(b = 0.39, 95% CI [0.28, 0.51]) when accounting for health, employment, and relationship status. Employment status moderated this association, as daily social interactions were more strongly associated with daily purpose for unemployed/retired individuals (b = -0.23, 95% CI [-0.38, -0.08]). Positive social interactions thus may help older adults maintain purposefulness, particularly after retirement.

MAINTAINING SENSE OF PURPOSE IN MIDLIFE PREDICTS BETTER PHYSICAL HEALTH

Emily Willroth, and Daniel Mroczek, *Northwestern University, Chicago, Illinois, United States*

Having a sense of purpose in life is fundamental to psychological and physical well-being. Despite the myriad benefits of purpose, it may be difficult to hold onto purpose as people age and experience fewer future-oriented goals. The present research used reliable change indices to estimate change in sense of purpose during midlife in three diverse samples. On average, sense of purpose declined slightly with age in all three samples. Next, we used linear regression to examine associations between sense of purpose levels and sense of purpose change and later self-reported physical health outcomes. Consistent with our preregistered hypotheses, higher sense of purpose predicted better health in the two larger samples and more positive sense of purpose trajectories better health in all three samples. Together, these findings suggest that both having a sense of purpose and holding onto it may be important for physical health in middle to older adulthood.

Session 2310 (Symposium)

STRESS PROCESSES OVER 2 DECADES: FINDINGS FROM THE NATIONAL STUDY OF DAILY EXPERIENCES

Chair: David Almeida
Discussant: Daniel Mroczek

Daily experiences of stress and the associated sequelae of affective and physiological changes represent the multiple dimensions of a complex, time-dependent process of how stressors unfold in daily life. Daily diaries capture these time-sensitive processes as they occur under real world conditions. Longitudinal changes in stress processes can then be tracked using a measurement burst design: daily diaries repeated longitudinally. Using this design, the National Study of Daily Experiences (NSDE) has generated more than 35,000 days of data from a national sample of over 2,500 adults assessed repeatedly across 20 years of adulthood. The NSDE features details of more than 10,000 reports daily stress including exposure, appraisal and affective responses from adults ranging in age from 24 to 95 years. The current symposium leverages this unique and influential dataset to examine age differences and aging-related changes in daily stress processes with four presentations from the NSDE. First, Dr. Robert Stawski will discuss longitudinal change and age-related differences in exposure to multiple types of daily stressors. Next, Dr. Susan Charles will examine age differences and change in a key element of the stress process: negative affect. Third, Dr. Eric Cerino will describe longitudinal change in appraisals of daily stressors focusing on stressor control. Finally, Dr. David Almeida will examine changes in negative affect reactivity to daily stressors across the 20 years of the NSDE. Dr. Dan Mroczek will discuss the picture these presentations provide of how aging and age-differences impact the daily stress process and future directions for understanding these trajectories.

AGE-RELATED CHANGE IN THE DAILY STRESSOR REACTIVITY ACROSS 20 YEARS OF ADULTHOOD

David Almeida,[1] Jacqueline Mogle,[2] and Jonathan Rush,[3] *1. Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pennsylvania, United States, 2. Penn State University, University Park, Pennsylvania, United States, 3. University of Victoria, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada*

Affective reactivity to everyday stressful events has been shown to be an important predictor of poor mental and physical health. The purpose of this study was to examine longitudinal changes in daily stress across 30 years of adulthood as a critical first step for understanding aging-related trends in daily stress. We used data from the National Study of Daily Experiences (NSDE) to calculate exposure and reactivity to daily stressors collected during telephone interviews over the course of 8 consecutive days. These daily assessment bursts were conducted in 1997, 2007, and 2018. Data were comprised of 33,931 daily interviews from 2,880 adults ages 25-74 at the first burst. Results indicated decreased stressor reactivity over time but this decrease was greater for younger adults. Discussion will focus on how examining change in daily stress processes is critical for illuminating stress and health.

AGE DIFFERENCES AND LONGITUDINAL CHANGE IN EXPOSURE TO DAILY STRESSORS: THREE WAVES OF DIARY DATA ACROSS 20 YEARS

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Exposure to daily stress is an important risk factor for healthy aging. We examined cross-sectional age-related differences and longitudinal aging-related change in stressor exposure across three waves of the National Study of Daily Experiences (N=2,914, M=51.53 years, SD=13.55, 56.35% Female) spanning 20 years. Exposure to six types of stressors (arguments, avoided arguments, work overloads, home overloads, network stressors, other) were obtained from telephone interviews over 8 consecutive days in waves conducted in ~1996, ~2008, and ~2017. Longitudinal analyses revealed declines in stressor exposure across 20 years (p <.01), driven by declines in arguments, work overloads, and network stressors specifically. Cross-sectional analyses indicated that older individuals reported stressors less frequently (p <.01), driven by decreases in arguments, avoided arguments, work overloads, and home overloads specifically. Rates of longitudinal decline did not depend on age at baseline. Results suggest that aging-related changes and baseline age differences inform daily stress trajectories in mid- and later-life.

CHANGE IN DAILY NEGATIVE AFFECT ACROSS 20 YEARS

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