



Search PubMed

Search

Advanced

User Guide

Save

Email

Send to

Display options

Review > Explore (NY). Jan-Feb 2017;13(1):16-25. doi: 10.1016/j.explore.2016.10.001.

Epub 2016 Oct 24.

The Effectiveness of Emotional Freedom Techniques in the Treatment of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder: A Meta-Analysis

Brenda Sebastian ¹, Jerrod Nelms ²

Affiliations + expand

PMID: 27889444 DOI: 10.1016/j.explore.2016.10.001

Abstract

Background: Over the past two decades, growing numbers of clinicians have been utilizing emotional freedom techniques (EFT) in the treatment of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, and depression. Randomized controlled trials (RCTs) have shown encouraging outcomes for all three conditions.

Objective: To assess the efficacy of EFT in treating PTSD by conducting a meta-analysis of existing RCTs.

Methods: A systematic review of databases was undertaken to identify RCTs investigating EFT in the treatment of PTSD. The RCTs were evaluated for quality using evidence-based standards published by the American Psychological Association Division 12 Task Force on Empirically Validated Therapies. Those meeting the criteria were assessed using a meta-analysis that synthesized the data to determine effect sizes. While uncontrolled outcome studies were excluded, they were examined for clinical implications of treatment that can extend knowledge of this condition.

Results: Seven randomized controlled trials were found to meet the criteria and were included in the meta-analysis. A large treatment effect was found, with a weighted Cohen's d = 2.96 (95% CI: 1.96-3.97, P < .001) for the studies that compared EFT to usual care or a waitlist. No treatment effect differences were found in studies comparing EFT to other evidence-based therapies such as eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR; 1 study) and cognitive behavior therapy (CBT; 1 study).

Conclusions: The analysis of existing studies showed that a series of 4-10 EFT sessions is an efficacious treatment for PTSD with a variety of populations. The studies examined reported no adverse effects from EFT interventions and showed that it can be used both on a self-help basis and as a primary evidence-based treatment for PTSD.

Keywords: Emotional freedom techniques; posttraumatic stress disorder; veteran.

Copyright © 2017 Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Similar articles

[EFT \(Emotional Freedom Techniques\) and Resiliency in Veterans at Risk for PTSD: A Randomized Controlled Trial.](#)

Church D, Sparks T, Clond M.

Explore (NY). 2016 Sep-Oct;12(5):355-65. doi: 10.1016/j.explore.2016.06.012. Epub 2016 Jun 27.

PMID: 27543343 Clinical Trial.

[A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of Randomized and Nonrandomized Trials of Clinical Emotional Freedom Techniques \(EFT\) for the Treatment of Depression.](#)

Nelms JA, Castel L.

Explore (NY). 2016 Nov-Dec;12(6):416-426. doi: 10.1016/j.explore.2016.08.001. Epub 2016 Aug 18.

PMID: 27843054 Review.

[Psychological trauma symptom improvement in veterans using emotional freedom techniques: a randomized controlled trial.](#)

Church D, Hawk C, Brooks AJ, Toukolehto O, Wren M, Dinter I, Stein P.

J Nerv Ment Dis. 2013 Feb;201(2):153-60. doi: 10.1097/NMD.0b013e31827f6351.

PMID: 23364126 Clinical Trial.

[A controlled comparison of the effectiveness and efficiency of two psychological therapies for posttraumatic stress disorder: eye movement desensitization and reprocessing vs. emotional freedom techniques.](#)

Karatzias T, Power K, Brown K, McGoldrick T, Begum M, Young J, Loughran P, Chouliara Z, Adams S.

J Nerv Ment Dis. 2011 Jun;199(6):372-8. doi: 10.1097/NMD.0b013e31821cd262.

PMID: 21629014 Clinical Trial.

[Psychological therapies for the treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder in children and adolescents \(Review\).](#)

Gillies D, Taylor F, Gray C, O'Brien L, D'Abrew N.

Evid Based Child Health. 2013 May;8(3):1004-116. doi: 10.1002/ebch.1916.

PMID: 23877914 Review.

[See all similar articles](#)

Cited by 7 articles

[Contextualized game-based intervention for digital literacy for the Pacific Islands.](#)

Reddy P, Chaudhary K, Sharma B, Chand D.

Educ Inf Technol (Dordr). 2021 Apr 24:1-28. doi: 10.1007/s10639-021-10534-y. Online ahead of print.

PMID: 33935574 Free PMC article.

[Cognitive-behavioural therapy for a variety of conditions: an overview of systematic reviews and panoramic meta-analysis.](#)

Fordham B, Sugavanam T, Edwards K, Hemming K, Howick J, Copsey B, Lee H, Kaidesoja M, Kirtley S, Hopewell S, das Nair R, Howard R, Stallard P, Hamer-Hunt J, Cooper Z, Lamb SE.

Health Technol Assess. 2021 Feb;25(9):1-378. doi: 10.3310/hta25090.

PMID: 33629950 Free PMC article.

[Emotion regulation through bifocal processing of fear inducing and disgust inducing stimuli.](#)

Wittfoth D, Pfeiffer A, Bohne M, Lanfermann H, Wittfoth M.

BMC Neurosci. 2020 Nov 23;21(1):47. doi: 10.1186/s12868-020-00597-x.

PMID: 33225884 Free PMC article.

[Guidelines for the Treatment of PTSD Using Clinical EFT \(Emotional Freedom Techniques\).](#)

Church D, Stapleton P, Mollon P, Feinstein D, Boath E, Mackay D, Sims R.

Healthcare (Basel). 2018 Dec 12;6(4):146. doi: 10.3390/healthcare6040146.

PMID: 30545069 Free PMC article. Review.

[Borrowing Benefits: Group Treatment With Clinical Emotional Freedom Techniques Is Associated With Simultaneous Reductions in Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, Anxiety, and Depression Symptoms.](#)

Church D, House D.

J Evid Based Integr Med. 2018 Jan-Dec;23:2156587218756510. doi: 10.1177/2156587218756510.

PMID: 29468884 Free PMC article.

[See all "Cited by" articles](#)

Publication types

> Meta-Analysis

> Review

> Systematic Review

MeSH terms

> Cognitive Behavioral Therapy / methods*

> Emotions*

> Freedom

> Humans

> Mind-Body Therapies / methods*

> Psychotherapy / methods

> Stress Disorders, Post-Traumatic / complications

> Stress Disorders, Post-Traumatic / therapy*

Related information

[Cited in Books](#)

[MedGen](#)

LinkOut - more resources

Full Text Sources

[ClinicalKey Nursing](#)

[Elsevier Science](#)

[Ovid Technologies, Inc.](#)

Other Literature Sources

[scite Smart Citations](#)

Medical

[MedlinePlus Health Information](#)

Miscellaneous

[NCI CPTAC Assay Portal](#)

FULL TEXT LINKS



ACTIONS

“ Cite

☆ Favorites

SHARE



PAGE NAVIGATION

< Title & authors

Abstract

Similar articles

Cited by

Publication types

MeSH terms

Related information

LinkOut - more resources

