



香港大學秀圃老年研究中心  
**Sau Po Centre on Ageing**  
**The University of Hong Kong**

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# **Making Meaning on Dementia Caregiving: A Generational Perspective**

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# Over 50 million

People living with dementia in 2019

## 5% - 8%

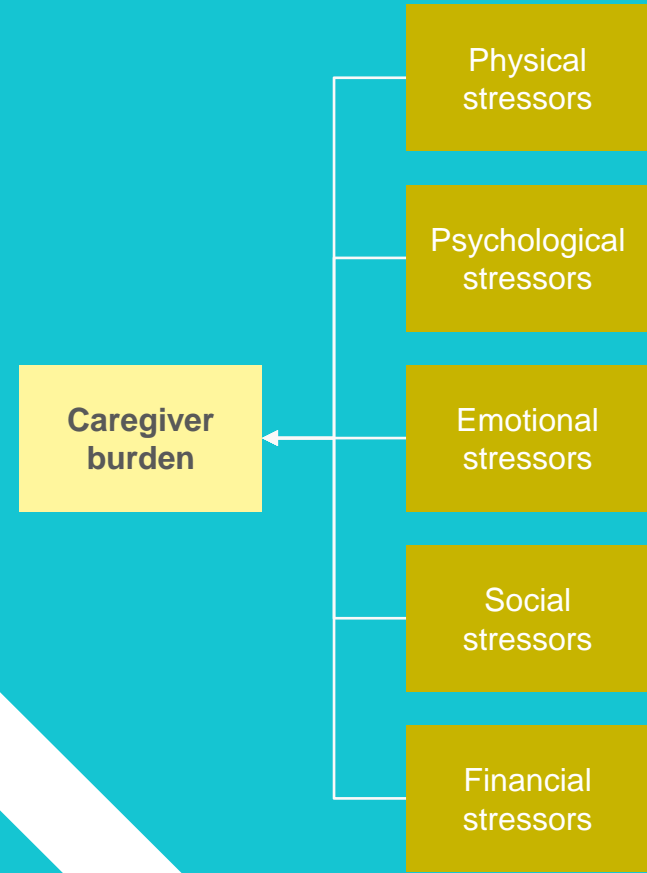
People aged over 65 in Hong Kong  
are living with dementia in 2017

# Female

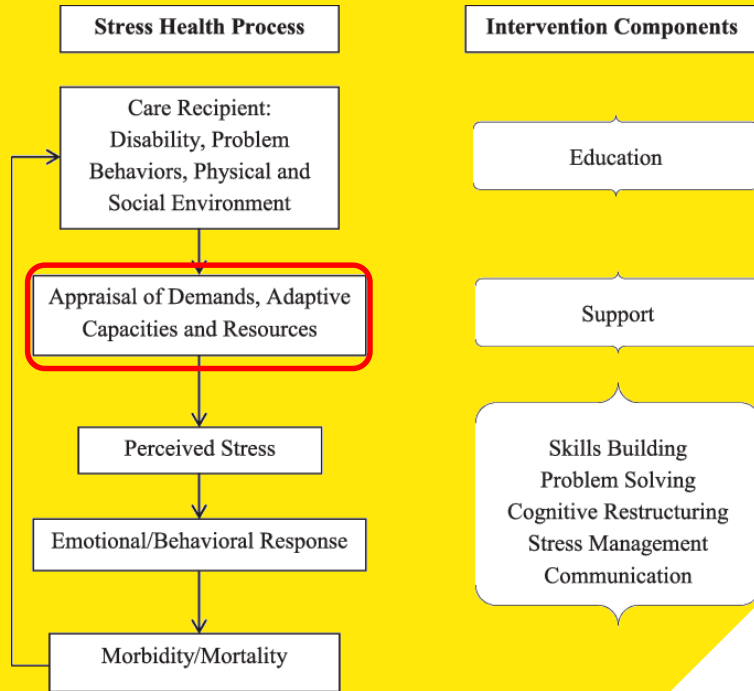
Has higher Dementia Life  
Expectancy (DemLE) than male in  
Hong Kong

# “Enduring stress and frustration”

- More than 80% of Alzheimer’s disease (AD) caregivers state that they frequently experience **high levels of burden**
  - **poor outcomes for caregivers** such as depression, illness and decreased quality of life (QoL);
  - **poor outcomes for dementia patients** such as poor QoL and early nursing home placement
  - **poor outcomes for families** such as family conflict, a decrease in social support, and limitations in social life



# Searching for meaning as an adaptive capacities & resources

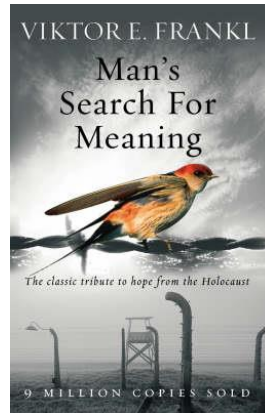


- **Triggered by a potential stressful situation** – individuals evaluate its cause, level of threat, loss and/or controllability, and current and future implications
- will then attempt to make sense of situations (**meaning making**) by going through a cognitive-emotional process
  - assimilate or accommodate to the challenging situation, which leads to the possible generation of new meaning

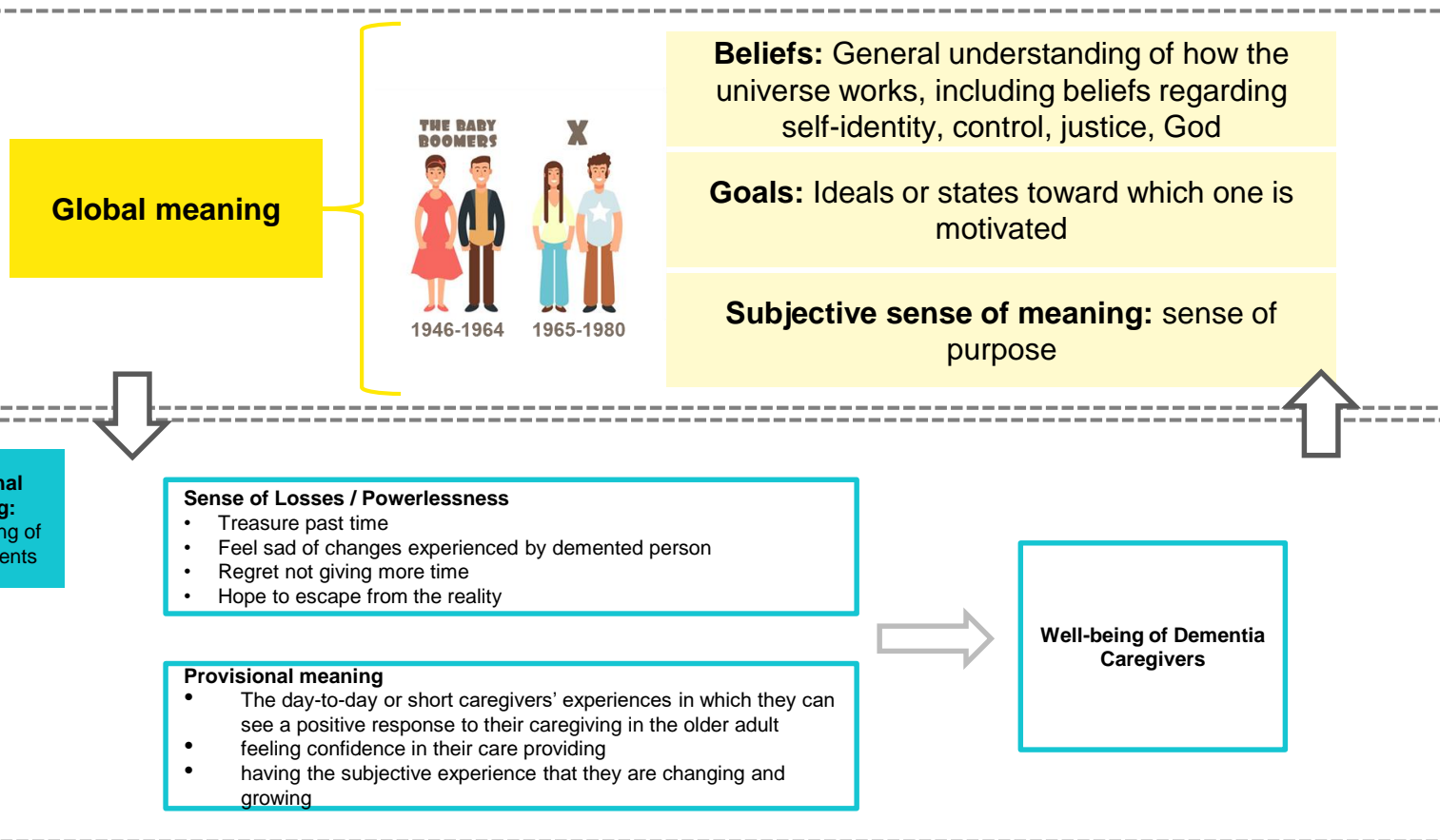
Sources: Nichols LO, Martindale-Adams J, Burns R, Zuber J, Graney MJ. REACH VA: Moving from Translation to System Implementation. *Gerontologist*. 2016 Feb;56(1):135-44. doi: 10.1093/geront/gnu112. Epub 2014 Nov 13. PMID: 25398828.

Sources: Park, C. L. (2010). Making sense of the meaning literature: an integrative review of meaning making and its effects on adjustment to stressful life events. *Psychological bulletin*, 136(2), 257-301.

# 02 Searching Meaning



# The Meaning Making Model



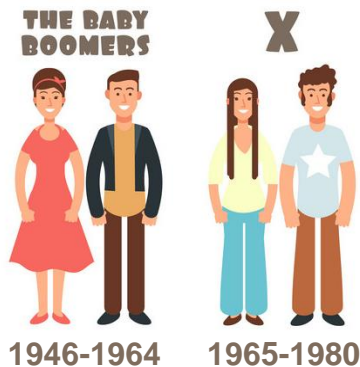


# Objectives



## Objective 1

Investigate differences of meaning making in dementia caregiving between the Baby Boomer Generation and Generation X



## Objective 2

Test possible impact of COVID-19 on meaning making across generations



# Methodology

Hong Kong residents

Birth year between  
1946 to 1980

Providing assistance to at least  
one parent (aged 65+) with  
dementia on ADL or IADL not less  
than 8 hours per week in the 3  
months prior to the survey

Can speak Chinese

Voluntary participation

# Measures

**Generation:** Baby Boomer Generation (1946-1964);  
Generation X (1965-180)

**Situational Meaning:** loss/powerfulness (19-95 points) and  
provisional meaning (19-95 points) of the Finding Meaning  
Through Caregiving Scale (FMTCS)

**Depressive symptoms:** Patient Health Questionnaire-9  
(PHQ-9)



**Dementia caregiving needs:** Activity of Daily Living (ADL);  
Instrumental Activity of Daily Living (IADL); the Revised  
Memory and Problem Behavioral Checklist

**Demographics and care arrangements:** Gender; education;  
marital status; no. of children; employment status; living  
arrangement; financial status

Longitudinal Survey

# Procedures

## Multimodal data collection process:

- Face-to-face interview
- Telephone guided interview 
- On-line self-administration 



# Active Sample

## Sample

Baby Boomers (BB) (N=338)  
Generation X (GX) (N=263)

## Baby Boomer (BB)

Before COVID-19 (N=228)  
After COVID-19 (N=110)

## Generation X (GX)

Before COVID-19 (N=168)  
After COVID-19 (N=95)



After COVID-19:  
After Jan 28, 2020

# Profile of Caregivers

	Overall (N=601)	Baby Boomer (N=338)	Generation X (N=263)
<b>Age</b>			
40-44	39 (6.5%)	0 (0%)	39 (14.8%)
45-49	78 (13.0%)	0 (0%)	78 (29.7%)
50-54	128 (21.3%)	0 (0%)	128 (48.7%)
55-59	150 (25.0%)	132 (39.1%)	18 (6.8%)
60-64	135 (22.5%)	135 (39.9%)	0 (0%)
65-69	63 (10.5%)	63 (18.6%)	0 (0%)
70-74	8 (1.3%)	8 (2.4%)	0 (0%)
<b>Gender</b>			
Male	136 (22.6%)	75 (22.2%)	61 (23.2%)
Female	465 (77.4%)	263 (77.8%)	202 (76.8%)
<b>Marital Status</b>			
Married or Partnered	328 (54.6%)	189 (55.9%)	139 (52.9%)
Neither Married nor Partnered	273 (45.4%)	149 (44.1%)	124 (47.1%)
<b>Education***</b>			
No Formal Education	3 (0.5%)	3 (0.9%)	0 (0%)
Primary Education	58 (9.7%)	53 (15.7%)	5 (1.9%)
Secondary Education	276 (45.9%)	160 (47.3%)	116 (44.1%)
College (Non-degree)	99 (16.5%)	55 (16.3%)	44 (16.7%)
Undergraduate	97 (16.1%)	37 (10.9%)	60 (22.8%)
Graduate or above	68 (11.3%)	30 (8.9%)	38 (14.4%)
<b>Religion</b>			
Have Religion	297 (49.4%)	167 (49.4%)	130 (49.4%)
Do not have Religion	304 (50.6%)	171 (50.6%)	133 (50.6%)
<b>Housing Type</b>			
Public Housing	226 (37.6%)	136 (40.2%)	90 (34.2%)
Private Housing	353 (58.7%)	189 (55.9%)	164 (62.4%)
Others	22 (3.7%)	13 (3.8%)	9 (3.4%)
<b>Housing Condition***</b>			
Renting	204 (33.9%)	120 (35.5%)	84 (31.9%)
Paying Mortgage	83 (13.8%)	29 (8.6%)	54 (20.5%)
Completed Mortgage Payment	299 (49.8%)	184 (54.4%)	115 (43.7%)
Others	15 (2.5%)	5 (1.5%)	10 (3.8%)
<b>Work Status***</b>			
Full Time	235 (39.1%)	84 (24.9%)	151 (57.4%)
Part Time	79 (13.1%)	42 (12.4%)	37 (14.1%)
Not Working/Retired	287 (47.8%)	212 (62.7%)	75 (28.5%)

# Profile of Care Recipients

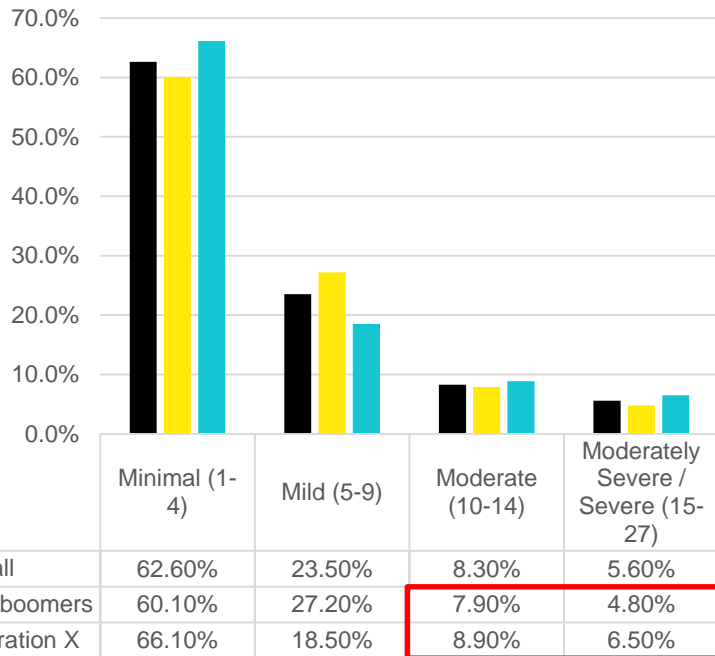
	Overall (N=601)	Baby Boomer (N=338)	Generation X (N=263)
<b>Age</b>			
60-69	6 (1.0%)	0 (0%)	6 (2.3%)
70-79	74 (12.3%)	7 (2.1%)	67 (25.5%)
80-89	344 (57.2%)	182 (53.8%)	162 (61.6%)
90-99	172 (28.6%)	144 (42.6%)	28 (10.6%)
100-109	5 (0.8%)	5 (1.5%)	0 (0%)
<b>Gender***</b>			
Male	127 (21.1%)	54 (16.0%)	73 (27.8%)
Female	474 (78.9%)	284 (84.0%)	190 (72.2%)
<b>CG-CR Relationship</b>			
Father	114 (19.0%)	49 (14.5%)	65 (24.7%)
Mother	433 (72.0%)	266 (78.7%)	167 (63.5%)
Father-in-Law	13 (2.2%)	5 (1.5%)	8 (3.0%)
Mother-in-Law	41 (6.8%)	18 (5.3%)	23 (8.7%)
<b>Length of Diagnosis (Month)</b>			
Mean (SD)	5.01 ± 4.66	5.26 ± 4.86	4.68 ± 4.39
Missing	1 (0.2%)	1 (0.3%)	0 (0%)
<b>Perform ADLs**</b>			
Mean (SD)	3.63 ± 2.27	3.42 ± 2.23	3.89 ± 2.30
<b>Perform IADLs***</b>			
Mean (SD)	1.47 ± 2.02	1.20 ± 1.70	1.82 ± 2.32
<b>NPI Severity Score</b>			
Mean (SD)	11.0 ± 7.15	11.2 ± 7.27	10.7 ± 6.99
<b>NPI Disturbance Score</b>			
Mean (SD)	13.3 ± 10.9	13.4 ± 11.3	13.1 ± 10.5
<b>Late Stage of dementia</b>			
Late Stage	86 (14.3%)	49 (14.5%)	37 (14.1%)
Not Late Stage	515 (85.7%)	289 (85.5%)	226 (85.9%)

# Caregiving Arrangement

	Overall (N=601)	Baby Boomer (N=338)	Generation X (N=263)
<b>Primary Caregiver***</b>			
Primary Caregiver	420 (69.9%)	255 (75.4%)	165 (62.7%)
Non-Primary Caregiver	181 (30.1%)	83 (24.6%)	98 (37.3%)
<b>Caregiving Length (Month)</b>			
Mean (SD)	61.0 ± 50.8	64.1 ± 51.1	57.0 ± 50.1
<b>Weekly Caregiving Hours***</b>			
Mean (SD)	40.1 ± 41.3	45.4 ± 44.8	33.3 ± 35.2
<b>CR's Living Location**</b>			
At Home	498 (82.9%)	269 (79.6%)	229 (87.1%)
Hospital/Temporary Home	2 (0.3%)	0 (0%)	2 (0.8%)
Long-term Care Facility	101 (16.8%)	69 (20.4%)	32 (12.2%)
<b>Sharing of Caregiving Role</b>			
Yes	486 (80.9%)	273 (80.8%)	213 (81.0%)
No	114 (19.0%)	64 (18.9%)	50 (19.0%)
Missing	1 (0.2%)	1 (0.3%)	0 (0%)
<b>Other Caregivers</b>			
<b>Carerecipient's Spouse***</b>	100 (16.6%)	32 (9.5%)	68 (25.9%)
Carerecipient's Son	179 (29.8%)	98 (29.0%)	81 (30.8%)
Carerecipient's Son-in-law	52 (8.7%)	31 (9.2%)	21 (8.0%)
Carerecipient's Daughter	242 (40.3%)	143 (42.3%)	99 (37.6%)
<b>Carerecipient's Daughter-in-law**</b>	63 (10.5%)	46 (13.6%)	17 (6.5%)
Friend	3 (0.5%)	2 (0.6%)	1 (0.4%)
Domestic Helper	227 (37.8%)	124 (36.7%)	103 (39.2%)
Hourly Helper	13 (2.2%)	7 (2.1%)	6 (2.3%)
Others	65 (10.8%)	43 (12.7%)	22 (8.4%)

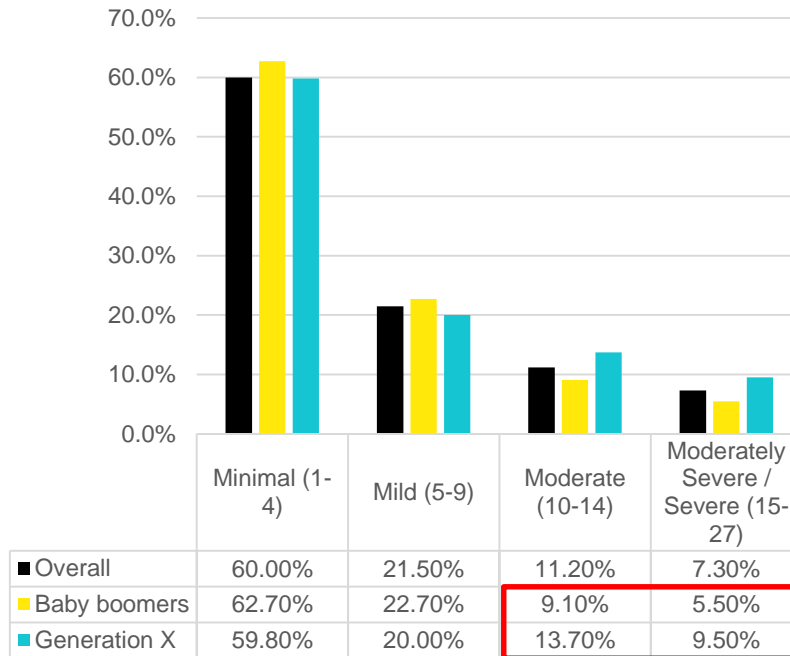
# Depressive Symptoms

**Before COVID-19**  
BB (N=228); GX (N=168)



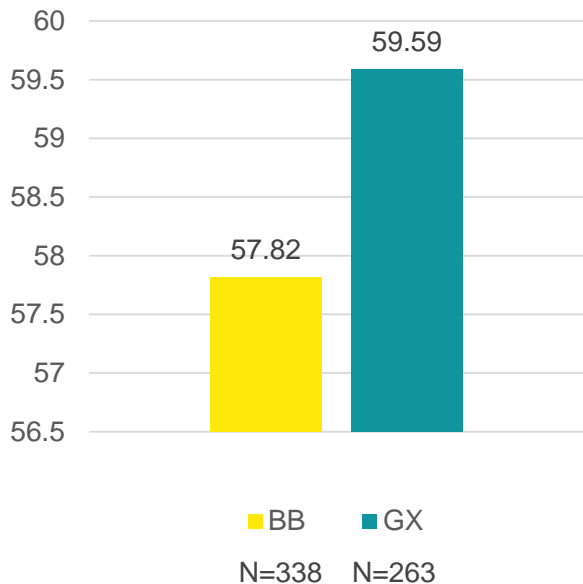
■ Overall ■ Baby boomers ■ Generation X

**After COVID-19**  
BB (N=110); GX (N=95)

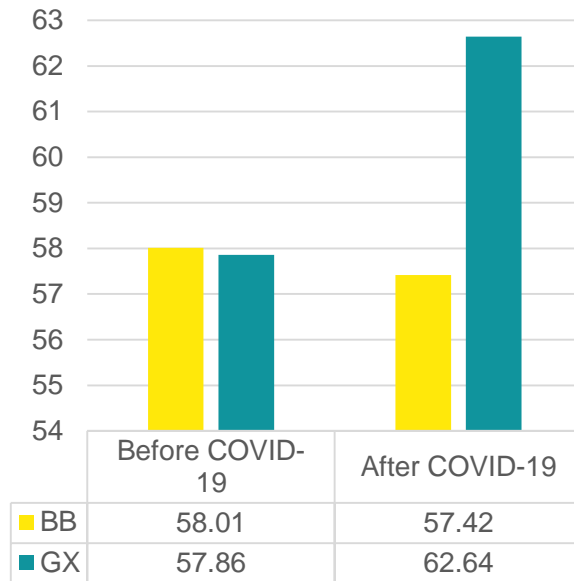


■ Overall ■ Baby boomers ■ Generation X

# Sense of Loss/Powerless



A significant **generational** effect,  
 $p = .044^*$



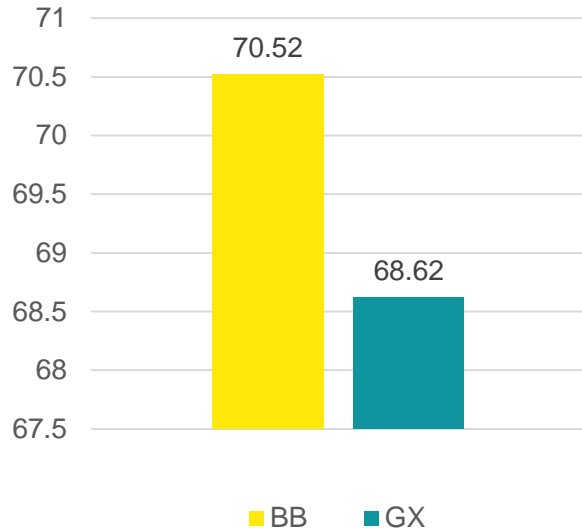
A significant **generational** effect,  
 $F(3, 597) = 7.69, p = .006^{**}$ ;

There was a significant effect of **COVID-19**,  
 $F(3, 597) = 5.23, p = .023^*$ ;

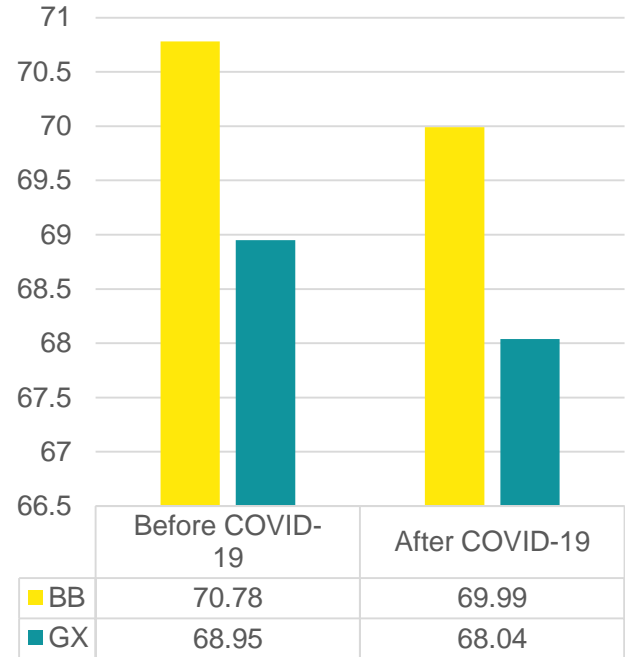
And a significant interaction of **COVID-19 and generation**,  
 $F(3, 597) = 8.66, p = .003^{**}$



# Provisional Meaning



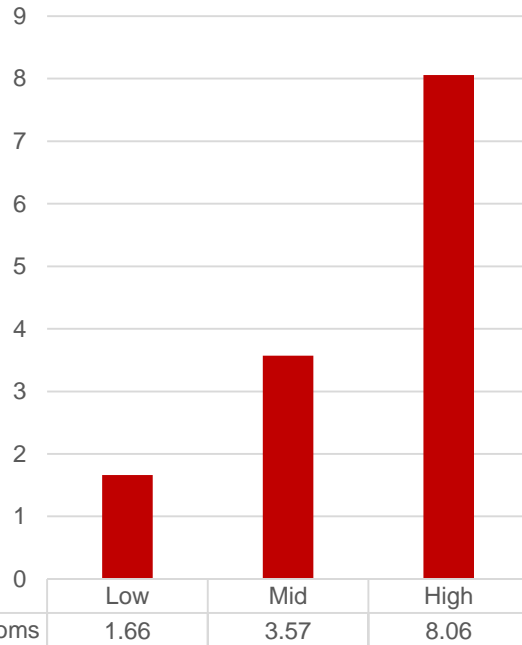
A significant **generational** effect,  
 $p = .017^*$



There was a significant **generational** effect,  
 $F(3, 597) = 5.07, p = .025^*$

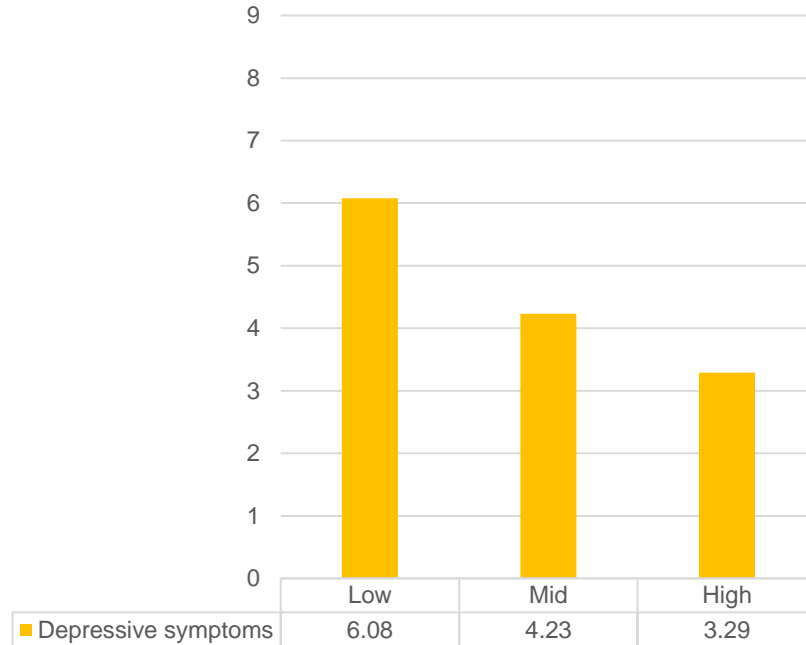
# Meanings and depressive symptoms

## Sense of Loss/Powerless



$p = .000^{***}$

## Provisional Meaning



$p = .000^{***}$

# 03. Conclusion

- Baby Boomer Generation and Generation X were different in meaning making process, in particular in experiencing losses / powerlessness;
  - **generation X caregivers** were more likely to report experiencing loss/powerless
- Under COVID-19 pandemic, interaction effect between generation and COVID-19 was observed
  - **generation X caregivers** were more likely to be affected by COVID-19 to report experiencing loss/powerless

# 04. Generation-responsive Strategy



## Services

Generation-responsive services to caregivers, especially under COVID-19



## Balanced Life

Generation-responsive workplace accommodative measures an/or life choices

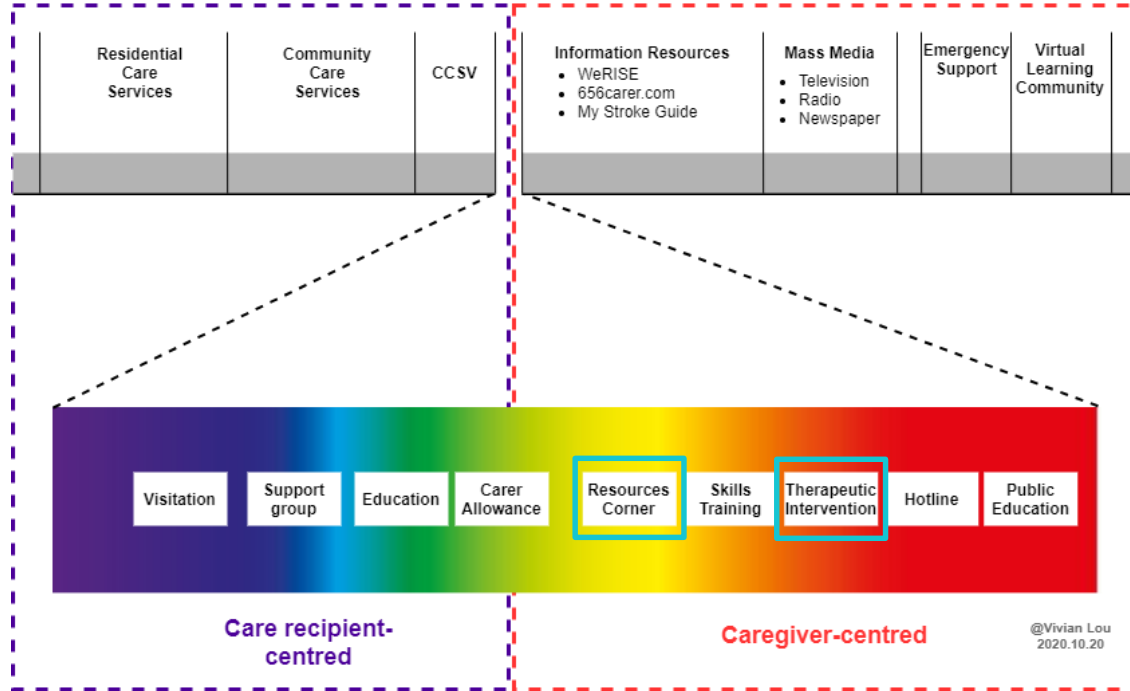


## Meaning making

Generation-responsive education and intervention to create a supportive ecology

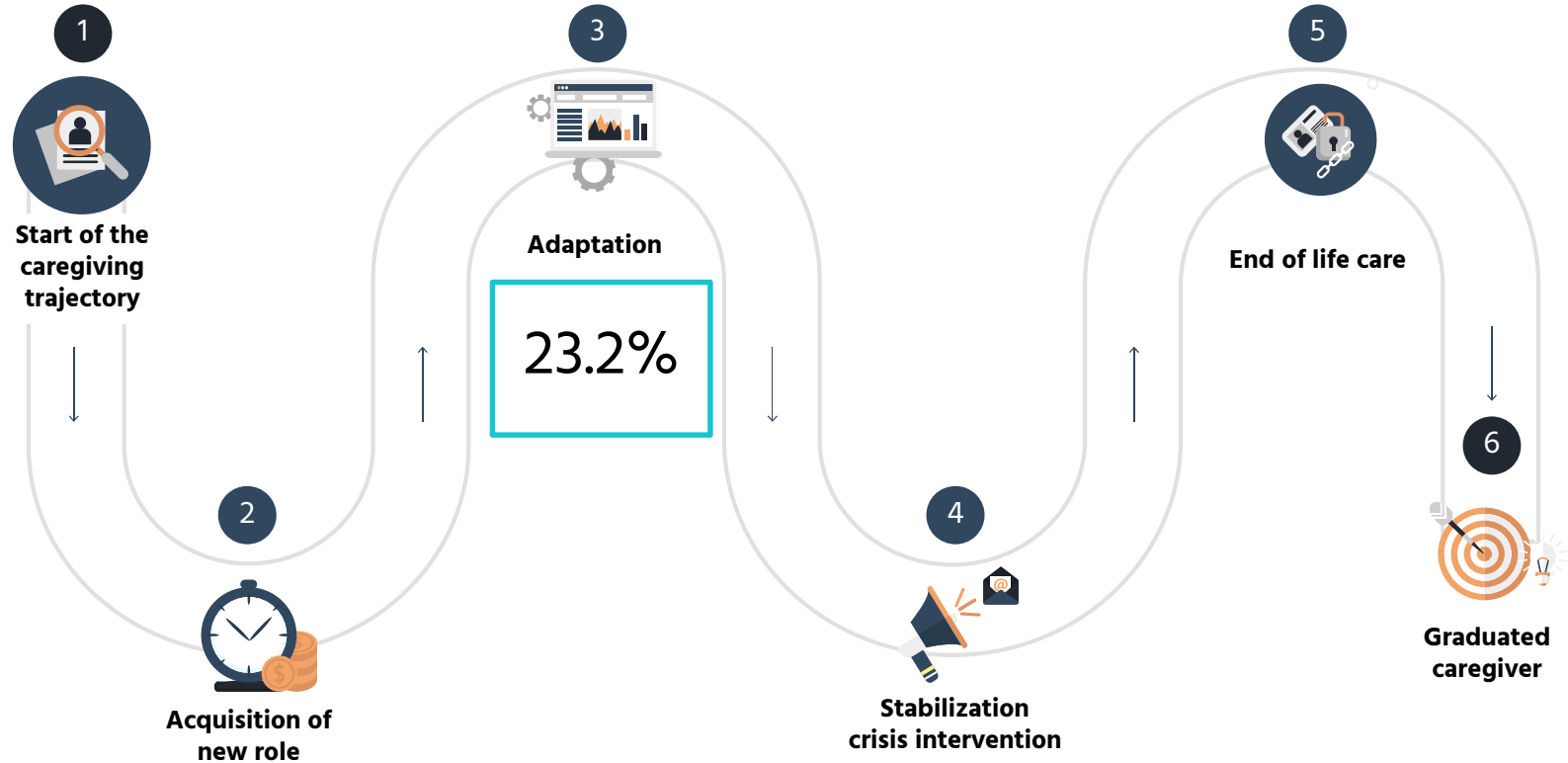
# Generation-responsive

## CAREGIVER SUPPORT AND CARE SPECTRUM



@Vivian Lou  
2020.10.20

# Caregiving trajectory



# Generation X needs a sense of **HOPE**

## Intervention Topics



01

- Finding sources of meaning
- Acknowledging caregiving identity

02

- Reflecting on life experiences
- Creating meanings for present and future

03

- Embracing life challenges
- Grasping life opportunities

04

- Experimenting new meanings in life
- Transitioning and transferring caregiving knowledge and experiences

TELL ME

TEACH ME

INVOLVE ME

*and I forget.*

*and I remember.*

*and I learn.*

—Benjamin Franklin



# Acknowledgements

## Co-Investigators

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Dr. Yang Lu, Frances

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