Nelson-Becker,2018). However, their level of engagement varies across cultural and national contexts. Complex life course trajectories related to spirituality and religion mean that these domains often interface with both challenges and a search for well-being. Individuals may align with spiritual and/or religious values to a greater or lesser extent at different periods in their lives becoming more spiritual/religious, less spiritual/religious, or differently so. These papers address diverse perspectives on spirituality, religion, and well-being using samples primarily from the UK, Europe, the US, and Canada. The first paper by Christina Victor sets context by comparing the role of religion, and spirituality in well-being across three separate older adult data sets, touching on loneliness and dementia. Holly Nelson-Becker discusses results from an online international survey of older persons who walked the ancient Camino de Santiago pilgrimage regarding their motivations and learning from the experience. Michael Thomas considers the complex role of spirituality and sexuality for older LGB couples who may choose to remain in or leave their religious faith as they integrate expanding views. Keith Anderson explores perceptions of belief changes among religious and spiritual older adults across the life course. Together, these papers will address benefit and harm from formal religious practice and the advancing roles of spirituality as well as nonspirituality (the "nones") in global societies.

OLDER ADULTS WALKING THE CAMINO DE SANTIAGO PILGRIMAGE: MOTIVATIONS, TRANSFORMATIONS, AND SPIRITUAL PERSPECTIVES

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This mixed-method study describes reasons that older people chose to complete the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage route in Spain and their assessment of how they were changed by the experience. The study is framed in Maslow's (1988) self-actualization and Tornstam's (2005) concept of gerotranscendence. We analyzed a subset of 121 participants age 65 and over who completed an online survey. Motivation included five themes: gratitude and transitions, cultural or historical curiosity. relationships, challenge and adventure, and spirituality. Transformations since their return involved greater strength, self-understanding, peace, desire to live lightly and to integrate their experience. Older individuals who walked the Camino have done so for a variety of reasons. Spiritual reasons may be more difficult to disclose. Half responded in the open-ended question, but a later spirituality question added many more respondents. Older people envision many forms of benefit to walking the pilgrimage and find growth in the experience.

RELIGION, SPIRITUALITY, AND WELL-BEING: AN UNDEREXPLORED ASPECT OF GROWING OLDER IN THE UNITED KINGDOM?

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There is a rich literature from The United States looking at the importance of religion and spirituality in the lives of older adults where it is positively linked with wellbeing. Despite the increased interest in wellbeing in the UK comparatively little interest has been show in the role of religion and spirituality in promoting wellbeing including quality of life, life satisfaction and loneliness. In this paper we explore these issues using three data sets: the European Social Survey (ESS), the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing (ELSA) and the IDEAL cohort of people with dementia and their carers to examine (a) the variation in religious practice by older adults, those aged 50+, across Europe; (b) the epidemiology of religious practice among older adults within England and (c) using both ELSA and IDEAL consider the relationship between religion and wellbeing in later life.

SPIRITUALITY AND SEXUALITY: NOT NECESSARILY A BINARY CHOICE FOR LGBTQ+ PEOPLE

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This paper reports on a qualitative study on the impact of marriage and civil partnerships for lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) couples. Drawing on data from 50 dyad interviews in the UK, US and Canada, the paper investigates the ways in which couples make sense of spirituality in the context of a stigmatised sexuality. For some, the task of arranging a wedding or civil partnership ceremony provided a powerful reminder of their exclusion from mainstream religious denominations. This sense of stigma (Goffman, 1963) was also present in later life, when the lack of social esteem granted to same-sex relationships gave rise to a sense of disenfranchised grief (Doka, 1989). Whereas some participants tended to frame sexuality and spirituality as a kind of binary choice, others resisted this marginalisation from religious and spiritual activities, even if this meant finding a personal sense of spirituality beyond the confines of organised religion.

SPIRITUAL AND RELIGIOUS JOURNEYS OVER THE LIFECOURSE: CHALLENGING STEREOTYPES

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Spiritual and religious beliefs often evolve across the lifecourse and tend to be influenced by experience, time, and maturity. Despite this evolution, stereotypes persist of older adults as being inflexible in their views and resistant to new or alternative beliefs. To explore this notion, researchers surveyed a convenience sample of 152 older adults (n = 152) who identified as spiritual/religious. Over three-quarters (77.0%) reported that their relationship with God or a higher power had grown closer over time. Most reported becoming "more liberal" (32.2%), "more conservative" (23.0%), or "more moderate" (17.8%) in religious perspective over time. Almost three-quarters of participants (73.7%) reported that they were "more accepting" of other religions", yet also "more certain" of their own beliefs (74.3%) in later life. These and other results challenge the stereotype of older

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