

**Excerpts from a first session with Phil and Julie, caught in a
withdraw/withdraw cycle:**

Phil: What is this EFT supposed to do anyway? Julie insisted we give therapy one more try, and I'm curious how this therapy will be any different than the other attempts we have made. As you can tell I am a bit reluctant to being here. We are doing pretty well on our own these days.

Emily, (therapist): I hear that the two of you have endured a lot of difficult experiences together and a lot of hard times before you met one another as well, and that you are both pleased with the good point you have been able to reach in your relationship to-day. I am also hearing that Julie—and may-be you too Phil, have some dreams and hopes of how much better things could be for you at times -- that there are times you get stuck in a kind of distancing dance where neither one is really reaching out to the other - sometimes for days?

Phil: True – we don't always feel quite relaxed or safe enough to be open....

Emily: I'm hoping that we can be curious together to discover how you get stuck in a kind of cycle that blocks you from having the safe and open relationship you want to have --

Julie: It is a cycle alright – a loop we get caught in -- I see he is looking upset - - I freeze -- he's gone off to his books/movies -- and I retreat to my music. I have so much work to do anyway – but I hate that he seems upset with me. We exist together like a frozen lake. That is the safest way to do it.

Phil: Well, it has been much better lately. We have this new dog. We enjoy the dog a lot...It's not a frozen lake. We have calm waters. I don't pull away as much as I used to, but it's true she is busy, busy with her music. I try to give her all the space she needs.

Emily: So, together we are going to explore this “loop” as you call it -- that you both get sucked in -- We are going to examine how you each move in this dance that somehow pulls the other one in as well. We want to rewind this automatic loop or dance in slow motion, so we get a real good look at the steps each one of you takes. Then -- and you are both musicians, so you will understand when I say, -- we want to replay your typical dance and listen to the background music each one of you is moving to in this dance. The “music” is like your inner emotional experience – what you hear in your minds and in your bodies that moves you to pull away from the other one.

We begin with noting *when* this loop begins to happen. I hear there are good moments between you, times you enjoy each other and feel lots of joy in being together. Then there are these times you get sucked into a distancing dance...Can you each tell me *when* you hear the music which pulls you into your typical moves of pulling back from one another?