



Brief Psychological Intervention after Deliberate Self-Poisoning

Program Description

This intervention provides four sessions of psychotherapy for adults who deliberately poisoned themselves. According to Guthrie et al. (2001), "This therapy entails identifying and helping to resolve interpersonal difficulties which cause or exacerbate psychological stress" (p. 1). It is adapted from a model developed by Hobson (1985) for the treatment of depression. The intervention is delivered by nurse therapists in the patient's home. Four, 50-minute sessions are offered over the course of a month. During each session, therapists assessed the risk of suicide and communicated with the patient's general practitioner."

Evaluation Design and Outcomes

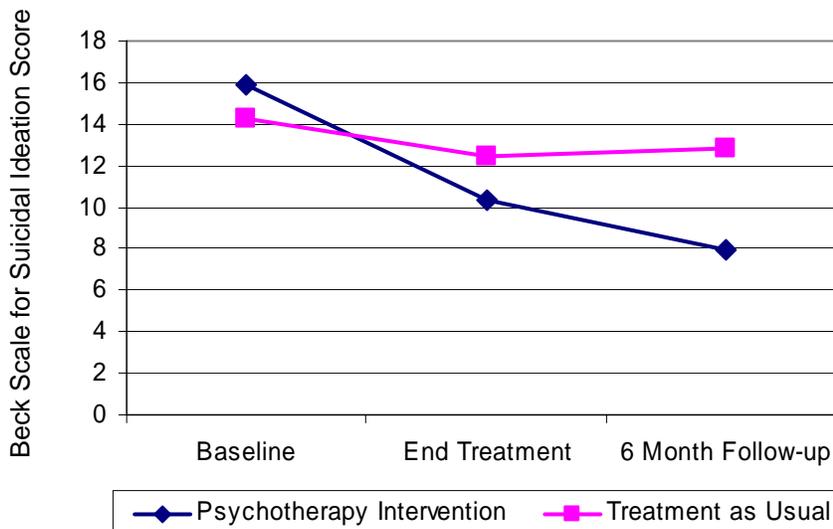
A randomized 2-group design was used by evaluators to determine the intervention effectiveness. One-hundred nineteen patients who deliberately poisoned themselves were assigned to either a psychotherapy (intervention) group or to a treatment as usual (control) group. Psychotherapy group members demonstrated statistically significant less suicidal ideation (see Figure 1) and depression compared to the treatment as usual group members. In addition, at the 6-month follow-up it was found that only 9% of psychotherapy group members had harmed themselves again compared with 28% of treatment as usual group members.

SPRC Classification

Promising

Program Characteristics
Intervention Type Home-Based Treatment
Target Age 18+
Gender Female & Male
Ethnicity Multiple
IOM Category Universal Selective Indicated

Figure 1: Suicidal ideation scores for psychotherapy intervention and treatment as usual groups across time



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Generalizability

The study was conducted in Great Britain. Participants were evenly divided between men and women, and ranged in age from 18 to 65 years. No information was provided regarding participant ethnicity.

Implementation Essentials

Therapists skilled in interpersonal therapy.

Targeted Protective and Risk Factors

This intervention impacts the following risk and protective factors that have been targeted by the *National Strategy for Suicide Prevention* for the reduction of suicide in the United States.

Increased Protective Factors

Effective clinical care for mental, physical, and substance abuse disorders

Decreased Risk Factors

n/a

Program Costs

Program costs include a standardized training manual, training, and the cost of four 50-minute therapy sessions held in the patients homes.

Program Contact Information

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References

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Hobson, R. F. (1985). *Forms of Feeling*. London: Tavistock.