

# Reduction of depression and anxiety with the Group Format of Emotional Activation Therapy (G-EAT)

Flies, E., Schmidt, A. & Chwallek, K.

## 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.



(Bloch, 2017)

## 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
- **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

## Scales & Design

### Scales:

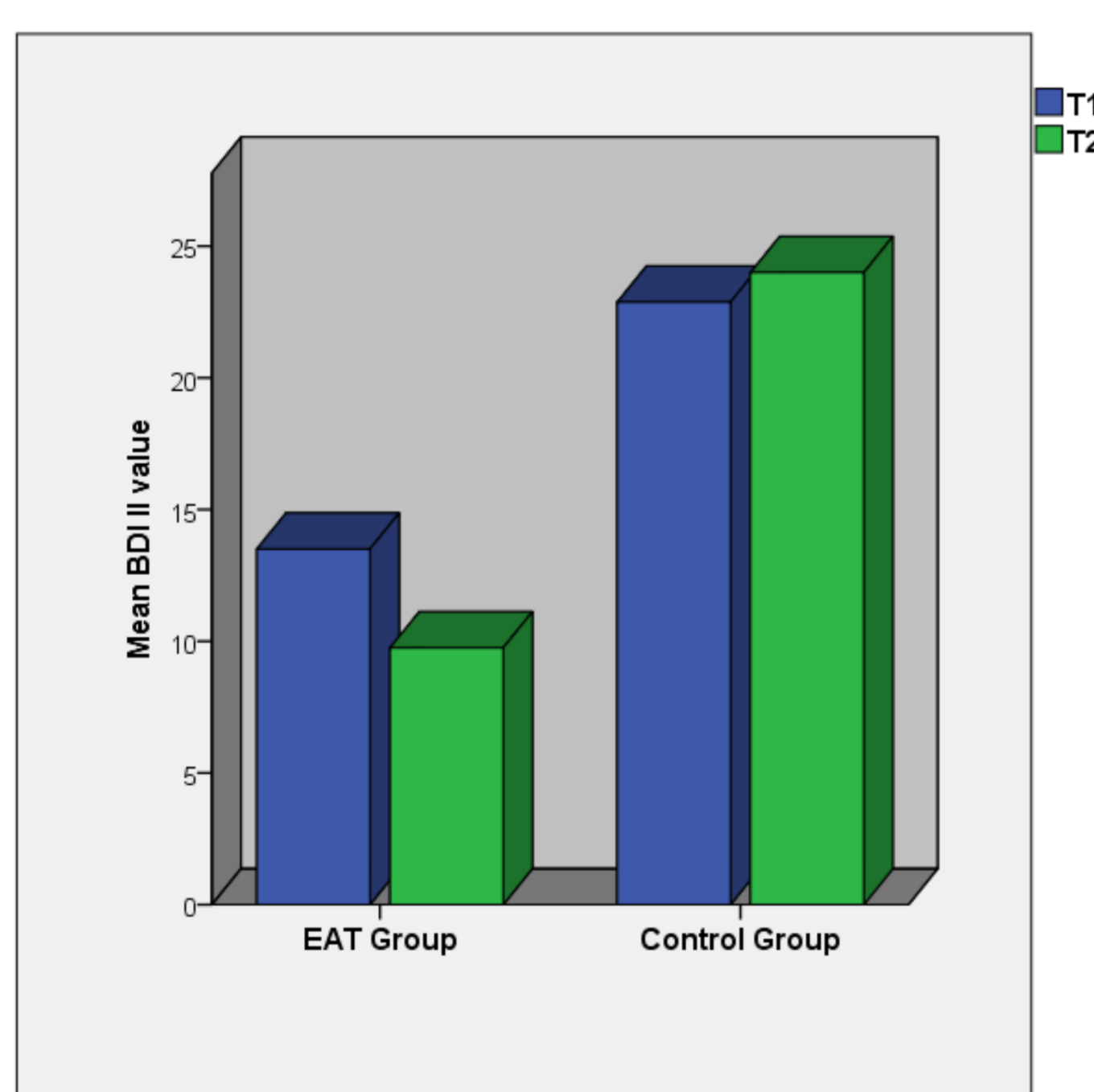
- Beck-Depression-Inventory (BDI-II) (Beck, Steer & Brown, 1996):  
 $N_{\text{Items}} = 21$
- State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI-G Form X1) (Laux et. al., 1981):  
 $N_{\text{Items}} = 20$

### Design:

- Pre-and Postmeasurement during a period of 12 weeks

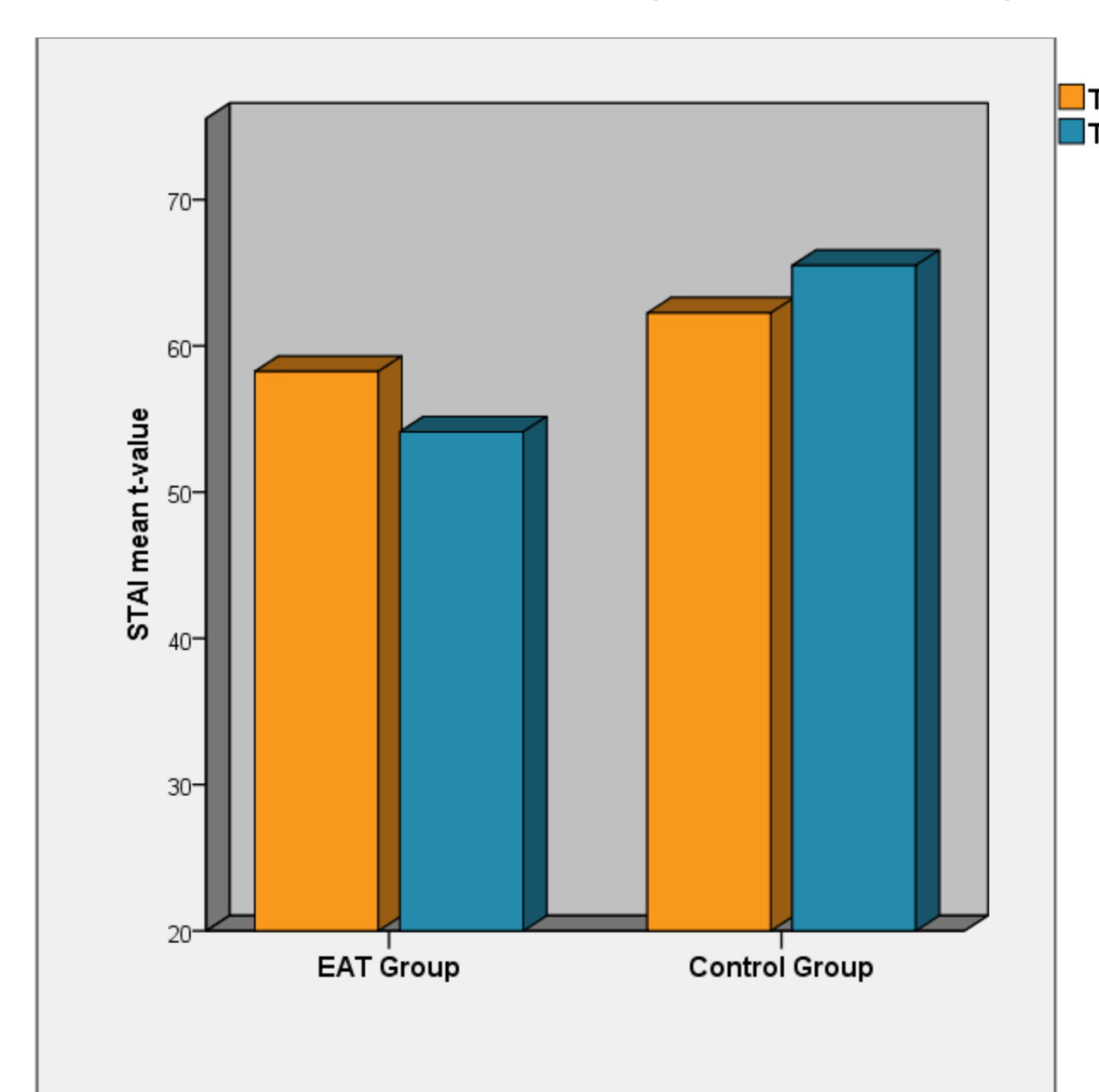
## Results

### Beck-Depression-Inventory



Between Subject Effects  
 $F = 5.2$   
 $p = 0.04$

### State-Trait Anxiety-Inventory



Between Subject Effects  
 $F = 8.3$   
 $p = 0.01$

### 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.