



EXERCISE:

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FORMAT:

GROUP
EXERCISE

*Finger-holds for Managing Emotions*³⁴

TIME: 20 MIN

REQUIRED MATERIALS: NONE

SUMMARY:

This is a light and practical exercise that offers participants tools for immediate self-care by teaching simple finger-holds to release extreme emotions. It is also good as an icebreaker in between sessions.

KEY EXPLANATION POINTS:

- Explain that the following exercise, based on Polarity and Indonesian culture, is a simple way to manage emotions by holding the fingers.
- It is also connected to the art of Jin Shin Jyutsu, a Japanese acupressure technique.
- Emotion is like a wave of energy that moves through the body. Often with strong emotions the energy of the body becomes blocked. Through the fingers run meridians or channels of energy.
- Through each finger runs a channel of energy that corresponds to the different emotional states (*see the next page*).
- The fingerholds are a very helpful tool to use in daily life. In difficult or challenging situations when tears, anger or anxiety arise, the fingers may be held to bring peace, focus and calm so that the appropriate response or action may be taken. The practice may also be done for relaxation with music, or used before going to sleep to release the problems of the day and to bring deep peace to body and mind. The practice may be done on oneself or on another person.
- Ask participants to gently hold each finger with the opposite hand for two to five minutes until they feel a steady, rhythmic pulse. This will help move and drain blocked energy, and bring back a sense of balance and harmony to the body. They can work with either hand.
- Explain that deep breathing while holding each finger can also help to bring the body-mind-spirit to a state of peace and harmony.
- As they hold each finger, ask participants to breathe in deeply; recognize and acknowledge the strong or disturbing feelings or emotions you hold inside yourself. Breathe out slowly and let go. Imagine the feelings draining out your finger into the earth. Breathe in a sense of harmony, strength and healing. And breathe out slowly, releasing past feelings and problems.
- Explain that often, as you hold each finger, you can feel a pulsing sensation as the energy and feelings move and become balanced.
- Summarise the exercise by explaining that this is something that participants can do at any time, when they feel stress, anger, anxiety, or any other strong emotion. It only takes a few minutes, and is a useful tool in difficult situations.



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FACILITATION NOTES:

- This exercise helps balance the energetic pathways that run through the fingers (referred to as meridians), which brings harmony to the entire body.
- This is a nice exercise to offer as a simple tool for self-care, and helps to emphasise that we carry the tools for self-care within ourselves.
- This exercise can be very useful following a challenging or emotional session, to help release emotions and shift the group into a space where they feel more hopeful and empowered.

Alternative Option:

- For participants who have challenges using their hands and fingers, or who are missing fingers or limbs, discuss this exercise beforehand and assess their comfort levels with it – they may be able to adapt it to hold other parts of their hand that correspond to the correct meridians, they could place fingers on the center of the palm (either side), which helps with fatigue and depression.
- An experienced facilitator who is familiar with ‘mudras’ (sometimes referred to as hand yoga) could continue this exercise by teaching specific mudras to the group.

