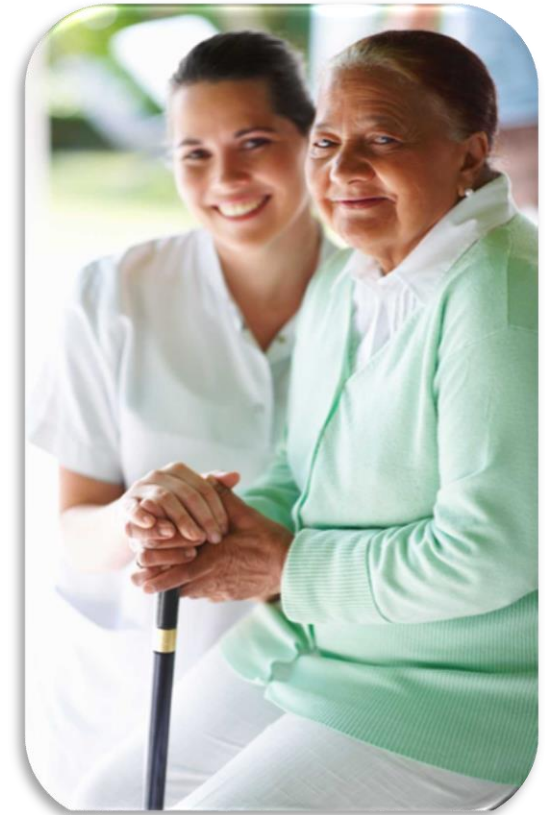




University of South Florida
**GERIATRIC WORKFORCE
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Learn@Lunch
Geriatric Education Series

Kathryn Hyer, PhD, MPP
Principal Investigator



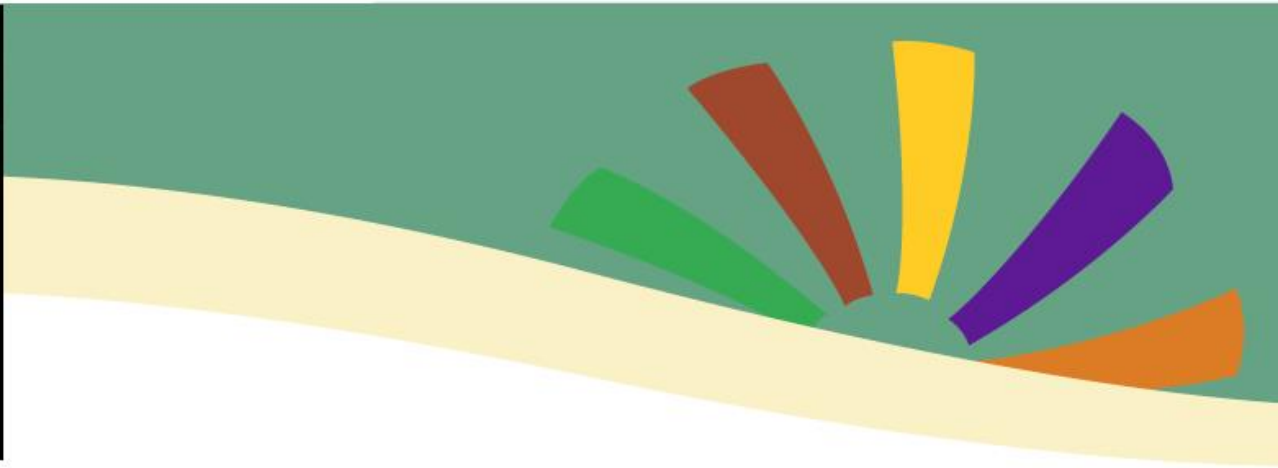
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Hope in Older Adults



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Objectives for Today's Presentation

- List the 3 primary components of hope theory
- List 3 attributes of a hopeful older adult
- Describe 2 strategies to help an older person be more hopeful

Think about an older adult who stood out to you, who impressed you.

- Why?
- What was she or he like?
- What had she or he done?
- What might have caused him or her to be this way?

How I got my start working with older adults

- Observations in a VA nursing home:
 - Man with blindness
 - Man with terminal cancer
- What differentiated these two men?



What is hope?

- Hope theory developed by C.R. (“Rick”) Snyder
- *“hope is defined as a cognitive set that is based on a reciprocally derived sense of successful (a) agency (goal-directed determination) and (b) pathways (planning of ways to meet goals)” (Snyder 1991, p. 571)*
 - Personality (individual differences)
 - Way of thinking (cognitive)
 - 3 primary components:
 - Goals (desired outcomes)
 - Agency (“the will”)
 - Pathways (“and the ways”)
 - “reciprocal, additive, and positively related” (p. 571)



How is hope measured?

- Trait Hope Scale
- State Hope Scale
- Children's Hope Scale



Hope



Is hope good for us?



- Yes (almost always)
- Across diverse samples in children and adults, hope is associated with:
 - better achievement
 - better psychological functioning
 - better physical health
 - more health-promoting behaviors
 - better social functioning
 - better coping and adjustment to stressors and physical illnesses

What does hope look like in older adults?

- Fairly stable within persons across time ($r = .44$, $N = 1,286$, 6 years, *Wurm et al., 2007*)
- May decline with age ($r = -.14$; *Wiest et al., 2013*)
- Older adults may select and manage goals better than younger adults:
 - They tend to disengage more from goals
 - Goal engagement and disengagement are associated with well-being (*Haase et al., 2013*)

What are the attributes of hopeful older adults?

- *Physical functioning*

- More hopeful older adults:

- Perceive better physical health and functioning
 - Are likely to be alive 8 years later (HR = .80; *Wiest et al., 2013*)
 - May focus on some goals more than others (hopeful stroke survivors with severe activity limitations participated less in meaningful activities; *Gum et al., 2006*)



What are the attributes of hopeful older adults?

- *Mental well-being*

- More hopeful older adults experience:
 - Less depression
 - Less suicidal ideation
 - Less negative affect
 - More positive affect
 - Better life satisfaction
 - Better overall mental well-being (*Gum in press*)



What are the attributes of hopeful older adults?

- *Attitudes and coping resources*

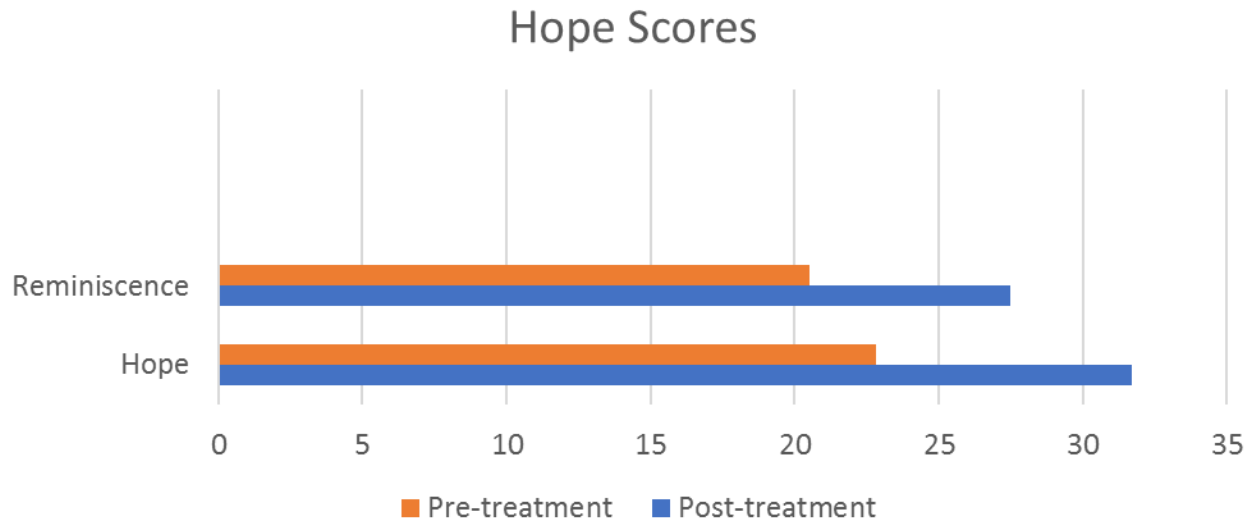
- More hopeful older adults:

- Respond well to stress (45-day study, N = 27; *Ong et al., 2006*)
- Are wiser (*Moraitou et al., 2013*)
- Perceive continued growth as they age (*Steverink et al., 2001*), which predicted hope six years later (*Wurm et al., 2007*)
- Perceive better social relationships and sense of belonging



Can we help older adults be more hopeful?

- More evidence that can improve hope and related outcomes for younger adults (*Cheavens & Guter, in press*)
- Only 1 study tested a hope intervention with older adults – with major depression (N = 13, *Klausner et al., 1998*)



Can we help older adults be more hopeful?

- Hope intervention benefited middle-aged, early retirees in Canada (*Dubé et al., 2007*)
- Other goal-focused behavioral interventions help older adults improve distress and functioning, such as:
 - Problem-solving therapy
 - Behavioral activation

How do we help older adults be more hopeful?

- Hope and other goal-focused interventions include:
 - Identifying values and goals
 - Setting goals that are meaningful, feasible, approach-oriented, measurable
 - Identifying sources of agency: self-care, self-talk, social support, strengths
 - Identifying pathways: routes, plans to achieve goals
 - How to overcome or get around obstacles
- May use strategies like:
 - Goal-mapping (map out goal, pathways, agency sources, obstacles)
 - Hope visualization exercise (mental rehearsal; *Cheavens et al., 2006; Feldman & Dreher, 2012*)

What about lost or blocked goals?

- Acknowledge and grieve losses
- Contemplate higher-order values and goals
- Discuss whether to disengage from goals
- Can you continue to pursue a blocked goal, while making sure you have other goals?

(Gum in press)



Can larger-scale changes improve older adults' hope?

- Could we combat ageism and promote positive views of aging?
- Could we improve the built environment to help older adults utilize more pathways to achieve goals?
(A. Gum, *in press*)



What does this mean for our interactions with older adults?



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For more information

- The Hope Scale:
 - Snyder, C. R. et al. (1991). The will and the ways: Development and validation of an individual-differences measure of hope. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 60, 570–585.
 - <https://ppc.sas.upenn.edu/resources/questionnaires-researchers/adult-hope-scale>
- Classic review of the theory:
 - Snyder, C. R. (2002). Hope theory: Rainbows in the mind. *Psychological Inquiry*, 13, 249-275.
- Recent review of research with older adults:
 - Gum, A. M. (in press). Promoting hope in older adults. In S. J. Lopez and M. W. Gallagher (Eds.), *Oxford Handbook of Hope*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Recent review of hope interventions:
 - Cheavens, J. S. and Guter, M. M. (in press). Hope therapy. In S. J. Lopez and M. W. Gallagher (Eds.), *Oxford Handbook of Hope*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

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