

## THE EMOTIONAL FREEDOM TECHNIQUE METHOD STRATEGY IN REDUCING ANXIETY

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### Abstrak

Kesehatan mental merupakan aspek penting dalam mewujudkan kesehatan secara menyeluruh. Data dari berbagai survei menunjukkan adanya peningkatan jumlah masyarakat yang mengalami gangguan mental, diantaranya kecemasan. Tingginya kecemasan masyarakat diperlukan suatu manajemen untuk menurunkan tingkat kecemasan melalui tindakan Emotional Freedom Technique. Tujuan kegiatan pengabdian masyarakat adalah meningkatkan pengetahuan dan mendemostrasikan Emotional Freedom Technique dalam menurunkan kecemasan. Metode kegiatan pengabdian masyarakat ini mencakup edukasi mengenai tingkat kecemasan, manajemen kecemasan dan demonstrasi tindakan Emotional Freedom Technique. Pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan pemberian angket state trait anxiety inventori quetionare pre-test sebelum dan setelah dilaksanakan tindakan. Hasil kegiatan ini didapatkan tingkat kecemasan partisipan sebelum diberikan Emotional Freedom Technique sebagian besar berada pada kategori cemas sedang sebesar 16 partisipan (57%) dan setelah diberikan Emotional Freedom Technique sebagian besar pada kategori normal sebesar 15 partisipan (54%). Evaluasi dari pelaksanaan kegiatan pengabdian masyarakat ini menunjukkan pentingnya pemahaman kepada masyarakat mengenai kecemasan dan tindakan Emotional Freedom Technique dalam menurunkan kecemasan.

**Kata kunci:** Kecemasan, Emotional Freedom Technique

### Abstract

Mental health is an essential aspect of realizing overall health. Data from various surveys show an increase in the number of people experiencing mental disorders, including anxiety. High public anxiety requires management to reduce the level of anxiety through the action of the Emotional Freedom Technique. Community service activities are to increase knowledge and demonstrate the Emotional Freedom Technique in reducing anxiety. This method of community service activities includes education about anxiety levels, anxiety management and demonstrations of the Emotional Freedom Technique. Data were collected by administering a state-trait anxiety inventory questionnaire pre-test before and after the action. The results of this activity showed that the participants' anxiety levels before being given the Emotional Freedom Technique were mostly in the moderate anxiety category of 16 participants (57%). After being given the Emotional Freedom Technique, most were in the normal category of 15 participants (54%). Evaluation of the implementation of community service activities shows the importance of understanding the community about anxiety and the Emotional Freedom Technique's actions in reducing anxiety

**Keywords:** 3-6 keywords

### PENDAHULUAN

Mental health is an important aspect in realizing overall health. Mental health is a state in which every individual realizes their potential by being able to overcome the pressures of life, work productively and be able to contribute to the environment. Mental health must be maintained both physically and mentally. At this time, it is getting more attention, adults and even adolescents are among the groups that are prone to mental disorders or depression. Symptoms that arise are irritability, feeling hopeless, low self-esteem, feeling anxious and worrying excessively. The anxiety of the people in Indonesia has been examined by (Kurniawan & Sulistyarini, 2017) found that the age group 20-29 years and 40-49 years experience higher anxiety than those over the age of 50 years. In addition, women tend to be more anxious than men.

Based on data from the Ministry of Health (2019) anxiety disorders are ranked second from mental disorders in Indonesia. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Health (2021) found that 18,373 people experienced anxiety disorders, more than 23,000 experienced depression and around 1,193 people attempted suicide (Antara, 2021). As much as 76.1%, people experience anxiety with the category of

anxious and very anxious about various aspects of life. Starting from the economic aspect, employment, religion, education and social interaction. In research (Rusman et al., 2021), economic anxiety that occurs due to dismissal from the workplace, reduced family income and increased spending causes factors that cause anxiety. Women experience more anxiety, namely 77% compared to men. If left unchecked, it will have a negative impact on anxiety disorders, which can reduce the body's immunity so that it is susceptible to disease (Nepon et al., 2010).

Anxiety management is needed which is an effort to deal with disturbing anxiety but does not mean eliminating anxiety, but reducing it so that it does not cause someone's obstacles in living their life (Putri, Andini Permana kartika; Septiawan, 2020). Several interventions were carried out to overcome anxiety, one of which was the Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT). EFT is a meridian-based psychological therapy that relieves the psychological condition, anxiety. This intervention is an easy, cost-free and effective intervention for reducing anxiety. In recent studies, EFT has been shown to be effective in alleviating anxiety (Lataima et al., 2020). With the EFT training, it is hoped that it will be able to generate enthusiasm, increase the ability to overcome various problems and relieve anxiety. The purpose of community service activities is to increase knowledge and practice EFT in order to reduce the anxiety experienced by the community.

## **METODE**

The community can receive assistance from health cadres. In order to promote health, health professionals can use positive emotional reinforcement. This method of community service activities includes education regarding levels of anxiety, anxiety management and the implementation of Emotional Freedom Technique actions as well as action trials. The data collection was carried out by administering the state trait anxiety instrument inventory questionnaire pre-test questionnaire before the action was carried out and giving the post-test questionnaire instrument after the action was carried out. The focus of this activity is to provide understanding and be able to practice giving cadres skills in anxiety management in the community.

## **HASIL DAN PEMBAHASAN**

The steps taken in community service activities include:

### **1. Preparation Stage**

The preparatory stage was carried out by the PKM team, which included lecturers and students. Coordination activities are carried out by writing a letter of willingness to partner with the head of the RT/RW in community service activities. After receiving a letter of intent from the head of the RT/RW, determine where the activity will be held and distribute invitations to the health cadres. Students prepare all the necessary tools and accommodations for organizing community service activities.

### **2. Work stage**

Conduct a pretest where before carrying out the activity, distribute questionnaires to all participants (health cadres) regarding the level of anxiety. The questionnaire used is the state-trait anxiety inventory questionnaire. Then the lecturer provides material regarding the definition of anxiety, the physical and psychological symptoms experienced, the level of anxiety, and the impact it causes. After the cadres understand anxiety, then the health cadres are given independent action Emotional Freedom Technique. Each healthcare practices the Emotional Freedom Technique independently. The cadres carried out the activities enthusiastically and in an orderly manner. After the action was practiced, the PKM team conducted a posttest to determine whether there were differences in the level of anxiety experienced by health cadres after being given the Emotional Freedom Technique.

## Results

Table 1 Characteristics of participants based on age, Kebonsari District, Surabaya

Characteristic	Participant	
	f	%
Age		
26-35 years	3	20
36-45 years	12	20
46-55 years	13	47
Gender		
Man	3	11
Woman	25	89

Table 2 Characteristics of participants based on anxiety levels before and after being given the Emotional Freedom Technique, Kebonsari District, Surabaya

Tingkat Kecemasan	Pre-test		Post-test	
	n	(%)	n	(%)
Normal	0	0	15	54
Mild anxiety	3	11	12	43
Moderate anxiety	16	57	1	3
Heavy Anxiety	8	29	0	0
Panic	1	3	0	0

In this community service activity, the results of demographic characteristics based on age and gender were obtained. Table 1 shows the distribution of participants based on age; most of them aged 46-55 years amounted to 13 respondents (47%), with female sex of 25 participants (89%). Table 2 shows the anxiety level of the participants before being given the Emotional Freedom Technique, most of them were in the moderate anxiety category of 16 participants (57%), and after being given the Emotional Freedom Technique, most of them were in the normal category of 15 participants (54%)

Based on Table 1, the sex group shows that almost all participants were female, 25 participants (89%) and three male participants (11%). These results found that gender can affect anxiety in the elderly, where women experience anxiety twice as much as men. Women with hormonal influences are more likely to experience changes in feelings and are less able to maintain emotional stability (Redjeki S, 2019). Women are more likely to keep their feelings hidden and rarely express their problems, so they tend to be emotionally unstable, especially in everyday life. (Wongpy & Virilia, 2020).

Several factors influence the occurrence of anxiety, including age and gender. Most participants were 46-55 years (47%). According to the Ministry of Health, those aged 46-55 are considered pre-elderly. The elderly must face physical, cognitive, emotional, social, and sexual changes. Problems with feelings include anxiety or anxiety. Based on the results of the distribution of the state-trait anxiety inventory questionnaire given prior to the implementation of the Emotional Freedom Technique, it was found that almost half of the participants were in the moderate anxiety category of 16 participants (57%). The emergence of moderate anxiety is marked by physical symptoms (restlessness, restlessness, and difficulty sleeping) and psychological symptoms (impaired attention and concentration, emotional changes). In a state of moderate anxiety, the individual focuses on important things and overrides others, and can only solve problems with the help of others. Such conditions are stressors that must be adopted by the elderly and cause anxiety (Ridayati et al., 2020).

Community service activities regarding implementing nursing students and the general public in the Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) as a management of anxiety. This activity aims to increase knowledge and practice to relieve anxiety experienced by the community. This activity is packaged as lectures and hands-on practice carried out on March 17, 2023 at Balai RW.01, Kebonsari sub-district, Jambangan sub-district. The participants in this activity were health cadres in the Kebonsari sub-district. The female cadres were very active in participating in the activities. It was seen that the health cadres were very enthusiastic about asking and practicing when the Emotional Freedom Technique was given. They followed the activity from start to finish in an orderly manner.

After the Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) action was given, participants redistributed the questionnaire to determine the level of post-intervention anxiety. Based on Table 2, it was found that the majority were in the normal category of 15 participants (54%) and 12 participants (43%) had mild anxiety, and 1 participant (3%) had moderate anxiety. EFT is a modern therapy for dealing with emotional problems and anxiety. The thing that is emphasized in this method is an unstable emotional condition that disrupts the body's energy system. The effect of giving EFT in a comfortable and calm environment is proven to reduce anxiety levels. This is in accordance with the opinion (Austrianti, rifka; Andayani, 2021) The Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) is a relaxation technique that uses tapping (light tapping) with the fingers on 18 points of the body's meridians which relaxes the blood vessels so that the flow of energy in the body is smooth and emotions become stable.



### 3. Final stage

This stage is to evaluate the implementation of community service activities. Evaluation of this activity All health cadres are orderly in participating in this activity from start to finish. Cadres can carry out EFT actions independently. After the EFT action, the health cadres felt relaxed and could practice again to be taught to residents. The form of EFT implementation activities can provide an understanding to the public regarding anxiety management that must be continuously carried out and improved. This is because universities have a moral obligation to carry out the tri dharma of higher education, one of which is to organize community service programs. In addition, this program is a means for Higher Education to be able to make a real contribution to society.



### SIMPULAN

Kegiatan pengabdian masyarakat ini dapat meningkatkan pengetahuan dan pemahaman para kader kesehatan dalam pencegahan dan menurunkan kecemasan dengan metode Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT). Peningkatan dan pemahaman para kader kesehatan dilakukan dengan penyampaian materi antara lain definisi, tanda dan gejala, serta pencegahan serta cara mengatasi kecemasan dilanjutkan dengan demonstrasi Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT).

### SARAN

This community service activity can increase the knowledge and understanding of health cadres in preventing and reducing anxiety with the Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) method. Improvement

and understanding of health cadres are carried out by delivering material including definitions, signs, and symptoms, as well as prevention and ways to deal with anxiety, followed by demonstrations of the Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT).

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