

Thirteen Evidence Based Thought Field Therapy Studies & Nine Reviews Supporting TFT's Effectiveness

There is growing evidence to support the effectiveness of Thought Field Therapy (TFT) as a psychological intervention.

An article entitled: *Mental health interventions by lay counsellors: a systematic review and meta-analysis* (Connolly et al., 2021) was published in the August 2021 issue of *The Bulletin of the World Health Organization*. Of the 19 randomized controlled trials that met the inclusion criteria three studies explored the use of TFT (Connolly & Sakai, 2011, Connolly et al., 2013, & Robson et al., 2016). Of the three included TFT studies, two were conducted in Rwanda and one in Uganda. Two of the included TFT studies demonstrated high effect sizes and one included TFT study demonstrated a medium effect size. The three TFT studies were found to have the fewest days of training and the least amount of treatment time. In a qualitative follow up, Edwards (2016) reported the lay counselor's satisfaction with their continued use of the TFT intervention.

In an outcome study conducted in Rwanda with street children, (Sakai et al., 2010) TFT was found to show promise in the treatment of children recovering from the 1994 Genocide, and, in another 2019 outcome study by Dheepa, V., Prabavathy, S., & Renuka, K., the authors reported that in their experience TFT mediated stress in schoolchildren. And in a third TFT study with children, (Barraza-Alvarez, 2021), a quasi-experimental study conducted in the nursing unit of the "Del Bosque" Childhood Integration and Connivance Center, S.C., Community Neighborhood Nursery No. U-1327 of the Mexican Social Security Institute, located in Texcoco, Mexico. Barraza-Alvarez found that TFT significantly reduced reported levels of anxiety and fear in the fourteen females participating in the study.

Two European RCT studies were conducted in a hospital setting in Norway, (Irgens et al., 2012, & Irgens et al., 2017). In the first study, TFT delivered superior results when compared to CBT for the treatment of anxiety. In the second Norwegian study, TFT was found to be a promising treatment for agoraphobia when compared to a waitlist group.

A recent study conducted in the war-torn Kurdistan Region of Iraq (Seidi et al., 2020), found TFT treatments to be preferred by the local population and more effective when compared to CBT. In another middle eastern study, a study of dental anxiety (AlAwdah, et al., 2021), conducted in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia at the King Saud University College of Dentistry Primary Clinics, the authors found that TFT significantly reduced dental pain when compared to other anxiety reduction techniques.

And in Japan, a recent study by Morikawa, et al., in 2021 found that TFT sessions averaging 36 minutes significantly reduced stress and improved heart rate variability in university students.

In addition to the Connolly, et al. study published by the Bulletin of the World Health Organization mentioned at the beginning, TFT studies have been included in several globally important literature reviews meta-analyses.

Brown et al., 2017 included the Sakai et al., 2010 study with street children in their review, *Psychosocial interventions for children and adolescents after man-made and natural disasters: a meta-analysis and systematic review*. These authors found that the TFT intervention had the highest effect size when compared to other interventions such as EMDR and CBT. In *Effects of current treatments for trauma survivors with posttraumatic stress disorder on reducing a negative self-concept: A systematic review and meta-analysis*, Banz, et al., found 25 studies that met their inclusion criteria. The meta-analysis included the Connolly & Sakai, 2011 TFT study, which demonstrated a strong effect size in reducing negative self-concept.

Morina et al., 2017, included Connolly & Sakai, 2011 in their *Meta-analysis of interventions for posttraumatic stress disorder and depression in adult survivors of mass violence in low- and middle-income countries*, as did Bangpan et al., 2019. Bangpan included Connolly & Sakai, 2011, in *Mental, health and psychosocial support programmes for adults in humanitarian emergencies: a systematic review and meta-analysis in low and middle-income countries* and also in Bangpan, et al., 2017, in *The impact of mental health and psychosocial support interventions on people affected by humanitarian emergencies: A systematic review*.

In 2014, Dunnewold reviewed four studies of TFT in Africa (Connolly & Sakai, 2011, Connolly et al., 2013, Robson et al., 2016 and Sakai, et al., 2010) in *Thought Field Therapy efficacy following large scale traumatic events*. and concluded that together they demonstrated the efficacy of this technique and recommended further research. And, in 2022, Ntlantsana V, Molebatsi K, Mashaphu S, et al., included Connolly and Sakai, 2011 in *Post-traumatic stress disorder psychological interventions in sub-Saharan Africa: protocol for a systematic review of the literature*, and noted its effectiveness.

Two Cochrane Reviews included TFT studies in their extensive meta-analyses. Purgato et al, 2018, included Connolly and Sakai, 2011, & Connolly et al., 2013, in *Psychological therapies for the treatment of mental disorders in low- and middle-income countries affected by humanitarian crises*. And Van Ginneken et al., 2021 included Connolly & Sakai, 2011 in *Primary-level worker interventions for the care of people living with mental disorders and distress in low-and middle-income countries*.

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TFT citings of note for future reference.in future studies

In 2019, Sullivan, et al. cited Sakai, Connolly, & Oas (2010) in *Using simple acupressure and breathing techniques to improve mood, sleep, and pain management in refugees: a peer-to-peer approach in a Rohingya refugee camp*. Sullivan noted “Acupressure point stimulation has been used effectively in adolescent survivors of genocide in Rwanda (Sakai, Connolly, & Oas, 2010) but has not been systematically studied.

Bagchi, et al. (2019) published a protocol for a potential review of the training of lay counselors. The authors quoted Connolly, et al, 2021 as one of several examples of there not being enough published about the methods of training lay counselors.

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Further Reading

- Roger Callahan, *Tapping the Healer Within: Using Thought-Field Therapy to Instantly Conquer Your Fears, Anxieties, and Emotional Distress*
- Suzanne M Connolly, *Thought Field Therapy: Clinical Applications, Integrating TFT in Psychotherapy Practice*.