Reduction of depression and anxiety with the Group Format of **Emotional Activation Therapy (G-EAT)** Flies, E., Schmidt, A. & Chwallek, K.



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General Description

In a quasi-experimental study including one experimental group and one wait list control group the Group Format of Emotional Activation Therapy (G-EAT; Flies, 2015) is evaluated with regard to the reduction of depression and anxiety scores. G-EAT is an enhancement of Emotional Activation Therapy (Hauke, 2013; Hauke & Dall'Occhio, 2015) that uses emotions as resources and is also applicable for several other mental disorders.

Group Format of Emotional Activation Therapy (G-EAT)

The group program is created for eight to ten participants and consists of three modules of eight sessions. Mindfulness-based strategies are used to train interoception skills as a basis for emotional activation. The emotional activation process is then conducted in three modes:

- 1. Subjects bring pictures from magazines, photos or postcards that generate access to relevant personal emotions.
- 2. Participants train embodiment techniques by using the Alba-Emoting system (Bloch, 2017): Breathing patterns, posture and facial expression are practiced in order to experience the power of meaningful or avoided emotions.
- 3. Starting from a concrete interactive problematic situation, the subject's so-called Emotional Survival Strategy (Sulz, 1994) and the Emotion Resources Pool (ERP) are developed. Primary and secondary emotions are revealed in form of a reaction chain, followed by learning to accept and integrate the avoided emotions.
- Finally, subjects will be guided to transfer the new emotional experience, supported by embodied personal values, to their individual goals and to support each other along the way.



Study Objectives

> Primary objective: Investigate suitability of G-EAT as useful instrument in the treatment of depression > Secondary objective: Investigate suitability of G-EAT as useful instrument in the treatment of Anxiety

Sample

> **n** = 16 patients with confirmed diagnoses of depression and anxiety [8 patients took part in the experimental group and 8 patients were in the wait list control group] > Age: 18-67 years

Scales & Design

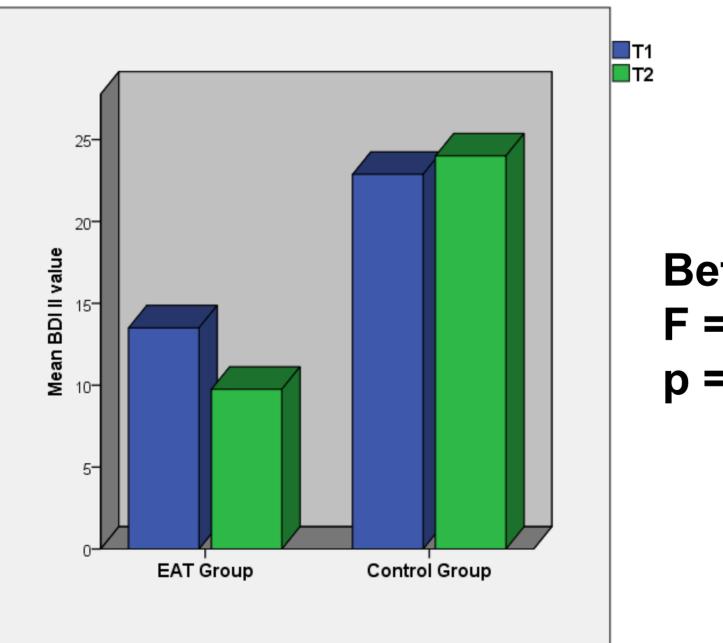
Scales:

Beck-Depression-Inventory (BDI-II) (Beck, Steer & Brown, 1996): N_{Items}=21

- > **Sex:** 12 women, 4 men
- > Inclusion Criteria: no organic or comorbid psychiatric disorder, no intake of medicaments, that could influence the autonomous nervous system or the vigilance

Results

Beck-Depression-Inventory



Between Subject Effects F = 5.2

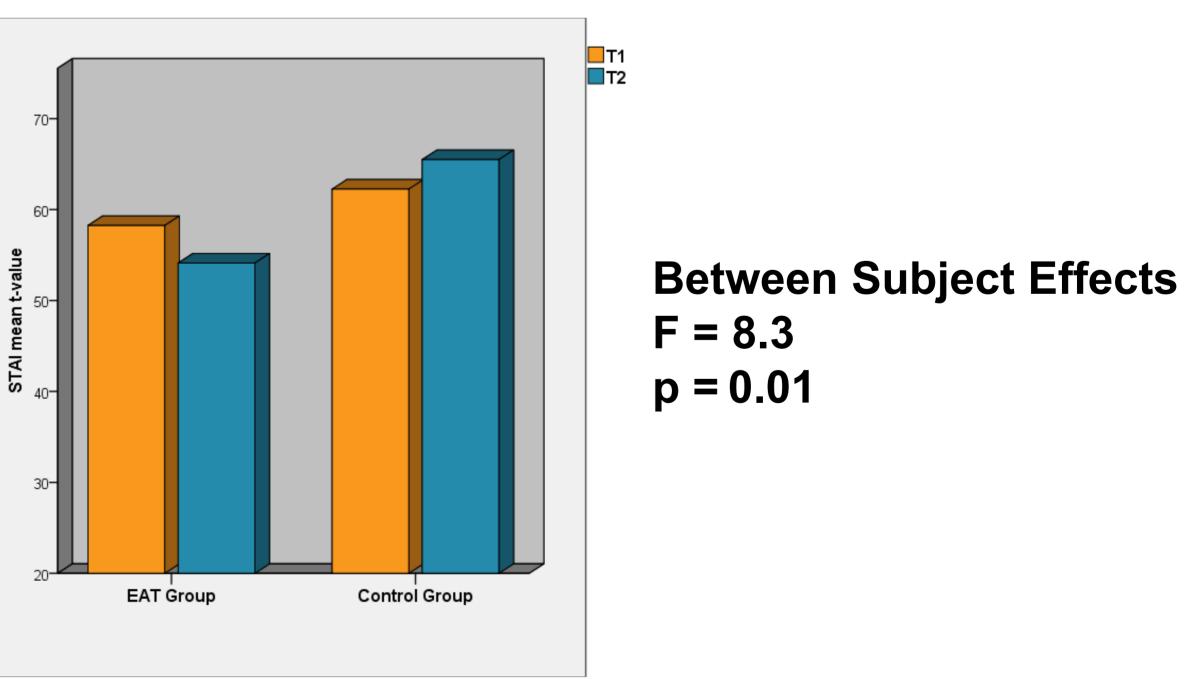
p = 0.04

State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI-G Form X1) (Laux et. al., 1981): $N_{items} = 20$

Design:

Pre-and Postmeasurement during a period of 12 weeks

State-Trait Anxiety-Inventory



Summary of the results:

When compared to the waiting control group, patients who took part in the G-EAT-Program showed significantly reduced scores in the...

- > ...Beck-Depression-Inventory
- > ... State-Trait Anxiety Inventory

Further research should test the effects of G-EAT in the context of huge randomized control studies. In addition to depression and anxiety effects in emotion regulation should also be explored: for example emotional awareness, differentiation, emotional clarity, acceptance and emotional flexibility.

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Flies, E. (2015). Die Emotionale Aktivierungstherapie im Gruppenformat (G-EAT). In: Hauke, G. & Dall'Occhio, M. (2015). Emotionale Aktivierungstherapie. Stuttgart: Schatthauer GmbH; p. 126-146.

Hauke, G. (2013). Strategisch Behaviorale Therapie (SBT). Emotionale Überlebensstrategien - Werte - Embodiment. Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer.

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Laux, L., Glanzmann, P., Schaffner, P. & Spielberger, C.D. (1981). Das State-Trait-Angstinventar (Testmappe mit Handanweisung, Fragebogen STAI-G Form X 1 und Fragebogen STAI-G Form X 2)"; Weinheim: Beltz. Sulz, S. K. D. (1994). Strategische Kurzzeittherapie. Wege zur effizienten Psychotherapie. München: CIP-Medien.