

Project Topic: Pursuing Meaningful Goals as Intervention to Reduce Loneliness Among Hong Kong Elders

Abstract

Meaningful social relationships are essential to the psychological well-being of older people. However, loneliness is a condition faced by many older people in Hong Kong. To address this issue, the CUHK Jockey Club Institute of Ageing, in collaboration with the Department of Psychology (CUHK) and NGO partners in Tai Po, undertook a project to understand whether loneliness in older adults can be reduced by engaging them in programme that draw upon their meaningful experiences and memories. This group-based intervention program consists of two different parts that take place during alternate weeks. First, lonely older people go on guided tours to visit historically and culturally meaningful places in their districts (Tai Po); then, they participate in small group sessions to reminisce about their own experience and memories related to these destinations. Through these meaningful interactions and sharing, they can connect to other participants, form new relationships, and feel less lonely. Any additional benefits over the comparison group (whose older adults engaged in recreational but not meaningful activities) allow us to understand whether meaningfulness played a critical role. The results suggested that compared to the comparison group, the intervention was effective in reducing loneliness and increasing meaning in life among older adults aged 75 and above. We are currently in the process of rolling out the program on a larger scale to benefit more lonely older adults in Hong Kong.

An introductory video (in Cantonese with English subtitles) can be viewed [here](#).

A complete intervention manual can be downloaded [here](#).