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DIALECTICAL BEHAVIOR THERAPY-BASED SKILLS TRAINING FOR FAMILY MEMBERS OF SUICIDE ATTEMPTERS

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A suicide attempt is a challenge both for the patient and for family members. Family members of suicide victims have an increased risk for depression and anxiety. This pilot study evaluated the effect of Family Connections (FC), a Dialectical Behavior Therapy-based manualized skills training program, for family members of suicide attempters. The DBT-based skills training program aims to enhance the knowledge of wide range research based aspects of suicidal behavior and treatment recommendations. Furthermore it includes skills training for interpersonal relationships and also offers family members an opportunity to share their experiences.

Thirteen participants completed the 9-week program with pre- and post selfreport questionnaires. The results showed significant reduction in Burden Assessment Scale (BAS) and in three out of four subscales of Questions about Family Members (QAFM):perceived criticism (PC), critical comments (CC), and emotional over involvement (EOI).

These results provide support for the need and importance of a DBT-based skills training program addressed specifically to family members of suicide attempters.