

Research documented the impact of marital transitions—particularly marital loss—on depression in old age, yet its severity depends multiple factors. Individuals' capability to cope with transitions depends on available resources and previous exposure to stressors, such as early-life adversity, which buffers or aggravates the impact of marital transitions on later-life depression. Although studies documented the pivotal link between early-life adversity and negative health trajectories, our study is the first attempt to examine whether early-life adversity influences the relationship between prospectively-tracked, later-life marital transitions and depression. We drew data from SHARE, which samples individuals aged 50+ across Europe (N = 13,258; 2004-2016). Using multilevel linear models, we found that women who became widowed had higher levels of depression compared to coupled and single women, but experienced lower increases in depression over time. After adjusting for early-life and adulthood SES, losing a partner remained significantly associated with depression. Life-course SES was associated with levels of depression, yet interactions between marital transitions and SES were not, with some exceptions: single women who reported difficulties in their ability to make ends meet experience higher increases of depression over time. Overall, results were similar for men. Interactions between family transitions and SES were again not significant, with a few exceptions for single men: those born in more childhood conditions, and those with high education, had lower levels of depression. We interpret and discuss our findings through the lens of life-course and stress-resiliency perspectives and in light of changing family dynamics for this age group.

THE EXPERIENCE OF HAPPINESS IN LATE-LIFE REPARTNERING: SURPRISE AND DISAPPOINTMENT

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Late life repartnering among those aged 65 and older is a phenomenon developing along with the increase in life expectancy. Although research indicates that older people are happier than adults at other life phases, the common lay person perception among the young as well as the old is that old age is associated with less happiness. Late life repartnering in Israel, culturally located between tradition and modernity, is not officially recognized as an option in old age. Exploring the experience of happiness within a social context that perceives late-life repartnering as the exception, using a naturalistic paradigm, has the potential for understanding lay persons perceptions of happiness. The aim of this qualitative research is to explore the experience of happiness in late-life repartnering relationships from a dyadic perspective of each and both partners. 20 couples (40 participants) functionally independent, aged 66-92 who entered their late-life repartnering at old age (men aged 65+; women aged 60+) after widowhood or divorce from a lifelong marriage raising a family, were interviewed separately. Interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim. Data was analyzed using a dyadic interview analysis method. Findings indicate that happiness in late-life repartnering relationships include experiences of surprise and disappointment in three sub-themes: a. "A gift from heaven": Surprised of being happy; b. Disappointment not being happy; c. No surprise – No disappointment. Findings are discussed based on

disappointment theory, and empirical literature on expectations and happiness. Implications are addressed.

SESSION 3035 (SYMPOSIUM)

EMPOWERING VULNERABLE GROUPS IN LATER LIFE: FOCUS ON THE ROLE OF ACTIVITIES, SOCIAL NETWORK, AND ROUND-THE-CLOCK CARE

Chair: An-Sofie Smetcoren, *Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Brussels, Belgium*

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Europe has been challenged with an intense rise of aging populations facing for example multiple chronic health problems, functional limitations and social and psychological challenges. With increasing age people may become vulnerable, nevertheless, they can still report high levels of well-being despite their deficits. Older adults' strengths and resources can balance negative experiences and increase positive well-being outcomes. These resources can be personal (e.g. have sufficient income) or stemming from the social environment of the older person (e.g. an involved social network). Hence, this symposium focusses on these strengths and resources and how they might (positively) affect the well-being of vulnerable groups ageing in place. The main objective of the symposium is to give insights into different aspects and strategies that can protect older adults against negative outcomes. Four different studies from Belgium will be presented: Sarah Dury starts with explaining the potential buffering predictor of leisure and civic activities, by uncovering the mechanisms underlying the relationship between multidimensional frailty and well-being. Lise Switsters examines if the absence of social and emotional loneliness can act as a buffer to maintain a good well-being for older adults at risk of frailty. An-Sofie Smetcoren examines how 'living in solidarity' in a co-housing project can contribute to ageing in place. Finally, Sylvia Hoens explores the experiences of the older care users and their informal caregivers with live-in migrant care workers and examines how this care can increase their well-being.

SHAPING LIVING IN SOLIDARITY AMONG OLDER VULNERABLE PEOPLE IN BRUSSELS

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This research explores how older people construct their view on 'living in solidarity'. The data was collected during a cohousing project (from construction till occupation). Co-creation sessions with residents and project coordinators were analyzed. 7 conditions and success factors were unraveled that deemed important to realize 'solidary housing': 1) The challenge to unite individual and collective needs; 2) Continuous task to engage (candidate-) residents, from early beginning; 3) A targeted selection of residents; 4) Maximizing the competences of older people; 5) Developing a group identity consciousness, 6) Involving