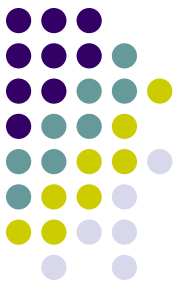


# **“On the road to a better life”: A personal goal realization program for depressed older adults**



**Prof. Dr. S. LAPIERRE**

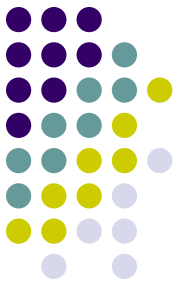
M. Dubé, L. Marcoux, S. Desjardins, P. Miquelon,  
Department of psychology  
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2<sup>nd</sup> Canadian Conference on Positive Psychology  
Ottawa, July 2014

# PERSONAL GOALS



- Great influence on behavior
- Important component of mental health
- Psychological well-being
- Life satisfaction. Positive emotions.
- Self-esteem. Self-efficacy.
- Meaning in life

Development of an goal intervention program :  
***“On the road to a better life”***

# Goals and suicide



Reasons for living and leading a meaningful life  
are incompatible with suicide.

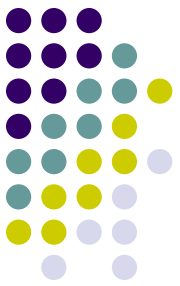
Realization of important personal goals  
might enhance hope and meaning in life:

Two protective factors of suicide.

# OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY



1. Development of a goal realization program for depressed older adults who lost their interest in life.
2. Evaluation of the effects of the program on :  
Various dimensions of psychological well-being,  
Depression, anxiety & suicidal ideations.



# AIM OF THE PROGRAM

Mental health promotion

Cognitive-behavioral approach

Knowledge of the goal realization process

Social support

Express – Set – Plan – Pursue & Achieve

Personal projects

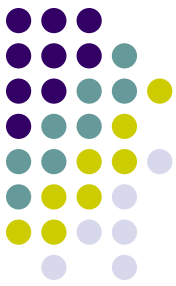
Meaningful – Concrete – Realistic

# STRUCTURE OF THE PROGRAM



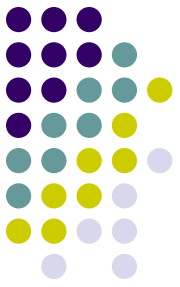
- 14 weekly group meetings.
- Two hours per week.
- 5 to 7 individuals.
- Conducted by doctoral student in psychology or psychologist.

<b>Steps</b>	<b>Meetings</b>	<b>Content of the program “<i>On the road to a better life</i>”</b>
<b>Preliminary steps</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Social activity to promote cohesion and cooperation between the members of the group.</b>
	<b>2-3</b>	<b>Share their experience and difficulties. See that they have similar problems.</b>
<b>Goal setting</b>	<b>4-5</b>	<b>Inventory of personal aspirations, ambitions, goals, &amp; interests. Identification of negative beliefs that impede on the realization of goals.</b>
	<b>6-7</b>	<b>Selection of 5 high priority goals. Evaluation according to distinct dimensions: Difficulty, stress, effort, probability of realization, enjoyment, control, support from others, conflict, feelings of competence ... Exploration of the characteristics of the goals they want to pursue.</b>
	<b>8</b>	<b>Translation into a “target behavior”. The goal is described into concrete, clear and precise terms to facilitate its realization. One goal is chosen. Commitment to the group to try and accomplish the goal.</b>
<b>Goal planning</b>	<b>9-10</b>	<b>Crucial step including choice of means. Identification of concrete actions and steps to reach the goal. Anticipation of obstacles and identification of strategies to overcome them. Identification of personal, social, and material resources. Suggestions from the group are useful.</b>
<b>Goal pursuit</b>	<b>11-12-13</b>	<b>Execution of the action plan. Evaluation of effort, progress, difficulties, abilities &amp; resources. Identification of thoughts and emotions that impede the actions. Adjustments to the unexpected. Group support is essential.</b>
<b>Evaluation of the outcome</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>Evaluation of progress &amp; knowledge. Evaluation of strengths and challenges. Ability to use the process in the future. Evaluation of well-being and depression.</b>



# Method.

## Procedure.



### **SELECTION CRITERIA :**

No cognitive problems. MMSE  $\geq$  24.

Age : Over 65 years

Depressed older adults or older adults with insomnia (risk factors for suicide).

Beck Depression Inventory-II cutoffs scores :

0 - 13: minimal depression;

14 - 19: mild depression;

20 - 28: moderate depression;

29 - 63: severe depression.

Participants with BDI-II scores ranging from 9 to 39;  $M = 21.2$

**54 respondents :**

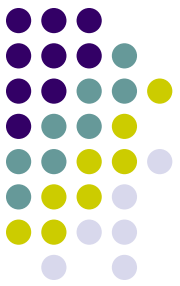
**13 not selected because did not meet selection criteria.**

**17 dropped out (of program). 80% before the 4<sup>th</sup> meeting.**

**24 persisted until follow-up.**



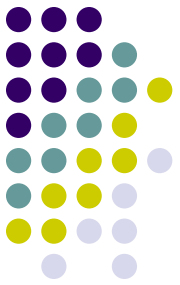
# Participants



- Experimental group : N = 24
- 10 men - 14 women
- 65 - 84 years; M = 68.6 years (S.D. = 5.3).
- Education: M = 12.7 years (S.D. = 3.96).
- Civil status: Married (37.5%); Widowed (16.7%); Single (4.2%); Divorced (41.7%).
- Sleeping problems : 54.2% (Often, very often, always)

## THREE TIME MEASUREMENTS:

- Pre-test (prior to the meetings)
- Post-test (at the last meeting)
- Follow-up (6 months later)



# MEASURES

## **Questionnaires on goals and projects:**

Goal Realization Process (Lapierre & Bouffard)  
State Hope Scale (Snyder)

## **Questionnaires on positive indicators of well-being:**

The Meaning in Life Questionnaire (Battista & Almond)  
Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener)  
Serenity Scale (Robert & Aspy)  
Basic Psychological Needs Scales  
(competence, autonomy and relatedness).

## **Questionnaires on negative indicators of well-being:**

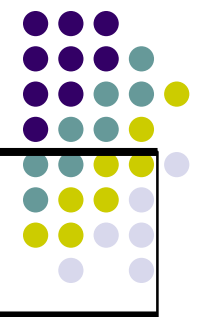
Beck Depression Inventory-II  
Geriatric Depression Scale (Yesavage et al.)  
Geriatric Suicide Ideation Scale (Heisel & Flett)  
Insomnia Severity Index (Bastien, Vallières, & Morin)  
Geriatric Anxiety Inventory (Pachana)  
UCLA Loneliness Scale (Russell, Peplau, & Ferguson)

# Statistic analyses

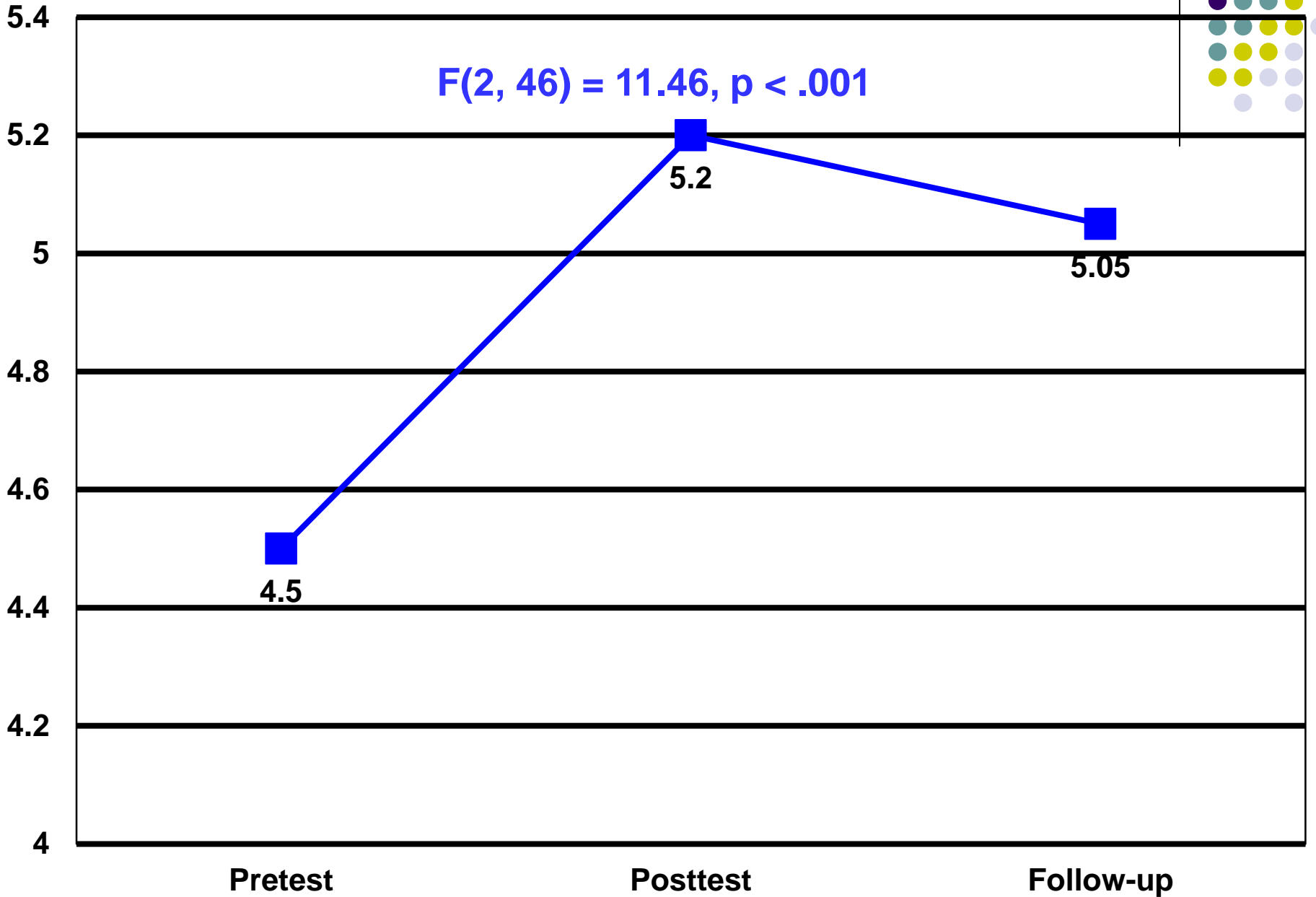


- Factorial repeated-measures ANOVA

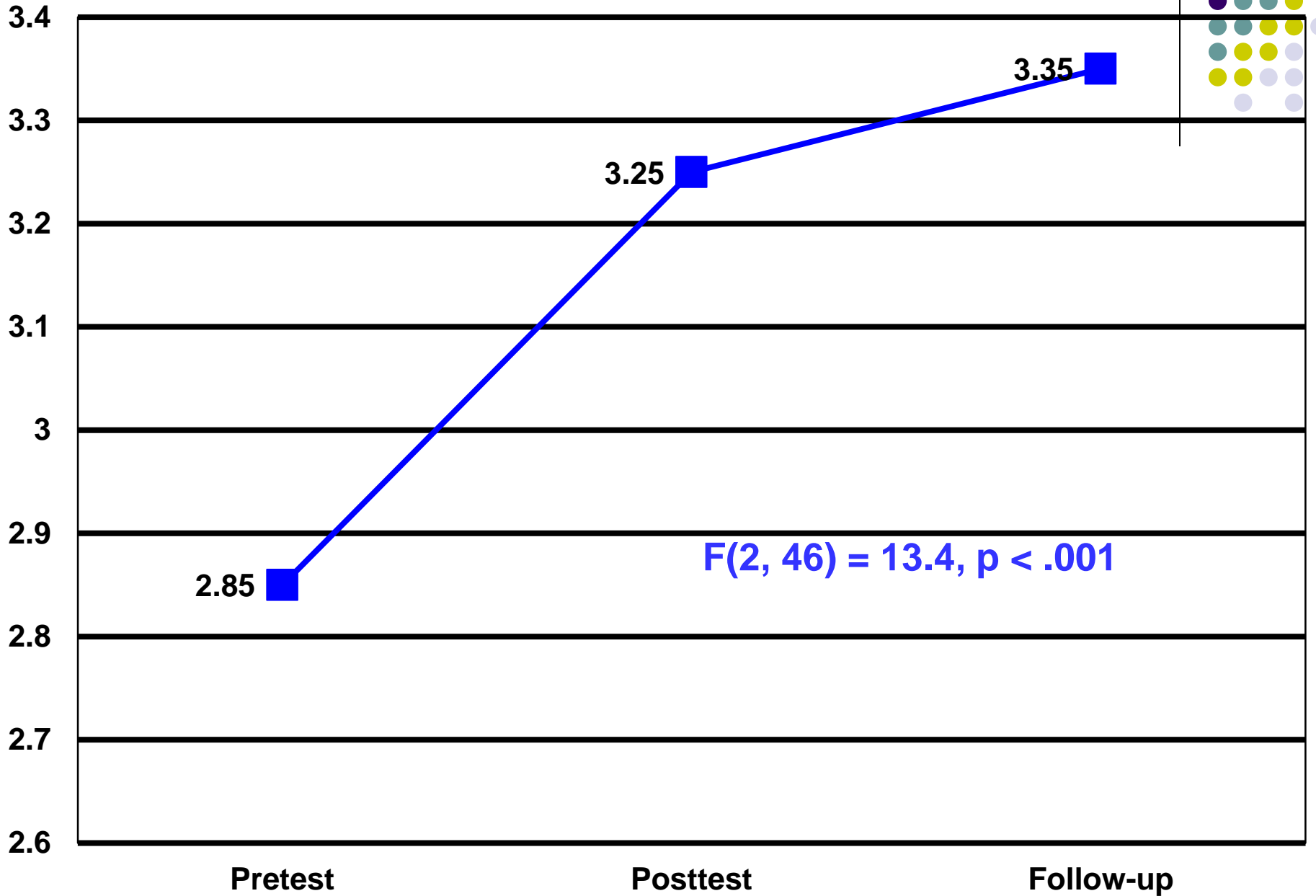
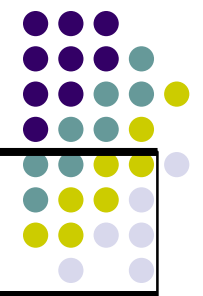
# GOAL REALIZATION



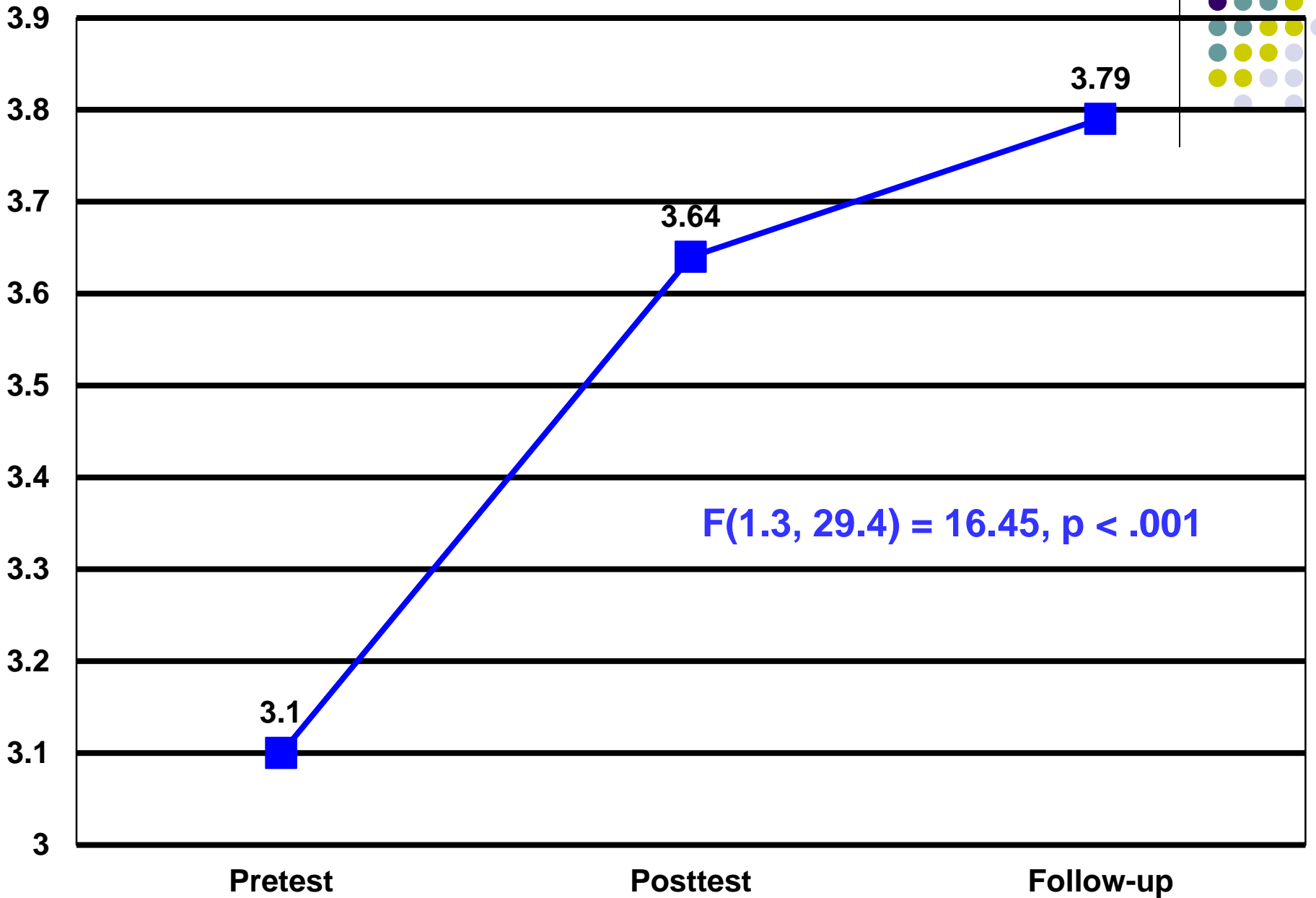
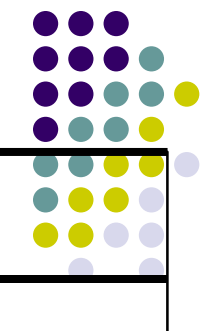
$F(2, 46) = 11.46, p < .001$



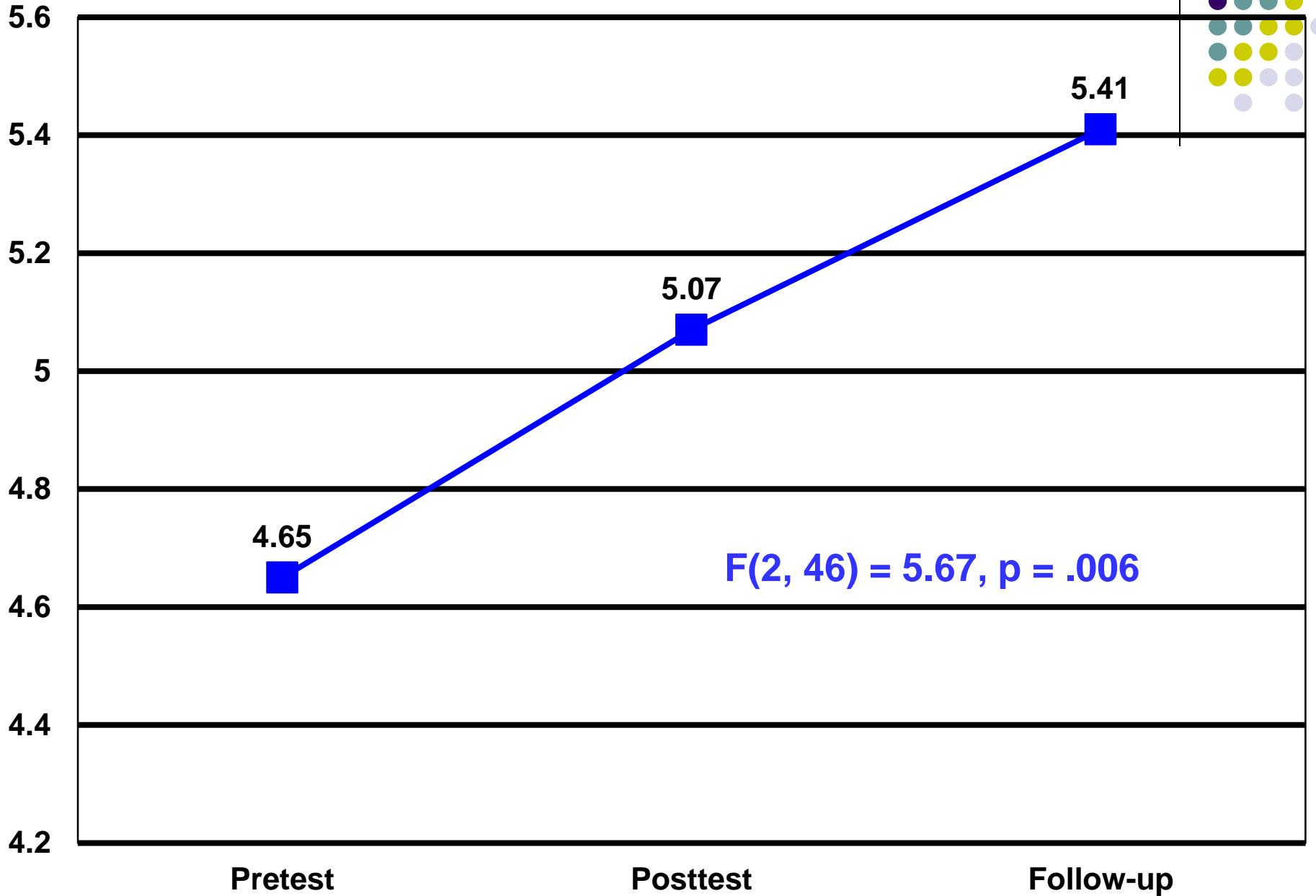
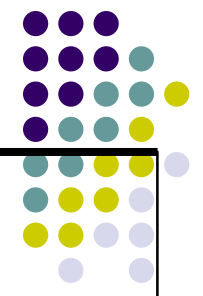
# HOPE



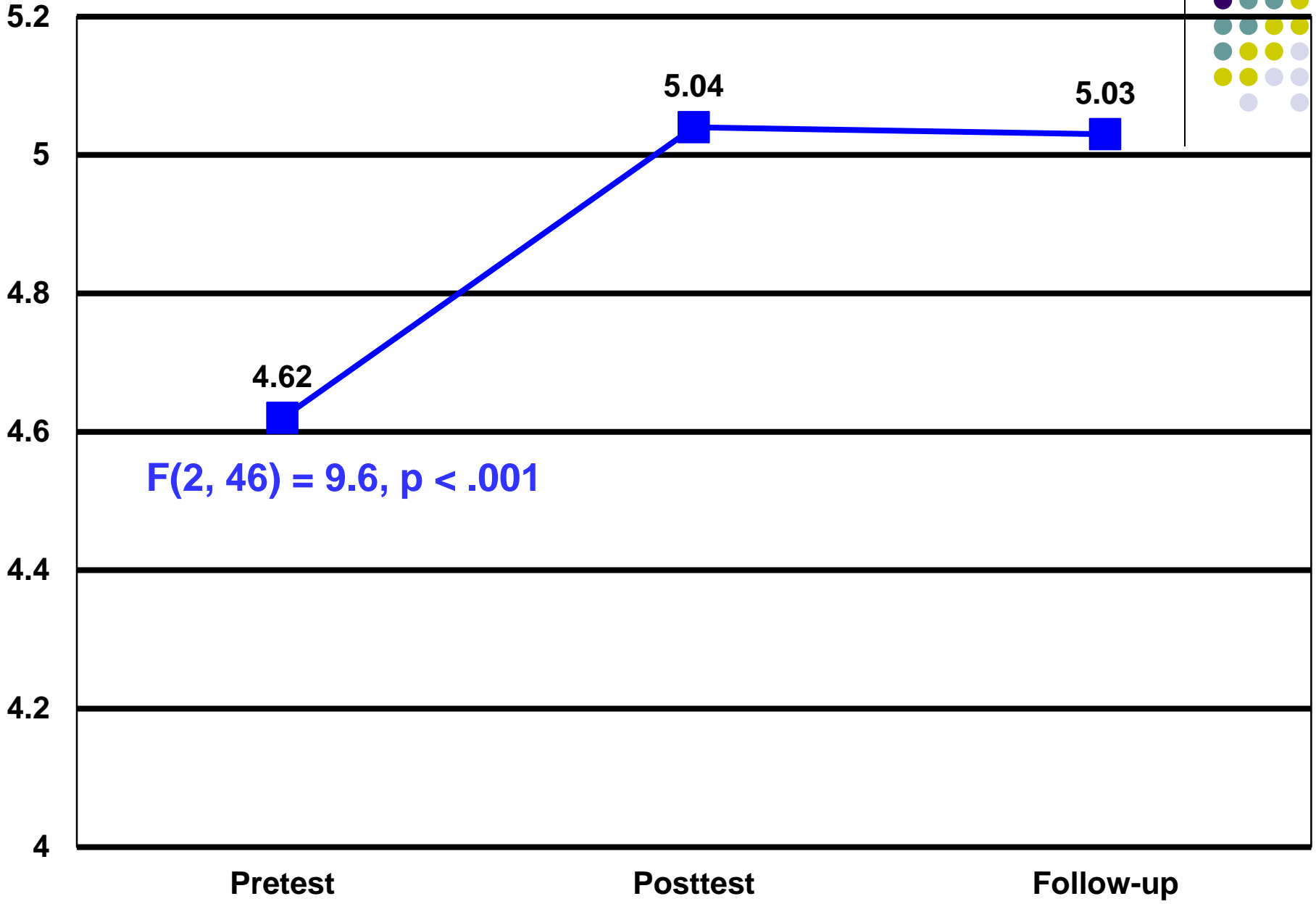
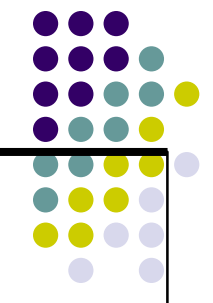
# MEANING IN LIFE



# SATISFACTION WITH LIFE

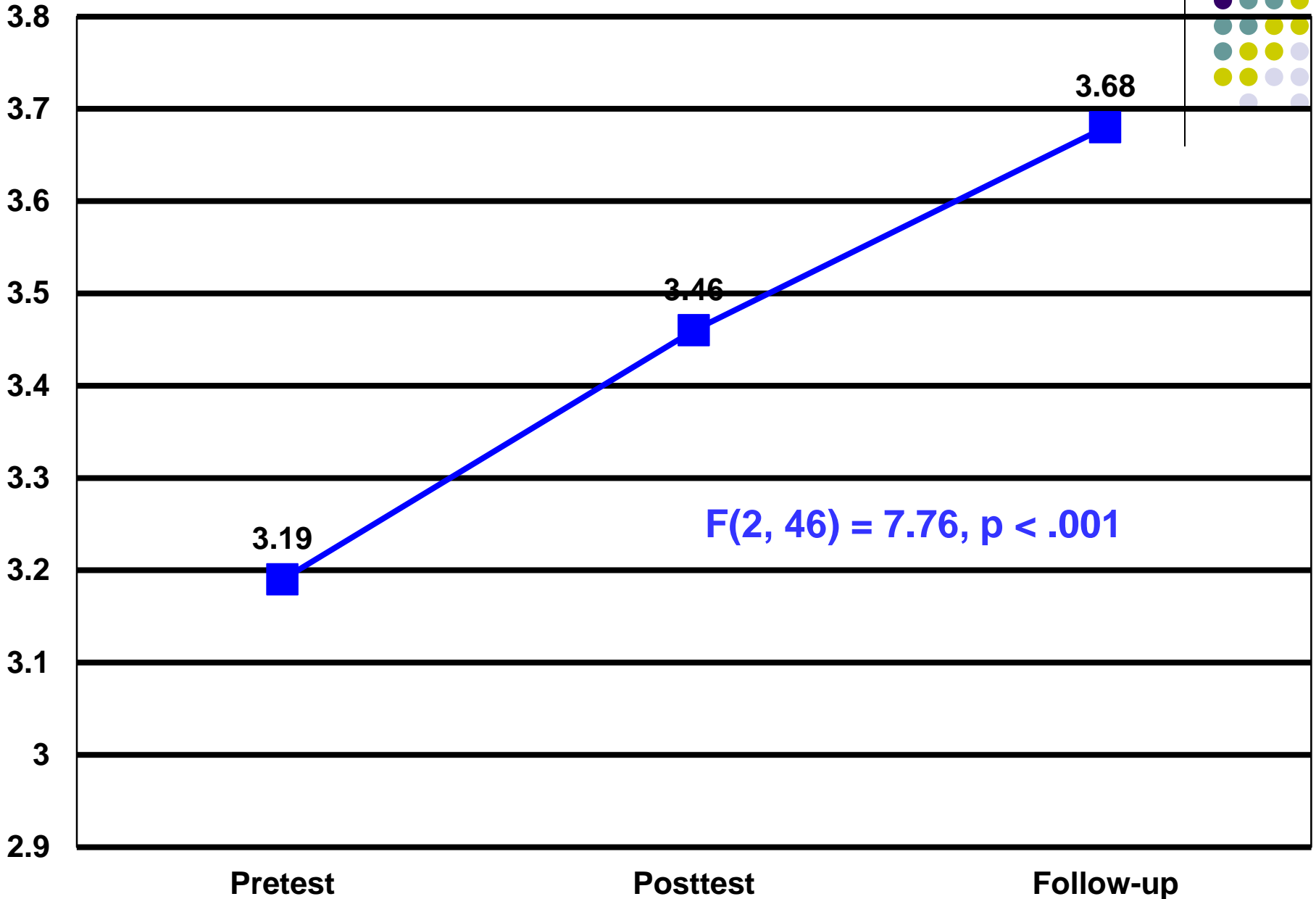
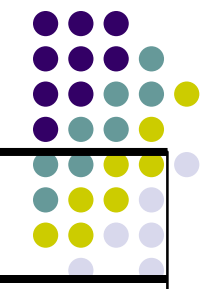


# NEED FOR COMPETENCE

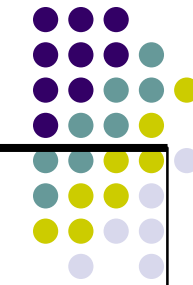




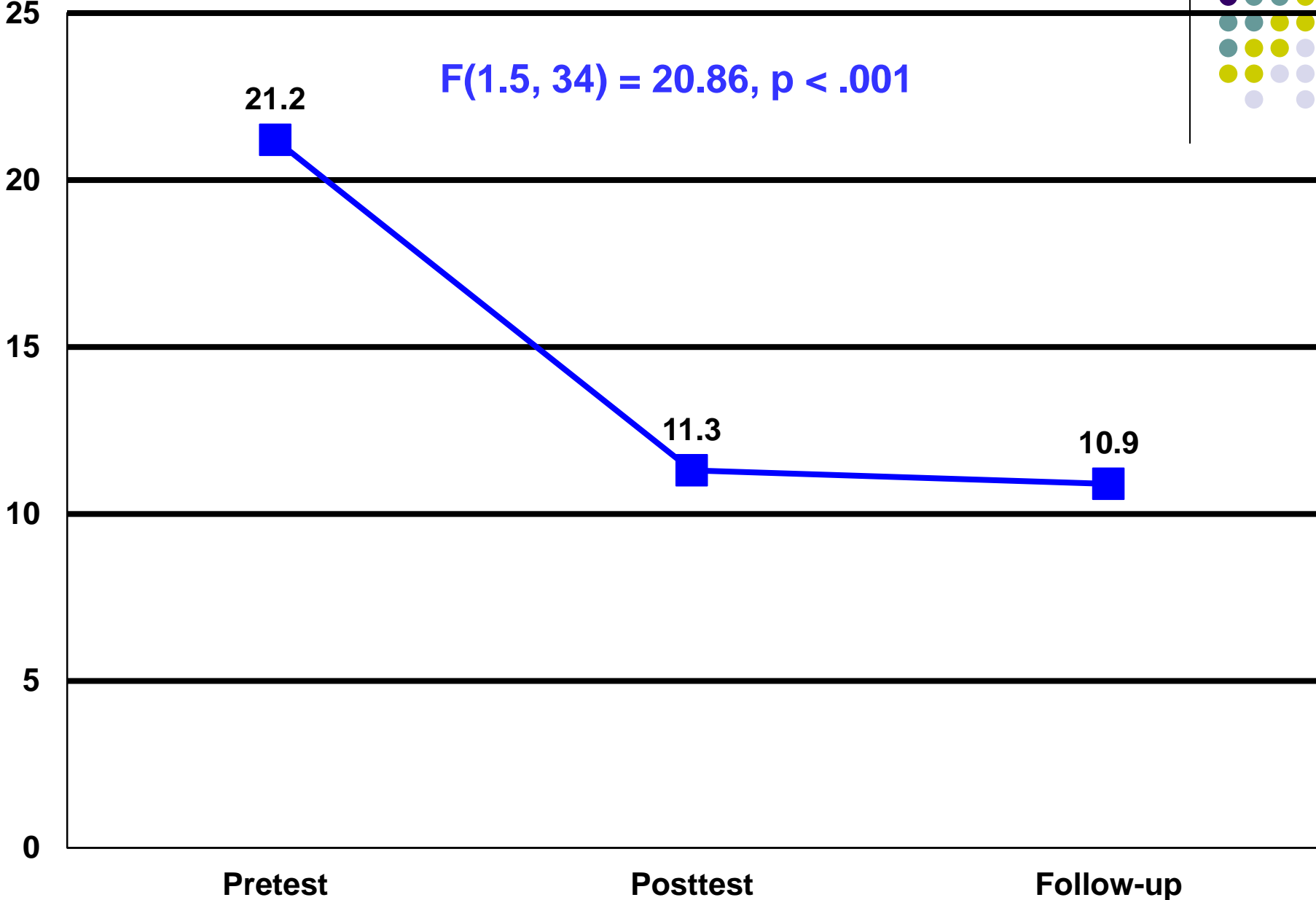
# SERENITY



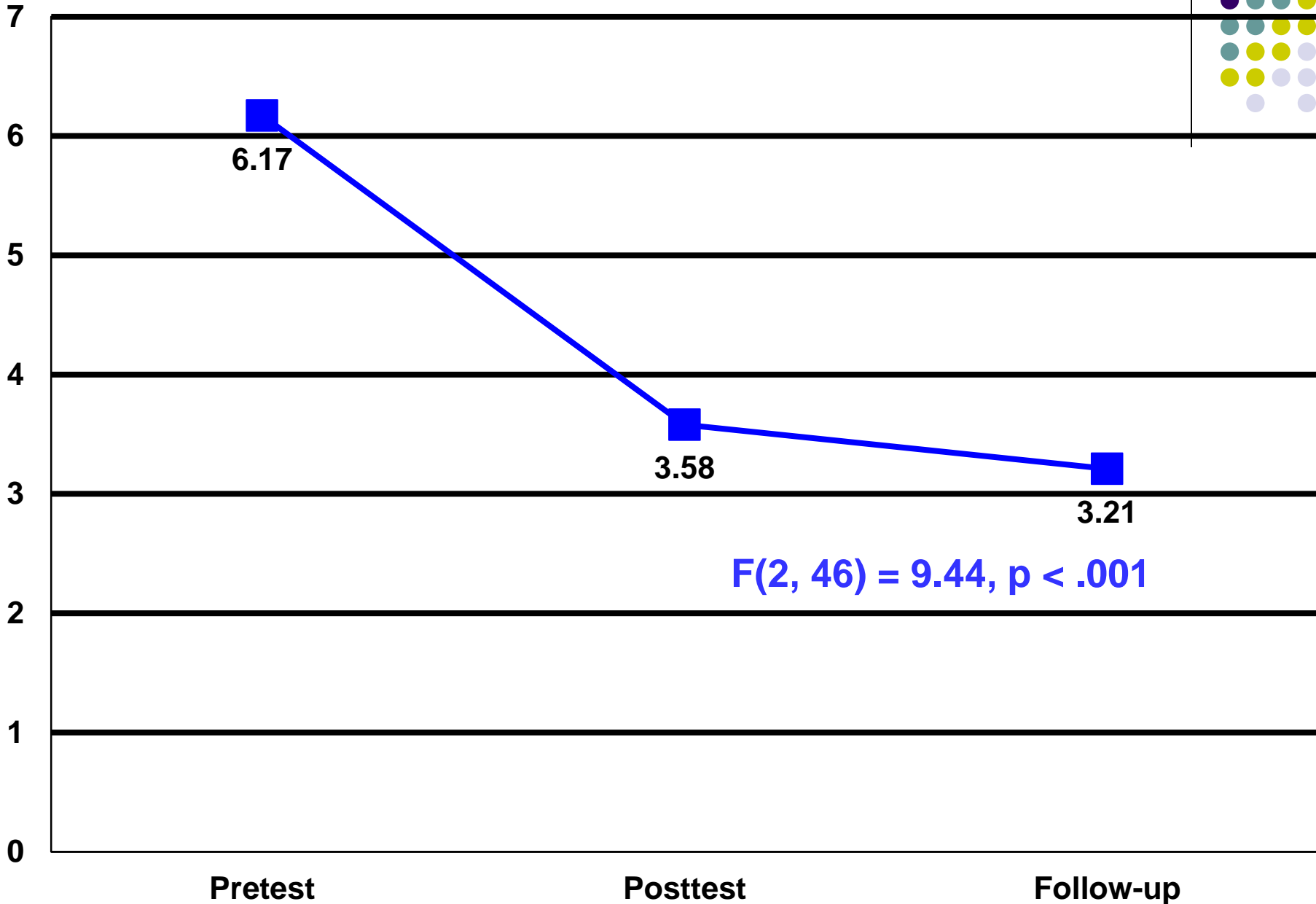
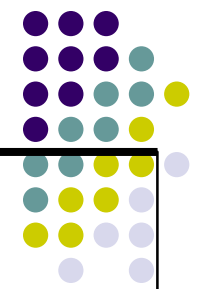
# DEPRESSION – BDI-2



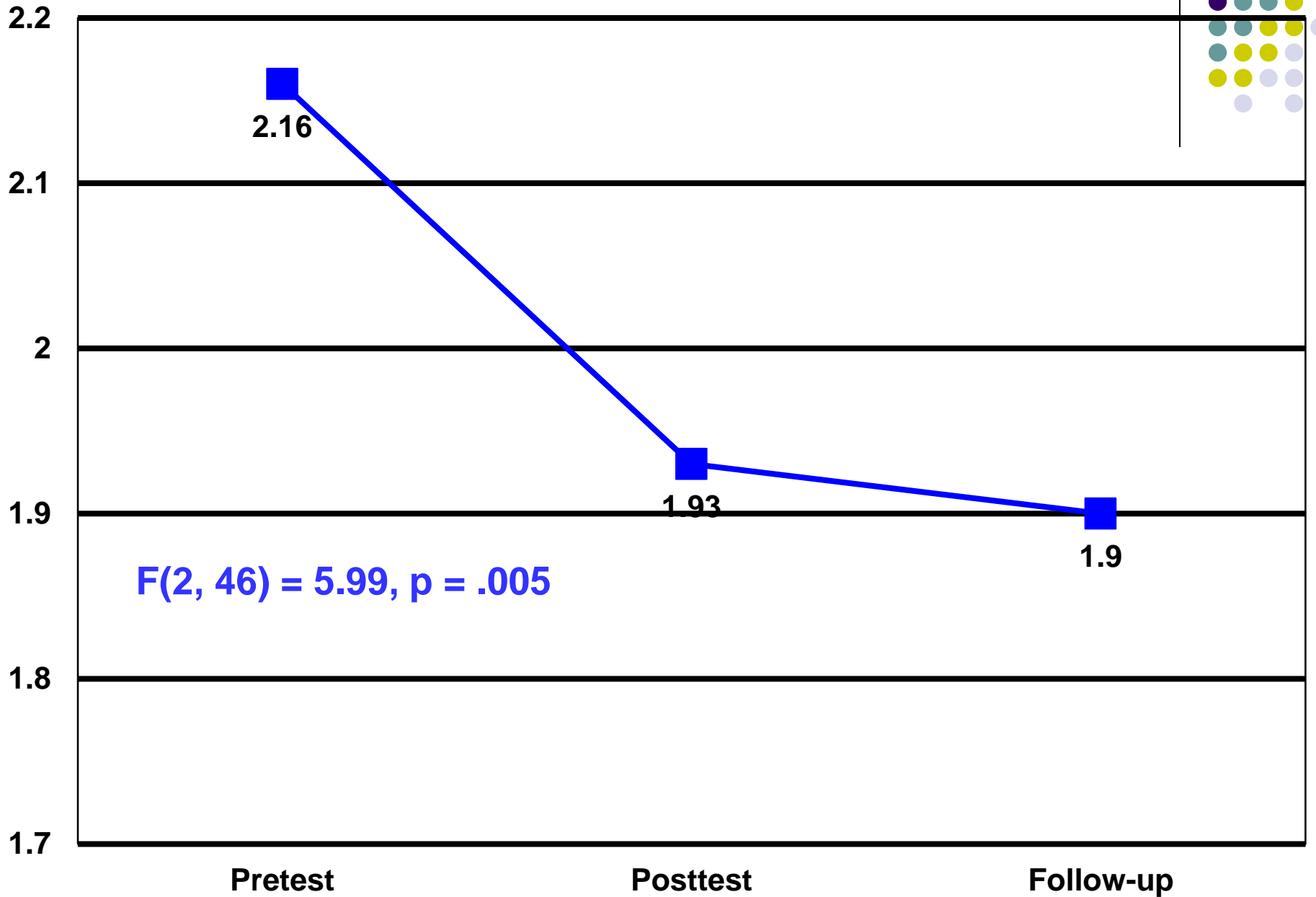
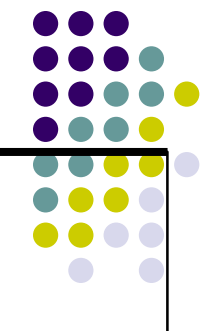
$F(1.5, 34) = 20.86, p < .001$



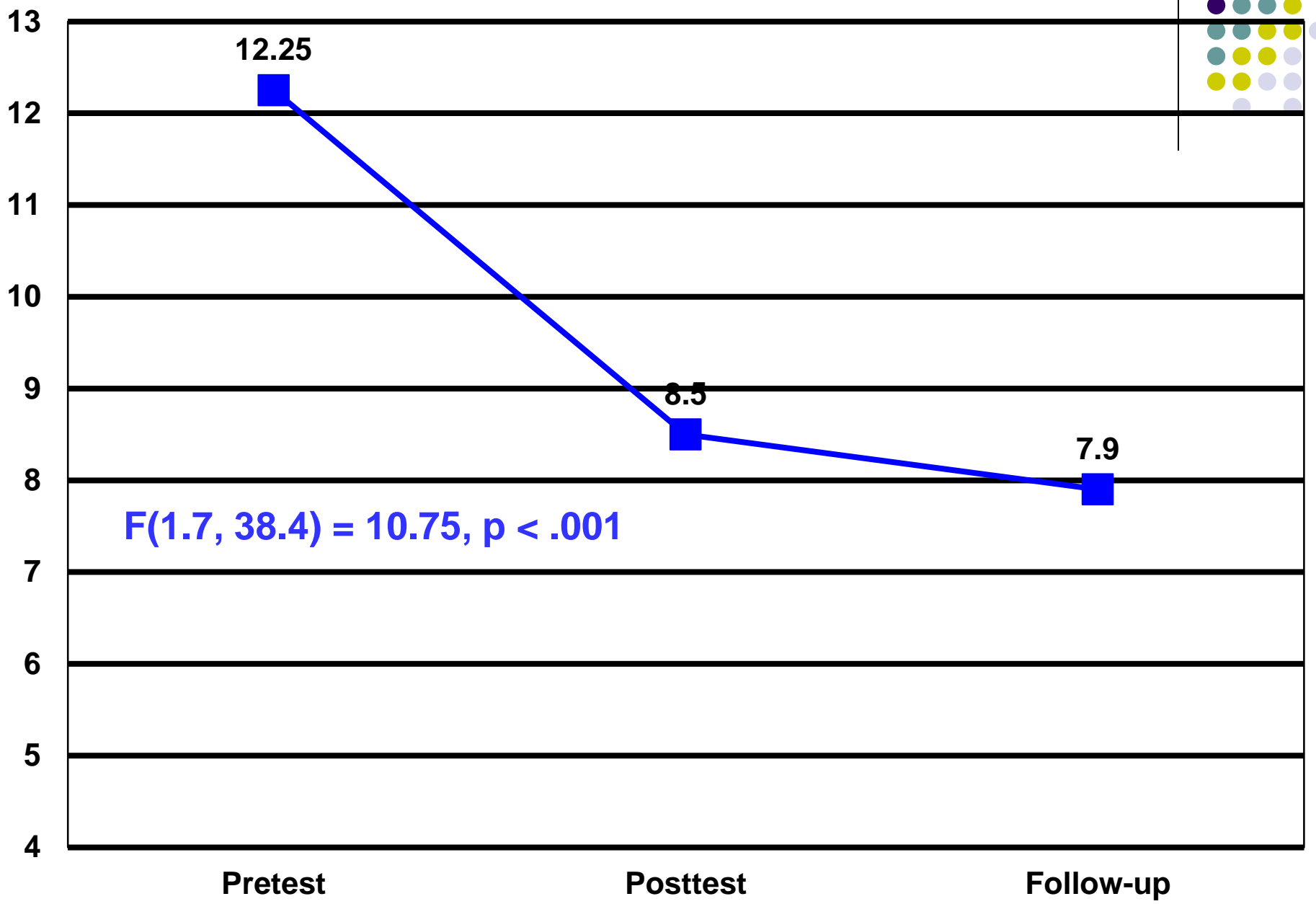
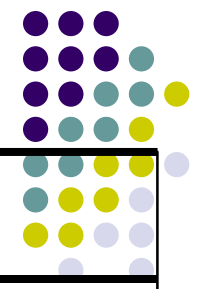
# GERIATRIC DEPRESSION



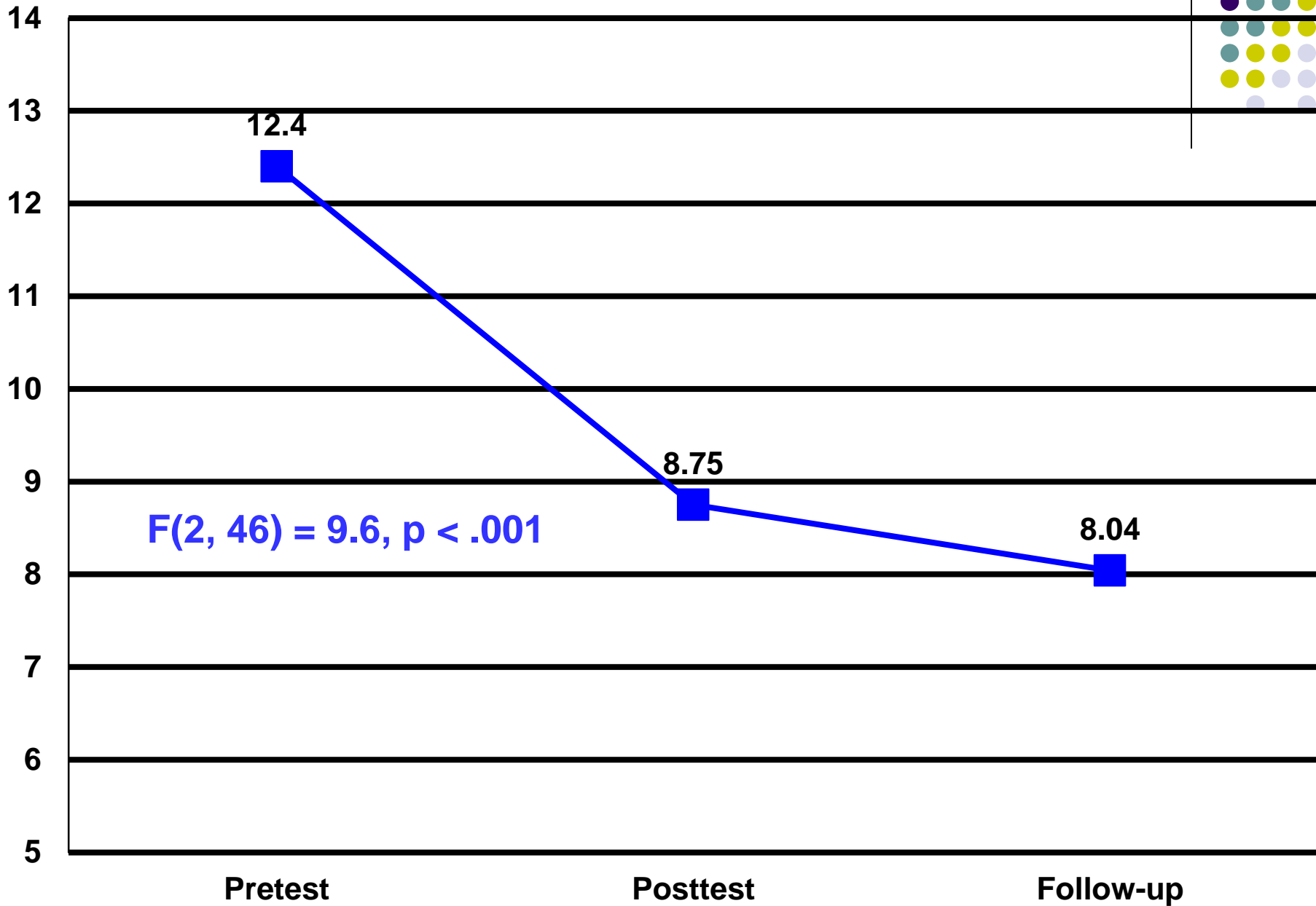
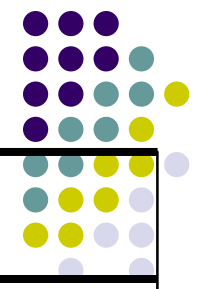
# GERIATRIC SUICIDAL IDEATION



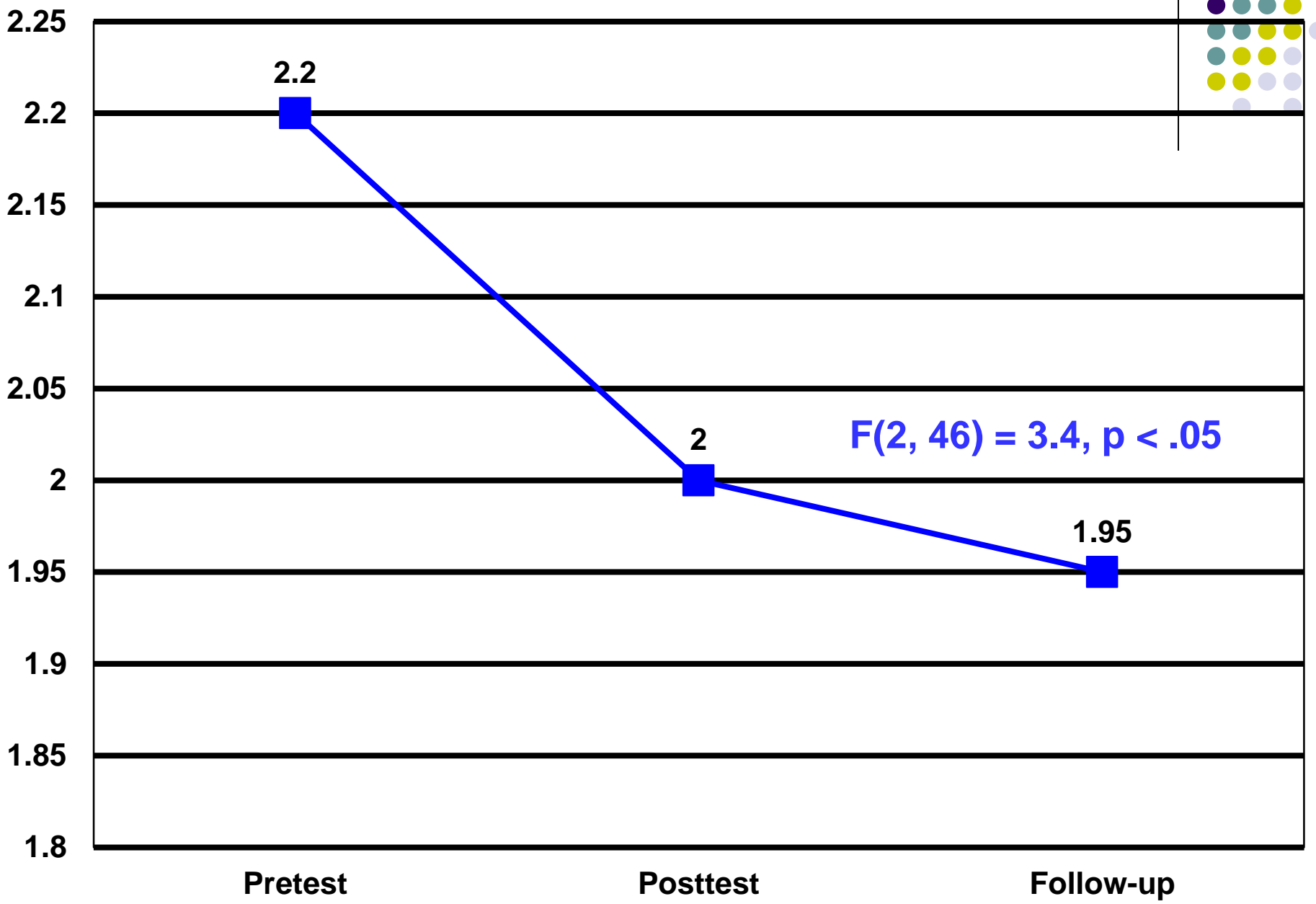
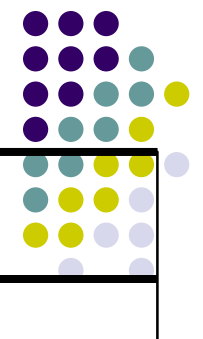
# ANXIETY



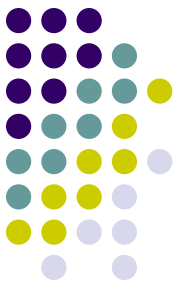
# INSOMNIA



# SOLITUDE



# Conclusion

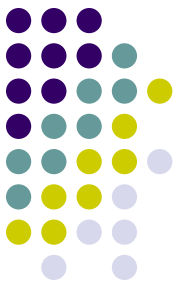


- Significant improvement of psychological well-being of depressed participants. **Maintenance of well-being 6 months later.**
- Men improve as much as women. No difference on time X gender.
- Systematic review show that suicide prevention programs are centered on reduction of risk factors: depression and social isolation. They had positive impact on women (70% ↓ in suicide risk), not men.
- A program centered on action, goal realization, and problem solving **seems beneficial to men.**
- New programs should aim at increasing protective factors : Reasons for living, meaning to life, hope, personal goal realization.
- **Innovative program for suicide prevention.**
- Comparison with control group is now being done to see if the goal program is superior or equal to *treatment as usual*.

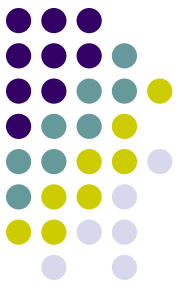


# References

[Sylvie.Lapierre@uqtr.ca](mailto:Sylvie.Lapierre@uqtr.ca)



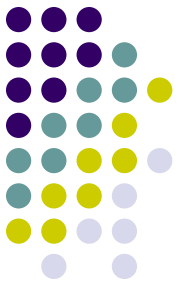
- Lapierre, S. et al. (2011). A systematic review of elderly suicide prevention programs. *Crisis*, 32(2), 88-98.
- Lapierre, S. et al. (2011). Daily hassles, physical illness, and sleep problems in older adults with wishes to die. *International Psychogeriatrics*, 24(2), 243-252.
- Lapierre, S., Dubé, M., Bouffard, L., & Alain, M. (2007). Addressing suicidal ideations through the realization of meaningful personal goals. *Crisis*, 28(1), 16-25.
- Dubé, M., Lapierre, S., Bouffard, L., & Alain, M. (2007). Impact of a personal goal management program on the subjective well-being of young retirees. *European Review of Applied Psychology* 57(3), 183-192.



# STEPS OF THE PROCESS

1. Preliminary meetings
2. Goal setting
3. Goal planning
4. Goal pursuit
5. Evaluation of the outcome





# Preliminary meetings

## Meeting 1

### **Encounter with participants**

Social activity to promote cohesion and cooperation between the members of the group

## Meeting 2

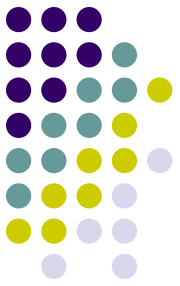
### **Discussion on retirement**

Share their experience and difficulties.

See that they have similar problems.

# Goal setting

## Meeting 3



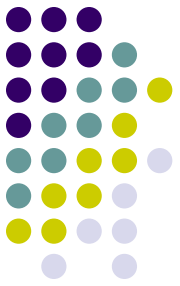
Inventory of personal aspirations, ambitions, goals, & interests.

Completion of 23 sentence beginnings such as: “I hope to...” ; “ I want ...” ; “ I plan to ...”

Identification of negative beliefs that impede on the realization of goals.

# Goal setting

## Meeting 4



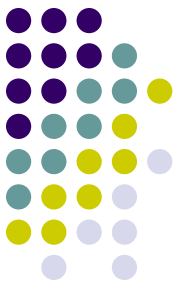
**Selection** of 5 high priority goals.

**Evaluation** according to distinct dimensions:  
difficulty, stress, effort, probability of realization,  
enjoyment, control, support from others,  
conflict, feelings of competence ...

Exploration of the characteristics of the goals  
they want to pursue.

# Goal setting

## Meeting 5



Translation into a “target behavior”.

The goal is described into concrete, clear and precise terms to facilitate its realization

Selection of 1 goal from the priority list.

Commitment to the group to try and accomplish the goal. Contact with self.

# Goal planning

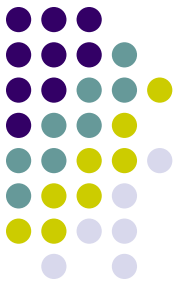
## Meetings 6 & 7



- Selection of means.
- Identification of concrete actions.
- Time given to the pursuit of the goal
- Identification of the steps to reach the goal
- Anticipation of obstacles and identification of strategies to overcome them
- Identification of personal, social, and material resources
- Suggestions from the group are quite useful

# Goal pursuit

## Meetings 8, 9 & 10



- Execution of the action plan.
- Evaluation of effort, progress, difficulty.
- Identification of thoughts and emotions that impede the actions.
- Which obstacles and difficulties were faced.
- Adjustment to the unexpected.
- What worked well : abilities & resources.
- Group support is essential.



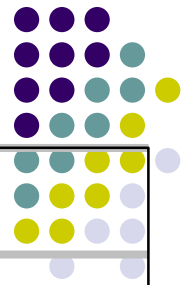
# Evaluation of the outcome

## Meeting 11

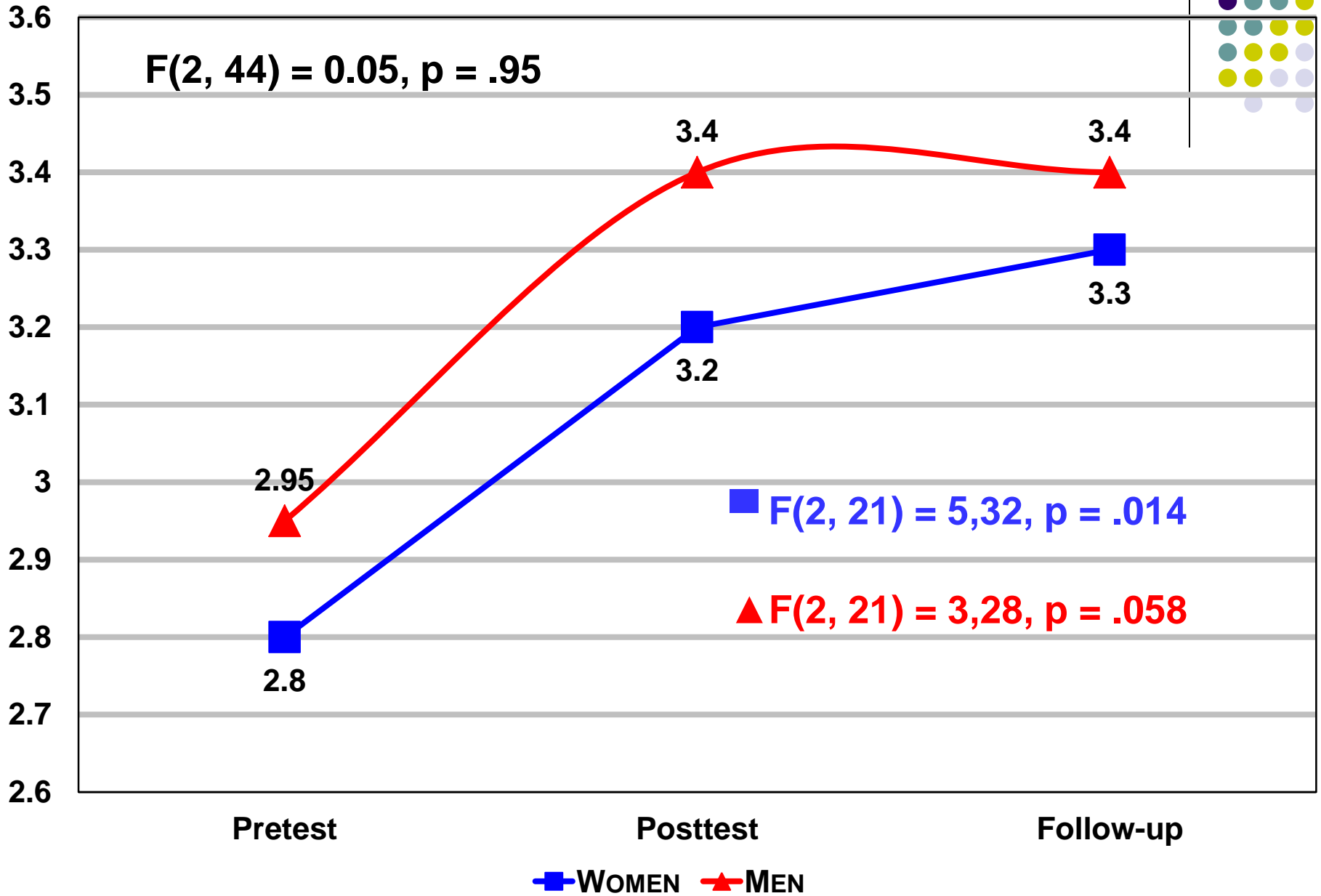


- Evaluation of knowledge.
- Evaluation of progress.
- What is left to do.
- Evaluation of strengths and challenges.
- Ability to use the process in the future.
- Evaluation of well-being and depression.

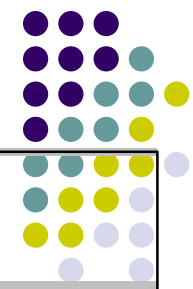
# HOPE



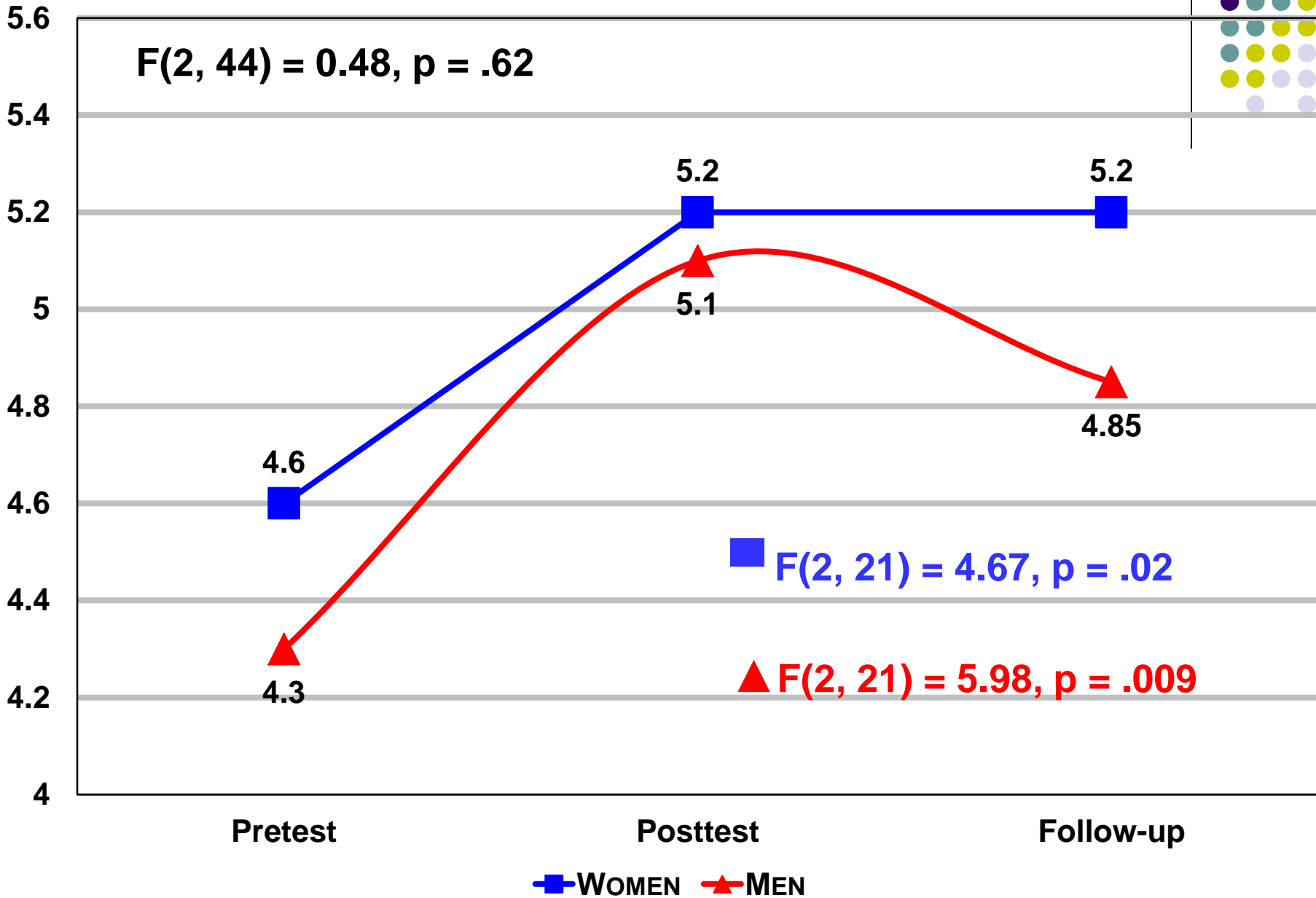
$F(2, 44) = 0.05, p = .95$



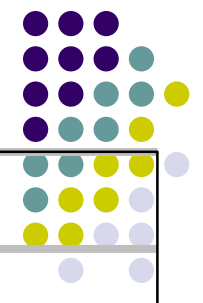
# GOAL REALIZATION



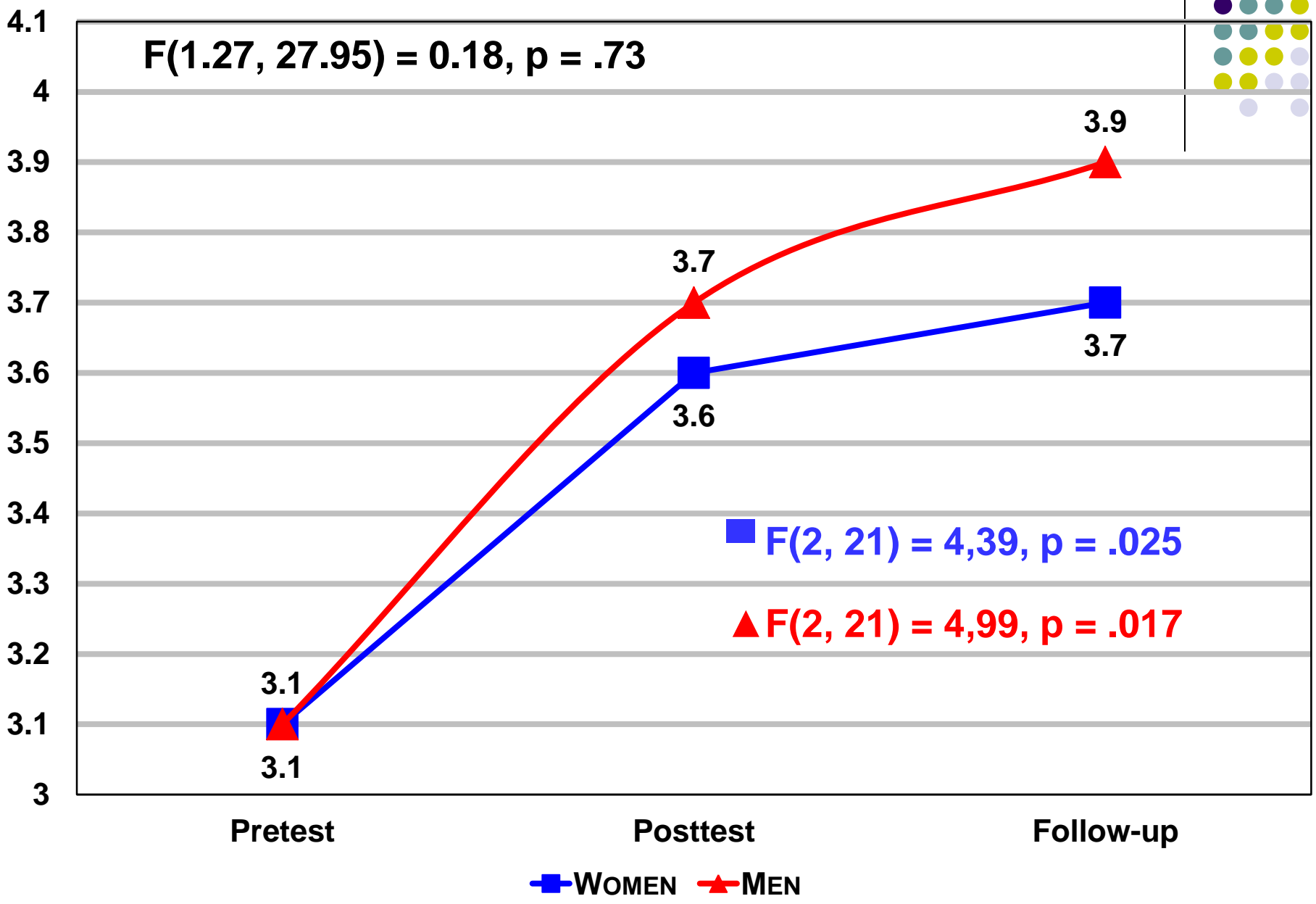
$F(2, 44) = 0.48, p = .62$



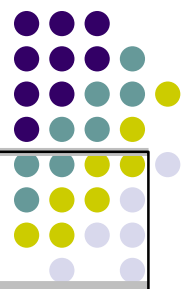
# MEANING IN LIFE



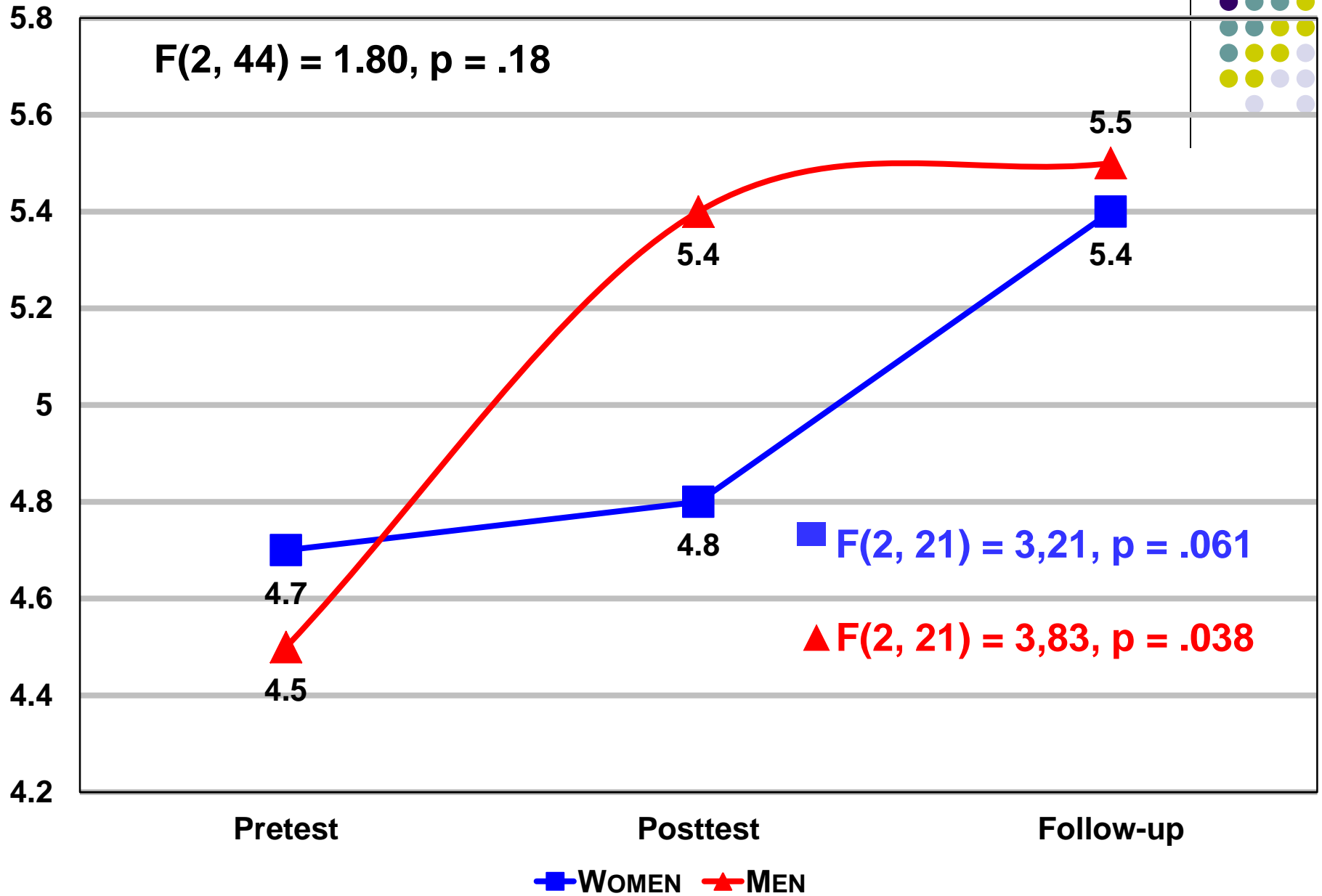
$F(1.27, 27.95) = 0.18, p = .73$



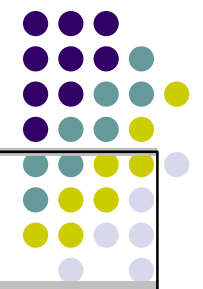
# SATISFACTION WITH LIFE



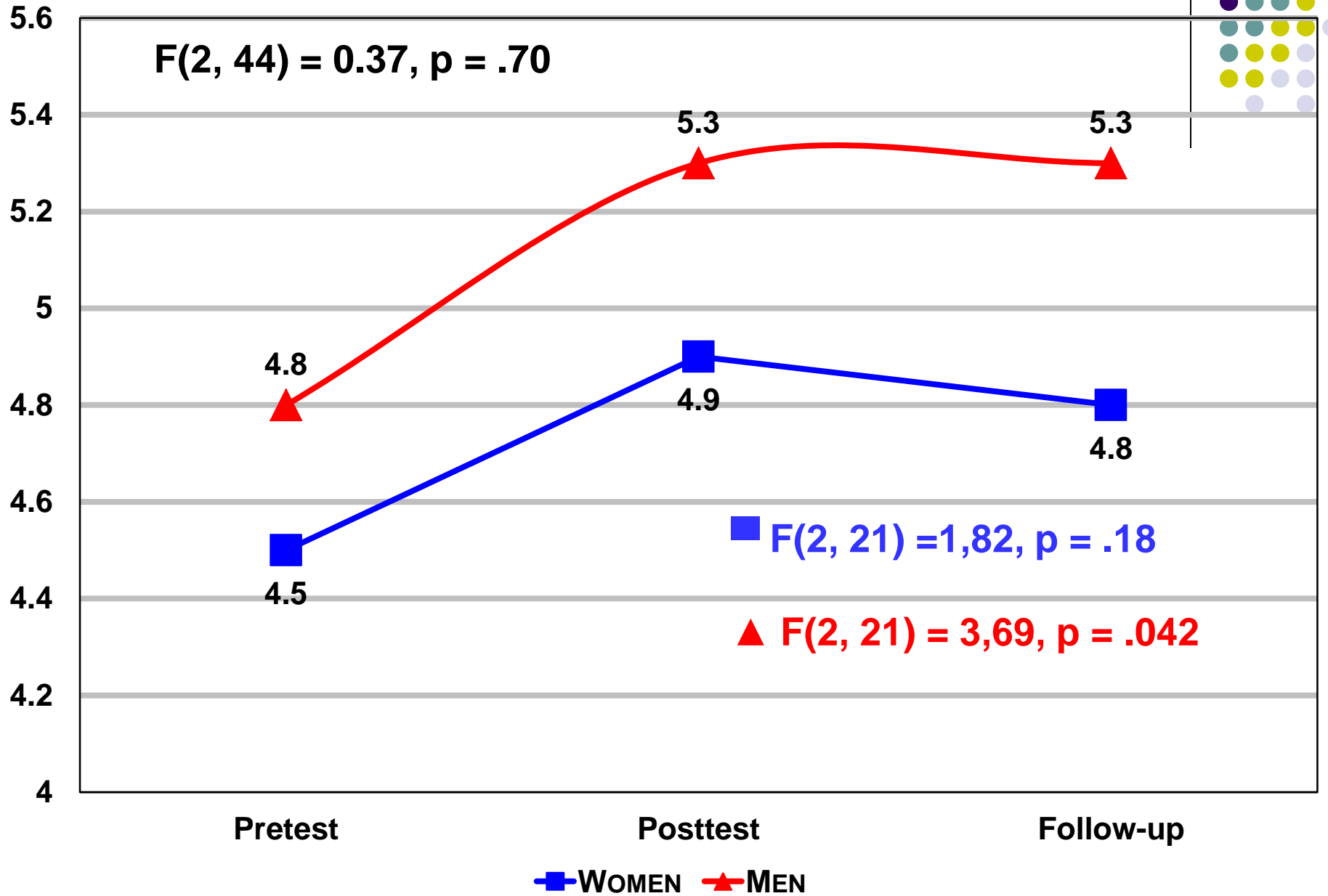
$F(2, 44) = 1.80, p = .18$



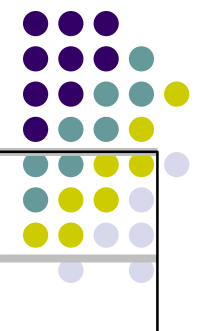
# COMPETENCE NEED



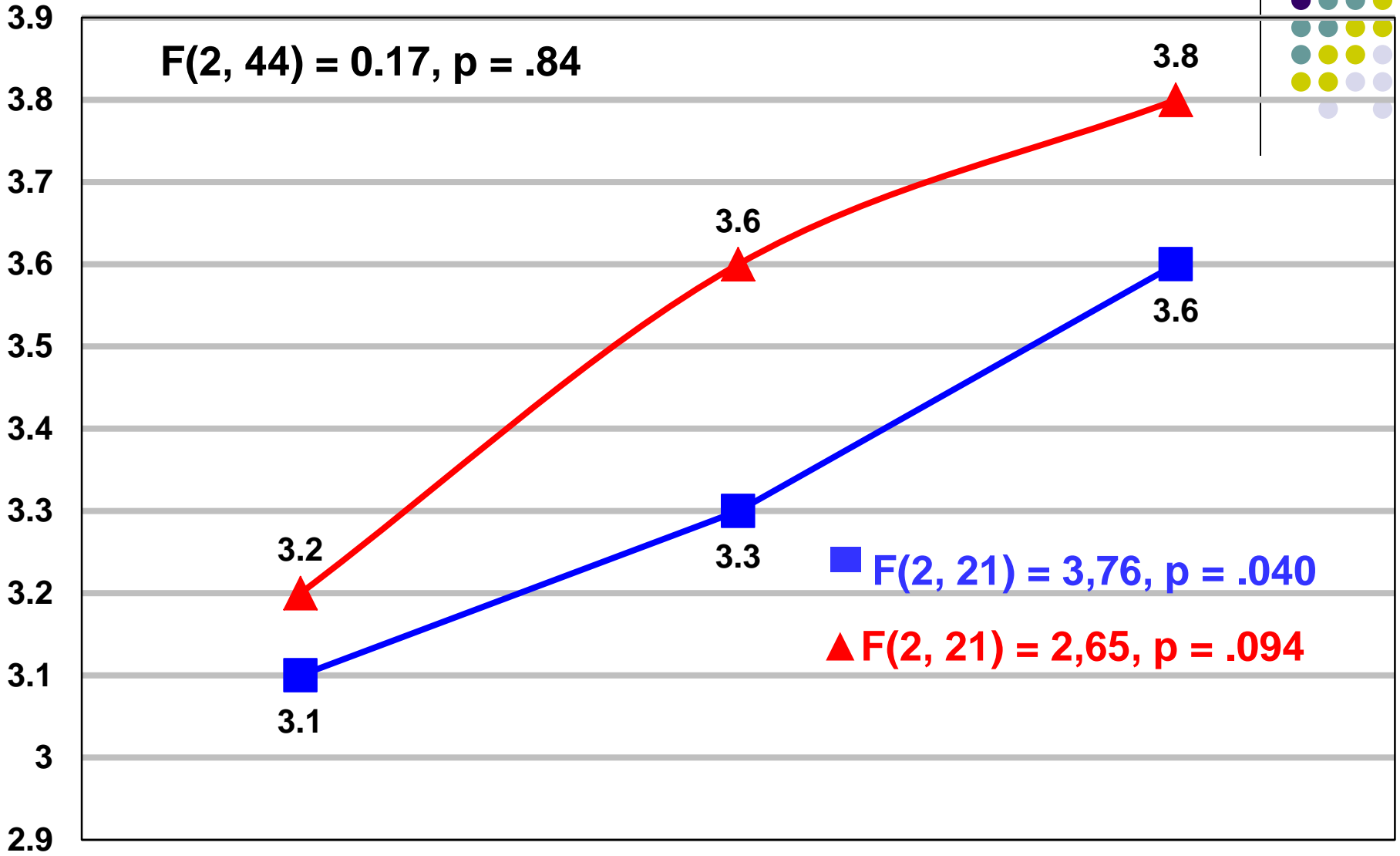
$F(2, 44) = 0.37, p = .70$



# SERENITY



$F(2, 44) = 0.17, p = .84$



■  $F(2, 21) = 3.76, p = .040$

▲  $F(2, 21) = 2.65, p = .094$

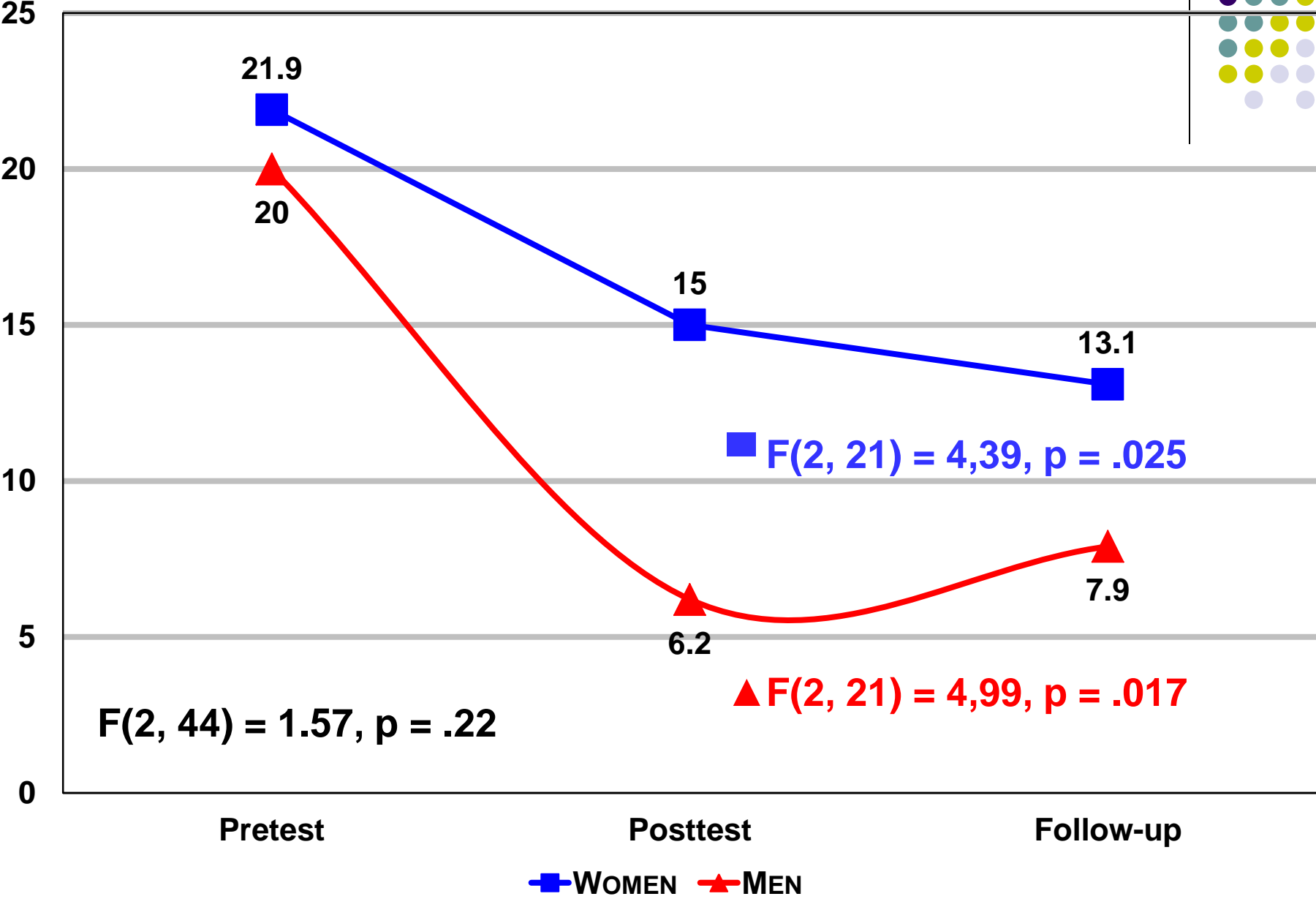
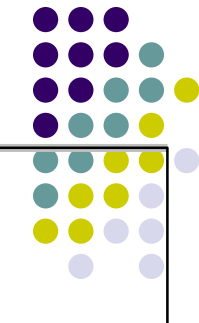
Pretest

Posttest

Follow-up

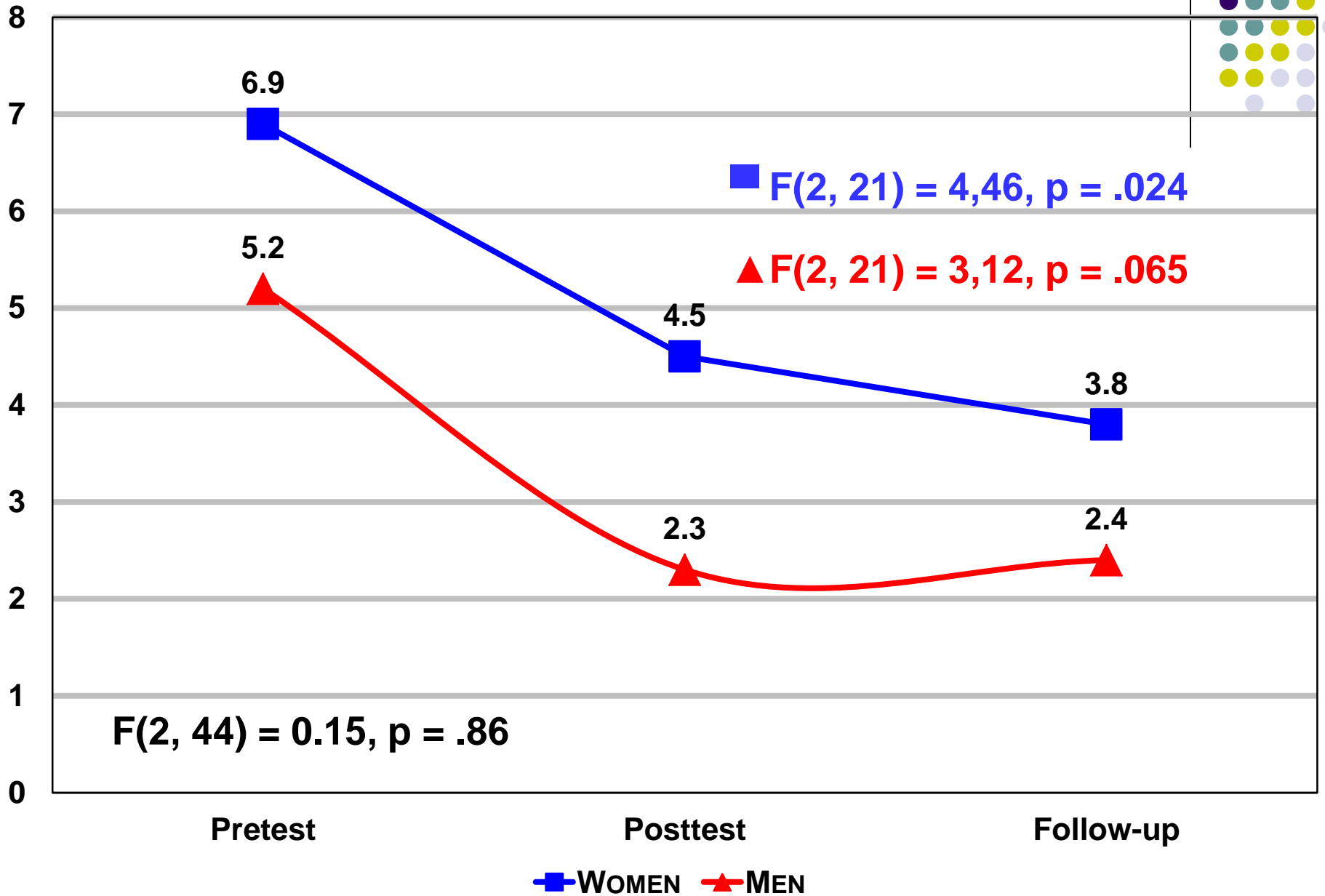
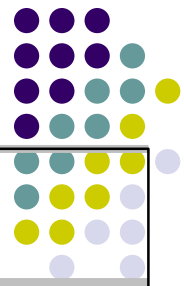
■ WOMEN ▲ MEN

# DEPRESSION – BDI-2

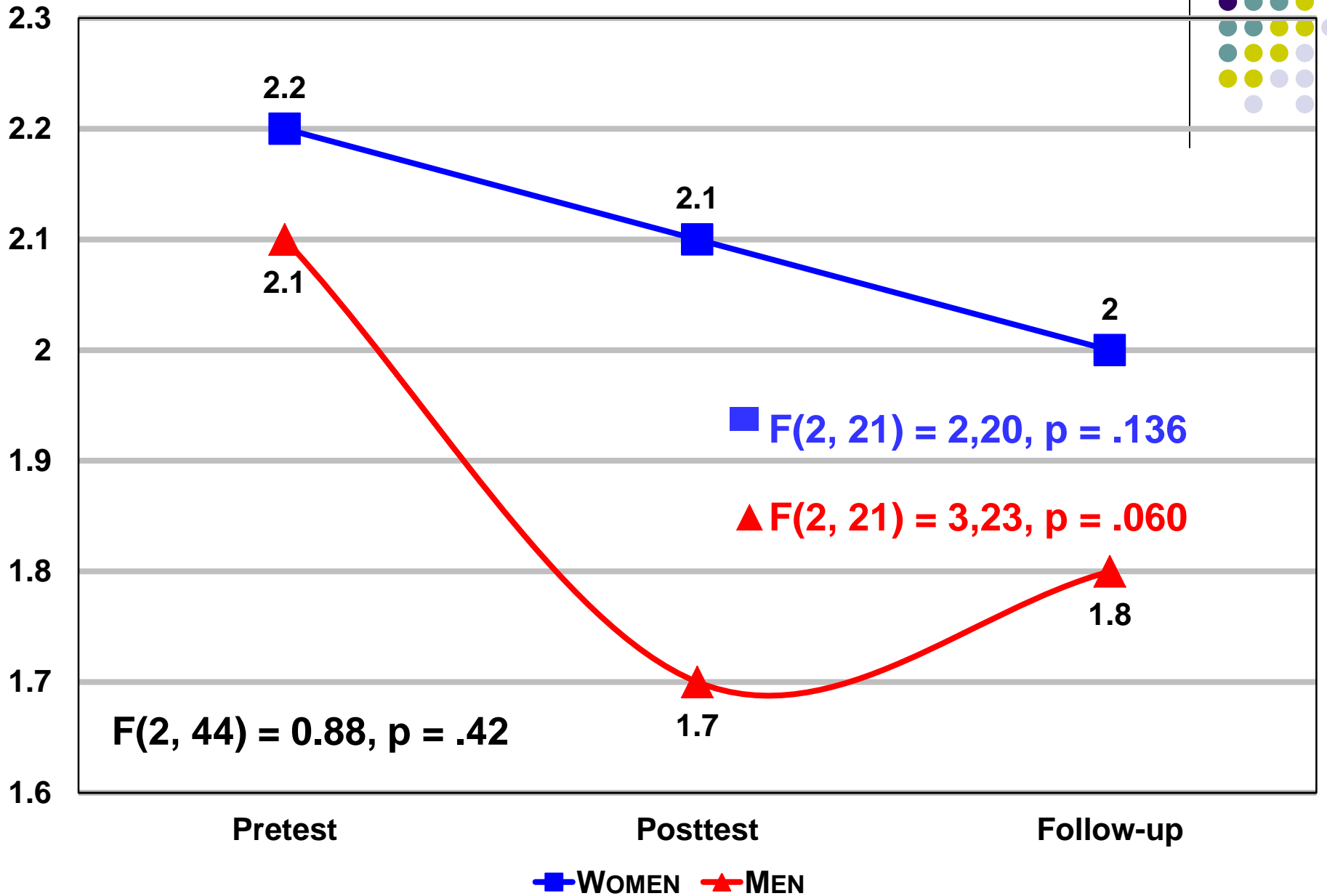
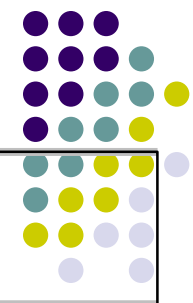




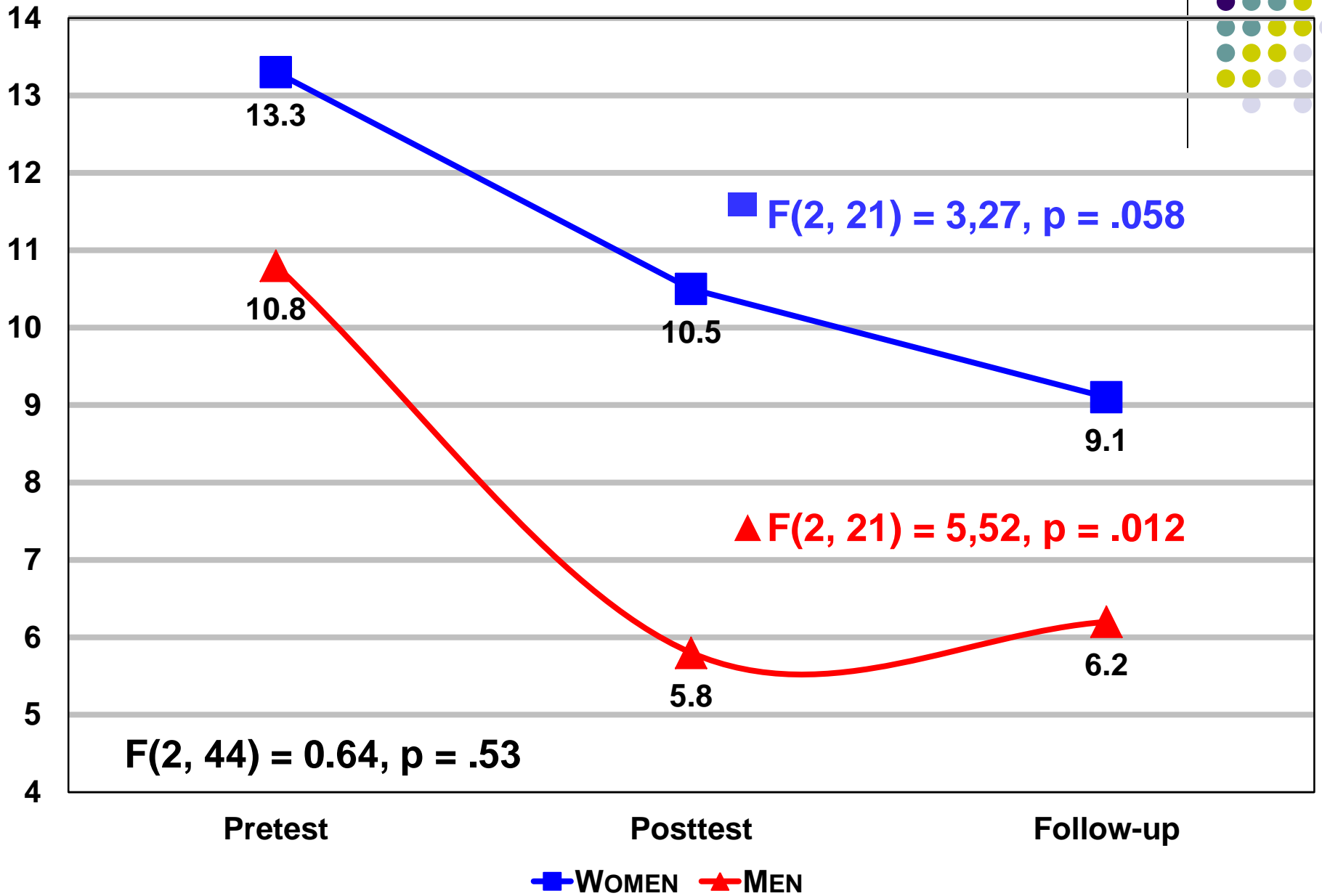
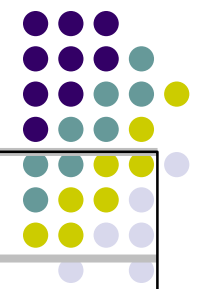
# GERIATRIC DEPRESSION



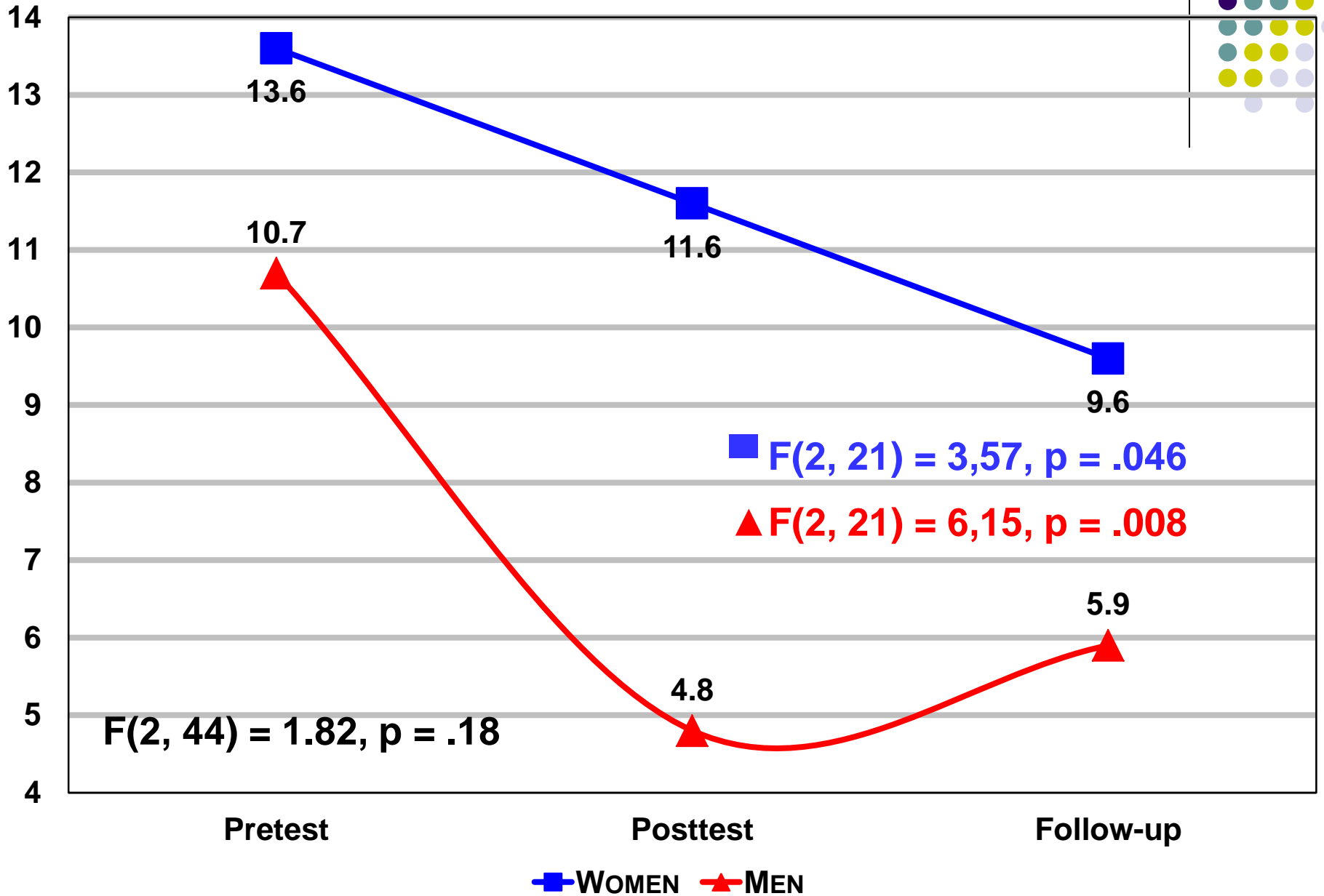
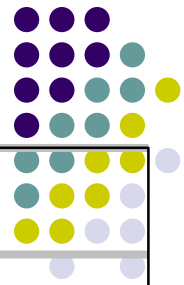
# GERIATRIC SUICIDAL IDEATION



# ANXIETY



# INSOMNIA



# SOLITUDE

