

in at the time. They also reported on various emotion regulation strategies. Both age groups favored positive activities, but older adults preferred positive-deactivated activities whereas middle-aged adults favored positive-activated activities. Both middle-aged and older adults reported more attention towards positive relative to negative thoughts. Greater attention to positive thoughts was associated with the tendency to select more positive activities across age groups. Both age and emotion regulation strategy use may therefore contribute to choice of emotional activities in everyday life.

SESSION 4100 (SYMPOSIUM)

CHARACTERIZING THE PATHWAYS UNDERLYING THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING AND HEALTH

Chair: Eric S. Kim, *Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, Boston, United States*

Discussant: Anthony Ong, *Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, United States*

As populations age, identifying factors that foster the maintenance of health is crucial for improving the health and well-being of older adults. Yet, most psychological, biomedical, and public health efforts have focused on reducing harmful risk factors. While the risk management approach has contributed greatly to prevention and treatment programs, our aging society continues to grapple with the steadily rising tide of chronic conditions. Expanding the focus to include upstream, health-promoting psychosocial assets may help inform a more comprehensive response effort. Mounting research suggests that different dimensions of psychological well-being are uniquely associated with reduced risk of chronic conditions. However, the mechanisms underlying these associations remain understudied. This symposium presents 4 studies evaluating potential mechanisms. The first talk presents research evaluating how a spouse's level of optimism may be uniquely associated with an individual's cognitive health over time (above and beyond that own individual's level of optimism). A second talk, draws upon a multi-burst daily diary study and focuses on affective stress response as a potentially modifiable target that could explain the health benefits of optimism. A third talk evaluates how baseline levels purpose in life might be associated with repeated measures of five key health behaviors over time. A fourth talk discusses results from a longitudinal-burst daily diary study determining the reciprocal relationships among optimism, pain interference, and goal-directed activity among older women who experience pain. Overall, these studies add to the growing research on psychological well-being and physical health by providing evidence around potential biobehavioral pathways.

THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN SENSE OF PURPOSE IN LIFE AND REPEATED MEASURES OF HEALTH BEHAVIORS OVER TIME

Eric S. Kim,¹ Koichiro Shiba,² and Laura Kubzansky²,
1. *Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, Boston, United States*, 2. *Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, Boston, Massachusetts, United States*

GSA 2019 Annual Scientific Meeting

Although a stronger sense of purpose in life has been associated with reduced risk of chronic conditions and mortality, potential pathways underlying these associations remain understudied. In the present study, we tested if a higher baseline sense of purpose in life was associated with maintenance of recommended levels of five health behaviors. Prospective data included 13,771 adults from the Health and Retirement Study, who were assessed up to six times across an average of 9 years. In mixed models that adjusted for sociodemographic factors, those in the highest quartile of purpose, compared to those in the lowest quartile, had a higher likelihood of not smoking (RR=1.04; 95% CI: 1.03–1.06), remaining physically active (RR=1.42; 95% CI: 1.33–1.51), drinking moderate amounts of alcohol (RR=1.21; 95% CI: 1.13–1.29), not suffering from sleep problems (RR=1.29; 95% CI: 1.24–1.34), and maintaining healthy BMI (RR=1.09; 95% CI: 1.06–1.11) over follow-up.

IS THE PATH EASIER ON THE BRIGHTER SIDE? OPTIMISM AND DAILY STRESS PROCESSES ACROSS 16 YEARS

Lewina O. Lee,¹ Avron Spiro,² Daniel K. Mroczek,³ and Laura D. Kubzansky⁴, 1. *Boston University School of Medicine, Boston, Massachusetts, United States*, 2. *VA Boston Healthcare System, Boston, Massachusetts, United States*, 3. *Northwestern University Feinberg School Of Medicine and Weinberg College of Arts & Sciences, Chicago, Illinois, United States*, 4. *Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, Boston, Massachusetts, United States*

Accumulating evidence supports optimism as a health asset, yet little is known about underlying pathways. This study evaluates the long-term influence of optimism on exposure and affective reactivity to daily stressors. The sample comprised 233 community-dwelling men who completed a validated measure of optimism in 1986 (age: M=59, SD=6), and participated in up to three 8-day daily diary studies between 2002-10. Daily stressor occurrence, end-of-day positive affect (PA) and negative affect (NA) were assessed nightly in the diary studies. Results from multilevel structural equation modeling showed that optimism was unrelated to affective stress reactivity. However, higher optimism preceded lower overall NA and higher overall PA. Lower daily stressor exposure mediated the association from optimism to lower NA (indirect effect: B=-0.26, 95% Bayesian CI: -0.48, -0.09), but it did not account for the optimism-PA association. Our findings add to knowledge on pathways by which optimism promotes affective well-being in old age.

THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN ACTOR-PARTNER OPTIMISM AND COGNITIVE ABILITY AMONG OLDER COUPLES

William J. Chopik,¹ Jeewon Oh,¹ and Eric S. Kim²,
1. *Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan, United States*, 2. *Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health, Boston, Massachusetts, United States*

Optimism has been found to be associated with physical health and interpersonal well-being. Spouses also play an important role on people's health especially in late life. Yet, little is known about how a spouse's optimism might be associated with an individual's cognitive health. This study examined