

The Effect of EFT (Emotional Freedom Techniques) on Psychological Symptoms in Addiction Treatment

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Abstract

Objective: Studies have found a frequent co-occurrence of psychological symptoms such as anxiety and depression with addiction. This pilot study examined the effect of EFT (Emotional Freedom Techniques), a widely practiced form of energy psychology, on 39 adults self-identified with addiction issues attending an EFT weekend workshop targeting addiction.

Measure: Subjects completed the SA-45, a well-validated questionnaire measuring psychological distress. It has two global scales assessing intensity and breadth of psychological symptoms and 9 symptom subscales such as anxiety and depression. The SA-45 was administered before and after the workshop. Twenty-eight participants completed a 90-day follow-up.

Results: A statistically significant decrease was observed in the two global scales and all but one of the SA-45 subscales after the workshop, indicating a reduction in psychological distress. Improvements on intensity and breadth of psychological symptoms, and anxiety and obsessive-compulsive subscales were maintained at the 90-day follow-up.

Conclusion: These findings suggest EFT may be an effective adjunct to addiction treatment by reducing the severity of general psychological distress. This study is limited by the small sample size, lack of a control group, and exploratory nature.