



# Well-being - A positive psychological intervention programm for elderly with depression

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## Introduction

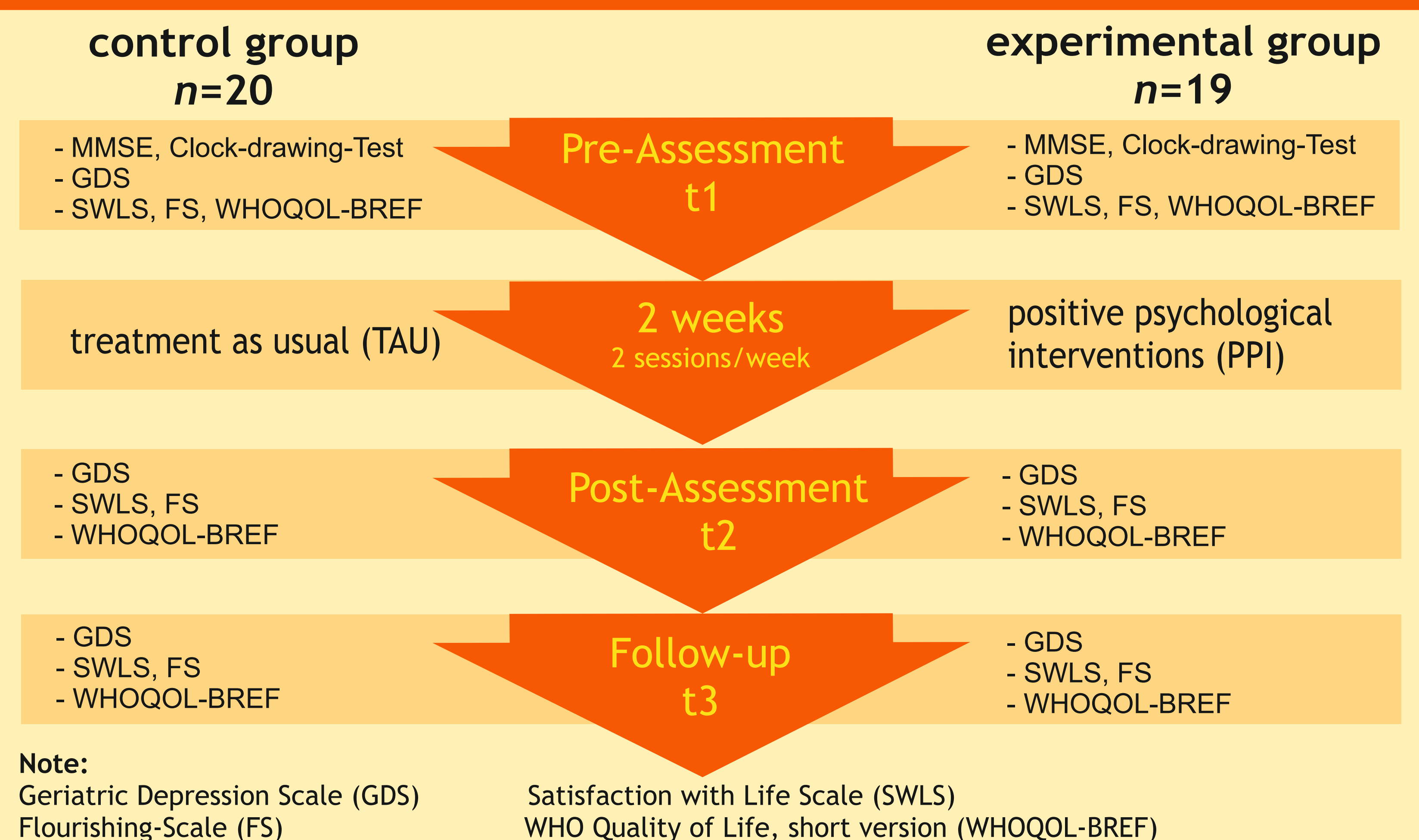
Depression is known as one of the most common mental disorders, as well in the elderly. As life expectancy is continually rising, research on well-being in aging has proliferated too. Over the past decade, several studies, particularly with depressed young and middle adults, have proved the effectiveness of positive psychological interventions but there are hardly any studies on people aged over 65 years [1,2]. The present study examines whether positive psychological interventions also enhance well-being and relieve the symptoms of depression in the aging population.

## Methods

In this ongoing study, 39 moderately depressed patients ( $M=72.42$ ,  $SD=6.07$ ) from the geriatric psychiatry of the „Landesnervenklinik Sigmund Freud“ (Graz, Austria) were assigned to the control (TAU)- or experimental (PPI) group depending on the date of hospitalization.

**PPI group exercises:** I. Three blessings and appreciating communication (ACR) II. Use your strengths III. Be grateful IV. Enjoy and be active - your personal project

**TAU group:** coping and relaxation exercises



## Preliminary Results

There were no differences between the groups in age, cognitive level, depression or well-being level at the pre tests.

After the 2 weeks PPI program the **WHOQOL-BREF** score improved significantly in the PPI group compared to the TAU group, where life satisfaction did not change. At the same time, in both groups the mean **GDS** score decreased, but in the PPI group this decline tended to be stronger.

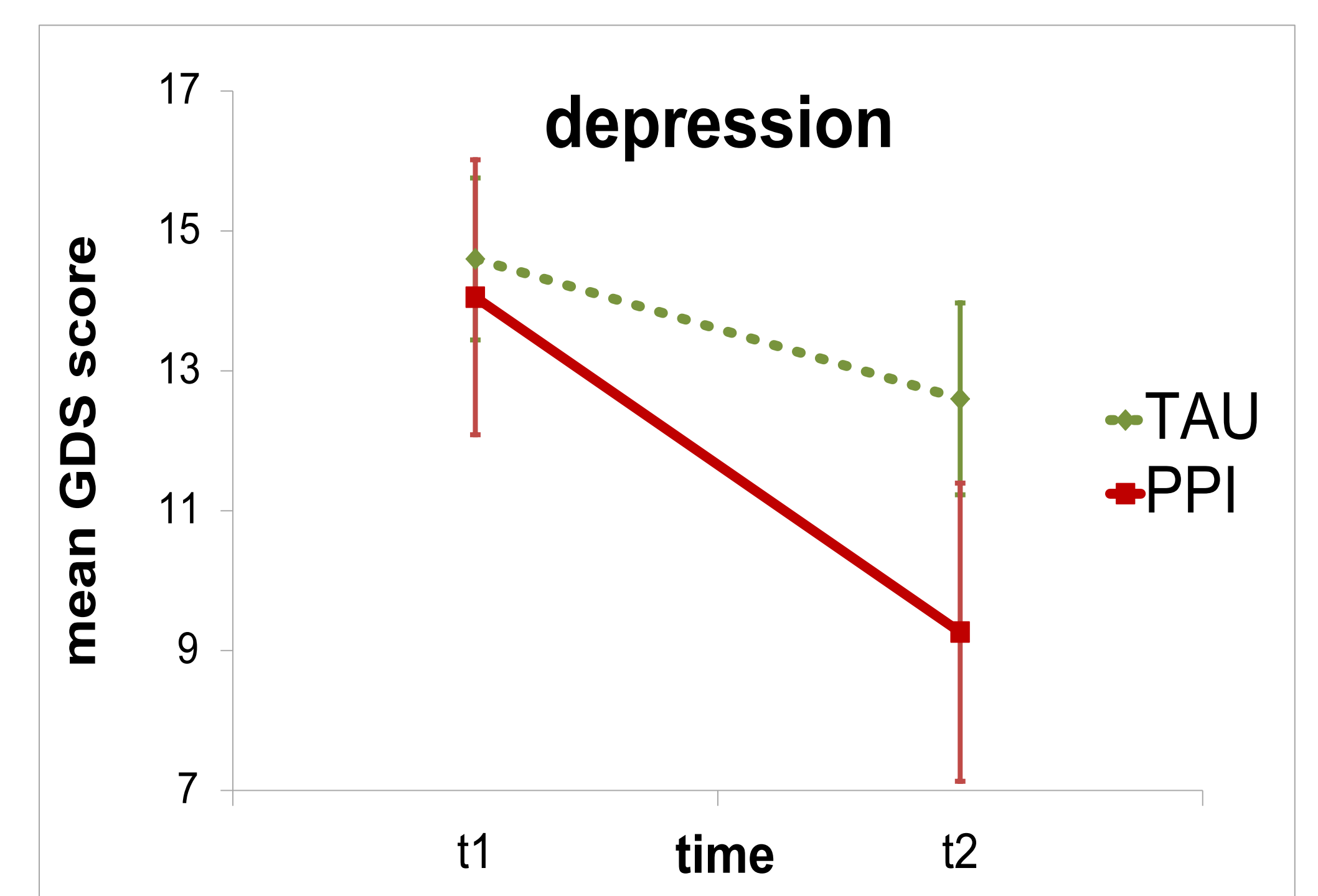
No significant effect has been found for FS and SWLS.



## Conclusion

The first results show that the PPI program in clinical setting enhances life satisfaction and decreases depressive symptoms already after 2 weeks. However, the findings should motivate further intensive research in the field of positive psychology, especially in clinical setting. Furthermore, the assimilation of PPI into the hospital routines appears promising.

Further follow-up tests will be performed to investigate whether the effect is persistent over time.



### REFERENCES

- [1] Sin, N. L., & Lyubomirsky, S. (2009). Journal of Clinical Psychology, 65, 467-487.
- [2] Seligman, M. E. P., Rashid, T., & Parks, A. C. (2006). American Psychologist, 61, 774-788.