

# APPLICATION OF EMOTIONAL FREEDOM TECHNIQUE TO REDUCE ANXIETY IN PATIENTS WITH GANGRENE WOUNDS

By

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## ABSTRACT

Background: Psychological problems such as anxiety are one of the most common problems in the world. Non-pharmacological interventions are one of the most needed treatments to help patients overcome their anxiety, one of which is the emotional freedom technique (EFT). EFT can be effectively learned through health counseling to increase knowledge and self-help skills. Objective: It is expected that this service will be able to increase the knowledge and skills of the community in controlling anxiety. Methods: Conducted through direct face-to-face meetings for the delivery of health information by the speaker at one of the participants' homes. Results: The target group can understand the concept of anxiety disease and can apply emotional freedom technique therapy independently as a treatment. There is also a significant change in the level of anxiety in the target group after being given emotional freedom technique therapy

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

A large bacterial infection or insufficient blood flow can lead to the death of body tissue, a disease known as gangrene. When large arterial blood vessels embolize, causing tissue necrosis and stopping blood flow to certain areas of the body, gangrene develops in people with diabetes mellitus. Neuropathy and vascular disease in the foot area can lead to gangrene. Rosa et al, (2019) states that gangrene appears as an open wound in the leg area and progresses to local tissue death, which is characterized by a change in skin color to blue, red, purple, or even black. (Rosa et al., 2019). In Indonesia, there is a 15% incidence of diabetic gangrene and a 30% amputation rate. It is proven that 10% of gangrene patients experience recurrence, and 68% of diabetic gangrene patients are reported to be male.

Inadequate treatment of gangrene can lead to vascular insufficiency, which impairs tissue oxygenation and perfusion. When necrosis (tissue death) first affects only one site, it disrupts supply and oxygenation elsewhere. If treatment is not received, this can lead to more severe tissue damage, ongoing infection, and inflammation in other tissues. According to estimates from the American Diabetes Association, amputation is required in 24% of patients suffering from diabetic gangrene (Care, 2019). After treatment, patients with diabetes and amputation-related gangrene have a 5-year survival rate of 40-48% (Huang et al., 2019). Gangrene is a serious condition that reduces the quality of life of sufferers, so proper treatment is required. Amputation has been shown to be an effective therapy for gangrene in a number of trials.

Each degree of wound will have a different impact based on the scale, depth, and severity of the infection (Setiawan et al., 2020). According to the Ministry of Health (2020), a. Stage 1: loss or damage to the skin in the epidermal layer or abrasions; b. Stage 2: loss or damage to the skin starting from the epidermis layer to the upper dermis layer; c. Stage 3: loss or damage to the skin starting from the lower dermis layer to the subcutis layer; d. Stage

4: loss or damage to the entire skin layer to muscle and bone (Kementerian Kesehatan, 2021). These are four categories divided into injury levels based on the description of the injury. Every step of the injury is painful. Anxiety triggered by severe pain adversely affects the immune system and heart.

Anxiety can increase pain perception, and pain can also cause fear. The relationship between pain and anxiety is complex (Yulendasari et al., 2022). This is in line with Gill's statement (1990) cited by Ernawati (2010) that pain is evidence that unpleasant stimuli can activate and affect feelings (Hartiti & Hadi, 2010). Anxiety can be managed without the use of medication. Some of the therapies used include relaxation, hypnosis, movement and position change, cutaneous massage, hydrotherapy, hot/cold therapy, music, acupressure, aromatherapy, imagination techniques, distraction and emotional freedom technique (EFT) (Hakam et al., 2010).

Several studies have shown that emotional freedom technique (EFT) is effective for overcoming various disorders such as anxiety, reducing the risk of physical health problems (such as blockage of blood vessels, heart problems) and psychologically can prevent the occurrence of mental illness or disorders (Lataima et al., 2020). Emotional freedom technique (EFT), also known as tapping therapy, was developed by Gary Craig. It is a therapy that quickly, gently and easily releases negative emotions that are believed to be the source of problems and pain. Emotional freedom technique (EFT) does not use needles, but rather harmonizes the body's energy system at the body's meridian points by tapping with the fingertips. (Baker et al., 2009). The purpose of this service is to educate participants about the benefits of emotional freedom techniques for gangrenous wound patients who experience anxiety.

## 2. METHODS

Health education techniques were used in the service activity to learn, explain and help participants, namely the target group of people in Cimenyan, Banjar City, who suffer from gangrenous wounds with anxiety to apply treatment. For five participants, this health education was delivered in one day. In the initial session, anxiety levels were measured, to determine the anxiety of the participants before education and therapy. Furthermore, the first presentation of service material was given related to the concept of anxiety disease accompanied by a brainstorming session. This session is carried out so that the counseling process becomes more active and participants are able to understand their illness. After that, the speaker gave a second presentation related to the concept of emotional freedom techniques to control participants' anxiety. After exemplifying how to do the emotional freedom technique by the speaker, participants were asked to try it independently with 3x repetition. The presentation was carried out using leaflet media and direct therapy teaching. The last session is a discussion and re-measurement of the patient's anxiety level, the results of which will be compared between the anxiety level before and after education and therapy.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The public needs more health education programs on the use of emotional freedom approaches to reduce anxiety in gangrene patients, especially those who feel anxious, depressed, and hopeless about their illness. Based on information provided by the International Diabetes Federation (IDF), 19.5 million people in Indonesia have been diagnosed with diabetes, and 15% of them suffer from gangrene. One initiative that can improve people's understanding and behavior at the individual, group, or community level is health education (Nurpratiwiningsih & Kurniawan, 2021). On January 14, 2024 a health counseling program was held at the residence of one of the participants in the Cimenyan Banjar neighborhood. People with diabetes mellitus who have gangrene wounds and are worried are all participants in the program.

As anxiety is the most common psychiatric condition worldwide, there is a need for appropriate and affordable treatment (König et al., 2019). WHO reports that the incidence of mental illness is increasing every year. Anxiety is the most common mental condition, and is often characterized by extreme anxiety or panic. Bipolar disorder, depression, alcohol and drug abuse, and bipolar disorder are the next most common mental disorders. The danger of pain to one's bodily integrity is one of the things that affects anxiety (Stuart, 2019). Patients feel pain, which is due to the presence of a wound, either closed or open, in a certain area of the body. Burns, surgical wounds, gangrene wounds and fractures are some of the wounds that often cause concern. Chronic wounds known as gangrenous wounds reduce quality of life, increase morbidity and mortality, and cause anxiety. The anxiety problems that patients experience over a long period of time, often years, may be caused by gangrenous wounds (Tambunan et al., 2023). Patients with gangrenous wounds who are in the process of wound care often complain of pain and anxiety (Prihati & Wirawati, 2018 ; Tambunan et al., 2023).

The method in this service was delivered in the form of leaflets and direct therapy regarding anxiety and the application of emotional freedom technique therapy. During the implementation of the activity, the speaker measured anxiety to see the difference before and after therapy. Participants seemed very enthusiastic to receive and understand the material, especially when participants were asked to do emotional freedom technique independently because

according to participants this therapy was new. Emotional freedom technique therapy is very easy to do, only tapping on the specified energy points using 2 fingers, is free of charge and has a calming impact on participants.

Patients with injuries may have lower anxiety levels when their anxiety is managed with non-pharmacological treatment. EFT is a meridian-based psychological treatment that uses tapping stimulation on certain meridian points with fingers to relieve psychological and psychosomatic disorders. Providing emotional freedom technique (EFT) therapy with a duration of approximately 30 minutes with 5 stages, namely preparation, the set up, the sequence, the 9 gammut procedure, and repeating the sequence. Tap these energy points with your finger in a specific order and with a specific number of taps. Energy has proven to be a promising new therapeutic approach in psychology that can alleviate psychological and physiological problems and improve overall quality of life (Babamahmoodi et al., 2015). Because at each point in the emotional freedom technique (EFT) can release serotonin which is believed to give a sense of comfort and pleasure in the amygdala (Latifah & Ramawati, 2014).

The working principle of emotional freedom technique (EFT) is that the body's meridian points are where energy flows throughout the body, and are interrupted when a person faces emotional obstacles such as anger, disappointment, sadness, worry, stress, trauma, and so on. And to remove these emotional obstacles, we need to correct the disruption of flow at the meridian points by tapping the fingers in a certain way according to the emotional freedom technique (EFT). The advantages of emotional freedom technique (EFT) are good for emotional and physical health because it does not hurt, can be for anyone, does not use drugs, can be used as a single intervention or with other techniques, and can be done anywhere. In addition, emotional freedom technique (EFT) is suitable for everyone because it does not require a long time (years/months), does not reveal the full experience and does not require any surgical procedures or medication.

Emotional freedom technique (EFT) is proven to be effective in overcoming psychosocial problems. Emotional freedom technique (EFT) is able to relieve stress and promote general relaxation, release and transform painful, uncomfortable, or negative emotions such as anxiety, sadness, anger, guilt, frustration, and others. In the set-up stage, the spoken sentences systematically organize the problem to be solved. Set-up sentences use cognitive (self-acceptance) and exposure (exposing negative experiences) approaches. Instead of avoiding the negative experience, at this stage the client is confronted with the negative experience, asked to recall and expose the mind to the traumatizing memory repeatedly and pair it with self-acceptance to reduce psychological distress.

Based on the results of the counseling activities, it was found that the pre-test anxiety level of the participants was very diverse, ranging from mild anxiety to severe anxiety. Many participants considered that the condition was not a problem because these feelings had been felt for years. Participants only focus on physical treatment, not psychological. When given direct exposure, participants only understood their own conditions. Participants were given an understanding of the meaning, causes, consequences, symptoms and treatment of anxiety. For almost 30 minutes the speaker provided education and therapy applications. In the final stage after the participants were trained in emotional freedom technique, a post-test was conducted, the results showed a decrease in the level of anxiety in each participant. There were participants who no longer experienced anxiety but there were also participants who still experienced anxiety (from moderate to mild and from severe to moderate). After knowing that emotional freedom technique has a significant impact, counseling participants are expected to be able to utilize this knowledge and be able to disseminate emotional freedom technique information to other people who experience anxiety. The documentation of this activity can be seen in the following picture :



(a)



(b)

Figure: pre-post measurement of anxiety level (a), emotional freedom technique training (b)

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The results of this service concluded that the participants found the instruction quite beneficial. It was also found that individuals with gangrenous wounds may experience a significant decrease in anxiety when using the emotional freedom approach. In addition, licensed practitioners can use the emotional freedom method independently in the healthcare industry or indirectly with patients. a) Following the emotional freedom approach, patients experience a reduction in pain and suffering as well as emotions of calmness and comfort, sincerity and submission. b) Accepting the physical state of the self: not feeling ashamed, not feeling inadequate, being real, not feeling anxious, and not feeling anxious. c) Accepting the physical state of the self..

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