



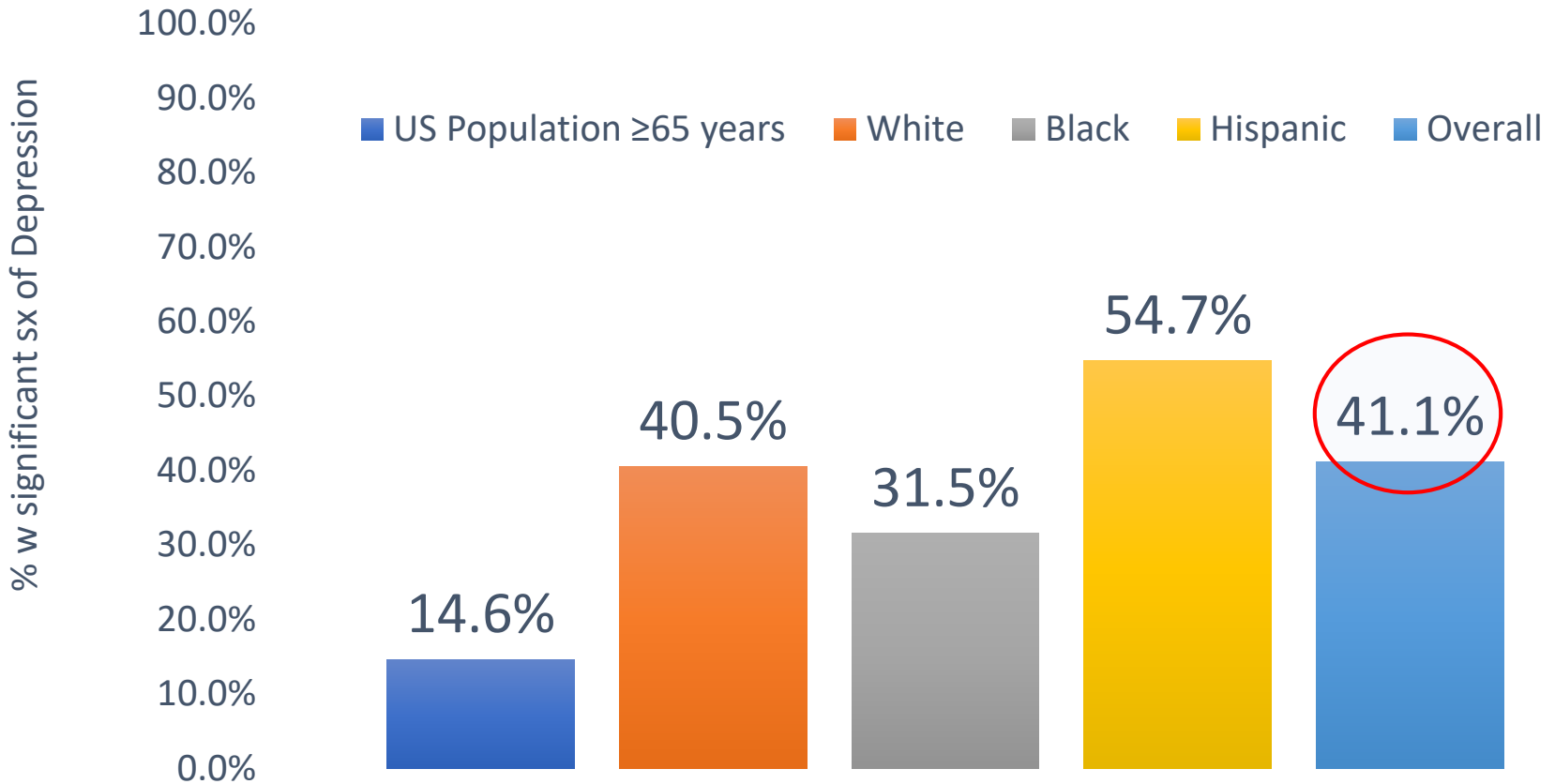
Promoting Caregiver Well-Being

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History of the UC San Diego Caregiver Project

- Early focus was on the emotional and physical consequences of caregiving
- Science had already shown that stress/distress was related to health problems (e.g., CVD; Hypertension)
- Our project focused on “why” the stress/distress led to those outcomes.
 - Caregivers have more active sympathetic nervous systems (SNS)
 - Active SNS can cause “sheer stress” which can cause higher coagulation molecules in the caregivers’ systems
 - Wouldn’t you know it, caregivers have higher levels of inflammation and coagulation molecules. These put caregivers at risk for CVD; hypertension

Caregiver Rates of Significant Symptoms of Depression



Source: Resources for Enhancing Alzheimer's Caregiver Health (REACH)

Caregiving and CVD

- National REACH Study
 - > 800 caregivers from 6 U.S. cities
 - Followed for 18-months and inquired as to new diagnosis of CVD
 - Heart disease
 - Heart attack
 - Congestive heart failure
 - Angina
 - Myocardial infarction
 - Primary interest was to determine if stress and negative moods are related to CVD risk over 18-month period.

Distress and CVD: Group Comparisons

	Not Depressed	Depressed
Low Stress	Reference	
High Stress		

Distress and CVD: Group Comparisons

	Not Depressed	Depressed
Low Stress	Reference	
High Stress	83% increased risk	

Distress and CVD: Group Comparisons

	Not Depressed	Depressed
Low Stress	Reference	200% increased risk
High Stress	83% increased risk	

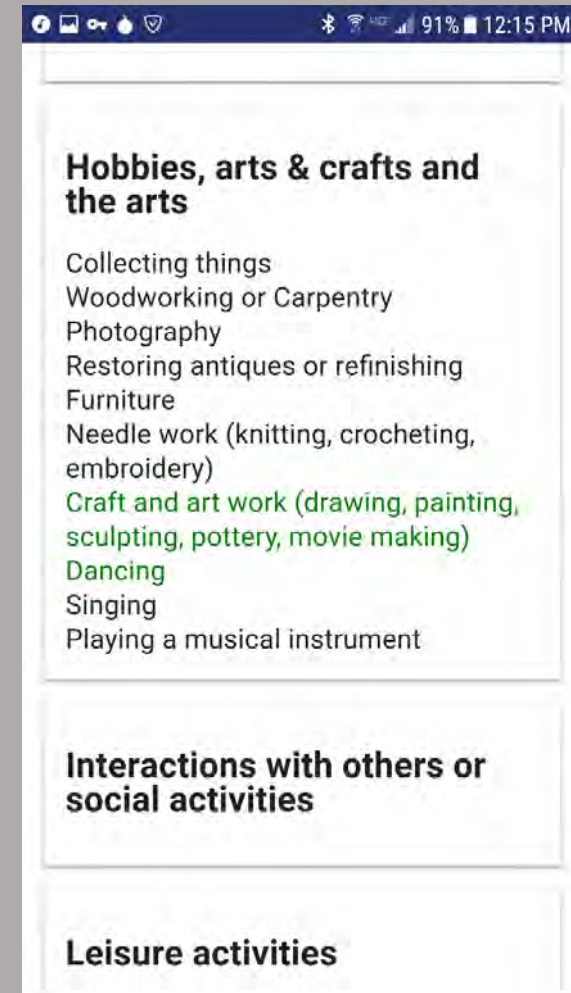
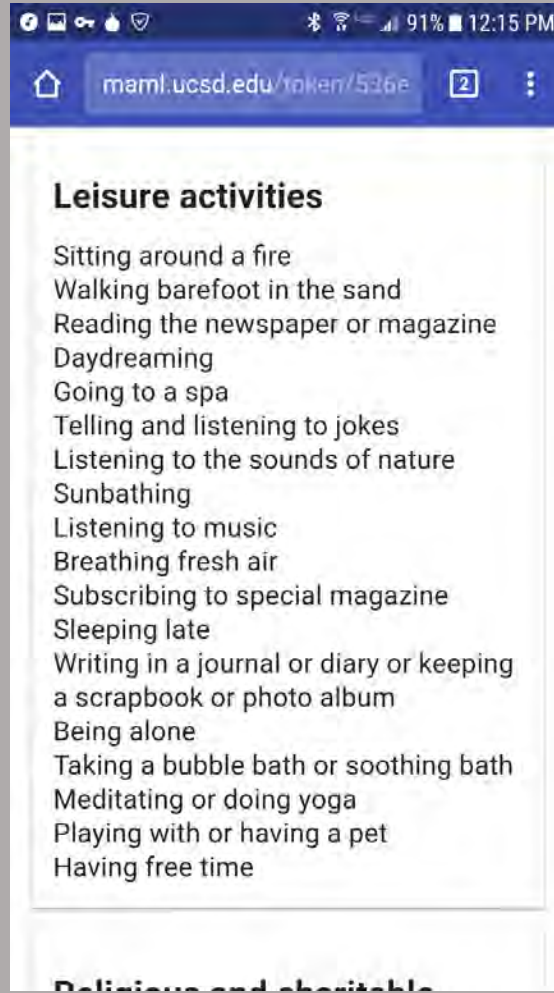
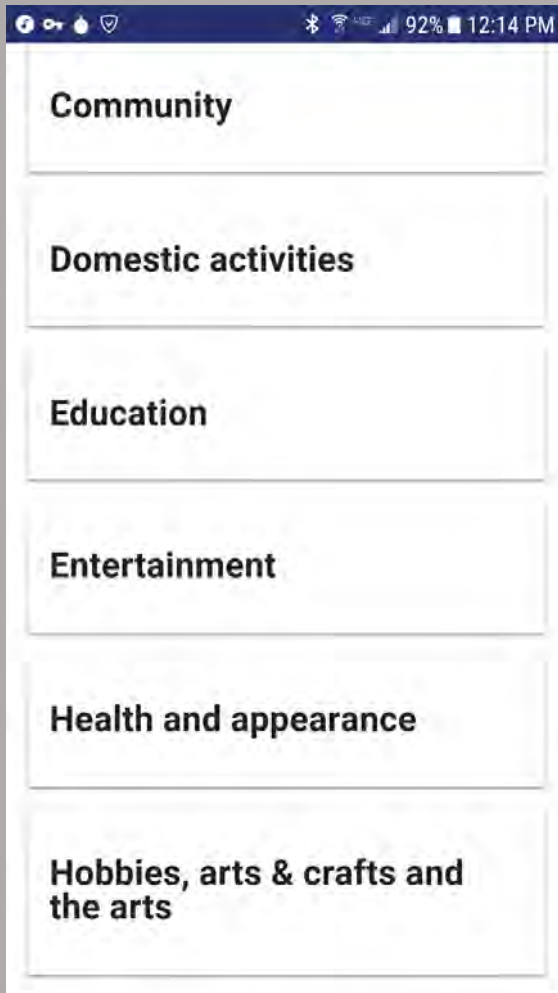
Distress and CVD: Group Comparisons

	Not Depressed	Depressed
Low Stress	Reference	200% increased risk
High Stress	83% increased risk	438% increased risk

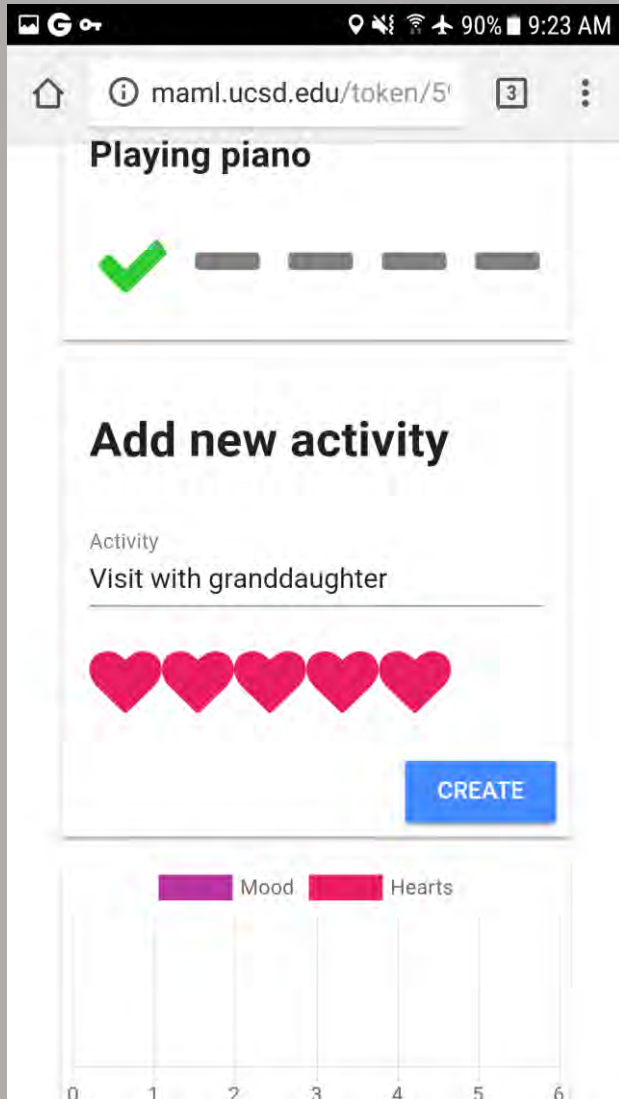
Source: Mausbach et al. (2007). Depression and distress predict time to cardiovascular disease in dementia caregivers. *Health Psychology*, 26, 539-544.

Current Focus of Caregiver Project

- Aid and support the caregiver in learning new coping skills
- 10 years of studying therapeutic approaches to helping caregivers learn these coping skills
- Now, we are focusing on mobile technology interventions
 - Can we deliver effective interventions to caregivers through the use of mobile technology?



- Select personally enjoyable activities from categories; or enter a custom/personal activity
- Select “candidate” activities to try for a week. Each activity has a “personal hearts” rating (from 1-5). The goal is to achieve 50 hearts during the first week



- Each day, participants receive a text (at time of their choosing), asking them to report on their progress for the day
- Text contains a link to their personal portal
- Caregivers check off activities they achieved that day, or add personal activities they enjoyed (e.g., visit with granddaughter)
- The site tracks “hearts achieved”, and every week shows progress regarding moods.

Thank You!

Information:
858-534-9479

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SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

CAREGIVER STUDY

