



# Self-defining memories and future projections as a means to facilitate reflection on life values in depressed adults

A preliminary study

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## Introduction

### Brief Behavioral Activation Treatment for Depression (BBATD)

(Lejuez et al. 2001)

→ Depressed patients are lead to a reflection on their personal life values per life domains (e.g., family relationships, employment)



Behavioral assignments through valued activities

Depressed patients → Difficulties to conduct this reflection and to identify their life values

### Self-defining memories (SDMs) & self-defining future projections (SDFPs)

(Singer, Blagov, Berry & Oost, 2012)

- ✓ Autobiographical memories concerning reflections on the past and on the potential future central goals, values and conflicts of one's life
- ✓ Vivid and well-rehearsed autobiographical memories related to a meaning-making (i.e., a learned lesson about oneself, others or the world)
- ✓ Positive, neutral or negative; specific or categorical events

SDMs and SDFPs are highly relevant for the self



Recalling SDMs and imagining SDFPs might help depressed patients to have a clearer view of their personal values



This might facilitate the selection of valued activities in BBATD



This preliminary study aims at *assessing the feasibility for depressed patients to recall SDMs and to imagine SDFPs per life domains*

## Methods

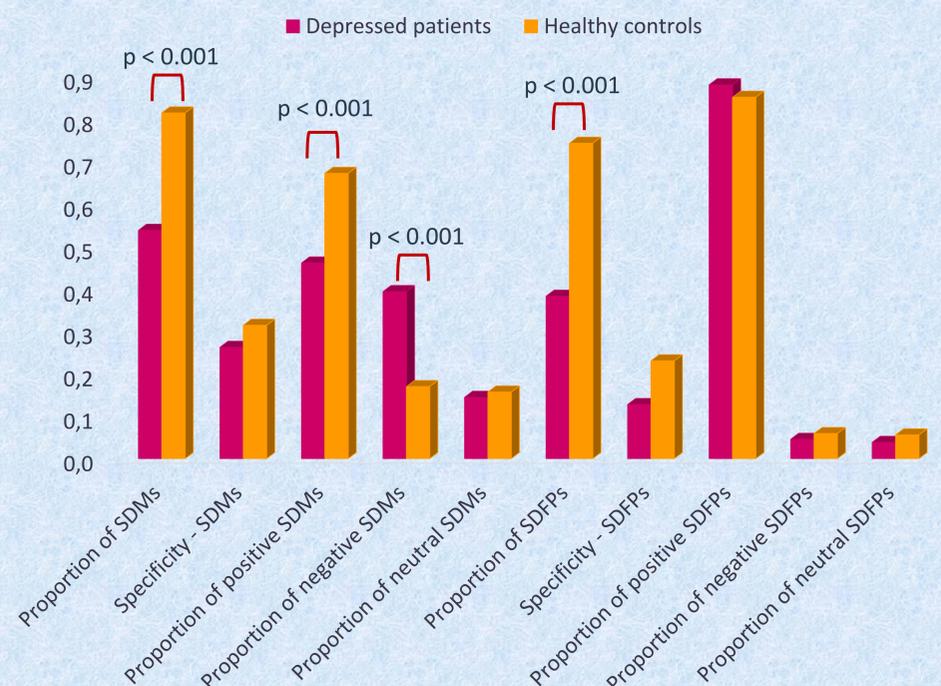
30 depressed patients (DP) and 30 paired healthy controls (HC) (i.e., sex, age) were asked to recall SDMs and imagine SDFPs per life domains (e.g., family relationships, employment)

→ Comparison of SDMs and SDFPs between DP and HC

## Results

	DP N = 30	HC N = 30	
♀/♂	18/12	18/12	
	M (ET)	M (ET)	F (d, dl) p
Age	43.70 (8.72)	43.20 (10.04)	0.04 (1,58) 0.84

■ Depressed patients ■ Healthy controls



## Discussion

- ✓ Even though DP report autobiographical memories and projections to the same extent than HC, DP report less SDMs and SDFPs than HC (i.e., autobiographical memories with a meaning-making).
  - DP seem less capable to produce a meaning-making while it is highly relevant for the self and the identification of one's personal life values
  - └ The adjunction of clinical interventions aiming at helping DP to elaborate a meaning making seems relevant in the BBATD perspective.

- ✓ DP recalled more negative SDMs and less positive SDMs: mood congruence bias?
  - These differences are not observable in regards to SDFPs: optimism for their future?
    - └ The adjunction of clinical interventions aiming at helping DP to focus on more positively valenced memories seems appropriate.
- Both issues should be addressed in future experimental studies.