

## Data supplement

Table DS1 12-month follow-up of binary outcomes (difference in proportions) for intervention group v. control group				
Primary outcomes	n (%)		Relative risk reduction (95% CI)	Number needed to treat (95% CI)
	Intervention group (n = 1043)	Control group (n = 1070)		
<i>Total sample</i>				
Any suicidal ideation			0.31 (0.22 to 0.38)	7.9 (6.0 to 11.5)
Yes	302 (29.0)	446 (41.7)		
No	741 (71.0)	624 (58.3)		
Any suicide attempt			0.42 (0.11 to 0.63)	46.1 (26 to 203.7)
Yes	31 (3.0)	55 (5.1)		
No	1012 (97.0)	1015 (94.9)		
Any self-cutting (mutilation)			0.14 (−0.29 to 0.42)	NA
Yes	42 (4.0)	50 (4.7)		
No	1001 (96.0)	1020 (95.3)		
<i>Subgroup analyses</i>				
Females (n = 1402)	696	706		
Any suicidal ideation			0.28 (0.17 to 0.38)	8.8 (6.1 to 15.6)
Yes	203 (29.2)	286 (40.5)		
No	493 (70.8)	420 (59.5)		
Any suicide attempt			0.59 (0.26 to 0.77)	32.4 (19.8 to 89.3)
Yes	15 (2.2)	37 (5.2)		
No	681 (97.8)	669 (94.8)		
Males (n = 711)	347	364		
Any suicidal ideation			0.35 (0.21 to 0.47)	6.5 (4.5 to 11.8)
Yes	99 (28.5)	160 (44.0)		
No	248 (71.5)	204 (56.0)		
Any suicide attempt			0.07 (−0.80 to 0.52)	NA
Yes	16 (4.6)	18 (4.9)		
No	331 (95.4)	346 (95.1)		
Previous suicide attempt at baseline (n = 723)	367	356		
Any suicidal ideation			0.37 (0.27 to 0.45)	4.1 (3.2 to 5.7)
Yes	154 (42.0)	237 (66.6)		
No	213 (58.0)	119 (33.4)		
Any suicide attempt			0.56 (0.25 to 0.75)	15.8 (9.7 to 42.1)
Yes	18 (4.9)	40 (11.2)		
No	349 (95.1)	316 (88.8)		
No previous suicide attempt at baseline (n = 1390)	676	714		
Any suicidal ideation			0.25 (0.10 to 0.38)	13.6 (8.4 to 35.6)
Yes	148 (21.9)	209 (29.3)		
No	528 (78.1)	505 (70.7)		
Any suicide attempt			0.12 (−0.83 to 0.58)	NA
Yes	13 (1.9)	15 (2.1)		
No	663 (98.1)	699 (97.9)		
Other outcomes	1043	1070		
Death			−2.59 (−16.24 to 0.25)	NA
Yes	7 (0.7)	2 (0.2)		
No	1036 (99.3)	1068 (99.8)		

## Postcard text

### First postcard text (as translated from Farsi)

*'What the caterpillar conceives as the end of the world, the butterfly sees as the life's beginning'*

Dear . . . . .

Some time has passed since you were hospitalised and we hope that everything has gone well.

As you may have thought, you were not the only one whose endurance has lessened due to life's problems.

We hope that by writing to you that this might help to reduce your sense of loneliness a little. Please wait to receive our next card.

Regards

Dr Saeedeh Sarjami, Dr Hossein Hassanian-Moghaddam

### The second postcard text (as translated from Farsi)

*'A human being is not your foe, nor your companion, but your master.'*

Dear . . . . .

You may use the address in the card to correspond with us by letter if you wish and we have included a stamped envelope to use. We assure you that we will reply.

Also, please advise us if your address and phone number have changed or if you do not wish to receive further postcards.

Regards

Dr Hossein Hassanian-Moghaddam, Dr Saeedeh Sarjami

### The birthday card text (as translated from Farsi)

Dear . . . . .

Heartfelt congratulations on your ...th birthday.

Sincerely

Dr Hossein Hassanian-Moghaddam, Dr Saeedeh Sarjami

### New Year (Nowrooz) postcard – always sent in March (as translated from Farsi)

Dear . . . . .

*Life is similar to riding on a bicycle, you only fall if you do not pedal.*

*New Year, New Effort, New Hope*

Regards

Dr Hossein Hassanian-Moghaddam, Dr Saeedeh Sarjami

### The text in the other postcards (as translated from Farsi)

Dear . . . . .

*In unexpected places, the Lord by some unimaginable people in incredible situations will work miracles.*

Your sincerely

Dr Saeedeh Sarjami, Dr Hossein Hassanian-Moghaddam

Dear . . . . .

*Oh Lord, Bestow understanding upon me to embrace what I can't alter*

*Give me courage, in order to change what I can*

*Give me insight, in order to understand the difference*

*Give me humility, in order not to think that people and creation should act according to my pleasure*

We will be happy to hear from you about your circumstances and look forward to any correspondence.

Regards

Dr Hossein Hassanian-Moghaddam, Dr Saeedeh Sarjami

Dear . . . . .

*Life rules are like the principles of playing a game. Nobody asks whether they are equitable or not.*

*You can learn them. Harmonize yourself.*

*Form your behaviours based on these rules and have a successful and effective life.*

Your sincerely

Dr Saeedeh Sarjami, Dr Hossein Hassanian-Moghaddam

Dear . . . . .

*There is no lost opportunity in heaven, if a door is closed, the Lord would release a gate.*

Regards

Dr Hossein Hassanian-Moghaddam, Dr Saeedeh Sarjami

Dear . . . . .

Have you heard this?

*The only people who can attain huge successes, are those who endure huge losses.*

*And*

*The desire to request help from others is a symbol of their potency and intellectual maturity not the symbol of their frailty (poverty).*

Your sincerely

Dr Saeedeh Sarjami, Dr Hossein Hassanian-Moghaddam

In the last postcard we included a separate note that said: 'This is the last postcard which we will be mailing to you. We hope these postcards may have reduced your worries a little. We will contact you by phone soon to ask you to arrange an interview with us either in person or by phone.'