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# A DBT Skills Training Group for Family Caregivers of Persons With Dementia

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## Abstract

A Dialectical Behavior Therapy Skills training manual (DBT Skills) was adapted for use with caregivers of individuals with dementia. Implementation occurred in a community clinic with a heterogeneous caregiver group at risk for elder abuse. Sixteen caregivers completed the 9-week group. The results point to improved psychosocial adjustment, particularly increased problem-focused coping, enhanced emotional well-being, and less fatigue. Caregivers tended to utilize individual therapeutic services at a higher rate during the period of group attendance, indicative of appropriate help-seeking behavior in highly demanding situations. Six of the 16 caregivers repeated the training sequence in "booster" groups. Follow-up data from the booster groups suggest that high-risk caregivers may require continuing support to maintain treatment gains. In addition to demonstrating the feasibility of DBT Skills with caregivers, the results warrant a controlled outcome evaluation.



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