Survivors of Suicide Attempts

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New findings suggest that an eight-week support group, Survivors of Suicide Attempts (SOSA), may help decrease suicidal symptoms and increase resilience among suicide attempt survivors.

Researchers recruited 92 attempt survivors through the Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services crisis line and local provider referrals. Participants completed a series of assessments on hopelessness, resilience, and suicidal ideation, desire, and intent before and after the program. SOSA's weekly 90-minute closed sessions included six to eight participants, a clinician, and a peer co-facilitator. Clinicians were experienced in suicide risk assessment and management. Co-facilitators were prior SOSA participants and/or volunteers with the crisis line who had lived experience. The program emphasized peer-driven conversation, information sharing, psychoeducation, and participants’ emotional and practical needs.

At the end of the program, the researchers found a significant decrease in participants’ suicidal symptoms and feelings of hopelessness, and a significant increase in their self-assessments of resilience. These findings provide a better understanding of how to support suicide attempt survivors, a high-risk group for whom few tailored interventions exist. The researchers recommended that in the future a randomized controlled trial should compare the SOSA support group to treatment as usual.


Populations: Attempt Survivors and Other People with Lived Experience

About Suicide: Suicidal Thoughts and Behavior, Ideation

Strategies: Life Skills and Resilience, Connectedness