

COVID-19 Pandemic and Climate Crisis:

Using Gerotranscendence as a tool to foster Post-Crisis Resilience and Meaning in Older Adults

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Introduction

- One in four Canadians will be over the age of 65, by **2031**¹³;
- Older adults have shown vulnerability to both climate change and COVID-19^{8,14};
- ↑ In infectious diseases as a result of climate change in the last **50 years**⁴;
- For older adults, the last stage of life consists of going inward and reflecting on their life⁶
- The path towards gerotranscendence can be blocked or ↑ due to life crises¹⁵

Gerotranscendence

- This theory allows for a new understanding of aging¹⁵

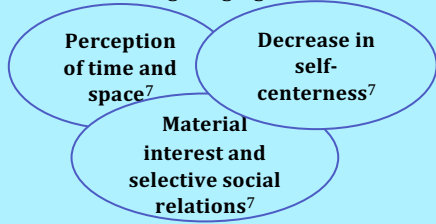


Figure 1. Three levels of Gerotranscendence

- Older adults review their life experiences and can find meaning⁶;
- Discussing the process of growing old allows for a new construction of reality¹⁵
- Rewriting their experiences will allow acceptance of past mistakes⁶;

- As well as prevent feelings of guilt or bitterness⁶;
- Older adults undergo gerotranscendence to ↓ stress levels and ↑ life satisfaction⁶

Table 1. Impacts of COVID-19 and Climate Change on Older Adults

↑ Social Social Isolation ¹³	↑ Psychological In Depression and Anxiety ¹³
↑ Physical Mobility limitations, comorbidities ^{8,14}	↓ Spiritual Life Satisfaction, ↓ & ↑ in spiritual well being ^{1,11}

Resilience

"the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, threats or significant sources of stress, and bouncing back from difficult experiences".⁷

- Important to promote resilience among older adults to cope with stresses²
- COVID-19 and previous experience to disasters can be ways to foster resilience¹
- Later life resilience fosters successful aging and improved quality of life⁷

Research Objectives

- **I.** Determine the level of resilience, social support and life satisfaction for older adults prior to the intervention

- **II.** Determine if gerotranscendence is an effective tool to foster post-crises resilience and meaning in older adults

Methodology

Research Design:

- Older Adults (+65)
- Mixed Methods Design

Data Collection:

- **Phase I: Questionnaires**
 1. Resilience in Older Adults Survey (ROAS)¹¹
 2. Geriatric Anxiety Scale⁵
 3. Geriatric Depression Scale³
 4. "Social Support" adopted 10 items from Yoon's study (2010)⁶
 5. "Satisfaction with life" 20-item scale developed by Yoon (2010)⁶
- **Phase II: Structured Interviews**
 1. Thornstam's short-form Gerotranscendence scale⁶
 2. Using open-ended questions
- **Phase III: Questionnaires**
 1. Participants will be asked to fill out questionnaires from Phase I

Analysis:

- Quantitative (Regression)
- Phenomenological (IPA) Analysis

Impacts and Implications

- Fill in the gaps in the literature regarding older adults lived experience during COVID-19 and climate change
- Importance of reviewing life experiences in later life to promote aging successfully
- Demonstrate older adults' capabilities for post-crisis resilience and meaning
- Add to the literature regarding the use of gerotranscendence as an intervention

Knowledge Translation

- Publish academic articles, attend conferences
- Data will be publicly available through social media platforms and through podcast episodes
- Create workshops at community centers

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