#### Pilot study

# Online selfhelp treatment of depression in MS (multiple sclerosis)

Lenka Nieuwenhuis MSc Mental Health Institute, Amsterdam

#### Projectmembers:

Dr. P. van Oppen

Prof. Dr. J. Dekker

Prof. Dr. C. Polman

Dr. B. Uitdehaag

Dr. E. Collette

Prof. Dr. P. Cuijpers







## How would you feel?



25 – 35 years old Children? Buy a house? Career?

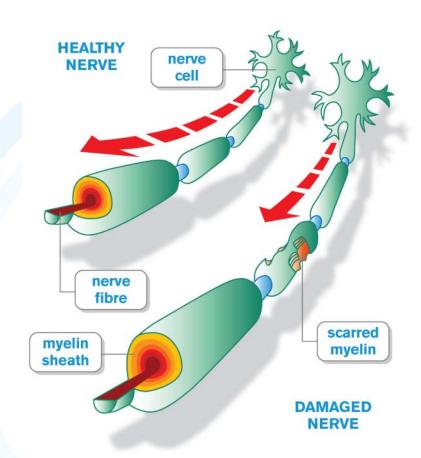






Immune system attacks central nervous system

Nerve cell communication disrupted



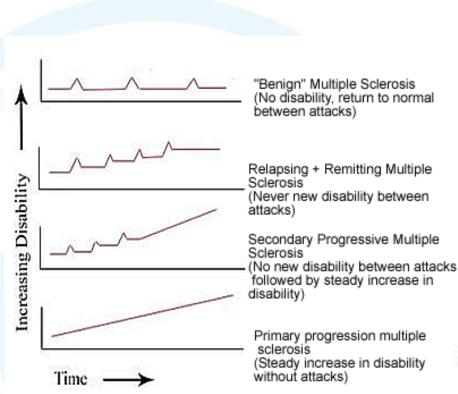






#### **Symptoms**

- Visual problems
- Changes in sensation
- Muscle weakness / spasm
- Bladder and bowel problems
- Fatigue
- Etcetera









- Prevalence → 1 in 1000 (Benelux)
  - Onset in young adults (20 40 year)
  - Female > male







- Prevalence → 1 in 1000 (Benelux)
- Cause remains unknown
- Course is unpredictable
- No cure







## How would you feel?































# Depression in MS

- Life-time prevalence ~ 50 %
- 12 month prevalence 15 25 %
- 50 % depressive symptoms at certain point of time
  - QoL ↓
  - Risk factor for suicidality







# Depression in MS

## Underdiagnosed and -treated

- Not mentioned (patients) vs.
   not asked (physicians and GP)
- Symptoms & signs overlap
  - E.a. fatigue, sleeping problems, concentration problems, loss of interest
- Distinguish from 'normal' mourning







# Depression in MS

#### Recommended treatment

Psychotherapy DC Mohr and DE Goodkin (1999)

## Hampering factors psychotherapy

- Physi

Perso

Trans

- Fatigu

nents

ice

ems







## Aim of pilot study

Online self-help program

# ZOGENE ZOGENE

- 1) Feasible?
- adherence
- response rate
- satisfaction

- 2) Effect on psychological distress?
  - depression
  - anxiety
  - QoL







# Study design

### 40 MS patients

- Mild / moderate depression
  - Screening BDI > 16
- Pre and post test
  - Depression (BDI)
  - Anxiety (HADS)
  - QoL (Euroqol)
  - Problem solving (SPSI-R)
  - Client satisfaction (CSQ)







# Study design

### 40 MS patients

- Mild / moderate depression
- Pre and post test
- CIDI diagnostic interview (DSM-IV)
  - Major / minor DD and dysthymia
  - Anxiety disorders









## Problem Solving Treatment (PST)

based on

Self-Examination Therapy Bowman

web-based

**Everything Under Control Cuijpers** 

for MS

Worry less / Minder Zorgen









#### Five weeks

- 1 lesson / week
- Homework
- Coach









#### Lesson 1

- What do you find important in life?
- What problems / worries do you experience in daily life?

#### Classify problems

- 1. Important and solvable
- 2. Unimportant
- 3. Important but insolvable









- Important and solvable problems
  - Use the 6 step problem solving method
    - 1. describe the problem
    - 2. list possible solutions
    - 3. pick the best solution
    - 4. make a plan
    - 5. implement the plan
    - 6. happy with the result? Yes











- Unimportant problems
  - Methods to stop worrying i.e. positive thinking and thought stop!









- Important but unsolvable problems
  - Learn how to cope and accept









- Make a plan for the future
  - Invest energy in the important things











#### Problems mentioned

- Relationship
- Adjustment to shower
- Asking for help
- Fatigue
- Sleeping problems
- Feeling guilty
- MS symptoms









## Why this intervention?

- → Improvement depressive symptoms in general population A. van Straten, P. Cuijpers, N. Smits 2008
- → Enlarge reach of underserved MS patients

→ PST: easy & for all levels of education







## Feasibility

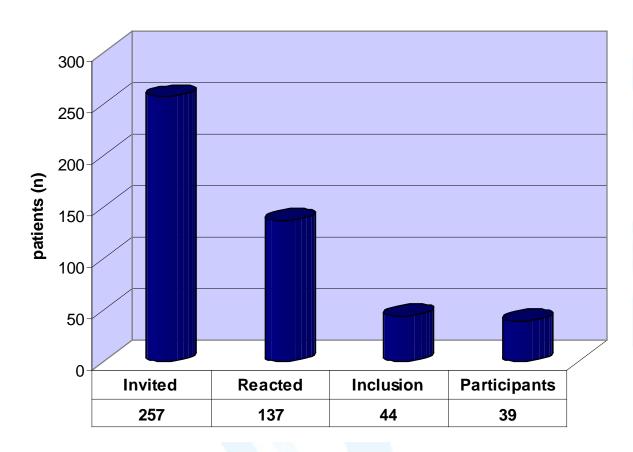
Reponse rate







#### **Response rate**









## Feasibility

- Reponse rate
- Drop out & satisfaction

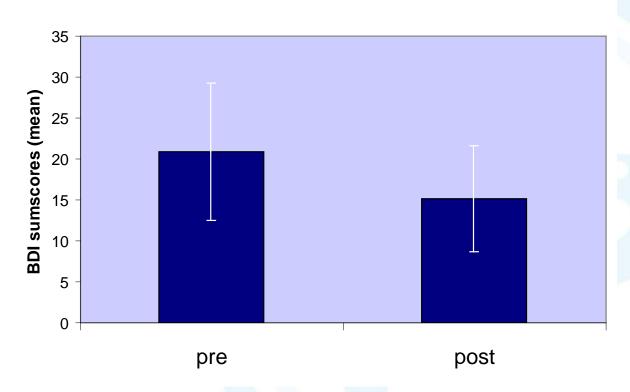
Drop outs	33 %
Satisfaction	7.6







# Pre- and post treatment scores on the BDI (n = 14)



\* p = 0.025 / effectsize = 0.78







## What's next

Promising results ->
Randomised controlled study a.s.a.p.







## Questions?



#### Contact

Lenka Nieuwenhuis minderzorgen@gmail.com
I.nieuwenhuis@ggzingeest.nl





