

Energy Psychology's Second Visit to Congress

(For Report of First Visit See "[Energy Psychology's Magical Mystery Tour of the U.S. Congress](#)")

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As a result of our “Magical Mystery Tour” of Congress last March, Dr. Dawson Church, Lieutenant Olli Toukolehto, and I all received letters from Congressman Bob Filner, Chair of the House Committee on Veteran’s Affairs, asking us to testify at a hearing on “Innovative Treatments for PTSD” to be held July 21, 2010. We decided to use the trip to Washington to take care of as

much business as we could. Dawson also asked Wayne Miller, a powerhouse of an advocate for energy healing from the private sector, to join us.

Dawson had attended a conference of about 1,000 people called “The Brain at War.” General James Lukeman of the Marines gave the keynote address. He admonished the researchers to move solutions for PTSD from the research lab to the field *now*, not after years of further research. Dawson ran into General Lukeman in the corridor as the General was on his way to being interviewed by a television station. Dawson said to him:

“We have the solution you are looking for. It is called Emotional Freedom Techniques.” The General listened intently, made some notes, then had to go. Wayne called General Lukeman, miraculously got through to him, and was able to set up the meeting the day before we were to testify at the Congressional Hearing. General Lukeman is the Special Assistant to the Commandant of the Marine Corps.



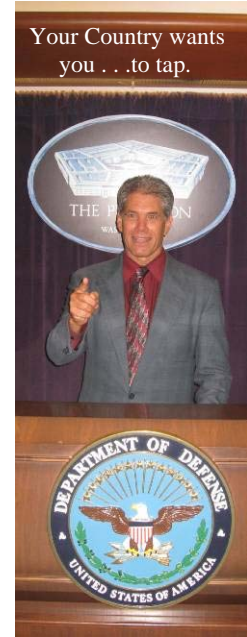
The General had also invited a Navy doctor, Commander Fritz Kass, to the meeting, and the six of us sat around a round table in the General’s office. He got right down to business about his agenda. He knew little about Energy Psychology and wanted us to educate him. The meeting went longer than its scheduled hour. The questions asked were pointed and our answers were frank. Commander Kass was extremely sharp, his questions were penetrating, and his grasp of what we were presenting was instant. I found General Lukeman to have a commanding and very appealing personality, but it was hard for us to read how we were being received. The one revealing moment was when we told about the 120-soldier study being designed at the Walter



Wayne, Dawson, Olli, & David

through the secure areas of the Pentagon we had to pass to get to the exit. I asked him about next steps. He said, “General Lukeman’s level of interest will determine my level of effort.” He went on to say that by the General’s questions and body language, he thought we had made a good impression. But he then pulled out his iPhone and showed us that in the time we were meeting, 15 new messages had come into him. He was telling us that he could not guarantee how much priority our suggestions would receive but also let us know that we had sparked his interest in Energy Psychology and requested us to send him an email remainder as soon as possible.

Reed Army Medical Center comparing Energy Psychology with Cognitive Behavior Therapy. The General said it is easier for him to implement treatments if they have been tested with Marines and led the discussion to the feasibility of second study, replicating the proposed Walter Reed study, but with Marines. The tone of the meeting focused on the damage that warfare does psychologically and how to repair it. After the meeting, Commander Kass escorted us



Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences

From the Pentagon, we went to the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, the military’s medical school facility, where Dawson and Olli had arranged a meeting with people concerned with the Walter Reed study. Eleven people attended: the study’s Principal Investigator, who is a psychiatrist and an Army Lieutenant Colonel at Walter Reed; an Air Force Major who is assigned to a Congressional office; two Congressional staffers; an attorney interested in the social impact of the technique; and Ingrid Dinter and Tracey Middleton, both Energy Psychology practitioners who have been extraordinarily successful with veterans suffering severe PTSD, with prisoners, and with psychotic homeless people who no one before has been able to help substantially. One of Ingrid’s statements was to be quoted numerous times by the Congressional staffers over the next 24 hours. She said that of the hundreds of PTSD sufferers she has worked with, she has never seen it not work. Dawson provided an introduction and overview and then I did a brief PowerPoint presentation that dramatically compares the improvements produced by the standard treatment for PTSD (Cognitive Behavior Therapy), with those of Energy Psychology (it is like 40% vs. 90%).

Anyone seeing it would wonder why in the world the mental health field has not been running to

embrace Energy Psychology. We wonder about that as well. The PowerPoint research presentation was then backed with a 10-minute excerpt from Eric Huurre's powerful full-length documentary on the application of EFT with combat veterans, [Operation Emotional Freedom](#). I noticed that several people had teared up and the combination of the compelling research data and the impact of seeing veterans who had been suffering with severe PTSD talking of their relief and sense of having been cured four days later set a powerful tone for the remainder of the meeting. We went on for more than two hours, discussing every aspect of the study, from the selection criteria to the strangeness of the method to the ethics of providing a treatment that makes it possible for people who are too damaged emotionally to be in combat to suddenly be able to be redeployed. By the end, the Colonel, who did not enter the meeting as a strong advocate of Energy Psychology, seemed to feel respectful of and supported by everyone in the room, enthused about the study, and ready to design it with greater confidence and sense of purpose.



The Hearing about to begin

felt – though the Amazon reviewers are mixed with 522 people giving it 5 stars as of today and 544 giving it 1 star, but I digress). More than 100 people crowded into the room, with the Committee and the invited guests sitting at a “round table” which was actually a rectangle made of 6 tables that seated 40 people shoulder to shoulder. Around the table were the Committee and 5 members of Congress not on the Committee who came in and out of the hearing, several high ranking administrative staff in the Veterans’ Administration and the Department of Defense, and eighteen of us invited to talk about our “innovative treatments.” These included hyperbaric therapy chambers that can cost up to a million dollars each, virtual reality machines that recreate the combat experience for the purpose of intense exposure therapy, service dogs for victims of PTSD, the use of Omega 3 Fatty Acids, and a peer-support program where veterans help veterans. We had the quickest, cheapest best researched, and most effective method at the table.

The next day was the House Committee on Veteran's Affairs hearing on Innovative Treatments for PTSD, scheduled for 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. The room was slightly larger than a basketball court with 50-foot arched ceilings, not ornate but a reminder of how much beauty has been put into our capitol (Donna and I just finished listening to *The Lost Symbol* while driving – must reading for anyone interested in energy healing, spiritual growth, or Washington, D.C., we



The Meeting Being Called to Order

But it took forever for it to get to be our turn, largely it seems by random seating. So we had only two minutes each to present our case (me, Dawson, and Wayne, who substituted for Olli – see below) and there was no time for questions or discussion. Ever try to present, in two minutes, something as strange as tapping on the skin to treat PTSD to skeptical Congress members who are accustomed to being “lobbied” by most of the people they meet? Here is what I said:



“Thank you Chairman Filner and Committee members for this opportunity to describe what appears to be a significant advance in the treatment of PTSD. The reason that people cannot *talk* themselves out of or *will* themselves out of PTSD is that, as this discussion has highlighted, PTSD literally changes the brain. The parts of the brain that are designed to deal with danger become overwhelmed and the brain

wiring is damaged. This damage causes daily life to be intruded upon by episodes of vividly reliving the traumatic events in ways that make it very difficult to function normally.

“Repairing the wiring so people can regain control of their lives has been a formidable challenge for the mental health field. Talk therapy and insight-oriented psychotherapy have been notably unsuccessful in treating PTSD. A new class of therapies that combines the most effective *psychological* methods with *physical* interventions that impact the brain’s electrical system is, however, producing strong results. One of these is called Energy Psychology, with EFT, Emotional Freedom Techniques, being its most popular format. In EFT, acupuncture points are stimulated by tapping on them. No needles or other equipment is required. The procedure turns off the threat response and brings the wiring in the brain to the condition it was in before the traumatic events. Part of the resistance to the acceptance of EFT is that the reported results seem too good to be true. Crackpot or genius? – as Chairman Filner succinctly summarized the dilemma. Nine evidence-based studies – cited in your notes – now support earlier field reports that the approach is exceptionally rapid, potent, and thus cost-effective in treating PTSD and that the outcomes are lasting. Acupuncture point stimulation has led to the most powerful protocol for treating PTSD I have encountered in my more than three decades as a clinical psychologist. Thank you.”



Dawson's Poignant Testimony



Wayne Questioning Other Speakers

Dawson provided an overview of the research and of our unsuccessful efforts to break into the VA and DOD, challenging the government to open itself to an approach that is already in use, proven, cost-effective, and available. Wayne had already made himself a presence by asking the most astute questions and making the most astute comments of anyone else in the room. It seemed that half the people that spoke subsequently referred back to his observations. His presentation ended our trilogy with a strong challenge to actively utilize Energy Psychology.



Wayne's Emphatic Testimony



Sandra Wiseman, the Congressional Staffer to Congressman Dan Lungren, has been our guardian angel during both our visits to Washington. She sat through the entire hearing along with two other staffers from the Congressman's office. She was upset that we got the short end of the stick in terms of presentation time, but as she did again and again during our first visit to Congress, she managed to turn what seemed bad news into good news (more below). Her concerns were actually echoed

by the Committee Chair, Bob Filner, an extremely likeable politician, formerly a university professor, whose concern for veterans is enormous. After the session, I went up to him to thank him for inviting me and for hearing us. He had seemed very engaged as all three of us spoke about Energy Psychology and he was the single person in the room we most wanted to impress. He was very frank with me. He said that he felt I had made very important points, but he was watching the VA and Department of Defense administrative staff while I was speaking. He said their expressions didn't change. They didn't take notes. He said that we were watching the problem of innovation not being implemented being played out right in front of our eyes. He wondered out loud what had to be done to make an impression. I sensed that while I may not have gotten through to them, he intended to. He made a point of saying he would read the material I had, like all the speakers, presented to the Committee.

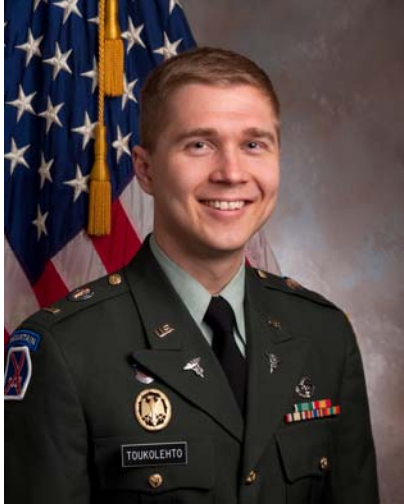


Congressman Filner Confiding to David about the Meeting

As far as we know, the hearing was the first time Energy Psychology or Energy Medicine has ever been talked about on Capitol Hill in an official forum. Even if the VA and DOD staff did not seem responsive, we at least planted seeds as it was probably the first time that most of them ever heard of Energy Psychology.



Dawson pointedly asking the Committee what we need to do since 15 years of approaching the VA, providing outcome research, offering services, and applying for grants have resulted only in closed doors.



As the meeting ended, Olli appeared. He had gotten clearance to testify at the hearing, going through his normal chain of command. But at the 11th hour, he was told that someone higher was ordering that he not testify. Since speaker slots were precious and hard to come by, we took the opportunity of having Wayne take his place, and Wayne certainly put in a stellar performance. But after the hearing, Sandra made a point of introducing Olli to Congressman Filner, explaining that Olli declined the direct request from the Congressional Committee not because he was too busy to testify or did not want to testify, but because he was ordered not to testify. This did not seem to please the Congressman. He invited Olli to set up a lunch date with him. This is an ideal outcome from our point of view. Rather than to have the two minutes Olli would have been allotted to tell about his own experience overcoming PTSD using Energy Psychology, he will have an entire lunch. And he will also be presenting the Congressman with a copy of [*The Promise of Energy Psychology*](#), as well as a reminder of our brief discussion.



The suffering of our veterans is an issue about which both parties feel strongly and can work together.

Before we could catch our breaths, however, Sandra – being one of the most thorough and proactive staff members I’ve ever witnessed in any organization – was whisking us away from the hearing as soon as she had set things up between Olli and Congressman Filner. She wanted an initiative to happen now on the Senate side. Within minutes we were entering the Hart Senate Office Building and ushered into the offices of the ranking member of the Senate Committee on Veterans’ Affairs, Senator Richard Burr. Jonathan Towers has been a Senior Policy Advisor to the Committee for more than a decade and Sandra had done enough

homework prepping him (she had, for instance, shown him the film clip of EFT being used with Veterans) that he was willing to informally meet with us. He looked on intensely but expressionless as we made our case. But then Dawson offered to give Olli a session on the anger he was feeling that his superiors had forced him to reverse his having accepted the invitation to testify at the hearing. Watching Olli go from a self-reported level of anger at 7 down to a 0, with laughter, in a few minutes, seemed to turn the tide. From that point on, Mr. Towers seemed eager to learn more, to contact his colleagues on the House side who had organized the hearing, and to see what he could do to set things into motion.



Senior Policy Advisor Jonathan Towers Listening



Dawson providing Olli with a tapping session. Mr. Towers was looking on with fascination.

What does it all mean? I don’t know. I’m a simple clinician dedicated to alleviating suffering, raising consciousness, and optimizing inner peace and joy. I can only be humbled and impressed by the enormity of the governmental systems that impact millions, tens of millions, and hundreds of millions of lives. They do not change their course readily. But neither do we as individuals. Perhaps this tap, tap, tapping on the wheels of government will nudge Energy Psychology closer to the “tipping point” I’ve been predicting these past several years. Perhaps not. All four of us on this odyssey to Washington felt we were being directed by larger forces and a passionate concern about unnecessary suffering. We’ve played our hand and await the next.