

# YOU, US, MEANINGFUL CHANGE AND OTHER ISSUES OF THE HEART

PROF. ANDREW GLOSTER
FACULTY OF BEHAVIOURAL SCIENCES AND PSYCHOLOGY

# **DISCLOSURES**

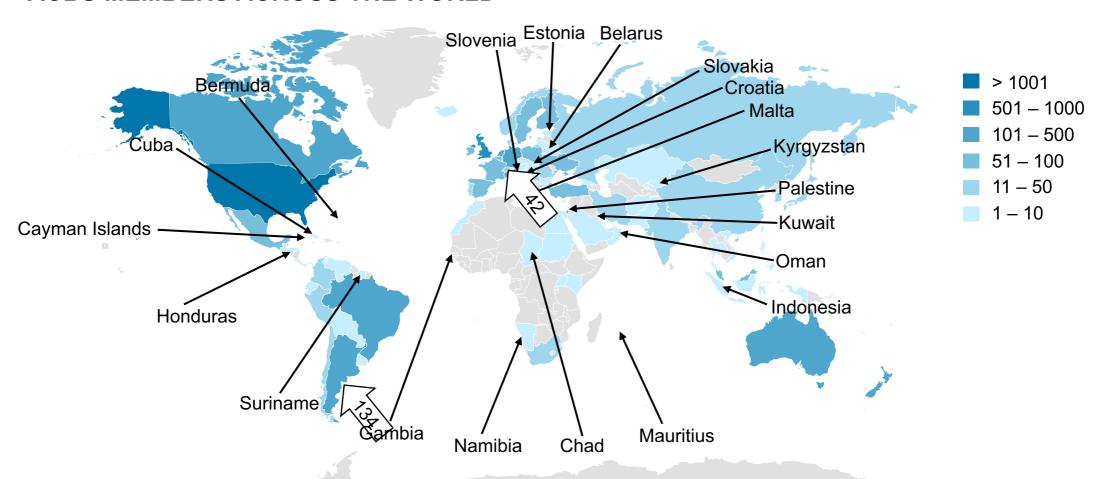
#### **Books**

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# IT HAS BEEN MY HONOR TO SERVE YOU



# YOU MAKE ACBS A REMARKABLE ASSOCIATION ACBS MEMBERS ACROSS THE WORLD



## REMARKABLE VARIETY OF APPROACHES & DOMAINS

Basic Science Applied Intervention Science

Language and Cognition Psychotherapy Organizations

Evolution Coaching Groups – per se

Values to Action

Prosocial

Data Analysis Family Caregiving Public Health Interventions

Training & Education Schools

**Public Health** 

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# **PSYCHOLOGICAL FLEXIBILITY**

Set of Intra- and Inter-personal skills that promote:

- Openness
- Awareness
- Engagement in meaningful activities

# **BREADTH**

"...psychological flexibility is relevant to all forms of human action and change."

Hayes, Strosahl, & Wilson, 2012, pg. 143

# **WE'VE DONE A GOOD JOB**

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#### Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

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journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/jcbs





Available online at www.s

ScienceDi

Behavior Therapy 48 (20

Review Articles

Andrew T. Gloster a, Noemi Walder Michael E. Levin Michael P. Twohig Amaria Karekla C





James N. Kirby Cassandra L. Tellegen Stanley R. Steindl

The University of Queensland

#### Mindfulness-based therapy: A comprehensive meta-analysis



Bassam Khoury <sup>a,\*</sup>, Tania Lecomte <sup>a</sup>, Guillaume Fortin <sup>a</sup>, Marjolaine Masse <sup>a</sup>, Phillip Therien <sup>a</sup>, Vanessa Bouchard <sup>b</sup>, Marie-Andrée Chapleau <sup>a</sup>, Karine Paquin <sup>a</sup>, Stefan G. Hofmann <sup>c</sup>

- <sup>a</sup> Department of Psychology, Université de Montréal, Canada
- b Department of Psychology, Université Laval, Canada
- <sup>c</sup> Department of Psychology, Boston University, United States







### WHY DO PEOPLE GO TO THERAPY?

- Social domains rated among most important goals (Grosse & Grawe, 2002)
- Patients rate social values as most important in therapy (Wersebe et al., 2017)
- Return to normal level of social functioning was most important factor in determining remission in outpatients with MDD (Zimmermann et al., 2006)
- Belonging is a fundamental need (e.g., Gloster, Haller, & Greifeneder, 2021)
- When impaired, high & pervasive levels of dysfunction (e.g., Stein & Kean, 2000)



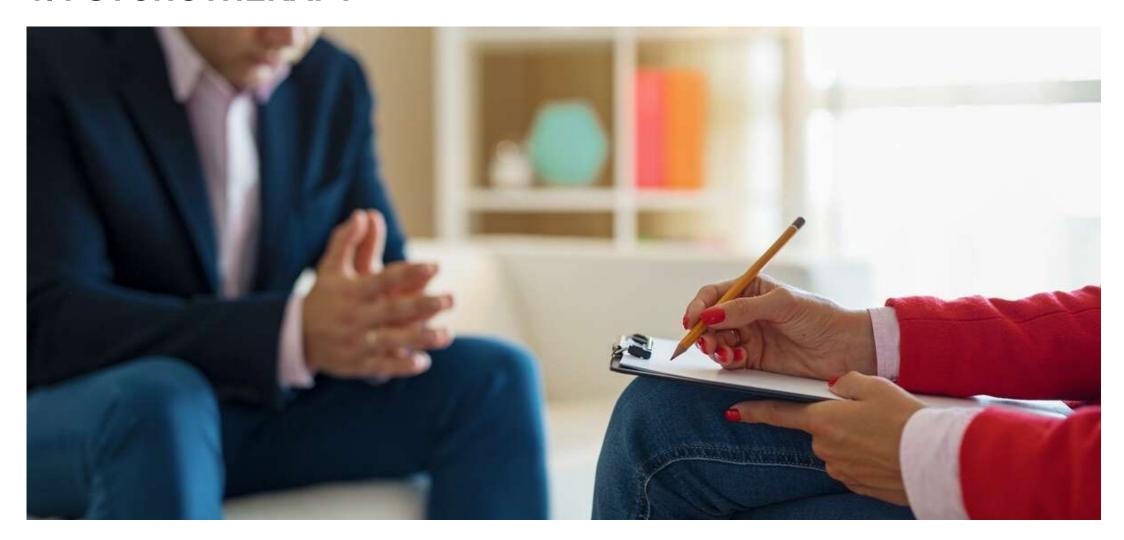
# **OVERARCHING QUESTIONS**

- How can we improve our therapies?
  - 1. Psychotherapy
- What do we really know about our patient's life outside the therapy room and does it matter?
  - 2. Epidemiology/Public Health
  - 3. Daily Experience
- Do the scientifically derived principles that we use in therapy matter outside the therapy context and if so, can they be harnessed to help beyond the clinic?
  - 4. Social and Prosocial



# MULTI-METHOD & MULTI-LEVEL

# 1. PSYCHOTHERAPY



# **PSYCHOTHERAPY...**

#### Works!

- On Average
- Empirical Support
- Most Mental Disorders
- Across Numerous Psychotherapies





66%

WITH LONG-TERM SUCCESS...

...TWO YEARS LATER THE EFFECTS WERE STABLE

BUT...

# AND...

33%

# PROFOUND IMPACT...

- Continued suffering
  - Decreased quality of life
  - Increased mortality
  - Increased suicide rates

# WHAT COULD HELP A PATIENT WHO DOES NOT PROFIT FROM THE FIRST/ GOLD STANDARD TREATMENT?

- Per Definition:
  - Stuck
  - Having Difficulty Changing
  - "Inflexible"

- Change the Client's relationship to their symptoms
- Acceptance- and Mindfulness-based approaches are promising (Gloster et al., 2020; Arch & Ayers, 2013)
- Focus on functioning

\_Psychological Flexibility

# THE IMPORTANCE OF WILLINGNESS DURING EXPOSURE



"How Willing Are You to Engage in Exposure?"

Those who drop out of treatment differ significantly from those who complete the exposure:

F(1, 226) = 3.89, p < .05

# **SAMPLE**

n = 43 patients

Sex: 69.8% Female

Mean Age: 37.2 y.o. (SD = 9.3)

Mean 42.2 Previous Sessions!

4-Week <u>Manualized</u> Treatment

# WITH A DIFFERENT TYPE OF CONVERSATION



"What do you want your life to stand for?"

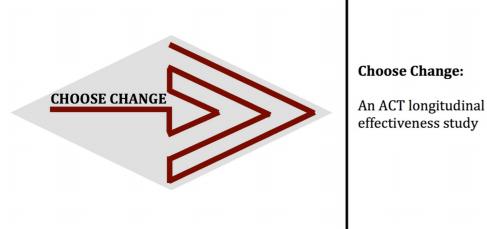
# **RESULTS**

66%/33% 1 80%

ACT lead to an improvement in 80% of the patients who did not previously respond.

#### WHAT CAN WE TAKE AWAY FROM THIS STUDY?

- ACT (<u>Psychological Approach</u>) Appears Feasible for Treating Refractory Anxiety Patients
  - ...with longitudinal stability
  - ...in a tough crowd
  - ...using therapists with no prior ACT experience
  - ...with evidence for hypothesized processes
- Mindfulness-based approaches may be especially useful for patients with moderate to severe depression
- Hope for the "Hidden Third"

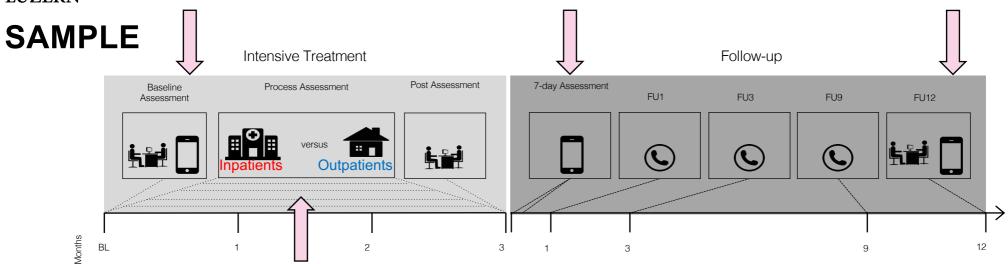


# **CHOOSE CHANGE:**

AN ACT LONGITUDINAL EFFECTIVENESS STUDY

Dr. Elisa Haller Dr. Vicky Block Dr. Jae Villanueva Dr. Charles Benoyc





N = 200, Treatment Non-Responders

n = 108 Inpatientn = 92 Outpatient

Therapist
Driven
Decisions –
Not
Manualized!

Transdiagnostic

Depression -29.5%Anxiety -39.4%OCD -20.2%Somatoform -4.1%

Comorbidity:

1 – 36.5% 2 – 20.2% 3+ - 12.4% Chronic Suffering

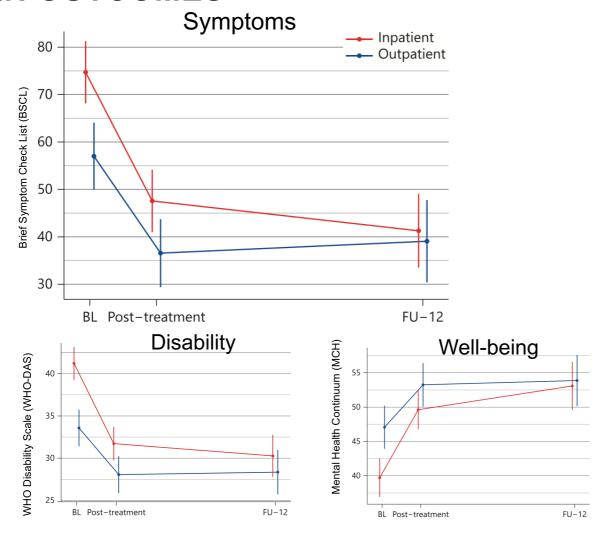
**Previous Treatment History:** 

Courses of Psychotherapy – 1.9 yrs Courses of Pharmacology – 1.4 yrs

Duration of Previous Txs – 3.9 yrs

Latency since Complaint began – 12.7 yrs

# **MAIN OUTCOMES**



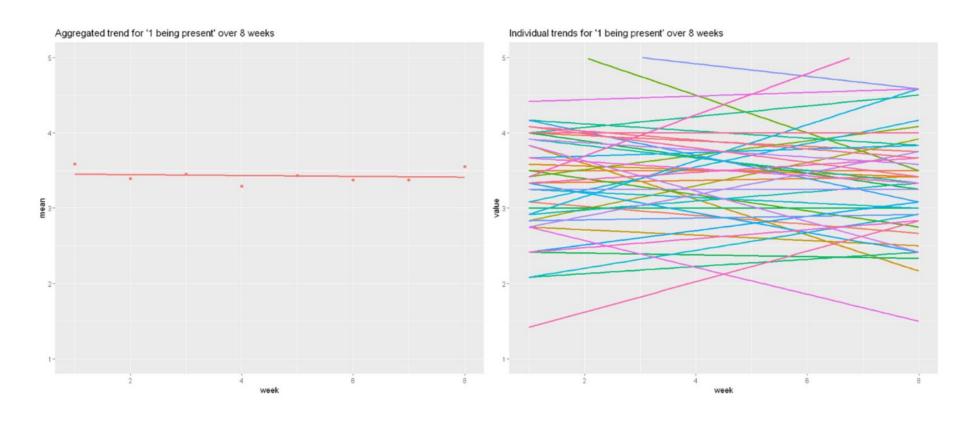
- Large, Significant Change
- Stable through one year follow-up

- Response Rates
- 80% any improvement
- 47% Reliable Change Index
- 4% Reliable Deterioration

(Gloster, Haller, Villanueva, Block, Benoy, et al., Psychother Psychosomatics, 2023)

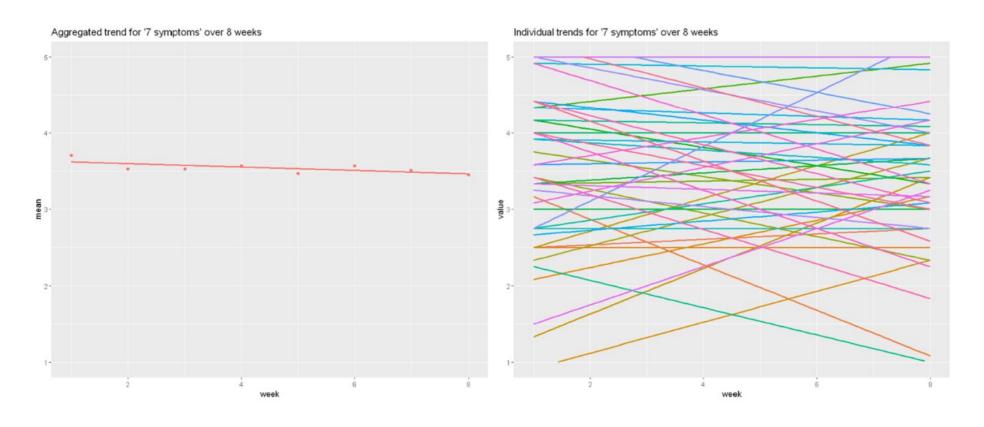
# **AVERAGE ISN'T ALWAYS ENOUGH**

Aggregate vs. Individual Change: Mindfulness

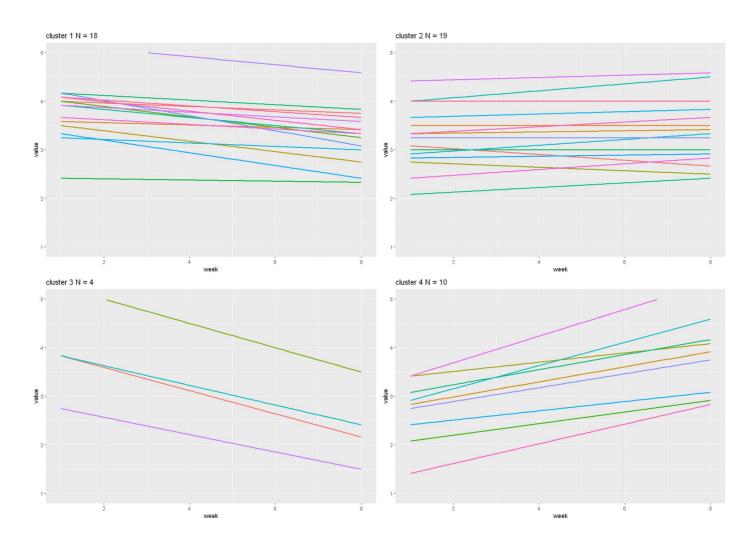


# **AVERAGE ISN'T ALWAYS GOOD ENOUGH**

Aggregate vs. Individual Change: Symptoms



# **AVERAGE ISN'T ALWAYS GOOD ENOUGH**



## **PSY-FLEX MEASURE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL FLEXIBILITY**

Context Sensitive & Change Sensitive
One-Factor Structure, with excellent reliability

# Portuguese Sample Brazilian Sample Brazilian

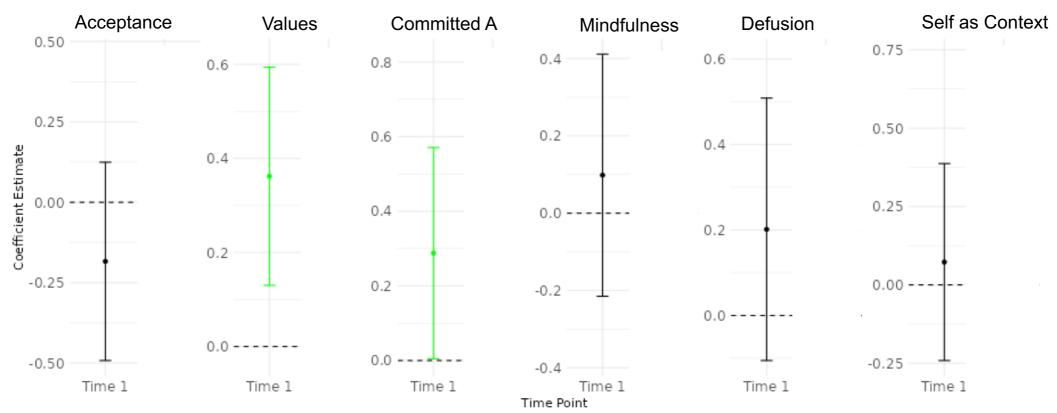
Unifactorial model of Psy-Flex in Portugal (left) and Brazil (right)

#### AND THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL CONTAINS CLINICALLY IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Overall, psychological flexibility positively impacts well-being (pooled effect 0.4)

### AND THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL CONTAINS CLINICALLY IMPORTANT INFORMATION

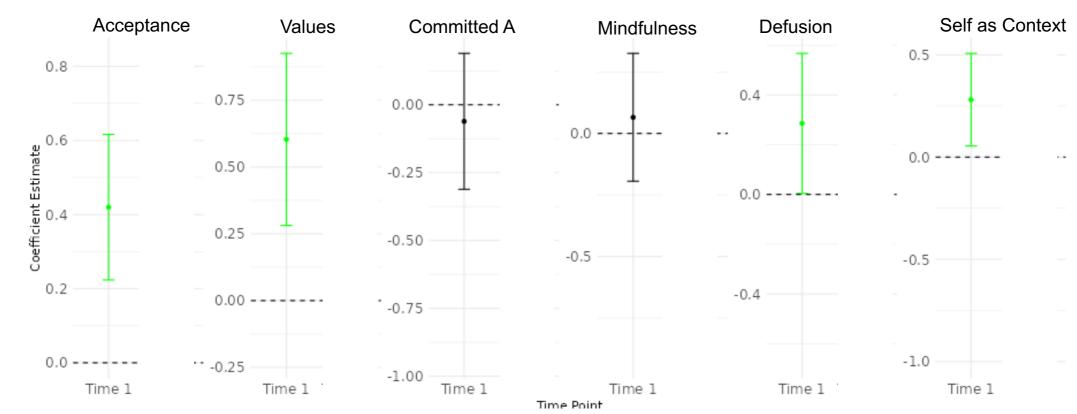
# **ISABELLA**



Note: Green indicates a positive effect on well-being, red a negative effect, and black non-significant effect.

# AND THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL CONTAINS CLINICALLY IMPORTANT INFORMATION

# **MIGUEL**

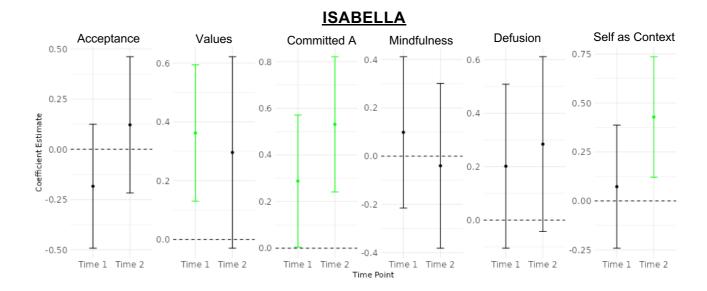


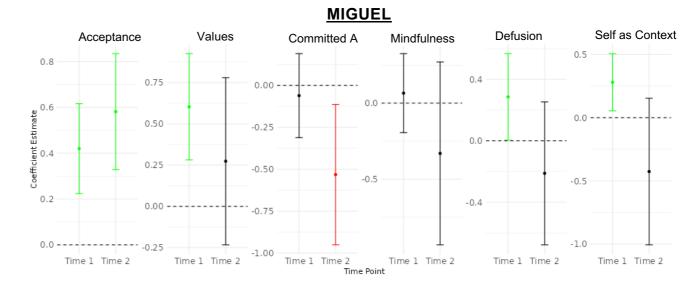
Note: Green indicates a positive effect on well-being, red a negative effect, and black non-significant effect.

PSYCHOLOGICAL FLEXIBILITY ISN'T ONE THING!

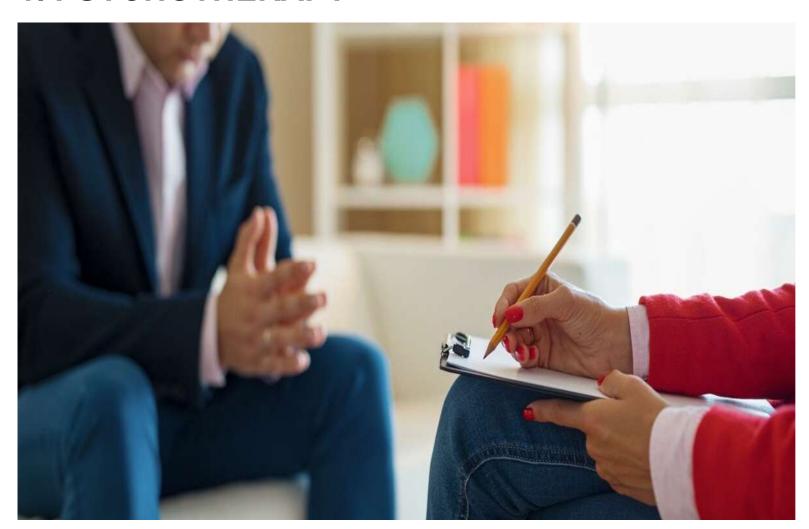
...OR THE SAME ACROSS INDIVIDUALS

...OR EVEN THE SAME
OVER TIME WITHIN
INDIVIDUALS





# 1. PSYCHOTHERAPY



Challenges
-33%
-On Average

Possibilities
-ACT/PF
-Within Person
Analyses

## **General population**

(or fractions thereof: e.g. sex, age)

Epidemiological approaches allow a <u>representative</u> description and thus complete clinical descriptions **without biases** such as <u>severity</u>, <u>help-seeking</u> and, <u>treatment effects</u>

WHAT/ WHO
IS THE BASIS
OF OUR
CURRENT
KNOWLEDGE?

Persons with (e.g. depressive) Symptoms

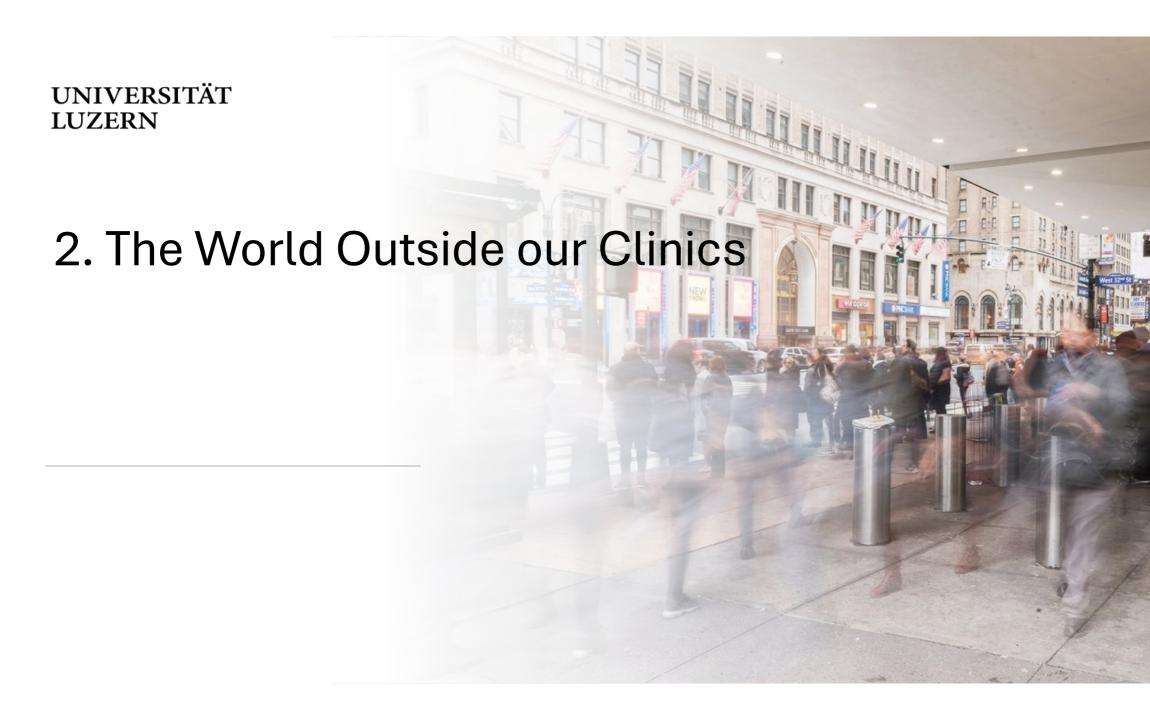
Persons with (e.g. MDE) Syndromes

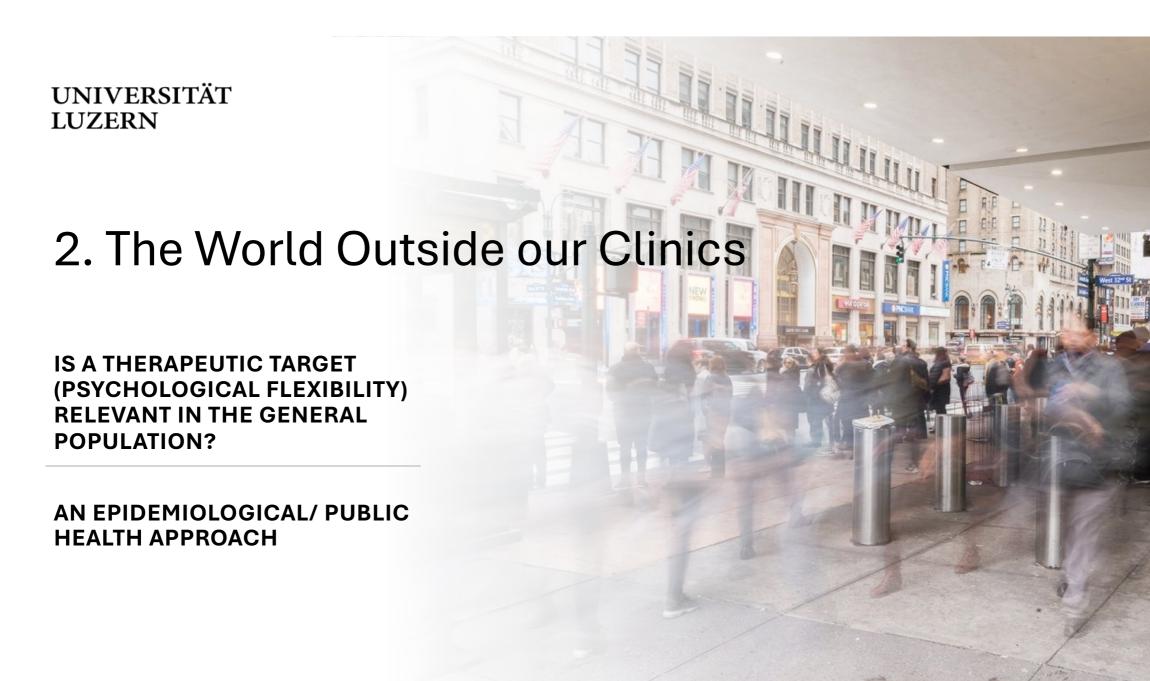
Untreated cases with Disorders (e.g., MDD)

Treated patients

- Primary care
- MH-specialists

Clinical research samples



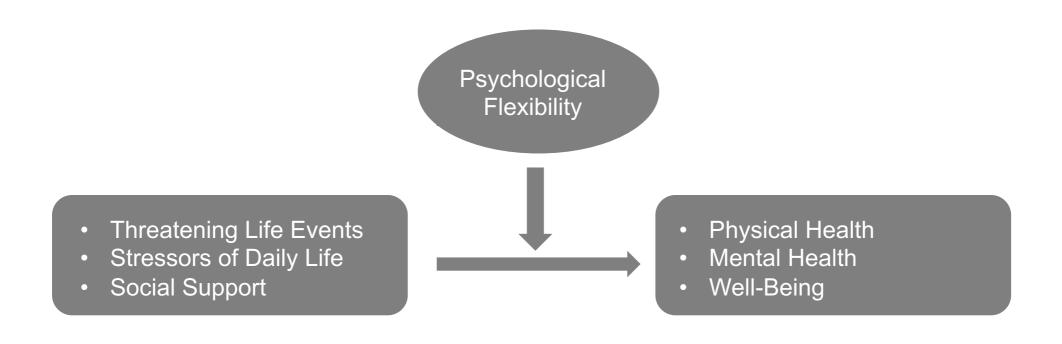


## **RELATION TO RISK & RESILIENCE**

- Mental Health Problems
  - Large Burdon Wittchen et al., 2010
  - Individual Suffering
  - Economic Loss
- Mental Health Problems Associated with Increased Physical Health Kessler et al., 2003
- Known Risk Factors
  - Stressful Life Events
  - Daily Stress
  - Low Social Support
- Known Resilience Factors
  - Social Economic Status
  - Intellectual Functioning
  - Positive Emotions

Malleability? Psychological Flexibility?

# DOES PSYCHOLOGICAL FLEXIBILITY MODERATE KNOWN RELATIONSHIPS IN GENERAL POPULATION?



## SPECIFIECS OF THE STUDY

#### REPRESENTATIVE FOR SWISS POPULATION

Age, Sex, Employment, & Urbanicity

- N = 1035 participants
- Age 18-74 (mean 45.4yrs)
- Sex
  - 50.3% female
- Employment Status
  - 65.9% Employed/ Training

- Marital Status
  - 33.8% Single
  - 54.0% Married/Life Partner
  - 09.2% Divorced
  - 01.9% Widowed

# **OUTCOMES**

Construct	Measure
Physical Health	Various Behavioral Indices
Mental Health	Depression, Anxiety, Stress Scale - Lovibond
Well-Being	Mental Health Continuum - Keyes Satisfaction with Life Scale - Diener

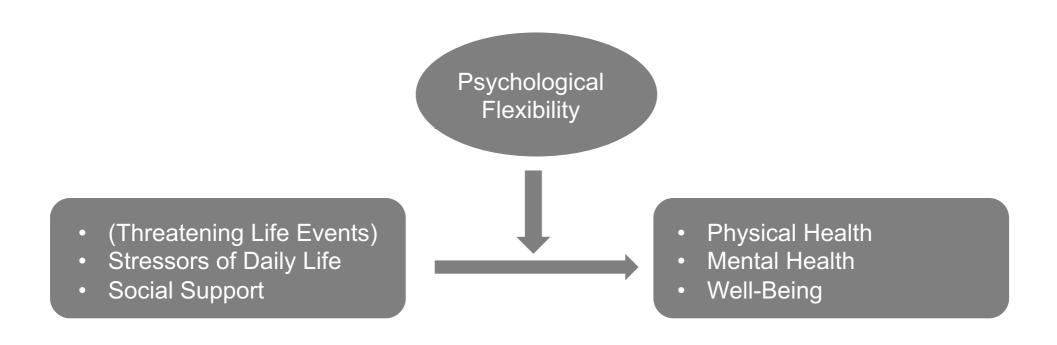
# MODERATING ROLE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL FLEXIBILITY

	Physical Health				Psychological Health				Well-being			
	Overall Health	Physician Visits	Sick Days	Health Disability	Overall Psych Health	Stress	Depression	Anxiety	Life Satisfaction	Emot. Wellbeing	Social Wellbeing	Psychol Wellbeing
Threating Life Events												
Daily Stress						N/A						
Social Support												

# MODERATING ROLE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL FLEXIBILITY

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Social Support												

# DOES PSYCHOLOGICAL FLEXIBILITY MODERATE KNOWN RELATIONSHIPS IN THE GENERAL POPULATION?



## TAKE AWAY MESSAGE

- PF consistently & logically moderates relationship between known risk/resilience factors and
  - Physical Health (especially impairment)
  - Mental health
  - Well-being
- Predicted dose response pattern (low, medium, high PF)
  - Suggests protective factor of high PF in general population
  - Suggests targeted subgroup interventions
- Malleable!
- → A Meaningful Public Health Target?!



## **AMONG COMMON RISK & RESILIENCE FACTORS**

**Not Predictive of Mental Health** 

Age

Gender

Lockdown Variables

**Marital Status** 

**Employment Status** 

**Living Situation** 

Children

Family Function

Mindfulness

**Predictive** 

Social Support

**Educational Level** 

Psychological Flexibility

## **SOCIAL FUNCTIONS**

N = 177 Patients

N = 297 Community Members

Same Average Size of Meaningful Relationships

Same Average (High) Quality of Meaningful Relationships

#### BOTH...

...patients and community members report a well-functioning network

...benefit from relationships

But how social relations relate to symptoms and well-being differs...

# **SOCIAL FUNCTIONS**





**Sexual Partner** 



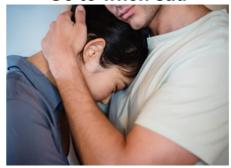
Complain



Comfort



Go to when sad



**Advice** 



Go to when happy



Support



Gossip



167-1

2014-2

Pretreatment ------Post-treatment

167-1

2002-14

Pretreatment -------Post-treatment

# 3. THE WORLD OUTSIDE OUR CLINICS - DAILY LIFE



Attention to how and when we ask questions.

What can we learn about daily life – and does it matter?

https://www.wholelifechallenge.com/why-i-believe-the-whole-life-challenge-works/

### **ASSESS BEHAVIOR IN CONTEXT!**







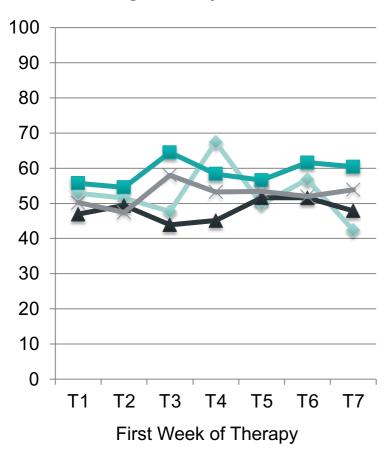




WHEN USING QUESTIONNAIRES, PEOPLE OVERESTIMATE SYMPTOMS AND IMPORTANCE OF PERCEIVED CAUSAL FACTORS WHEN COMPARED TO ESM

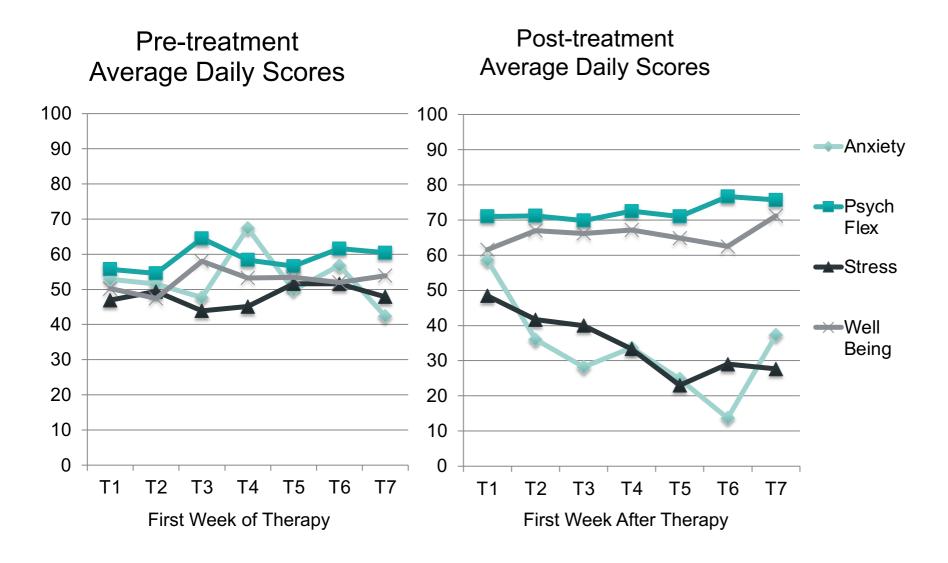
# AN ALTERNATIVE WAY TO MEASURE CHANGE

# Pre-treatment Average Daily Scores





## AN ALTERNATIVE WAY TO MEASURE CHANGE



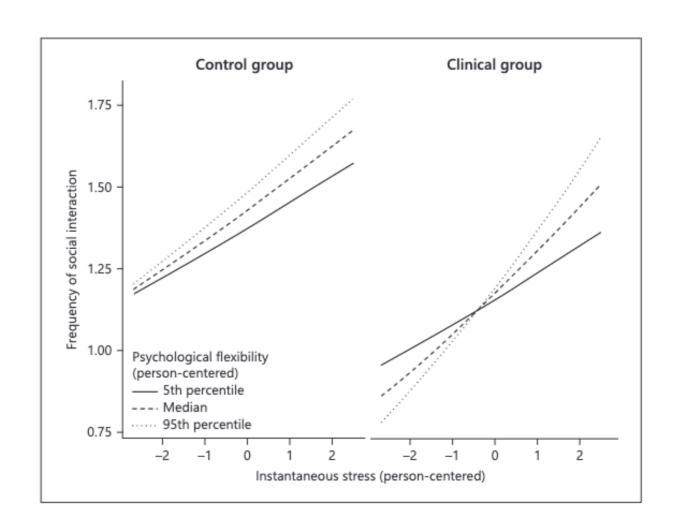
### **MEASURE EXPERIENCE!**

Stress is "bad for us"
Social Interaction is "good for us"
Negative relationship

But that is a cross-sectional hypothesis!

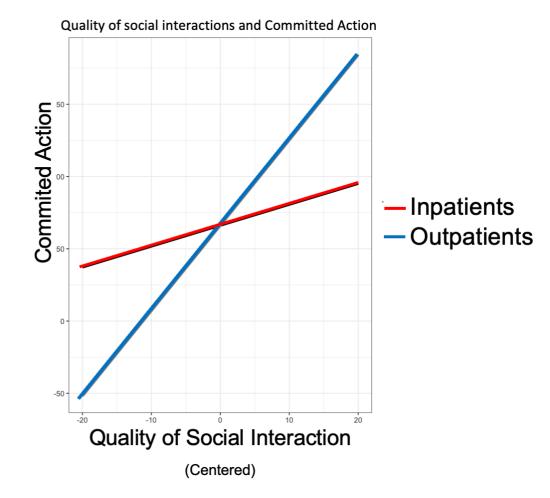
Momentary Experience tells us something different!

Positive relationship moderated by Psychological Flexibility



# HOW ARE INTERVENTIONS ACTUALLY IMPLEMENTED? UNDERSTANDING INTERVENTIONS IN EVERYDAY LIFE USING ESM

HIGHER QUALITY
SOCIAL
INTERACTIONS
HELP PATIENTS
FOLLOW
THROUGH!



# HOW DO PATIENTS MOVE THROUGH LIFE AND DOES THIS IMPACT OUTCOMES?

## EXAMINING PROCESSES VIA SPATIOTEMPORAL MOVEMENT



Participants carried a GPS-enabled smartphone for one week at the beginning of treatment; GPS



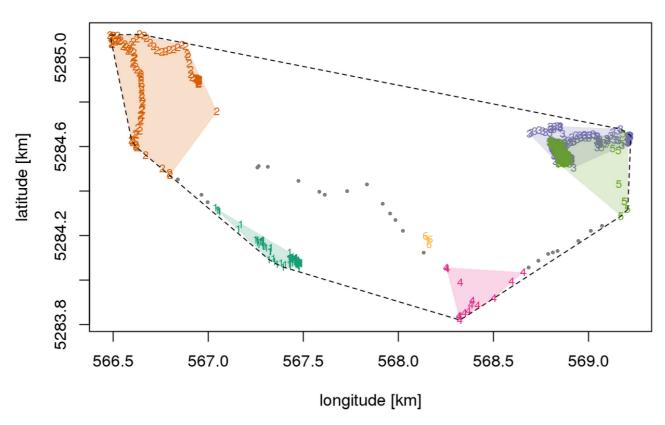
Algorithms were applied to establish spatiotemporal clusters



Symptomatology and Wellbeing were assessed

Signals were logged every 5 seconds

## SPONTANEOUSLY CHOSEN MOVEMENT



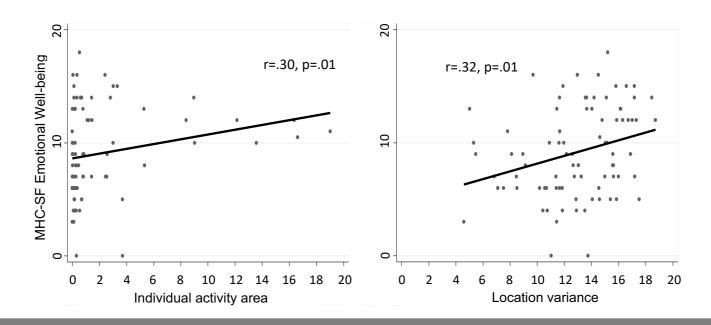
**Figure 1.** Spatiotemporal activity pattern of a selected patient during one day.

The ST-DBSCAN algorithm estimated six clusters in this case. Numbers denote GPS signals of a specific cluster in temporal order of recording (1 = first cluster, 6 = last cluster recorded throughout the day).

Color-shaded areas refer to the hulls around individual clusters. The broken line denotes the hull boundary around all GPS signals recorded during the entire day. Grey dots denote GPS signals allocated to "in transit" destinations.

1=turquoise, 2=brown, 3=violet, 4=red (carmine), 5=green, 6=yellow

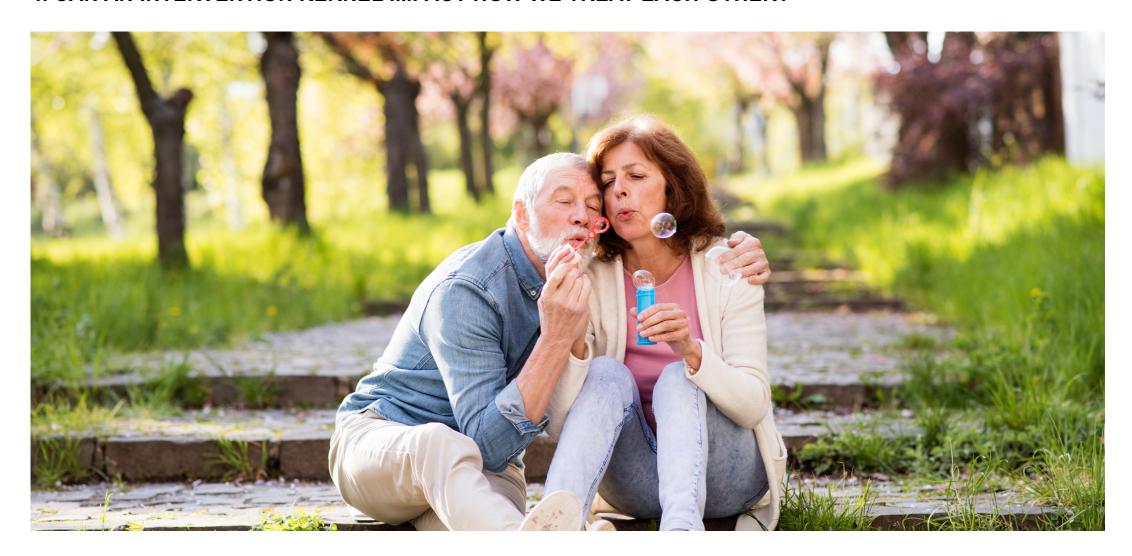
# MOVEMENT RELATES TO WELL-BEING, BUT NOT SYMPTOMS



Relationship between Wellbeing & Individual activity area (left) and Location variance (right).

This relationship was the same for Psychological Flexibility and Movement.

#### 4. CAN AN INTERVENTION KERNEL IMPACT HOW WE TREAT EACH OTHER?



## PF OUTSIDE THE CLINIC: STUDY AIM





Psychological Flexibility & Well-Being Does PF in dyads impact

- Well-Being
- Prosociality
- Relationship Closeness
- Cooperation key factor in human development and success (Hayes & Sanford, 2014)
- Are These Relationships "Dose" Dependent
  - Group level of PF
- Is PF a key "kernel"?

## PF OUTSIDE THE CLINIC: STUDY AIM



 90 Couples (180 Individuals)

Age matched

Average: 33.1 years

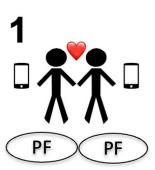
• Rage: 19 – 75 years

Length of relationship

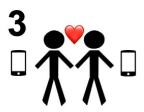
Average: 8.2 years

Rage: 1 – 44 years

# STUDY: YOU & ME - PROCEDURE







#### Lab

#### **Baseline**

- Questionnaires
- Interview
- Micro-Intervention





### Lab

#### **Post**

- Questionnaires
- Economic Game





Everyday Context



Picture: http://www.barbara-jordi.ch/wp/wp-content/uploads/barbara\_jordi\_paartherapie.jpg

STUDY: YOU & ME

What is the secret of your relationship?

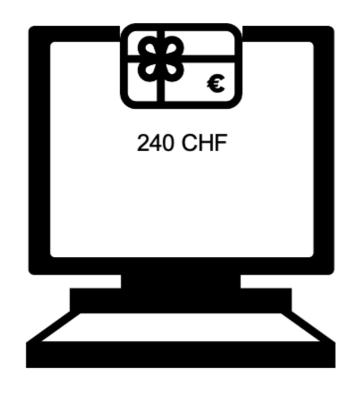
But we also accept each others' space!

We have a lot in common, for example we both like to travel, do sports and ...



 $Picture: http://www.clinicaltherapygroup.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Clinical\_Therapy\_Group\_Services\_Relationship-and-Couple-Therapy\_Inner.jpg$ 

#### DICTATOR GAME - AN EXPERIMENTAL TEST OF PROSOCIALITY



How much do you want to give to your partner?

#### **DICTATOR GAME**

#### **Experimental Test of Prosociality & Selfishness**

- Players decide how to distribute a fixed amount of money to herself & recipient
- Strangers with no previous <u>or subsequent</u> contact
- Homo Economicus Prediction
  - Rational Response: Me:100% You: 0%
- Modal amount
  - Me: 70% You: 30%
  - Some dictators leave nothing
  - Some <u>up to 50%</u>

# **GIFT CERTIFICATE EXAMPLES**

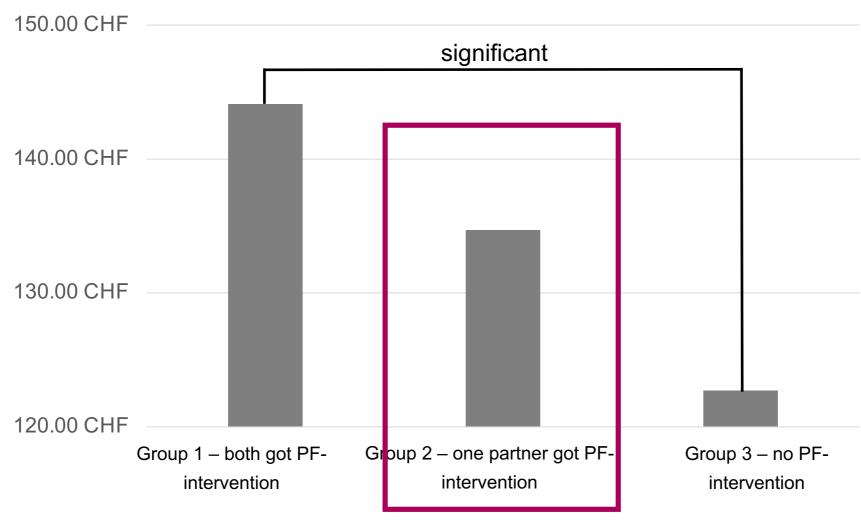




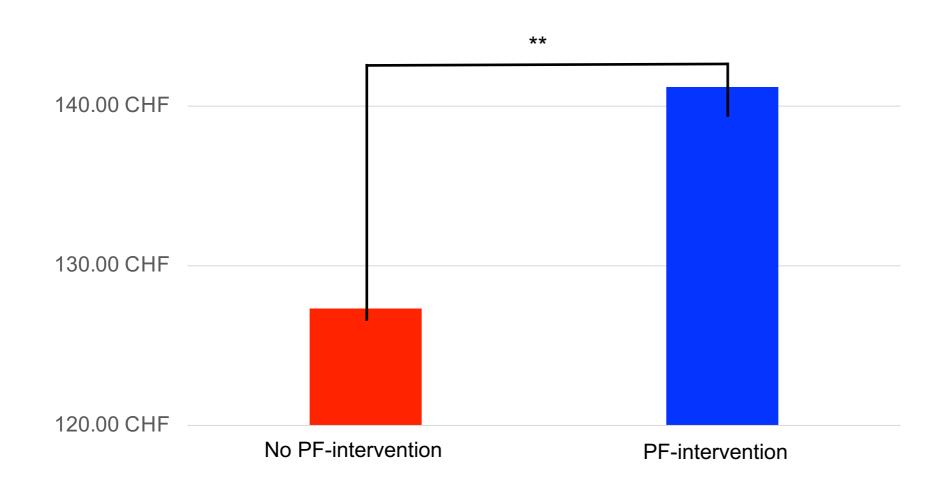


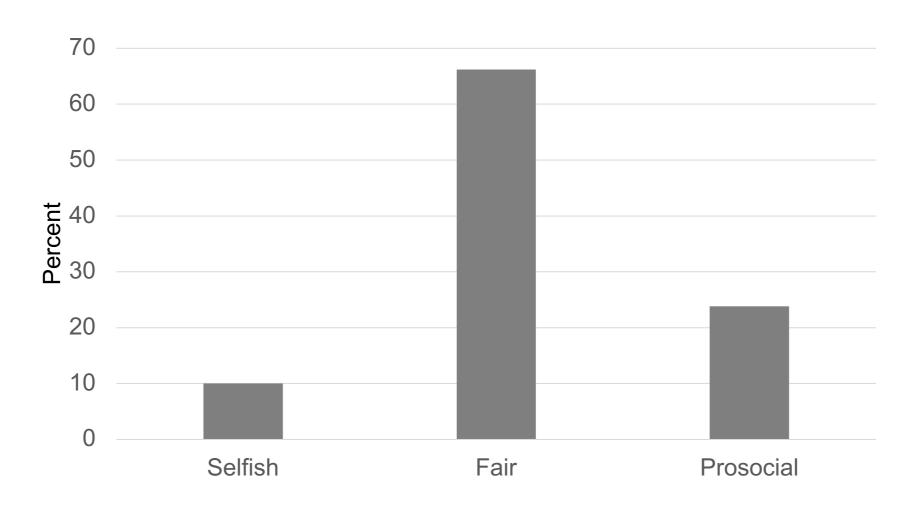


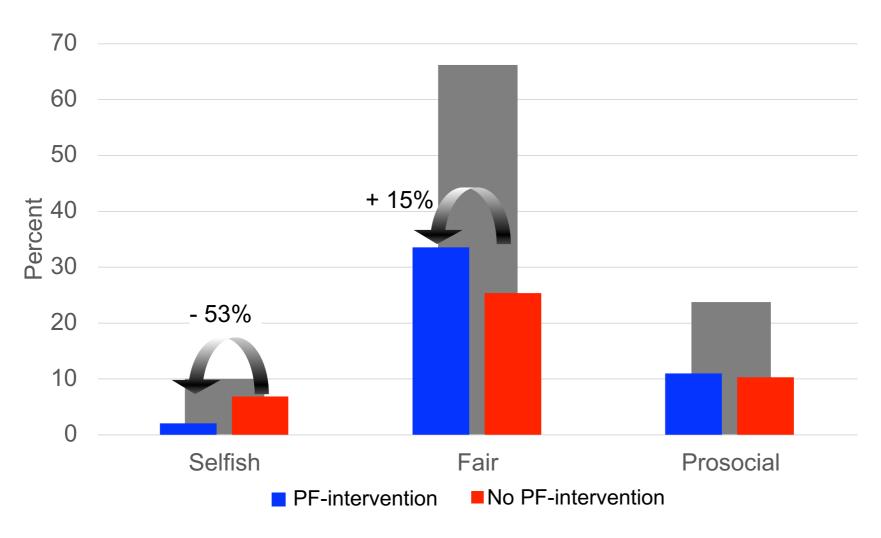
#### **Dictator Game**



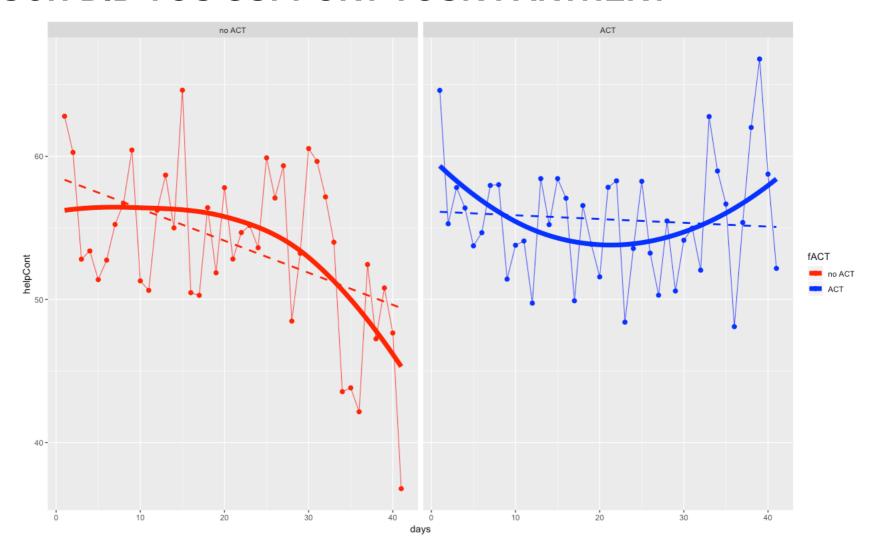
150.00 CHF







# **HOW MUCH DID YOU SUPPORT YOUR PARTNER?**





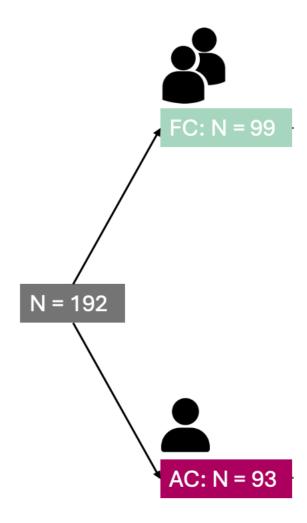
#### THROUGH THICK AND THIN -

A RANDOMIZED CONTROLLED TRIAL TO EVALUATE THE ROLE OF FRIENDSHIP AND PSYCHOLOGICAL FLEXIBILITY AFTER BEING OSTRACIZED

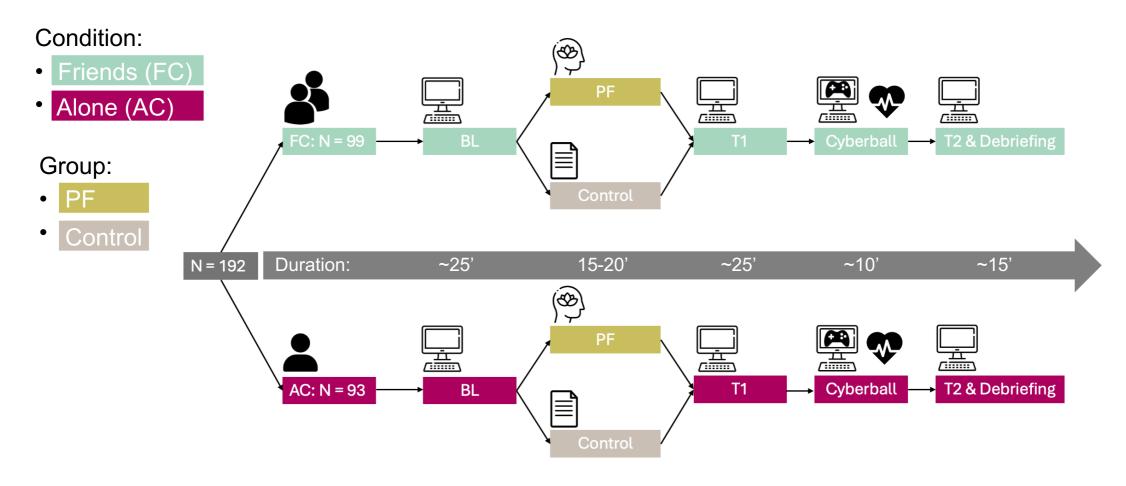
ELISA HALLER CLARA BONGARTZ ANGELINA ZEUGIN FABIO COVIELLO

#### **STUDY SAMPLE**

- N = 192 participants
- Age: mean = 24.8 (SD = 8.04)
- Sex: female = 147 (76.57%), male = 43 (22.40%),
   non-conforming = 2 (1.04%)
- Employment Status:
  - Student: 114 (75.00%)
- Marital Status:
  - In a relationship: 72 (37.50%)
  - Married: 3 (1.56%)
  - Single: 110 (57.29%)
  - No detail: 7 (3.65%)



#### **STUDY FLOW**



# **CYBERBALL**



"Stranger I"



"Friend / Stranger II"



#### **BEING OSTRACIZED HURTS!**

"Although I could imagine that the Cyberball game doesn't reflect reality, I realize how the feeling of being excluded affects my current emotions, actions and thinking."

"I felt hopeful but also disappointed."

"Once again, I was the fifth wheel on the wagon."

"You can play on your own. I do not even want to fight for attention or the ball. Bye!!"

"Being excluded hurts."

...even if Cyberball is already familiar, ostracism distress is felt (e.g. Davidson et al., 2019; Waldeck, D., Tyndall, et al., *JCBS*, 2017; Waldeck, Bissell, Tyndall, *JCBS*, 2020).

#### **BEING OSTRACIZED HURTS!**

Threat of loosing your tribe is of evolutionary importance. Which is why it hurts!

And...

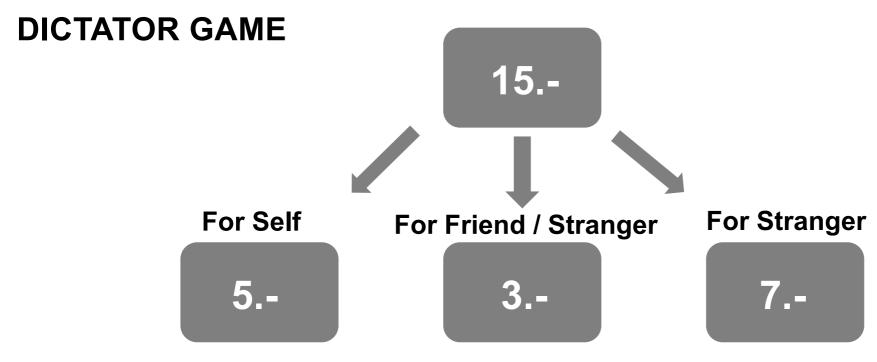
...PF does NOT reduce the negative emotions nor enhance positive emotions

... a Friend does NOT reduce the negative emotions nor enhance positive emotions

#### **BEING OSTRACIZED HURTS! AND...**

...there are various ways of dealing with difficult emotions!

# Revenge!



• **Prosocial:** Gave themselves 4 or less or gave themselves less than another person

• Fair: Gave all participants & themselves 5.- each

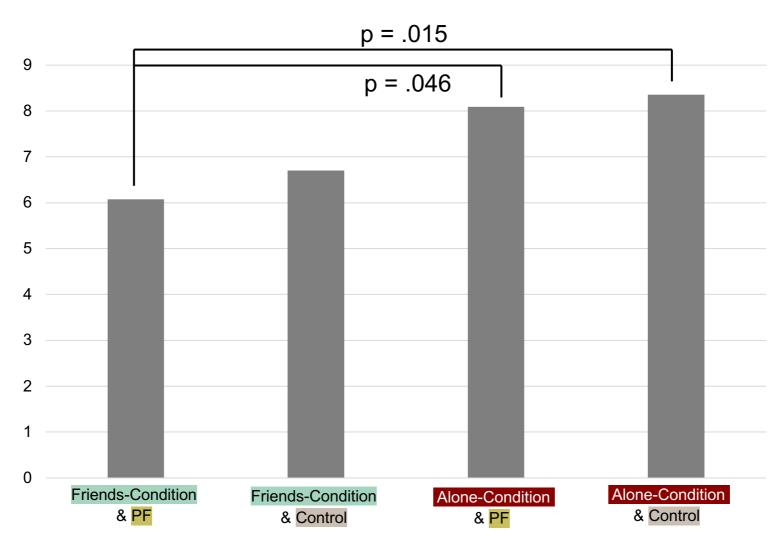
• **Selfish:** Gave themselves 8.- or more + the case where they gave themselves 7 and the

others each 4

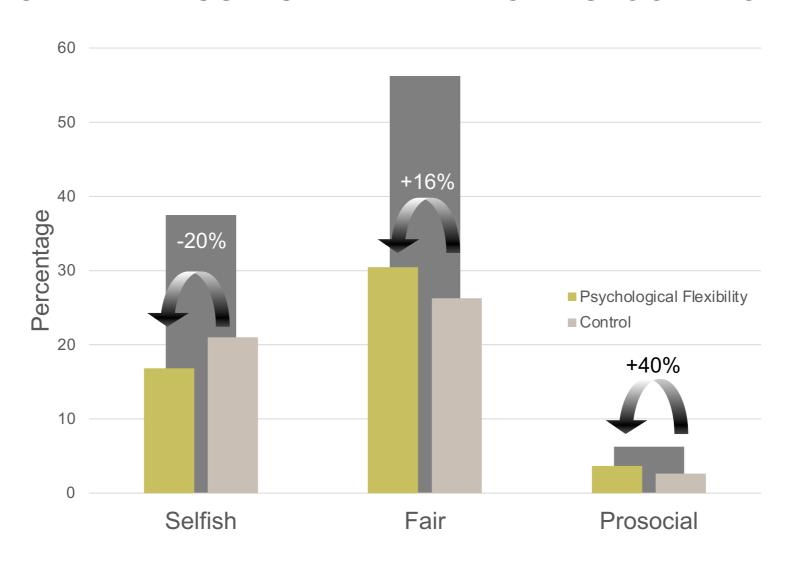
• Two cases were not clear: Self 6.-; Friend 6.-; Stranger 3.- => selfish

#### **DICTATOR GAME – RESULTS: FRIENDS MATTER!**

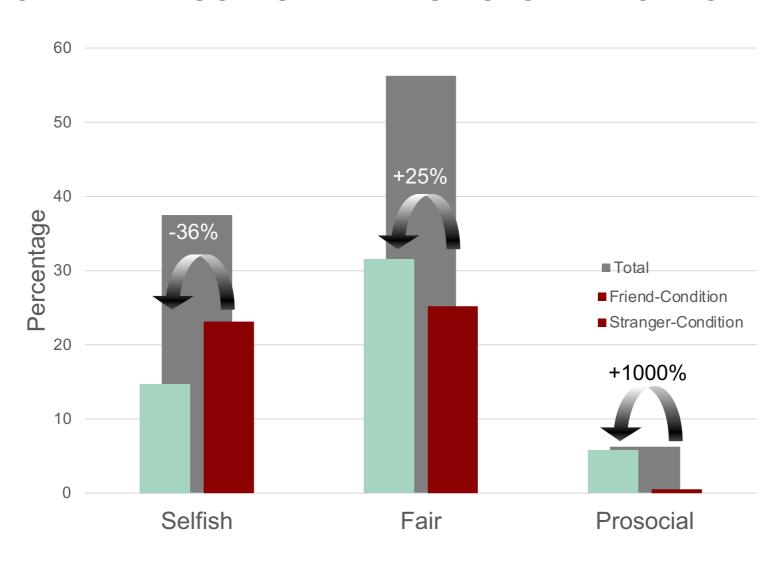
How much did the participants give themselves?



#### **DICTATOR GAME - RESULTS INTERVENTION VS. CONTROL**



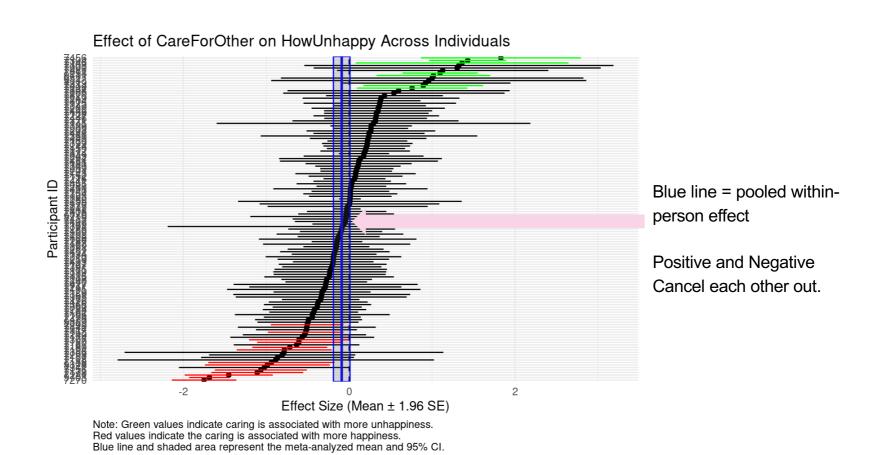
#### **DICTATOR GAME - RESULTS FRIENDS VS. STRANGERS**

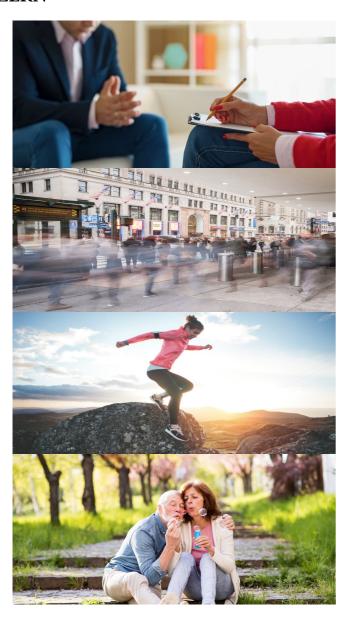


# IN THE FACE OF (PRIMAL) PAIN AND THREAT

Can we maintain our humanity?

# BUT, AND ONCE AGAIN, IT (THE PROCESSES) DEPENDS





### **SUMMARY**

We have important successes, on average, but not for everyone. Emerging technologies may help us better personalize interventions.

Addressing this requires attention to our targets and methods.

Our clients' lives transcend many contexts. Examining this offers new & clinically useful insights.

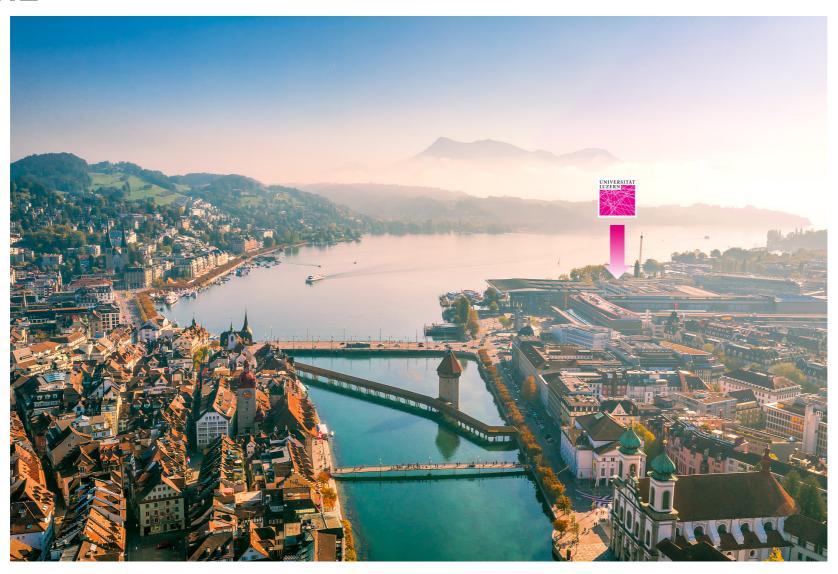
Psychological Flexibility is malleable and salient. And the importance of friends and community can not be overstated.

#### **ISSUES OF MY HEART**

Community

Psychological Flexibility

# **LUCERNE**





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#### **Lab Members**

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#### **Collaborators**

Jeanette Villanueva & Jan Martz (Zurich – SING), Roselind Lieb, Andrea Meyer, Patrizia Hofer, Jens Gaab, Isabell Schumann, Klaus Bader, Thorsten Mikoteit, Christian Imboden (Solothurn), Martin Hatzinger (Solothurn), Michael Waadt (München), Rainer Sonntag (Olpe), Jürgen Hoyer (Dresden), Hans-Ulrich Wittchen (Dresden), Jens Klotsche, Nina Romanczuk-Seiferth (Berlin), Stefan Hofmann (Marburg), Alexander Gerlach (Köln), Jutta Mata (Mannheim), Charles Benoy (Luxembourg), Yuen Yu Chong (Hong Kong), Cristóbal Hernández Contreras (Chile), Gökçen Aydın (Turkey), Maria Karekla (Cyprus), Giovambattista Presti (Italy), David Dias Neto (Portugal), Louise McHugh (Ireland), Joseph Ciarrochi, Baljinder Sahdra (Australia), Michael Twohig, Michael Levin, Joe Himle, Georg Eifert, Steve Hayes (USA)

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# THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION.