



16TH CONGRESS OF THE EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR PSYCHOTHERAPY: MEANINGS OF HAPPINESS AND PSYCHOTHERAPY

**Encounter Groups Experience  
Self Esteem and Subjective Wellbeing**  
\*\*\*  
**A experiência de Grupos de Encontro  
auto-estima e bem-estar subjectivo**

5 JULHO 2009

 APPCCP  
Associação Portuguesa de  
Psicoterapia Centrada na  
Pessoa e Counselling

 UAL  
UNIVERSIDADE  
AUTÓNOMA  
DE LISBOA


DEPARTAMENTO  
PSICOLOGIA E SOCIOLOGIA

Pires, M., Nunes, O., Hipólito, J., Brites, R. & Pires, P.(2009).  
Encounter Groups Experience - Self Esteem and Subjective Wellbeing.  
*16th Congress of The European Association For Psychotherapy: Meanings of  
happiness and psychotherapy.* Lisbon, July 5, 2009.



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Literature's Revision


SELF-ESTEEM	AFFECTS
It implies two actions on the person itself: measuring and valuing his way of being. Tap (2006)	Affective dimension of wellbeing Galinha & Ribeiro (2005)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plays a fundamental part on the variables that allow the person to affirm his identity, to develop stress coping strategies, social integration competences and to elaborate a meaningful existential project.</li> <li>• Depends on the way the person mobilize different strategies and efforts with the goal of obtaining a good personal, professional and social integration.</li> </ul>	<p>The 2 wellbeing dimensions::</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Cognitive:</b> Personal life satisfaction evaluation</li> </ul> <div style="background-color: #f4a460; padding: 5px; margin-top: 5px;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Emocional:</b> affects demonstrated on every moment; preponderance, duration and intensity of positive and negative emotions</li> </ul> </div>



Investigation Data

Rogers, 1970/1987	• Encounter's groups experience significantly contributes to a constructive change
Meador, 1970/1987	• Significant process's evolution: greater flexibility and expression, better contact with his own emotional expressivity, greater availability and trust in significant interpersonal relationship .
Gibb, 1970/1987	• Evidence that intensive training group's experiences have therapeutic aspects: Changes in sensibility, in the capacity of direct the feelings, in the motivation, in the attitudes towards it self and others, and in his interdependency.
Laneiro, 2006	• No-residential encounter's groups experience increase communicational aspects (pre and post tested).
Pires, 2006	• In no-residential encounter's groups experience participants mentioned with other aspects : personal and interpersonal growth, a better personal and interpersonal knowledge, and the promotion of personal and interpersonal change.

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### Study's Pertinence


Experience of APPCPC's team during more than 20 years with Residential Encounter's Groups and more 10 years with No-residential Encounter's groups (collaboration with Universities).

Research has shown that Encounter's groups facilitate personality 's constructive changes.

Being Encounter's groups limited in time, how long will last their impact in the person?

Self Esteem as a measure of the incongruence between the Real (perceived) Self and the Wanted Self might be an indicator of "subjective happiness".

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### Objectives

1. Evaluate the Self esteem and the affects of participants in Person Centered personal development's groups. Residential Encounters" groups (Group 1).
2. Evaluate the Self esteem and the affects of participants in Person Centered personal development's groups. No-residential Encounters" groups (Group 2).
3. Compare the Self esteem and the affects in the two groups.
4. To very if Self esteem and affects are influenced by time passed since the last Encounter's group as well as by the number of participations.
5. To verify if there are gender differences in the perception of Self esteem and affects.


A . To verify if there is a correlation between Self esteem and affects.

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Hipotesis

- 1 There are differences between self-esteem perception of residential and non residential encounter groups.
- 2 There are differences between affects perception of residential and non residential encounter groups.
- 3 The time passed since the last encounter group experience is associated with self-esteem perception.
- 4 The time passed since the last encounter group experience is associated with affects perception.
- 5 There are gender defferences on self-esteem and affects perception.



Sample

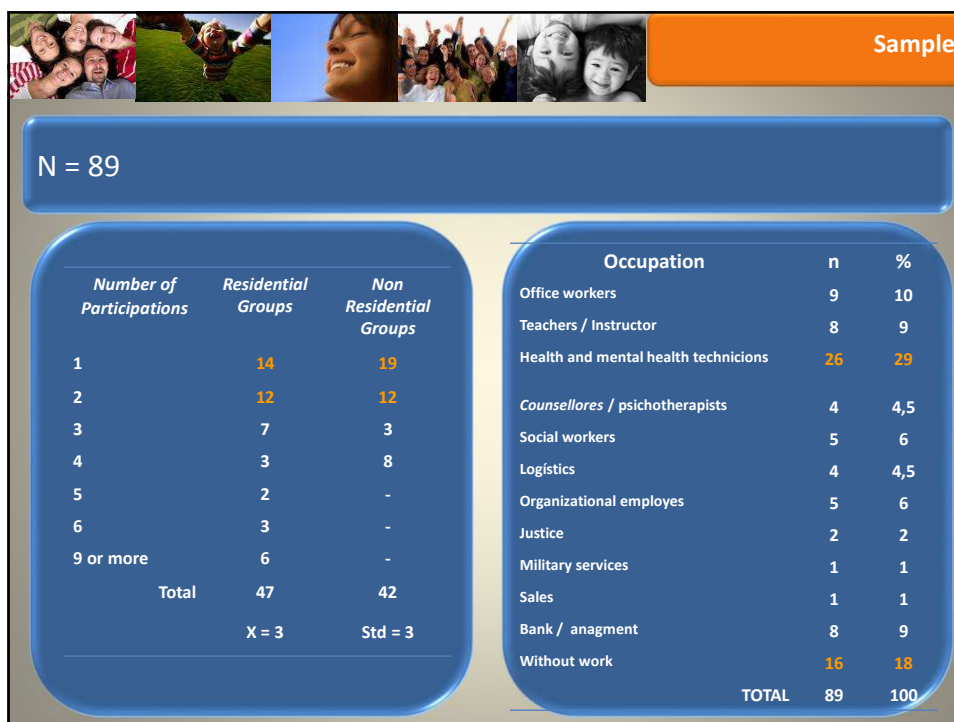
GROUPS	GENDER	n	%
Residential Groups	Men	15	17
	Woman	32	36
Non Residential Groups	Men	14	16
	Woman	28	31
TOTAL		89	100


89 subjets:

29 men (33%)  
60 women (67%)

Age:  
Between 20 and 68 years  
( $\bar{x}=39,04$  std=11,55 )


Schooling:  
University degree or University frequency





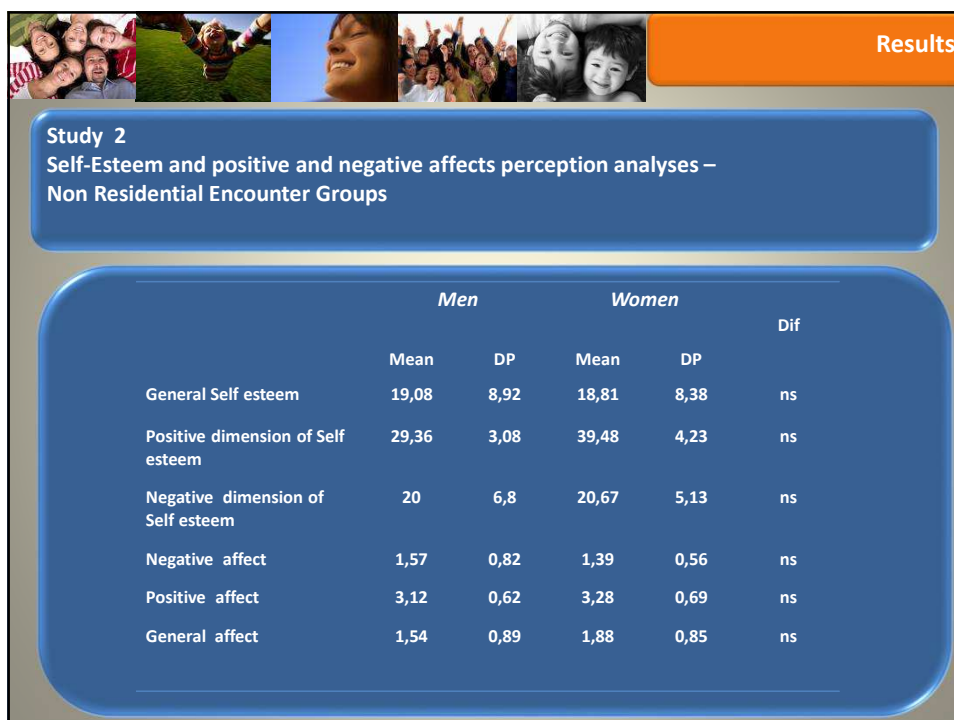
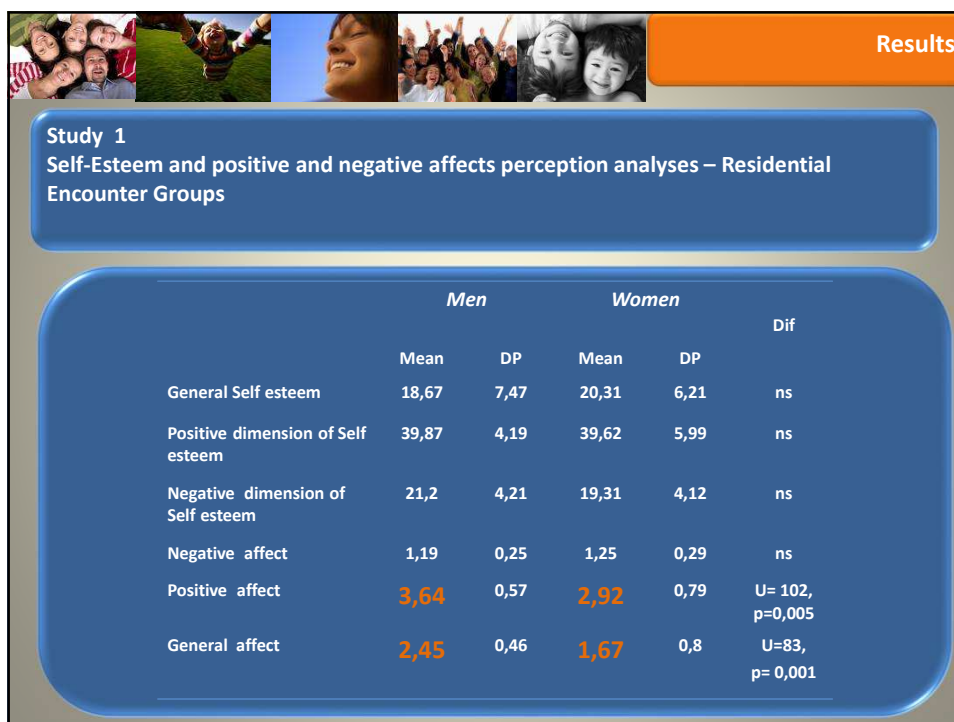
### Instruments


SELF-ESTEEM	SUBJECTIVE WELLBEING (affect)
SERTHUAL – Short version Tap, Hipólito & UAL (2009)	PANAS – Affect dimension scale Galinha & Ribeiro (2005)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Build from SERTHUAL (60 itens)</li> <li>•20 itens distributed by 5 positive self-esteem dimensions and 5 negative self-esteem dimensions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Portuguese adaptation of the PANAS scale</li> <li>•20 itens distributed by 2 dimensions (positive and negative affects)</li> </ul>



### Procedures

- Subjects answered on-line questionnaires after receiving an e-mail message
- The e-mail message clarified study objectives and asked for subjects participation
- Two months gathering data






**Results**

**Study 3**  
Group comparison - Self-esteem and Affects perception

There are no significant differences on self-esteem and affects between residential and non residential encounter groups.



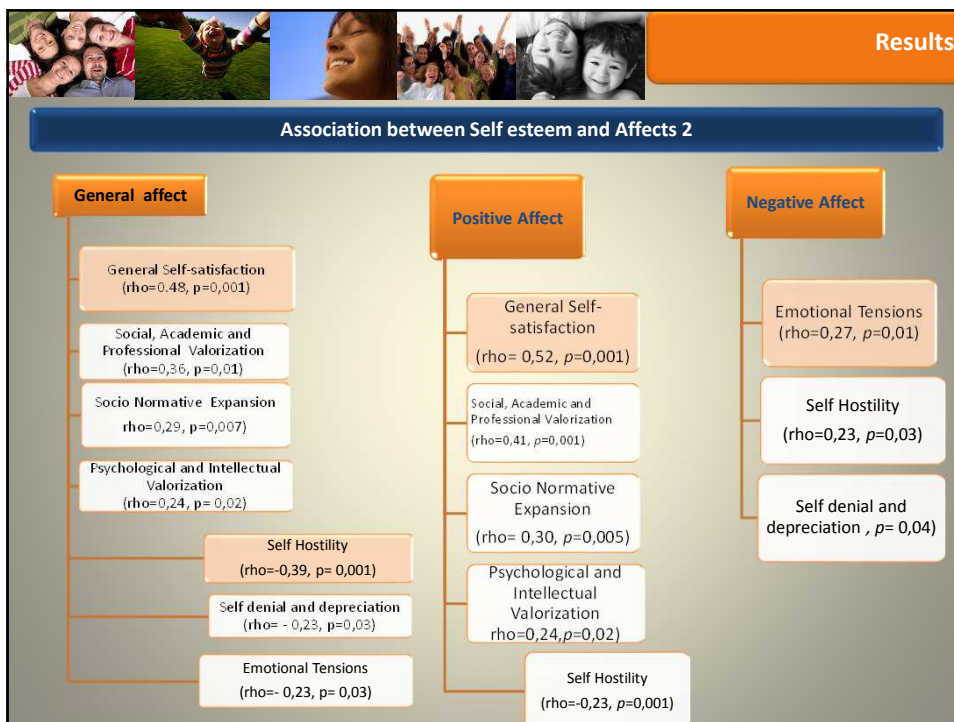
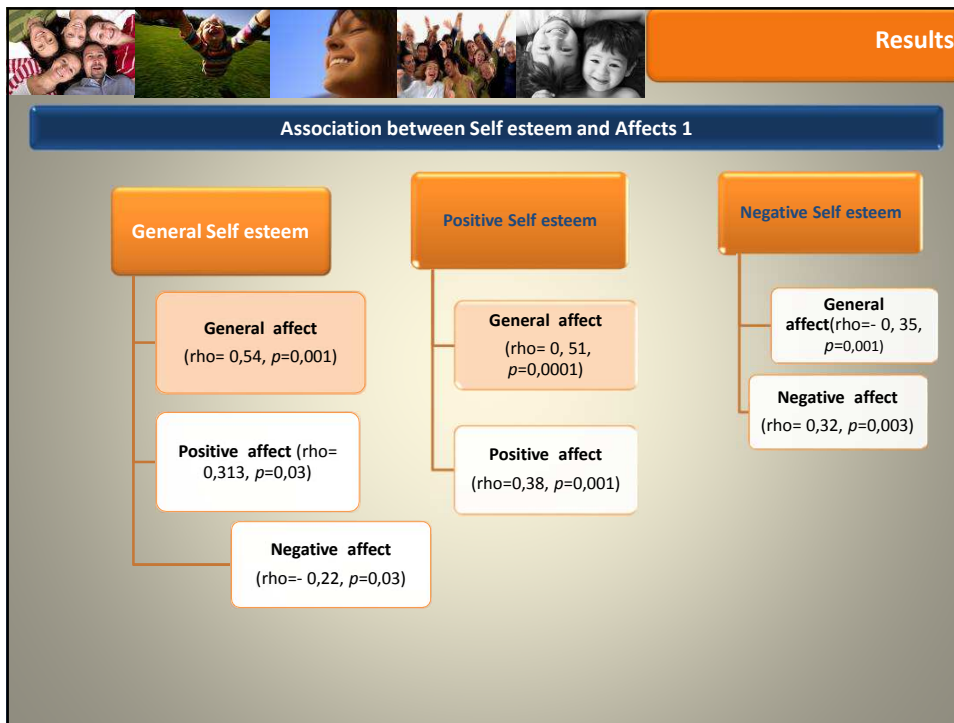
**Results**

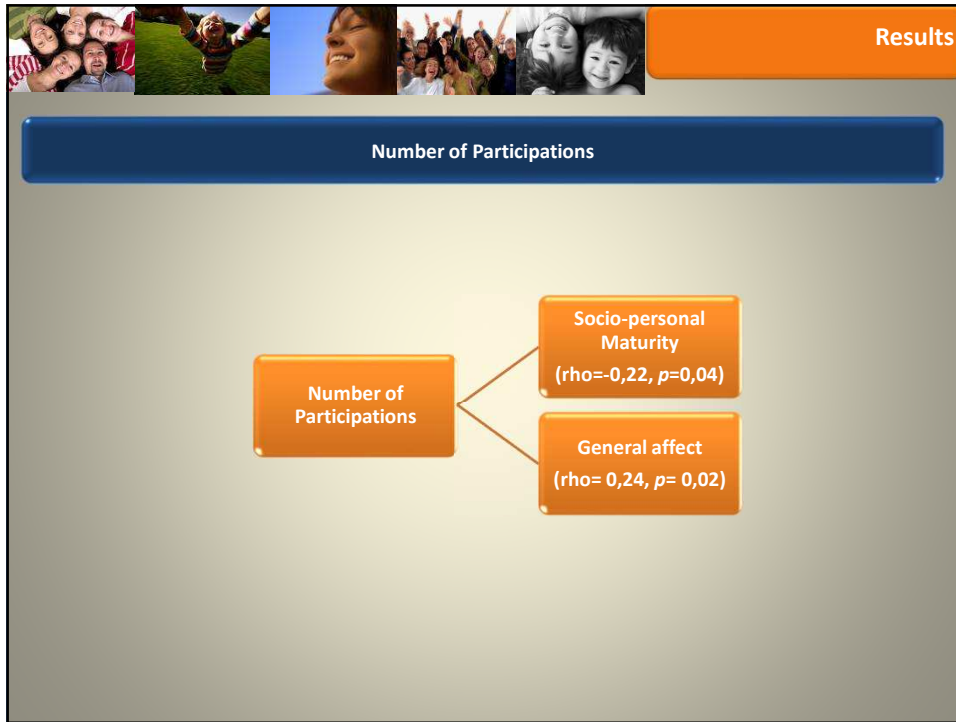
**Study 3**

- In a gender comparison there are no significant differences on self-esteem between residential and non residential encounter groups.
- But concerning the affect variable:

	Men Residential Group	Men Non Residential Group	Dif	Woman Residential Group	Woman Non Residential Group	Dif
	Mean (ords.)	Mean (ords.)		Mean (ords.)	Mean (ords.)	
General Affect	19,39	9,61	U=29,5, p=0,01	27,06	31,31	ns
Positive Affect	17,93	11,07	U=50, p=0,02	24,84	33,96	U=274, p= 0,03
Negative Affect	12,21	16,79	ns	27,71	30,54	ns









## Results

### Time since last participation


- The number of years passed since last time encounter group participation influence:
  - General Self-esteem ( $H(2)=10,46, p=0,005$ )
  - Self-esteem's positive dimension ( $H(2)=7,58 p=0,02$ )
  - Self-esteem negative dimension ( $H(2)=10,59, p=0,005$ )
- Group differences (*post hoc* Mann-Whitney comparisons) :
  - The last 1 or 2 years participation group ( $Mdn=22$ ) has significantley higher self-esteem scores compared with the last 3 years participation group ( $Mdn=18$ ) and with the more than 5 years participation group ( $Mdn= 15$ )
  - The last 1 or 2 years participation group ( $Mdn=41$ )has significantley higher positive self-esteem scores compared with the last 3 years participation group ( $Mdn=18$ ) and with the more than 5 years participation group ( $Mdn= 38,5$ ) ( $U=280,5, p= 0,01$ )
  - The last 1 or 2 years participation group ( $Mdn=19$ ) presentes lower scores of negative self-esteem compared with the last 3 years participation group ( $Mdn=22$ ) and with the more than 5 years participation group ( $Mdn= 22,5$ )



## Discussion

1. Both groups presents a General Self esteem positive and a predominance of positive Affects
2. Gender influences the predominance/intensity of positive Affects (higher values in men) being this difference higher in the residential group
3. However, Residential women's group presents lower values of positive affects when compared with no-residential women's group
4. General Self esteem/positive has a positive correlation with recent participation in Encounter's groups (residential or no-residential)
5. General Self esteem/negative has a negative correlation with recent participation in Encounter's groups (residential or no-residential)
6. The intensity of positive Affects has a positive correlation with recent participations in Encounter's groups (residential or no-residential)

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**Conclusion**

1. The differences between residential groups and no-residential groups are not evident. However, the results seem indicate the presence of other variables affecting the study's dimensions (ex. Gender)
2. The impact of Encounter's groups in Self esteem and Affects, usually decreases with the time passed, accentuating the negative aspects. However the continued participation in Encounter's groups seems to reverse this tendency accentuating the positive aspects

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