time and place, such as income, education, prosociality, and perceived corruption (i.e. REF). Given the benefits of well-being to both individuals and nations, and that subjective well-being is often predicted by variables that are not easily altered, this study aims to better understand the relationships between subjective well-being and some of its known predictors, in the context of India. Three hypotheses were tested and found significant with nationally representative samples of a total of 57,077 survey respondents in India, using data from Gallup World Poll for 2006-2019. Hypothesis #1 tests for having someone one can count on as a mediator. Hypothesis #2 tests for age as a moderator. Hypothesis #3 is a moderated mediation that best explains how the known predictors of subjective well-being make their influence, and with whom. This study's findings give insights into the ways in which subjective well-being in India can be better understood and thus improved. Such understanding may also help local Indian nonprofit organizations, as well as other researchers and mental health providers, with shared interests in the growing prevalence of suicide in India.

Session 9460 (Poster)

SOCIAL SUPPORT, SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS, AND LONELINESS II

BIRTH OF THE SOCIETY OF DIVOREES – CHANGING PATTERNS OF CIVIL STATUS IN LATER LIFE

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Half a century ago Lopata used the concept “society of widows” to describe the gendered reality of late life singleness, where widowed women were excluded from coupled social life, depended on a community of other widows for social integration, and refrained from initiating new relationships due to “sanctification” of their former husbands. We use Swedish, American and EU census data and a national survey to Swedes 60-90 years old (n=1225; response rate 42%) to illustrate a substantial change in the demographic landscape of late life singleness. More people enter later life as divorces or become divorced at a high age. Among Swedes 60+ divorces outnumber widowed people, and the incidence of late life divorce has more than doubled since the millennium in what has been called the “grey divorce revolution”. Many other Western countries follow the same demographic trend, posing important questions about the transformation of late life singleness. Based on two Swedish studies we will show that the structure of the late life single community is becoming less gender skewed as a consequence of the emerging society of divorces, and that in this society relationship careers are increasingly complex, attitudes to re-partnering increasingly liberal and partner sanctification seldom an issue. We conclude by proposing the concept “society of divorces” for this new demographic landscape of late life singleness, argue that research is needed to capture this new reality, and discuss the implications of this change for access to social support later life.

EFFECTS OF LONELINESS AND STRESS MANAGEMENT ON PERCEIVED STRESS IN OLDER ADULTS

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In older adulthood, individuals may experience acute and chronic stressors, such as the loss of independence, mobility, or the experience of chronic diseases. Loneliness is also a concern in older adulthood as many experience the loss of close others and smaller social networks. Loneliness is well-established as being associated with higher stress levels in younger adults, but there are mixed findings on the impact in older adulthood. Furthermore, while older adults may engage in behaviors designed to reduce and manage stress, it is not known whether these behaviors modulate the relationship between loneliness and chronic stress. The current study examined the relationship between loneliness and stress in older adulthood and the degree to which stress-management moderated this relationship (note: data collected prior to COVID-19 pandemic). We hypothesized that loneliness and perceived stress would be positively associated, but that stress-management would moderate this relationship. Participants included 40 healthy older adults (Mage= 69.18, Range:55-86yrs; 29 females) who completed the UCLA-Loneliness Scale, the Perceived Stress Scale, the NEO-FFI (to assess neuroticism), and demographic information about participation in stress management activities. We found that loneliness was significantly associated with chronic stress, r(38) = .539, p < .001. Furthermore, loneliness and neuroticism were significant predictors of perceived stress, F(2, 37) = 10.657, p < .001, R2 = .366. These findings demonstrate that loneliness is a significant predictor of perceived stress in older adulthood and point to a need for further exploration of effective stress-management tools in later life.

ENHANCING GROUP BONDING IN AN ACTING CLASS OF OLDER ADULTS IN URBAN SUBSIDIZED HOUSING

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Creative arts such as acting can promote social contact and bonding among socially isolated populations. Yet the benefits of art programming among older adults in low-income urban settings remain unexplored. A professionally administered theater group comprised of older adults living in urban low-income housing met for 12 weeks to learn acting skills and perform a play. The purpose of this study was to identify: 1) why participants enroll in a residence-based acting and improvisation course, and 2) what aspects of the course contribute to group bonding. Participants (n=14) were African American. The average age was 63 years, 14% were men, 57% had a high school degree or less, 79% reported good to excellent health, and the mean ADL score was 1.45 (range: 1-2.5). A researcher was present at each class session to observe and take field notes. Pre-post interviews included closed
and open-ended questions. The researchers reviewed field notes and interview transcripts for a priori themes and emergent themes through independently coding data, discussing similarities and discrepancies, and coming to consensus on themes. Results showed that participants were motivated to enroll to meet new people, come out of themselves, learn something new, and gain artistic skills. Participants indicated the course contributed to group bonding via teaching techniques, course structure, the teacher’s use of self, the expression of self, and mutually enhanced coping skills. Results from this study provide guidance for the design of theater groups in similar settings and inform recruitment efforts of older adults in creative arts programs.

EVALUATING THE VALIDITY OF THE COLUMBIA-SUICIDE SEVERITY RATING SCALE FOR LONELY OLDER ADULTS

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The risk of suicide death represents a significant problem facing older adults. They are less likely to disclose suicidal ideation (SI) and more likely to die from a suicide attempt compared to younger populations. Accurate screening tools for suicide risk are necessary to identify high-risk individuals who could benefit from intervention. The Columbia-Suicide Severity Rating Scale (C-SSRS), considered the gold standard for clinician-administered suicide risk assessments, was not developed for use with older adults. The purpose of this investigation is to evaluate the C-SSRS’s sensitivity in capturing previous suicidal behavior (behavior subscale) and current intent (severity subscale), both of which are highly predictive of suicide in older adults. Among participants, there were 328 deaths after data collection (4.1%). In separate, adjusted models, loneliness (severe, HR=1.86, 95% CI: 1.43-2.41 and moderate, HR=1.51, 95% CI: 1.16-1.98) and social isolation (limited SN, HR=2.37, 95% CI: 1.72-2.37 and moderate SN, HR=1.55, 95% CI: 1.12-1.24) were both associated with mortality. Modeled together, loneliness (severe, HR=1.35, 95% CI: 1.18-2.04 and moderate, HR=1.40, 95% CI: 1.07-1.83) and social isolation (limited SN, HR=2.08, 95% CI: 1.49-2.89 and moderate SN, HR=1.46, 95% CI: 1.05-2.02) both remained significantly associated with all-cause mortality with limited SN as the stronger indicator. Results demonstrate that both loneliness and social isolation contribute to greater risk of mortality among older adults. Furthermore, individuals with limited SN are at greatest risk. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, loneliness and social isolation should be targeted safely in efforts to reduce mortality risk among older adults.

LOW FRIEND CONNECTION LEADS TO LOW FUNCTIONAL CAPACITY OF OLDER ADULTS: FINDINGS FROM A 2-YEAR LONGITUDINAL STUDY

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Maintaining personal connections in geriatric years is important to sustain the functional capacity of older adults. In this study, we define the term functional capacity as the ability to perform tasks and activities necessary for one’s independent life. Meanwhile, the type of personal connection and its effect on functional capacity remain unclear. We classified personal connections into connections with family or friends and examined their association with the functional capacity of independently living Japanese older adults. A two-year longitudinal study (2016 and 2018) was conducted using data from the Kashiwa Cohort Study. The amount of personal connections was determined using the Lubben Social Network Scale. The Japan Science and Technology Agency Index of Competence was used to assess functional capacity. The change in functional capacity was analyzed by binomial logistic regression analysis (N=638, reference: group with high family and friend connection). The results showed a decline in the functional capacity of the group with low friend and family connections (odds ratio (OR): 0.48, 95%CI: 0.29–0.82). This trend was also seen for the group with a high family connection but low friend connection (OR: 0.43, 95%CI: 0.24–0.78). Meanwhile, there was no significant difference between the