SESSION 3140 (SYMPOSIUM)

INNOVATIONS IN AGING: CREATING A TRANSDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH COLLABORATIVE GRADUATE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM
Chair: Diane Martin Co-Chair: Nia Latimer Discussant: Katherine Bowers

Social isolation impacts nearly one-quarter of community dwelling adults aged 65+ in the United States. It is associated with poor physical and mental health, cognitive decline, higher healthcare costs, and early mortality. Older adults are at greater risk because they are more likely to live alone, experience a shrinking social network from loss of family and friends, and encounter limitations with driving and mobility resulting from chronic health conditions and sensory impairments. Social isolation in later life is not new; however, the COVID-19 pandemic brought to light the increased risk for negative outcomes. Reducing social isolation is a priority area for our state’s Department of Aging (DoA), and the updated State Plan on Aging highlights the need for innovative approaches to develop and strengthen initiatives addressing social isolation among older adults. The DoA is advancing multiple projects, including a partnership with our public university to create a transdisciplinary graduate fellowship program. The program brought together professional students from medicine, nursing, pharmacy, and social work and resulted in a community of practice in which fellows engaged with DoA and university faculty to share best practices and receive training in transdisciplinary research. In this session, the first presentation will focus on development of the fellowship program and highlight the success of the inaugural year; the second session will focus on the future goals of the fellowship program, and the third presentation will share how we plan to expand the partnership between our public university and our state’s Department of Aging.

YEAR ONE AND BEYOND: SUSTAINING A COLLABORATIVE AGING FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM
Diane Martin, University of Maryland, Baltimore Graduate School, Baltimore, Maryland, United States

A graduate aging fellowship experience can provide participants with unique opportunities for professional development in interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research, community engagement, and team science. Program success is contingent on multiple factors beyond participant recruitment and customizable curriculum to meet the educational goals of individual participants. Stakeholder buy-in, strategic planning, and identification of funding streams are all necessary to support an internal program beyond its first year. In this session, we will offer guidance in planning, building, and sustaining a fellowship program for current graduate students with a professional interest in supporting older adults.

LEVELING THE PLAYING FIELD: ONBOARDING AGING FELLOWS REPRESENTING DIVERSE DISCIPLINES
Catherine Kim1, Nia Latimer2, Katherine Bowers3, Loretta Anderson4, and Diane Martin5. 1. Veterans Affairs Maryland Health Care System, Baltimore, Maryland, United States, 2. University of Maryland, Baltimore, Baltimore, Maryland, United States, 3. University of Maryland, Baltimore, Maryland, United States, 4. University of Maryland, Baltimore, Reisterstown, Maryland, United States, 5. University of Maryland, Baltimore Graduate School, Baltimore, Maryland, United States

The transdisciplinary Innovations in Aging Graduate Fellowship program brought together graduate students from medicine, nursing, pharmacy, and social work. As a result, fellows entered the program with a range of exposure as to how aging impacts the body, social interactions, health needs, and society. Therefore, onboarding modules were utilized to provide an integrated perspective on aging. Topics for these onboarding modules included ageism, dimensions of wellness, and health and well-being in later life. Through these modules, fellows were able to customize their learning to meet their unique educational needs and goals related to their involvement in the fellowship program. In this session, we will share development of the fellowship program and highlight factors, such as the onboarding modules, that led to the program’s success.

SESSION 3150 (SYMPOSIUM)

INSIGHTS INTO HEALTH-RELEVANT INTERPERSONAL DYNAMICS IN AGING COUPLES FROM THE LAB AND DAILY LIFE
Chair: Theresa Pauly Co-Chair: Karolina Kolodziejczak Discussant: Christina Röcke

Emerging research demonstrates that long-term and daily health indicators are closely linked in aging partners. Yet, not much is known about exactly how partners get under each other’s skin. This symposium investigates different positive and negative interpersonal contexts, including physical intimacy, positive and negative emotional experiences, and couple conversations (e.g., conflict, recounting distressing memories, discussing enjoyable topics), and their link with neuroendocrine and cardiovascular markers. The four talks feature a variety of study designs ranging from laboratory research to ambulatory assessment methods which recruited couples in midlife and old age. Kolodziejczak et al. use ambulatory assessment data to examine links between (experienced and wished for) physical intimacy, affect, and cortisol in older couples. Pauly et al. pool data from three ambulatory assessment aging studies to analyze how own and partner positive and negative affective states are intertwined with everyday cortisol secretion in old age. Wilson et al. invited middle-aged to older couples to engage in two different conversations (recounting a difficult memory, conflict) and investigated concurrent changes in affect and cardiovascular activity. Meier and colleagues make use of automated language analysis to examine how positive and negative emotion word use during a positive and negative conversation in the laboratory relates to cardiovascular reactivity in middle-aged couples. The discussion by Christina Röcke will delineate insights gained from these four papers, discuss their strengths and limitations, and outline directions for future inquiry.

PHYSICAL INTIMACY IN DAILY LIVES OF OLDER ROMANTIC COUPLES: LINKS WITH MOMENTARY AFFECT AND DAILY CORTISOL LEVELS
Karolina Kolodziejczak1, Johanna Drewelies2, Theresa Pauly3, Nilam Ram4, Christiane Hoppmann5,
Stephanie Wilson
AND MARITAL CONFLICT
REACTIVITY TO UPSETTING PERSONAL MEMORIES
FEELING BLUE WITH YOU: AGING COUPLES’
influence each other’s health in old age.
phasize the importance of considering how members of a dyad
satisfaction was high, but unrelated to own PA. The findings em
day level, cortisol output was lower on days with lower own
moments when the partner’s PA was higher than usual and when
vealed, at the between-person level, that individuals with higher
obtained up to seven times per day over seven consecutive days. In moments when partici
more physical intimacy was associated with more positive af
and less negative affect in women, and lower daily cortisol in
in more physical intimacy wished was related to more negative af
and, to higher daily cortisol in men. We conclude that physical intimacy relates to indicators of well-being
in older couples’ daily lives and consider routes for future inquiry.

"WHAT'S YOURS IS MINE": A DYADIC STUDY
OF EVERYDAY EMOTIONAL EXPERIENCES AND
CORTISOL IN OLDER COUPLES
Theresa Pauly1, Karolina Kołodziejczak2,
Johanna Drewelies3, Maureen Ashe4, Kenneth Madden5,
Nilam Ram6, Denis Gerstorf6, and Christiane Hoppmann3,
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Older partners’ health is linked; individuals’ physiological arousal can be shaped by their own and their partner’s emo
tional experiences. This study examines those associations using repeated daily life assessments (7 days) of physiological arousal (cortisol), positive affect (PA), and negative affect (NA) obtained from 321 older couples. Results from multi-level models revea
ed, at the between-person level, that individuals with higher average cortisol had partners with higher overall NA; and, at
the within-person (momentary) level, that cortisol was lower in moments when the partner’s PA was higher than usual and when
one’s own PA was higher and NA was lower than usual. On a
day level, cortisol output was lower on days with lower own NA and with higher partner PA, particularly when relationship satisfac
tion was high, but unrelated to own PA. The findings empha
ize the importance of considering how members of a dyad influence each other’s health in old age.

FEELING BLUE WITH YOU; AGING COUPLES’
REACTIVITY TO UPSETTING PERSONAL MEMORIES
AND MARITAL CONFLICT
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Reactivity to marital conflict has long been considered a critical mechanism linking marriage to health and well-being. Yet, developmental theories suggest conflict may subside with age. To compare mood and cardiovas
cular responses to two novel contexts—both partners’ upsetting personal experiences—with marital conflict reactivity, 107 couples ages 40-87 recounted a difficult personal memory to the partner, discussed a marital problem, and provided baseline and post-task mood, blood pressure (BP), and heart rate (HR). Although older adults relived their upsetting personal memories with less emotional intensity, negative mood and systolic BP in
creased most after this task. Compared to disagreement, the spouse’s upsetting memory triggered larger increases in negative mood, HR, and among older adults, SBP. Results suggest that both partners’ upsetting personal experiences are as relevant for mood and cardiovascular activity as marital conflict in aging couples, and that spousal distress may grow increasingly important with older age.

EMOTION WORD USE AND CARDIOVASCULAR
REACTIVITY DURING MARITAL INTERACTIONS
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Cardiovascular reactivity in midlife may predict health problems in later life, but few studies have examined cardiovas
cular reactivity during marital interactions, as an important interpersonal context, and potentially modifiable linguistic correlates. This laboratory-based study examined emotion word use (i.e., positive and negative emotion words derived using automated language analysis) and cardiovas
cular reactivity (i.e., heart rate changes from baseline) across two marital interaction contexts (i.e., positive and conflict conversation) in 46 married couples (92 individuals; age: M = 42.6, SD = 8.5). Results showed that (1) spouses who used more negative emotion words during conflict showed higher cardiovascular reactivity. Moreover, (2) when husbands used a more diverse negative emotion word vocabulary during positive conversations, their wives showed higher cardiovascular reactivity and (3) when wives used a more diverse positive emotion vocabulary, their hus
bands showed lower cardiovascular reactivity. Findings highlight the relevance of couples’ emotion word use for cardiovas
cular reactivity in midlife.

SESSION 3160 (PAPER)
PREDICTORS OF HELP-SEEKING AND SERVICE AND
HEALTH CARE UTILIZATION
HEALTHCARE-SEEKING BEHAVIORS AMONG
OLDER AMERICANS WITH SUBJECTIVE COGNITIVE
DECLINE
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