

A Guided Sabbath “Tapping” Meditation

By Carol M. Bechtel

A Brief Introduction to Tapping

A couple of years ago, a pastor friend of mine introduced me to a method of guided meditation called “tapping.”¹ This technique combines guided meditation with gentle “tapping” on acupressure points. The tapping points are:

- Side of the hand
- Eyebrow point (on either side of the bridge of the nose)
- Side of the eye
- Under the eye
- Under the nose
- Under the mouth
- Collar bone (1 inch under either side)
- Under the arm
- Top of the head

Does this work? I admit, I was skeptical. But you can judge for yourself. Nick Ortner claims that even brief tapping sessions significantly lower the level of the stress hormone cortisol. I find that, at the very least, tapping helps me to connect my body with my brain. The idea that these two are separate is an illusion, but as an academic, I often treat my body as if it is just a means for transporting my brain from place to place. Tapping helps me to ground my thoughts—to connect them with my physical body. That connection alone seems like a significant step toward the “wholeness” that is part of Sabbath peace—*Shabbat shalom*.

Setting Up

If your group is sitting in a circle, you may want to invite participants to turn their chairs around to face outward. In any case, assure people that no one will be looking at them, since everyone will have their eyes closed.

Let people know that you will be guiding them through the tapping points. Explain that as you guide them through the points during the meditation, you invite them to tap gently on the various acupressure points and mentally repeat the phrases you use to guide their meditation.

Consider playing soft, meditative music in the background. Nature sounds are particularly effective—gentle waves or flowing water with bird song, for instance.²

¹ Sometimes this is called “EFT” (Emotional Freedom Technique). One of its most well-known practitioners is Nick Ortner. Here is a link to his book, [The Tapping Solution](#). Here is a link to [a brief video](#) that introduces the technique and demonstrates the tapping points.

² I use the “Sierra Nevada Stream” track in the *Calm* app.

Introduction

Take a deep breath/hold it/release (2x)

Now, tapping on the side of the hand . . .

- Even though I have a lot on my mind and am feeling some stress,
- I choose to open my heart to God’s gift of peace.

- Even though I am unsure about whether this meditation will help,
- I honor those feelings,
- and I give myself permission to try something new.

- Even though I am afraid of what might happen if I stop working so much,
- I am open to accepting God’s gift of Sabbath peace.

Resist³

- Eyebrow point Resist the voice inside that says, “Nothing will really change.”
- Side of the eye Resist the temptation to do “just one more thing.”
- Under the eye Resist the idolatry of thinking, “Only I can fix it.”
- Under the nose Resist burning the candle at both ends.
- Under the mouth Resist the folly of taking more than you need.
- Collar bone Resist the forces that think Sabbath and justice are only for some.
- Under the arm Resist abusing the gift of your one wild and precious life.
- Top of the head Resist. Resist.

Remember

- Eyebrow point Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.
- Side of the eye Remember that Sabbath is more about “yes” than it is about “no.”
- Under the eye Remember that Sabbath is God’s invitation to intimacy.
- Under the nose Remember that Sabbath is blessing not burden.
- Under the mouth Remember to laugh, to love, and to breathe.
- Collar bone Remember the smell of lavender—the warmth of sun on your face.
- Under the arm Remember the song of the birds, the lap of the waves.
- Top of the head Remember. Remember.

³ The 4 “R” words in this guided meditation were suggested by a presentation given by Rev. Jimmie Ray Hawkins for the Presbyterian Women of the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic on June 9, 2022. They were part of a list that also included Ritual, Rhythm, Re-imagine, Resist, and Restore.

Receive

- Eyebrow point Receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- Side of the eye Receive the gift of Sabbath.
- Under the eye Receive permission to stop, to relax, to be.
- Under the nose Receive the gift of time with family and friends.
- Under the mouth Receive release from unrealistic expectations.
- Collar bone Receive relief from endless striving.
- Under the arm Receive God's grace and forgiveness.
- Top of the head Receive. Receive.

Rest

- Eyebrow point Rest in the Lord.
- Side of the eye Rest in the satisfaction of work well done.
- Under the eye Rest in the knowledge of God's ability to care for you.
- Under the nose Rest from the pressure of having to get everything done.
- Under the mouth Rest from the burden of perfection.
- Collar bone Rest from the anger, frustration, and grief that you carry every day.
- Under the arm Rest in the intimate presence of the God who loves you with a love that will not let you go.
- Top of the head Rest. Rest.

Conclusion

Stop tapping and relax.

Take a few deep breaths:

- Breathe in gratitude—exhale stress.
- Breathe in joy—exhale grief.
- Breathe in peace—exhale anxiety.

Hold and be held in the spirit of God's Sabbath peace.

Give people time to come back to the space gently and thank them for participating.