

¹Spiritual Meaning Making in the Lives of Older Adults

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³The purpose of this research was to examine how older adults make meaning of the spiritual turning points in their lives. ⁴Twenty-four African American and Jewish older adults were recruited from a synagogue and a neighborhood center serving older African Americans and interviewed in separate ethnic groups. Participants were asked to complete a form and participate in a focus group identifying their spiritual turning points and the impact of those events on their lives at the time they occurred and now. Focus groups methodology was selected because of their low cost, high validity, and successful results with cultural groups. ⁵Findings reveal that spiritual meaning making for older adults involves four dimensions: personal, interpersonal, sociocultural and structural. Meaning making for these older adults may involve attributing an old meaning to a new situation or reinterpreting an old experience from a new understanding. This narrative gerontology approach provided a framework for these ethnically, culturally, and religiously diverse older adults to explore how these critical, spiritual events contributed to life's meaning. ⁶Their stories illustrate how older adults learn and grow from the events in their lives and how they utilize spiritual meaning making to increase their adaptive capacity. (195 words)

*** The numbers included above correspond with the information below. This is only provided for your understanding of what needs to be included in an abstract. Do not include the numbers in your submitted abstract. Abstract should be 200 words or less.

1 = Title of presentation submission

2 = Name and affiliation of the author(s)

3 = First sentence – purpose

4 = Next 1-2 sentences – method

5 = Next few sentences – results/findings

6 = Last sentence – conclusion