Caitlin is excellent at training horses, especially those who have had tougher upbringings, because she has a very grounded demeanor and doesn't appear differently than how she is feeling internally.

### **EFT Intervention: Level 1 and Level 2 EFT Skills Utilized**

I was certainly no exception to Buddy's cautiousness. During our first session together, Buddy and I worked in a stall, and I could tell immediately he was nervous and felt a little bit too contained with me, who he didn't know/trust yet. I began by just standing next to Buddy and letting him eat some hay and observing him. This graduated to petting and feeding him some treats while speaking to him about what we were going to be doing. His miniature friend Dewey (who is Buddy's pasture-mate) was at the door the entire time (he likes treats and knows I always carry them) which was slightly helpful, however Buddy remained wary and alert the entire time. I talked to Buddy about how I was going to try and help him with some of his fears and tapping will be new to him. I normally don't feed treats to horses right away when we're in our workspace because they can be a distraction once the horse knows I have them, however I was trying to help Buddy to see me as non-threatening and allow there to be a connection through touch right away. When tapping on a horse, I now generally go from my hand to the following points on the horse: Chest (both sides), Under Arm, Liver point, Bladder Meridian (spine) 2-3 times, Between Eyes, Side of Eye, Under Eye, Nose, Mouth. This is, of course, based on the horse's comfort level. Sometimes I will add in or take away points based on the responses I'm observing from the horse, however our entire first session together was solely about earning Buddy's trust, building rapport, and getting him used to the process without creating more stress on his system.

Buddy and I started our EFT session by me tapping through the set up phrase **on my hand** with *“Even though I can feel jumpy and untrustworthy of people, I deeply and completely love and accept myself.”*

After tapping on my own hand I then asked Buddy if I could touch his chest prior to approaching him. He stepped back but didn't exit my space completely so I attempted to tap on the chest points while using the reminder phrase:

**Chest:** *I don't trust people because I don't know what they're going to do.*

I then attempted to tap “under his arm” - but Buddy backed out of my space completely at this point. I asked if I could touch his head but he had moved into the back corner of the stall. I said “you don't like being touched?” And he further pulled away. He did not want to be touched hardly at all on the first round.

I gave him some treats to draw him back in. I then kept one hand on his body and tested meridian points on different parts of his body by rubbing them slowly while just saying “shhhhh” and “it's okay.” Most of the points he let me at least touch, but I tried his spine during this period and Buddy had a very strong reaction and moved away immediately.

I then stepped back and gave Buddy a moment without me in his space. He stepped forward into mine so we stood there for another moment while he processed by moving his head around and side-eyeing me.

I held my hand out in front of his nose and tried rubbing his chest with the other hand (one side of his chest and then the other) while saying *“humans are trustworthy, I can trust people.”* Buddy allowed me to do this for at least 30 seconds, so I decided to attempt another round of EFT.

Starting with the set up phrase **on my hand**, I tapped *“Even though I learned humans can’t be trusted, I deeply and completely love and accept myself.”*

After I completed the set up phrase three times on my hand, I slowly put a hand out and kept it in front of Buddy’s nose while he let me tap the following meridian points using the reminder phrase:

**Under Arm:** *I learned humans can’t be trusted.*

**Liver point:** *I learned humans can’t be trusted.*

I then tried his Bladder Meridian (Spine) again with *I learned humans can’t be trusted*, just running my hands down it instead of tapping, and Buddy still retreated to the corner of his stall. I then asked if I could tap his head (earlier he was letting me rub his head) but at this time he was not open to it anymore. When I attempted to tap there Buddy’s ears went back, his head went away and came back, and he continued to raise his head high when I tried to reach for it.

I again stepped out of Buddy’s space to the front of the stall where the hay was, and after a few seconds he stepped into my space again. I could tell that he was trusting me more, but Buddy was very sensitive about me touching certain parts of his body when he is not ready for it. At this point Buddy ate hay while I spoke to him and rubbed various points on his body including under arm, chest, liver meridian, the base of his mane, and either side of his spine - which he circled the stall after I did.

For the third round of EFT, I decided to tap only on my own body using this script:

**Side of Hand (three times):** *“Even though I learned that humans can’t be trusted and I’m very skeptical of them, I deeply and completely love and accept myself.”*

**Eyebrow:** *I feel like humans can't be trusted and I'm very skeptical of them.*

**Side of Eye:** *I feel like humans can't be trusted and I'm very skeptical of them.*

**Under Eye:** *I feel like humans can't be trusted and I'm very skeptical of them.*

**Under Nose:** *I feel like humans can't be trusted and I'm very skeptical of them.*

**Chin:** *I feel like humans can't be trusted and I'm very skeptical of them.*

**Collarbone:** *I feel like humans can't be trusted and I'm very skeptical of them.*

**Under Arms:** *I feel like humans can't be trusted and I'm very skeptical of them.*

**Top of Head:** *I feel like humans can't be trusted and I'm very skeptical of them.*

This round of EFT brought Buddy's attention back and he stayed close to me, so I took a deep breath, exhaled at the end of this round, and then gave him a treat. I waited a moment and then began another round on myself. I did this because Buddy seemed to be becoming desensitized to my hands moving from one point to another. When we initially began, he was wary of any hand movement, but the more I tapped on myself, the more he began to realize faster hand movements didn't mean danger.

**Side of Hand (three times):** *"Even though I worry so much about what's going to happen to me, I deeply and completely love and accept myself."*

**Eyebrow:** *I worry so much about what's going to happen to me.*

**Side of Eye:** *I worry so much about what's going to happen to me.*

**Under Eye:** *I worry so much about what's going to happen to me.*

**Under Nose:** *I worry so much about what's going to happen to me.*

**Chin:** *I worry so much about what's going to happen to me.*

**Collarbone:** *I worry so much about what's going to happen to me.*

**Under Arms:** *I worry so much about what's going to happen to me.*

**Top of Head:** *I worry so much about what's going to happen to me.*

Again, Buddy was very attentive and watched me the entire time; he even tried to lip my hand during the set up phrase. I gave him treats when I was done and I decided to attempt to tap on him again.

This time **I started on side of my hand with:** *“Even though when people move quickly, it makes me feel scared, I deeply and completely love and accept myself.”*

As I moved to tap on Buddy this time, his ears went back and he stepped back once while side-eyeing me. I only tapped on the following points with the reminder phrase:

**Chest - Both Sides (One at a time):** *When people move quickly, it makes me feel scared.*

**Under Arm:** *When people move quickly, it makes me feel scared.*

**Liver point:** *When people move quickly, it makes me feel scared.*

**Bladder Meridian (spine) 2-3 Times:** *SKIPPED*

When I got to Buddy's face, he raised his head and was wary, but let me tap a couple times in between his eyes and on the side of his eyes.

**Between Eyes:** *When people move quickly, it makes me feel scared.*

**Side of Eye:** *When people move quickly, it makes me feel scared.*

I didn't push it any further this round and gave Buddy treats as soon as we were done.

I let Buddy and I both process for a few minutes. He stayed in my space and ate hay. I then began another round of EFT starting **on the side of my hand** with:

*“Even though I’m scared of humans because of what happened to me, I deeply and completely love and accept myself.”*

Buddy was nudging my hands while I tapped, most likely looking for treats. When I moved to tap on his chest he immediately got wary but didn’t move away from me/step back this time, so I tapped in the following order:

**Chest - Both Sides (One at a time):** *I’m scared of humans because of what happened to me.*

**Under Arm:** *I’m scared of humans because of what happened to me.*

**Liver point:** *I’m scared of humans because of what happened to me.*

**Bladder Meridian (spine) 2-3 Times:** *I’m scared of humans because of what happened to me.*

**Between Eyes:** *I’m scared of humans because of what happened to me.*

**Side of Eye:** *I’m scared of humans because of what happened to me.*

**Under Eye:** *I’m scared of humans because of what happened to me.*

Buddy shook and blew while I was tapping on his under arm point, and he let me tap on his spine this time! After the spine point, when it was time for me to tap on the face points, Buddy gave me his head but still yanked it upwards when I attempted to tap. He seemed to get impatient with me after a couple tries, so I gave him treats and told him he was a good boy. Buddy stood in the corner, stared at me for a minute, and then moved his nose into the corner.

I let him process for a few minutes and began tapping **on the side of my hand** while he stayed in the corner:

*“Even though it’s so hard for me to trust people because of what happened to me, I deeply and completely love and accept myself.”*

After I began tapping on myself, Buddy came back over and nosed my hands during the set up phrase. After tapping through the set up three times, he let me tap on his chest point.

**Chest - Both Sides (One at a time):** *It’s so hard for me to trust people because of what happened to me.*

When I moved to tap on his under arm point, Buddy immediately started moving away and went back to the corner where he stayed. I tried petting him, but could tell he felt trapped. I then retreated out of his space and continued tapping on myself to finish the round:

**Eyebrow:** *It’s so hard for me to trust people because of what happened to me.*

**Side of Eye:** *It’s so hard for me to trust people because of what happened to me.*

**Under Eye:** *It’s so hard for me to trust people because of what happened to me.*

**Under Nose:** *It’s so hard for me to trust people because of what happened to me.*

**Chin:** *It’s so hard for me to trust people because of what happened to me.*

**Collarbone:** *It’s so hard for me to trust people because of what happened to me.*

**Under Arms:** *It’s so hard for me to trust people because of what happened to me.*

**Top of Head:** *It’s so hard for me to trust people because of what happened to me.*

During this time, Buddy came back over and put his nose in my chest space while I tapped, so I took a deep breath and then gave him a treat after I finished. We stood like this for a bit and I let him stay close in my space. I then began tapping on myself again, beginning with **the side of hand:**



*“Even though my body feels so much stress because I’m always on high alert, I deeply and completely love and accept myself”*

**Eyebrow:** *My body feels so much stress because I’m always on high alert.*

**Side of Eye:** *My body feels so much stress because I’m always on high alert.*

**Under Eye:** *My body feels so much stress because I’m always on high alert.*

**Under Nose:** *My body feels so much stress because I’m always on high alert.*

**Chin:** *My body feels so much stress because I’m always on high alert.*

**Collarbone:** *My body feels so much stress because I’m always on high alert.*

**Under Arms:** *My body feels so much stress because I’m always on high alert.*

**Top of Head:** *My body feels so much stress because I’m always on high alert.*

I took a deep breath and gave Buddy a treat for staying in my space. We stood there for a bit again while I let him process.

By this point, which was towards the end of our session, Buddy was still visibly wary of me but would seek me out in the stall when I walked away. I asked if he wanted to try tapping one more time, but he moved away to the corner of his stall so I walked away to get my notebook. When I did this, Buddy came up behind me, so I asked again if he’d like to tap one more time and he obliged. I began **on the side of my hand** with:

*“Even though big movements and loud noises scare me, I deeply and completely love and accept myself.”*

Buddy stepped back when I was done tapping the last set up phrase, so I asked him “can i tap on you?” He immediately backed up further and moved to the corner, so I completed this round on myself:

**Eyebrow:** *Big movements and loud noises scare me.*

**Side of Eye:** *Big movements and loud noises scare me.*

**Under Eye:** *Big movements and loud noises scare me.*

**Under Nose:** *Big movements and loud noises scare me.*

**Chin:** *Big movements and loud noises scare me.*

**Collarbone:** *Big movements and loud noises scare me.*

**Under Arms:** *Big movements and loud noises scare me.*

**Top of Head:** *Big movements and loud noises scare me.*

We ended our session together with a treat. I pet his neck, told him he is a good boy, and thanked him for trusting me. I then let him out of the stall into the pasture to be with his friend Dewey and feel less contained.

### **Assessment**

This was my second session with a horse who is extremely intuitive and sensitive, but my first session with a horse who was not trustworthy or interested in being touched and felt claustrophobic with me in the stall. Every other horse I've worked with thus far has been much more receptive to tapping. I had no idea what speed I'd be able to go or what the "correct" path was to earn Buddy's trust, but I do believe by the end of the session we had made progress together.

This session required me to be very self aware as to when *I wanted* to do something versus how much I was respecting Buddy's process when *he was ready* to do something. Because of his skittish tendencies, I focused more on the touch and rapport building than I did on trying to find the exact "right" script to use with Buddy. I knew the underlying issues/feelings, so just continued to work on those with various wording throughout the entire session.

By the end of the session, Buddy knew the cadence of the tapping sequences and would sometimes respond accordingly (ie. giving me his head when it was time for his face points). Although it was clear he trusted me more than when we started, he still seemed to feel very contained with me in the stall which may or may not have held us back a bit because he couldn't "escape". I noticed when I let Buddy out of the stall after we had finished, he was much more comfortable with me rubbing between his eyes than when he was contained with me in the stall (most likely because he was able to leave if he felt uncomfortable).

Regarding the tapping points used, eventually Buddy let me slowly tap his chest, and "under his arm" - but was *extremely* sensitive on his back/spine to the point where he would immediately circle in the stall try and get the furthest away from me that he could (even though he did let me tap there once). He also didn't love his face being tapped, but tolerated it moreso than his back/spine throughout the session. I tried to tap on his nose and chin points, but was not able to do so without Buddy trying to mouth my hand or pulling away.

I thought overall I did a good job and it was a productive session, but this was a good lesson in trusting my own intuition, even if I've never tried certain approaches before. For example, I think maybe I would've made the change to outside the stall immediately, rubbed versus tapped, and also not tried the spine more than once in order to build the rapport with Buddy and make sure he didn't feel trapped/pushed. I tried to watch Buddy's cues closely and be respectful, but there were many times throughout this session I questioned whether I was asking too much of him too soon. There is

a fine line with horses because sometimes repetition can habituate them to the movement and they will get over their fear or knee jerk fear reaction.

I suggested to Caitlin that Buddy and I work together outside of a stall in his pasture next time in order for him to feel more comfortable with me. I also let Caitlin know (again) that Buddy will take more than one session, however Caitlin has reported that being afraid of people is slowly dissipating. She also expressed that the back sensitivity could be due to Lymes disease, however she had a veterinarian give Buddy a physical and he seemed to check out.

### **Follow Up**

Since our first session together, Buddy and I have worked together three “official” times. There was one other time that I casually hung out with him and rubbed on his meridian points, just to build more rapport while my daughter took her riding lesson. Caitlin reports that Buddy has made great

strides regarding trusting people, their training together, and his tentativeness/jumpiness. I've included a brief overview of our last two sessions together with some notes because Buddy's progress since our first time together has been absolutely amazing to me and I'm in awe. He seems happier, calmer, and so well adjusted that he is now showing his fun-loving and impish personality. The next two sessions (after the first) we worked on Buddy trying to decrease his internalization of worries, and doing things even though he doesn't really want to or feels resistance to them.

**Our second session was at least a month or so after our first session.** Caitlin put a halter and a lead rope on Buddy and I loosely tied the rope to a fence in his pasture outside. His little friend Dewey was with us. Buddy was noticeably more receptive to me touching him on all of the meridian spots on his body. I was, again, very repetitive with using the same basic script but reordering it in various ways. He did still back up a couple times, but didn't seem upset or stressed out when he couldn't go any further because of the lead rope. All sequences went as follows:

**Side of my hand three times:** *"Even though I internalize all my worries, I accept myself and how I feel."*

**Chest - Both Sides (One at a time):** *I internalize all my worries.*

**Under Arm:** *I internalize all my worries.*

**Liver point:** *I internalize all my worries.*

**Bladder Meridian (spine) 2-3 Times:** *I internalize all my worries.*

**Between Eyes:** *I internalize all my worries.*

**Side of Eye:** *I internalize all my worries.*

**Under Eye:** *I internalize all my worries.*

Here are the other scripts we used in the same order as listed above:

**Set Up:** *“Even though I internalize my worries and sometimes it doesn’t make me feel good, I accept myself and how I feel.”*

**Reminder:** *It doesn’t feel good when I internalize my worries.*

**Set Up:** *“Even though I worry and it causes me to internalize things, I accept myself and how I feel.”*

**Reminder:** *I worry and it causes me to internalize things.*

**Set Up:** *“Even though sometimes it’s hard for me to trust my rider and surroundings, I accept myself and how I feel.”*

**Reminder:** *Sometimes it’s hard for me to trust my rider and surroundings.*

**Set Up:** *“Even though loud noises and quick movements make me nervous still, I accept myself and how I feel.”*

**Reminder:** *Loud noises and quick movements make me nervous still.*

**Set Up:** *“Even though loud noises and quick movements make me nervous still, I accept myself and how I feel, and I am safe.”*

**Reminder:** *Loud noises and quick movements make me nervous still, but the truth is I am safe.*

**Set Up:** *“Even though when i don’t trust my surroundings I internalize those feelings, I accept myself and how I feel, and I am safe.”*

**Reminder:** *When i don’t trust my surroundings I internalize those feelings, but I am safe.*

**Our third session together was a week after our second session.** This session was performed in Buddy’s pasture without a lead or a halter. He had nothing to prevent him from leaving when he did not want to be tapped on, yet he followed me around, remained in my presence, and is now completely comfortable with me moving around him and touching him. Buddy displays so much

affection now and is even impish during our sessions, nudging my hands when I try to write, or nuzzling my neck when I'm not paying attention to him or when I refer to my notes. I had to ask him to respect my space a few times, which was very different than our first time together. Caitlin describes him as "a way less tentative horse" that has a good work ethic but is a little bit resistant to some of the things that she is training him to do, even though he is perfectly capable of doing them. She can't tell if it's because these are new things or if it's his work ethic because he "jumping isn't hard for him but he just doesn't seem that into it." This is what we focused on today.

**Side of my hand three times:** *"Even though sometimes I don't want to be doing what I'm asked to do, I accept myself and how I feel."*

**On Horse:**

**Chest - Both Sides (One at a time):** *Sometimes I don't want to be doing what I'm asked to do.*

**Under Arm:** *Sometimes I don't want to be doing what I'm asked to do.*

**Liver point:** *Sometimes I don't want to be doing what I'm asked to do.*

**Bladder Meridian (spine) 2-3 Times:** *Sometimes I don't want to be doing what I'm asked to do.*

**Between Eyes:** *Sometimes I don't want to be doing what I'm asked to do.*

**Side of Eye:** *Sometimes I don't want to be doing what I'm asked to do.*

**Under Eye:** *Sometimes I don't want to be doing what I'm asked to do.*

Here are the other scripts we used in the same order as listed above with some notes on physical responses Buddy displayed:

**Set Up:** *"Even though I'm learning lots of new things and sometimes it's overwhelming, I accept myself and how I feel."*

**Reminder:** *I'm learning lots of new things and sometimes it's overwhelming.*

Buddy put his nose to his knee after this round as if he is processing learning something new.

**Set Up:** *"Even though sometimes I just don't want to jump, I accept myself and how I feel."*

**Reminder:** *Sometimes I just don't want to jump.*

Buddy shook and blew after this round.

**Set Up:** *"Even though I know I can do it, I just don't want to work, I accept myself and how I feel."*

**Reminder:** *Sometimes I just don't want to jump.*

I continually switch the side I tap on during our session and after this round I noticed Buddy's left side seems a little more sensitive than his right.

**Set Up:** *"Even though jumping isn't hard for me, I'm just not that into it, I accept myself and how I feel."*

**Reminder:** *Jumping isn't hard for me, I'm just not that into it.*

Buddy licked and chewed a lot during and after this round.

**Set Up:** *"Even though learning all of this new stuff makes me tired, I'm just not that into it, I accept myself and how I feel."*

**Reminder:** *Jumping isn't hard for me, I'm just not that into it.*

Buddy displayed a little bit of tail swishing here, and really throughout our session. It seemed like more of a release/processing than anything.



Since our third session together, Caitlin reports that Buddy is so fun to ride and is game for jumping or trying whatever she asks of him.