

# Well-being

**A positive-psychological program of interventions for people with depression older than 65**

A Study of the Department for Alterspsychiatrie of the LSF Graz and the Institute for Positive Psychology and Mentalcoaching Graz

Prim. Dr. Christian Jaksch  
Dr. Philip Streit

# OUTLINE

- AIM OF THE STUDY
- WHAT IS WELL-BEING?
- COMPONENTS OF WELL-BEING IN AGING
- How POSITIVE INTERVENTIONS work
- SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS OF PP INTERVENTIONS FOR OLDER PEOPLE
- STUDY DESIGN
- HYPOTHESES

- **POSITIVE-PSYCHOLOGICAL PROGRAM OF INTERVENTIONS**

**1<sup>st</sup> unit: Three good things/ Appreciating communication**

**2<sup>nd</sup> unit: Use your strengths**

**3<sup>rd</sup> unit: Be grateful!**

**4<sup>th</sup> unit: Enjoy! Be active and come into contact with others!**

# AIM OF THE STUDY

- Investigation of the **effectiveness** of a
- *Positive-Psychological Program of Interventions*
- based on the **PERMA theory** (Seligman 2011)
- in a clinical setting for people with
- **depression** aged over 65 years.

# THEORETICAL BACKGROUND: WHAT IS WELL-BEING?

- The PERMA Model was developed by respected Positive Psychologist, **Martin Seligman**, and was widely published in his influential 2011 book, "**Flourish**..,"
- "PERMA" stands for the five essential elements that should be in place for us to experience lasting well-being.

*1. Positive Emotion (P)*

*2. Engagement (E)*

*3. Positive Relationships (R)*

*4. Meaning (M)*

*5. Accomplishment/Achievement (A)*



# THEORETICAL BACKGROUND: COMPONENTS OF WELL-BEING IN AGING

- Activity and participation (Lehr, 2003)
- Positive self concept and control (Perrig-Chiello, 2003)
- Conscious acting has a lasting effect on well-being (Sheldon & Lubomirsky, 2006)
- Psychological well-being influences physical health (Veenhoven, 2008)



# THEORETICAL BACKGROUND: HOW POSITIVE INTERVENTIONS WORK

- Positive interventions are no therapeutic interventions in the classical sense.
- Positive interventions induce more confidence, life satisfaction etc. through action
- They also affect psychological problems and difficulties, cause positive interventions are solution approaches.
- They work over the power of action.
- They break through problematic patterns and build something new.
- Positive interventions are immediately understandable and easy to implement in everyday life.



# THEORETICAL BACKGROUND: SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS OF PP INTERVENTIONS FOR OLDER PEOPLE

- Easy to handle
- Activity furthering
- Corresponding to cognitive status
- Appeal to different sensorial, physical and mental areas
- Empowering social contact and communication
- Revival of the senses
- Appropriate to age
- Adaptable to a clinical setting



# STUDY DESIGN

- 120 participants will be recruited to join the study, 60 for the experimental and 60 for the control condition.
- 1. Exclusion criteria are a score lower 25 in the Mini Mental State Examination (Folstein et al., 1975); in addition the Clock Drawing Test (Thalmann et al., 2002) will be applied to investigate the cognitive level of the participants.
- ❖ **Ascertainment of the cognitive level / exclusion of an existing dementia / indications of the presence of a depression:**
  - ❖ **MMSE** Mini-Mental-State Examination (Folstein et al., 1975)
  - ❖ **Clock Drawing Test** (Thalmann et al., 2002)
  - ❖ **DIA -S** Depression in old Age Scale (Heidenblut & Zank, 2009)



# STUDY DESIGN

- ❖ There will be a pre-test at the beginning, a post-test at the end of the program of interventions and a follow-up-test about 3 months after offset of interventions.

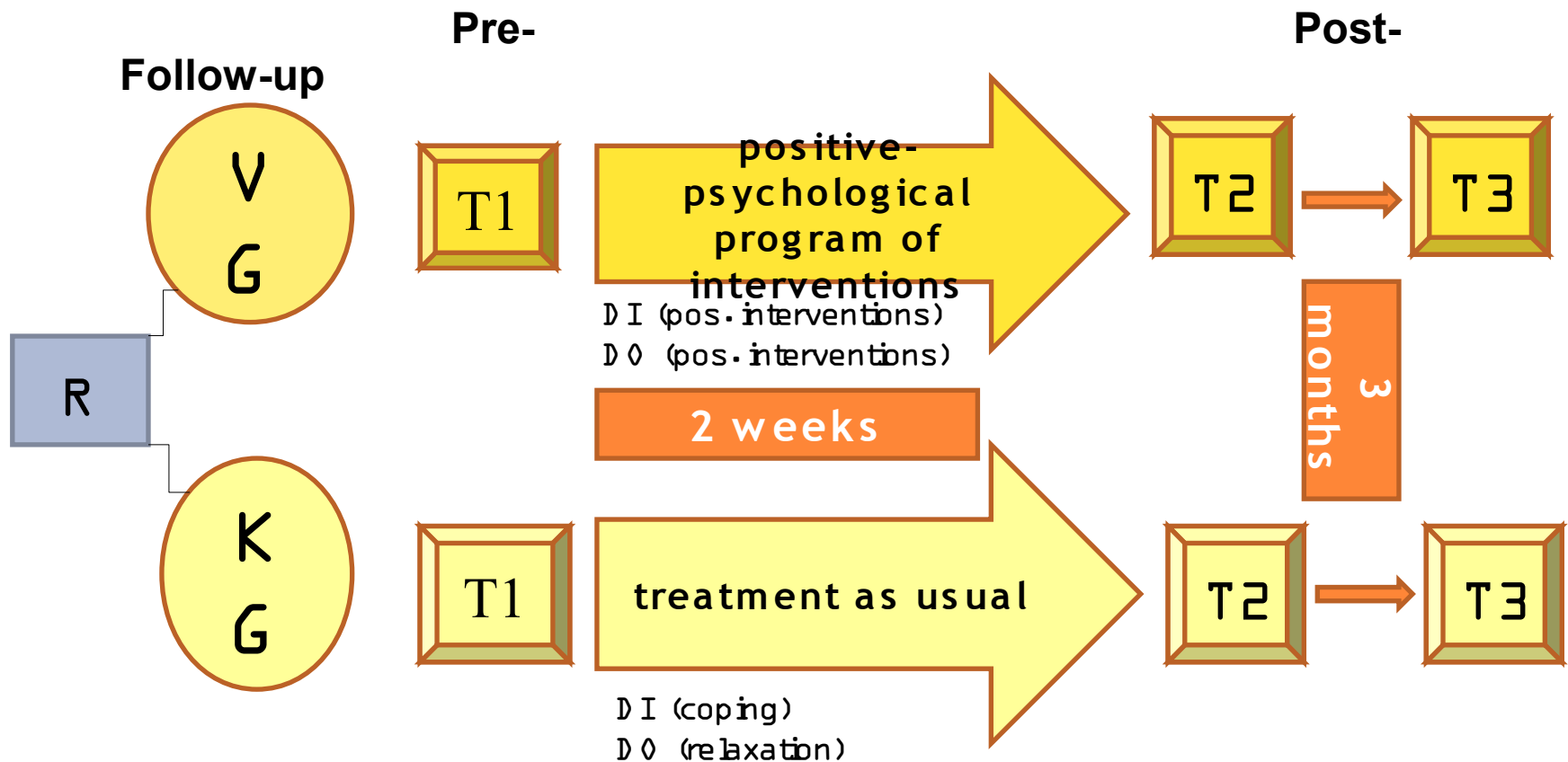
## Measurements of well-being:

- ❖ **SWLS** Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener et al., 2009)
- ❖ **SPANE** Scale of Positive and Negative Experience (Diener Biswas-Diener, 2009)
- ❖ **PANAS** Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (Watson et al., 1988)
- ❖ **FS** Flourishing Scale (Diener et al., 2009)
- ❖ **Ryff-Scales** of Psychological Well-Being (Ryff & Keyes et al., 1995)

## Measurement of depression:

- ❖ **DIA -S** Depression in old Age Scale (Heidenblut & Zank, 2009)

# STUDY DESIGN

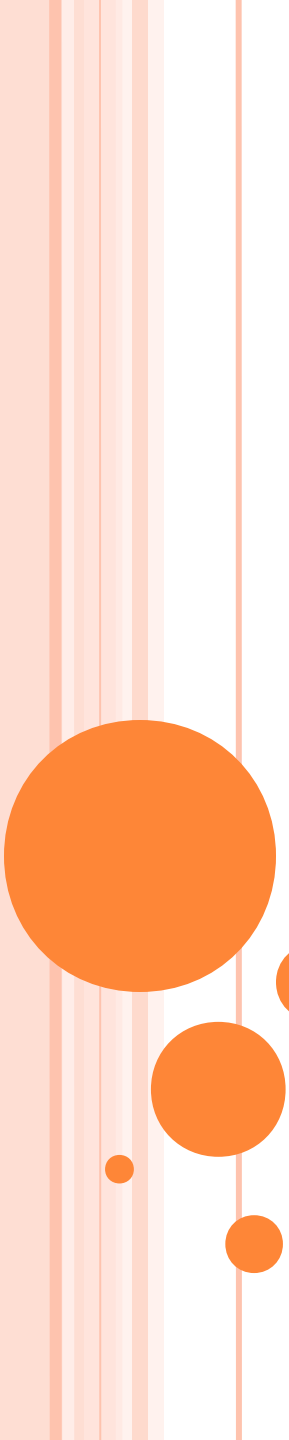


R: randomisation

T1 – T3: testing time 1 – 3

# HYPOTHESES

- **H<sub>1.1</sub>**: At the second date of testing the **Happiness-Index** (results from 3 scales: SWLS, SPANE, FS) is significantly higher in the test group than in the control group.
- **H<sub>1.2</sub>**: **life satisfaction** □ is significantly higher in the test group than in the control group at the second date of testing
- **H<sub>1.3</sub>**: **positive affectivity** □ is significantly higher in the test group than in the control group at the second date of testing
- **H<sub>1.4</sub>**: results in the **Flourishing Scale** □ are significantly higher in the test group than in the control group at the second date of testing
- **H<sub>1.5</sub>**: **psychological well-being** □ is upgraded significantly in the test group at the second date of testing
- **H<sub>1.6</sub>**: The **degree of depression** □ decreases in both groups.  
Nevertheless this reduction will be significantly higher in the test group.



# **POSITIVE-PSYCHOLOGICAL PROGRAM OF INTERVENTIONS**

**1<sup>st</sup> unit: Three Blessings/ Appreciating  
communication (ACR)**

**2<sup>nd</sup> unit: Use your strengths**

**3<sup>rd</sup> unit: Be grateful!**

**4<sup>th</sup> unit: Enjoy! Be active and come into contact with  
others!**

# 1<sup>ST</sup> UNIT: THREE BLESSINGS/ APPRECIATING COMMUNICATION (ACR)

- **Exercise:** make compliments /resources shower

## Questions for the group :

- In which situations I act positive and interested to others?
- How do I react in a positive and joyful way to others?

Defining **rules for appreciating communication** together in the group:

- Smile and be friendly
- Speak in the first person
- Listen active, eye contact
- Ask concrete questions
- Compliments



# 1<sup>ST</sup> UNIT: THREE BLESSINGS/ APPRECIATING COMMUNICATION



- **Question for the group**
- When have you first thought about something positive or gratifying today?
  
- **Introduction into the topic:**
- ... „*Most of the time we think more about what is going wrong in our life, than about what is positive.*
- *This tendency to focus on the negative aspects of life, furthers the development of anxiety and depression. A way to prevent this is to develop the ability to think more about the good things in life!“ ...*
  
- **Question for the group:**
- Who can tell three good things that happened in the last few days?

# 1<sup>st</sup> UNIT. THREE GOOD THINGS/ APPRECIATING COMMUNICATION



## Dealing out of the happiness diary:

- Individualisation: Everyone can enter names, stick pictures or photos all over the diary.

- **Exercise for the next two weeks:**

*„Take some minutes time everyday and think about, what made you happy today – even on a bad day there are normally some things that we can feel good about!*

*Each day write down three good things that happened. Please think about, why these things have been that gratifying for you.*

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Exercise:

*„Please complete the paper „Preperation for the 2. unit“ until Thursday, you will find it in the 2. part of your folder!*

# 2<sup>ND</sup> UNIT: USE YOUR STRENGTH



- **Getting started:** Read out aloud from the happiness diaries / the others should react in an active-constructive way as practised in the 1<sup>st</sup> unit
- **Question for the group:**
- In what are you strong? / How strong are you?
- **Introduction into the topic:**
- „Today we are dealing with virtues and good qualities, that everybody has. But of course they are different in any case, therefore now we will discuss which character strengths we know. Look around and collect your strengths, lets compare with your strenghts shield”



## 2<sup>ND</sup> UNIT: USE YOUR STRENGTHS



- **Question for the group:**
- Which character strengths do I know?
- Which is my signature strength?
- How do I use this already and in what areas of my life?
- Which strengths do I use currently?

### Dealing out the ZRM pictures from Maja Storch



#### **Exercise:**

1. Find a picture for your goals and strengths
1. Think about your own strengths and note them down!
3. Think about what gives your life meaning and start to plan a **personal project**:

Therefore plan one or two activities and put them into action. Define a personal aim, that is a little bigger than you and maybe connected with prosocial behaviour!

# 3<sup>RD</sup> UNIT: BE GRATEFUL



- **Getting started:** Read out aloud your own strengths and good things from the happiness diaries / react in an active-constructive way
- **Question for the group:**
- „When did you give thanks to somebody for the last time?“
- **Introduction into the topic :**
- *Thank you – this is actually a simple word, that everyone of us uses daily. In childhood we have been taught to say thank you for everything. Over time we take this little word for granted and don't think about its meaning or feeling any more. Studies show that expressing our gratitude to others can significantly boost our happiness.*

# 3<sup>RD</sup> UNIT: BE GRATEFUL



## Questions for the group:

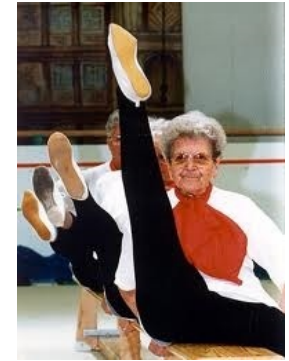
- „For what are you really grateful to in your life? – Also the little things are noteworthy!“
- „Who are you grateful to? And why?“
- „How does it feel to be grateful?“
  
- **Exercise:**
- Take some minutes time everyday and think about, who are what for you are grateful to – please note your thoughts in your happiness diary.  
Try to keep the feeling of gratefulness!
- Optional: Write a **letter of thanks** - Choose on of these people to write to and tell them how grateful you are; perhaps someone you've not thanked properly before.

# 4<sup>TH</sup> UNIT: ENJOY! BE ACTIVE AND COME INTO CONTACT WITH OTHERS

- **Getting started:** Read out aloud the things, you are grateful for, maybe some wants to read his/her letter of thanks to the others/ react in an active-constructive way
- Prepared enjoyment table with gifts to see, to hear, to feel, to smell for example a book, a cup of coffee, some chocolate, a flower, a pack of cards etc., spices
- **Questions for the group:**
  - What can you enjoy and in which situations?
  - What does it mean to enjoy?
  - Which feelings you have while enjoying?



# 4<sup>th</sup> UNIT. ENJOY! BE ACTIVE AND COME INTO CONTACT WITH OTHERS



- **Question for the group:**
- If you look at your daily routine, in which areas of life have you been involved in the last time?
  
- **Planning your personal project:**
- Plan one or two activities and put them into action. Define a personal aim, that is a little bigger than you and connected with prosocial behavior!
- *„At the third date of testing in about three months we will have a look, if your personal project has come to fruition!“*
  
- *We recommend to continue writing your happiness diary!*

# FIRST EXPERIENCES



- The discussion about strengths and three blessings changes the group atmosphere.
- Gratitude is very powerful!
- The exercises about strengths work best in combination with visualisation.
- Personal Project seems very helpful, but needs a lot of attendance
- First results show, the positive psychological program of interventions decreases the degree of depression.

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**THANK YOU FOR  
YOUR ATTENTION!**