

Emotional Freedom Techniques to Improve Wellbeing and Reduce Anxiety in Primary School Classrooms

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ABSTRACT

The use of Emotional Freedom Techniques (EFT) as a class exercise was investigated to ascertain its effectiveness for student wellbeing. Although EFT has been validated in clinical settings, studies have not yet established whether this approach could be applied in classrooms to curb anxiety and improve wellbeing. A pragmatic, mixed methods study was conducted with 138 students in northern Australian primary schools. Student anxiety dissipated over two stages of intervention.

Aside from class tapping sessions, students sometimes tapped surreptitiously, and teachers applied tapping for themselves on occasions. Students generally preferred a quieter, individual approach during class tapping sessions. Broader themes derived from student and teacher data suggested that tapping is a mechanism for change, the skills are transferable, and unsurprisingly, tapping is not always effective. EFT supports social and emotional learning and aligns with the Australian school curriculum. Findings suggest EFT used in classrooms can benefit students and teachers.

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