

their involvement or noninvolvement in the labor market (McVittie, McKinlay & Widdicombe, 2008). These factors are, however, neither fixed nor static; individuals can use them flexibly in working up accounts of their lives and themselves that make sense in the contexts in which they live. Further work on these topics is essential if we as psychologists are to derive a rounded understanding of retirement in the early 21st century.

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## Is Retirement Always Stressful? The Potential Impact of Creativity

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In their recent and insightful article on adjustment among retirees, Wang, Henkens, and van Solinge (April 2011) provided a comprehensive review of current theorizing on the antecedents of employees' post-retirement well-being. Central to their review is a resource-based model, which conceptualizes retirement as a stress-inducing role transition that requires significant pools of resources to overcome. Prototyp-

ical of the resource paradigm are examinations of how monetary resources allow retirees to overcome financial stressors and how familial connections allow retirees to overcome emotional stressors. Despite the explanatory power of Wang et al.'s (2011) model, a broader perspective on role transitions suggests that retirement might not always be inherently stressful. Viewed from the perspective of the creative personality, employees may in fact experience retirement as a self-actualizing event that enhances well-being through the provision of desired novelty. Existing empirical evidence on individual difference predictors of role transitions provides preliminary support for this perspective, suggesting that while retirement is often stressful it can also be an energizing and fulfilling experience.

Above all else, the creative personality entails (a) a preference for novelty, new experiences, and wide interests and (b) confidence in one's ability to succeed in creative tasks (Feist, 1999). For instance, Barron and Harrington (1981) listed among the core traits of creative individuals both a "high valuation of aesthetic qualities in experience" and a "firm sense of self as 'creative'" (p. 453). These traits are in contrast to those of less creative people, who are conversely attracted to routine and certainty and lack confidence in their ability to achieve in creative tasks. Creative individuals in turn tend to seek out novelty in their everyday lives and take on new challenges that incorporate creative components (Feist, 1999). Given both their preference for novel experiences and their confidence in overcoming associated novel challenges, it is reasonable to presume that creative individuals tend to switch life roles more frequently than do their more close-minded peers. Applied to the workplace, this presumption means that creative individuals should by extension tend to switch tasks, jobs, and careers with relative frequency and ease.

Converging empirical data support the above proposition; for reasons of space, I briefly summarize just three of these projects. In one recent study, Wille, De Fruyt, and Feys (2010) conducted a 15-year cross-lagged examination of individual differences that predict college graduates' tendency to transition into new jobs. First among their findings was a positive relationship between job change frequency and openness to experience—a construct within the Big Five taxonomy that entails a preference for novelty and new experiences. In a second set of findings, the authors demonstrated a positive link between job change and investigative and artistic voca-

tional interests that emphasize new experience, and a negative link between job change and conventional vocational interests that emphasize familiarity and routine. In another recent study by Vinson, Connelly, and Ones (2007), a similar pattern of findings emerged. Utilizing archival data from more than 1,000 job applicants across a variety of jobs, the authors found that job switching over a five-year period was consistently predicted by applicants' openness to experience. Uncreative employees' discomfort with role transitions appears to extend even to transitions within the same job roles. In four studies, Higgins, Kruglanski, Pierro, Higgins, and Capozza (2007) found that employees high on need for closure—a preference for firm answers that dampens creative ability—were less able to cope with organizational change than were their peers. Taken together, each of these studies paints a similar picture. Whereas some employees avoid change and seek to maintain consistent roles, many others do not. Instead, employees who value novelty and excel in unfamiliar environments appear to actively seek change, switching roles and jobs more often than their peers.

What are the implications of these findings for retirement scholarship? When retirement is conceptualized as a role transition, the data suggest a decidedly more complex view of retirement than the stress-based resource perspective allows, one emphasizing the potential for retirement to exert a net positive impact on employees' lives. Although previous research supports the idea that retirees often experience stable or increased well-being upon retirement (Wang, 2007), the explanatory mechanisms provided by the creativity perspective are unique. For instance, whereas existing research suggests that increases in well-being during the retirement transition are largely due to the removal of work stressors (Wang, 2007), the creativity perspective suggests that a similar pattern might also emerge from the inducement of new challenges that energize and excite employees. In this way, retirement becomes a path to positive identity construction (Dutton, Roberts, & Bednar, 2010), providing employees with new opportunities to imbue their lives with enhanced virtue and meaning.

Applied to modern organizations, the creativity perspective suggests new possibilities for organizations seeking to manage employees' retirement transitions through their policies, practices, and procedures. At the most formal level, organizations can institute training programs that encourage employees to consider how retirement might allow them to embrace new, energizing life roles. Less

formally, leaders can likewise provide mentorship to their subordinates and encourage creative thinking as employees plan for their own postretirement lives. In this way, organizations can actively shift prevailing attitudes toward retirement, replacing negative frames of stress and loss with more positive frames that emphasize gain, excitement, and self-actualization.

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### Correction to “Summary Report of Division Journal Operations, 2010”

In the “Summary Report of Division Journal Operations, 2010” (*American Psychologist*, Vol. 66, No. 5, p. 406), some of the data in the “Total pages published” column were incorrect. All electronic versions of this table have been corrected. See <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0023978>

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