



# ENHANCING SOCIAL CONNECTION THROUGH ARTS & TECHNOLOGY

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# PRIMARY GOALS:

- Provide a path for ongoing skill-building, self-expression, and social connection through creativity
- Alleviate the opportunity gap for homebound older adults
- Showcase and honor the creative work of older adults in the community
- Help bridge the digital divide by providing devices, connection, and individualized training
- Facilitate peer-to-peer engagement and intergenerational storytelling



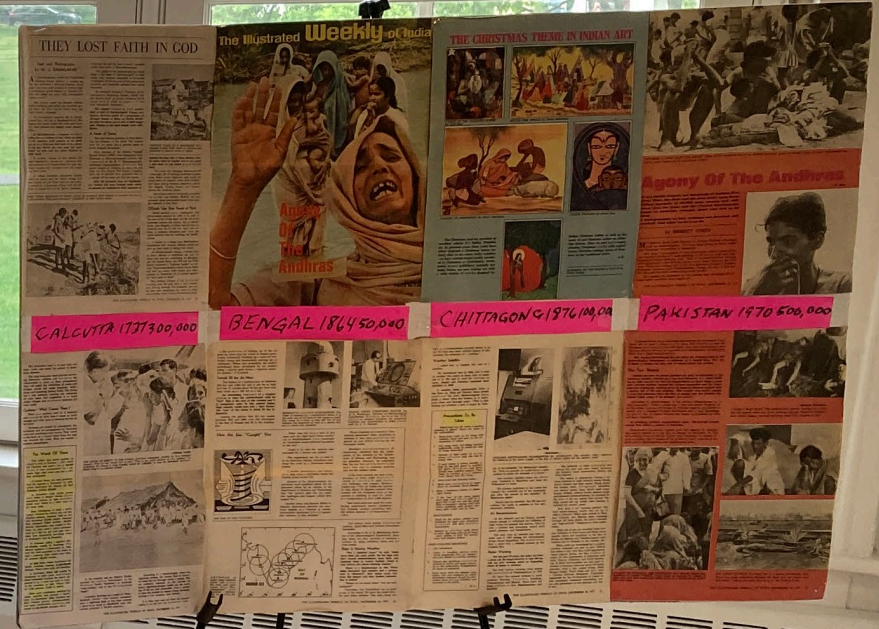
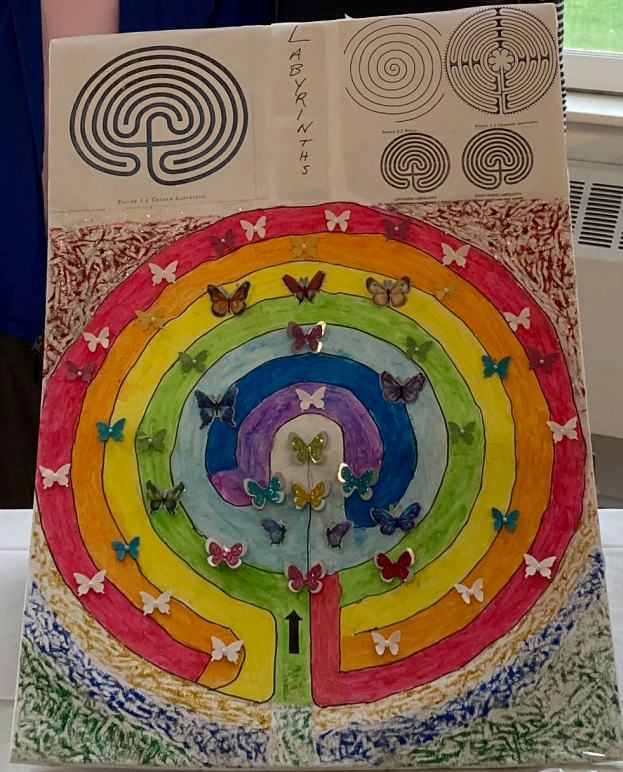
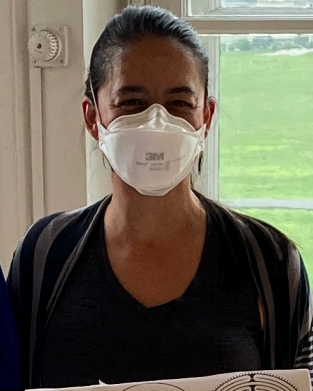
## WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE HOMEBOUND?

Medicare considers you homebound if:

1. You need the help of another person or medical equipment such as crutches, a walker, or a wheelchair to leave your home, or your doctor believes that your health or illness could get worse if you leave your home
2. And, it is difficult for you to leave your home and you typically cannot do so

When considering social connection, being homebound is not a black and white or fixed determination. Changing health conditions, mental health, safety/acceptance in society, winter weather, transportation access, and many other factors affect older adults' ability to access social connection opportunities.



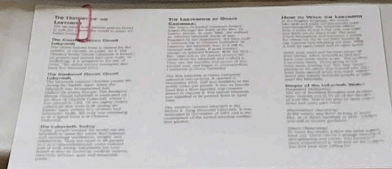
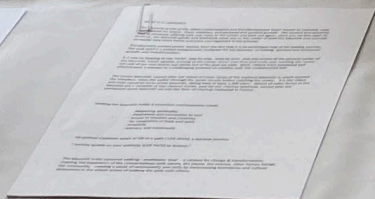
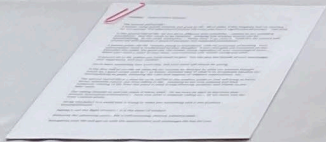
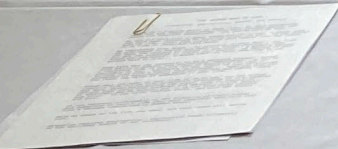


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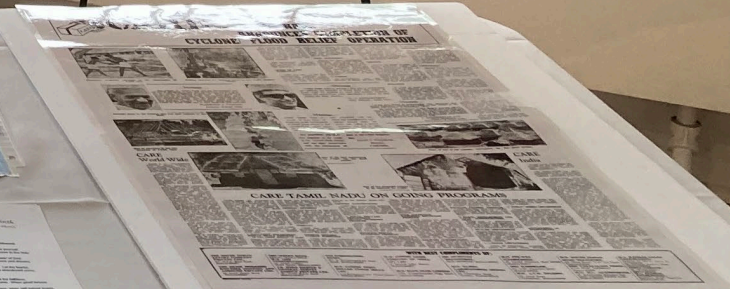
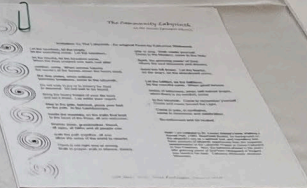
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take one  
(stages w/ paper clip)



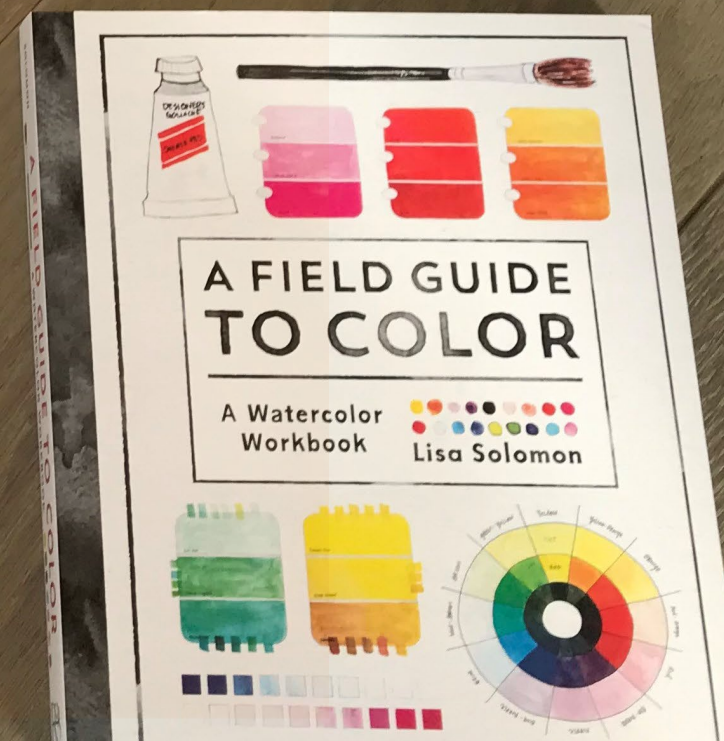
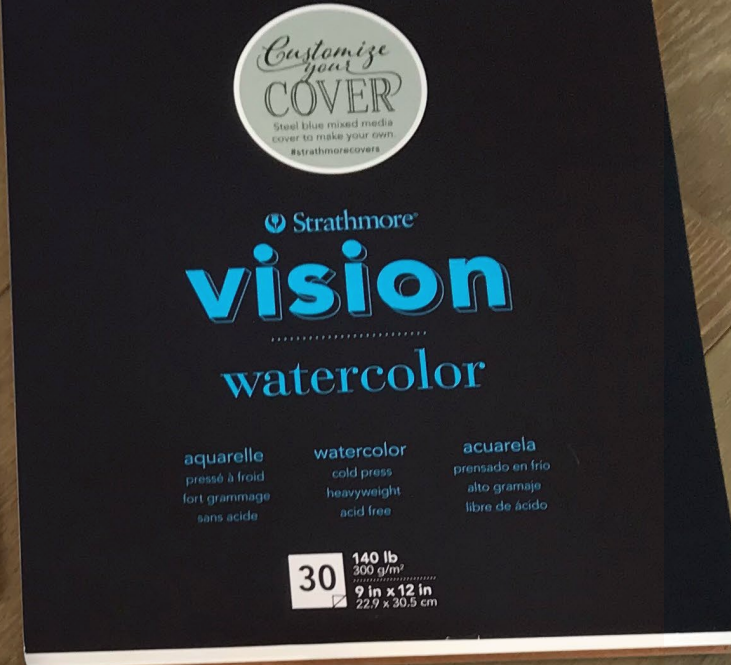
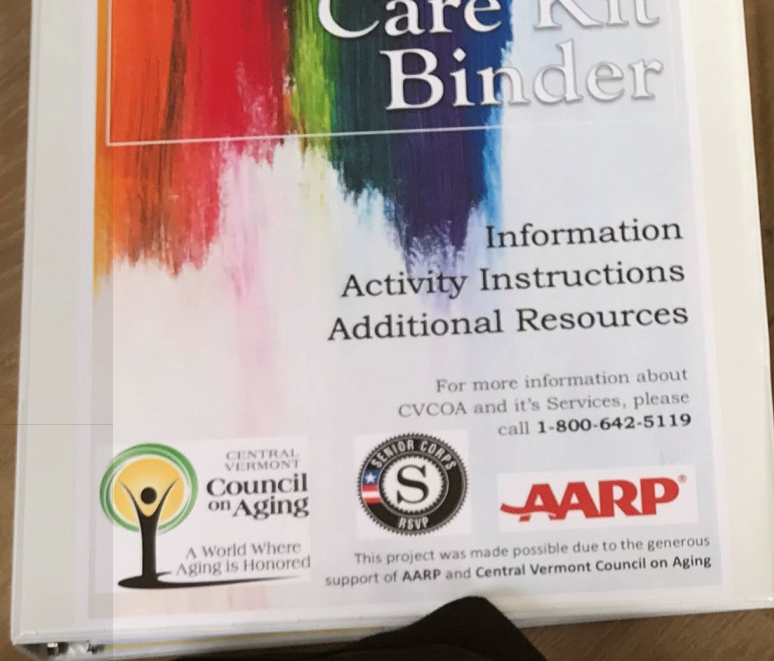


# KIT DESIGN

Skills-based

Practice-focused

Social-centric







## SOCIAL COMPONENTS

***Creative Companion*** volunteers courageously embrace the unknown, inspiring kit recipients and motivating them to stay engaged. They practice skills together and share work with each other, helping to develop meaningful connection through their creative work. These volunteers play a key role in leading conversations about creativity and the meaning of creative work in their lives.

***Teaching Artists*** offer virtual opportunities for people to share, ask questions, and develop skills.

***CVCOA's Community Engaged Tech Specialist***, Digital Navigator volunteers, and technology partners all help to support technology access and training needs.



# CREATIVITY IS A PATH TO WELL BEING

## Unique aspects of creative pursuits:

***Social:*** the arts connect people in new and deep ways, providing a path to meaningful interaction

***Emotional:*** creativity is a powerful means of self-reflection and exploration, helping to develop acceptance and understanding

***Physical:*** many creative activities help build fine motor skills and coordination

***Mental:*** meaning- & sense-making is embedded in creative practice & arts practices help people build creative habits of mind



# CONNECTING THROUGH ART

The blank handmade greeting cards are a popular feature in the kit supplies, providing a unique opportunity for participants to share their new skills, work, and thoughts with others.

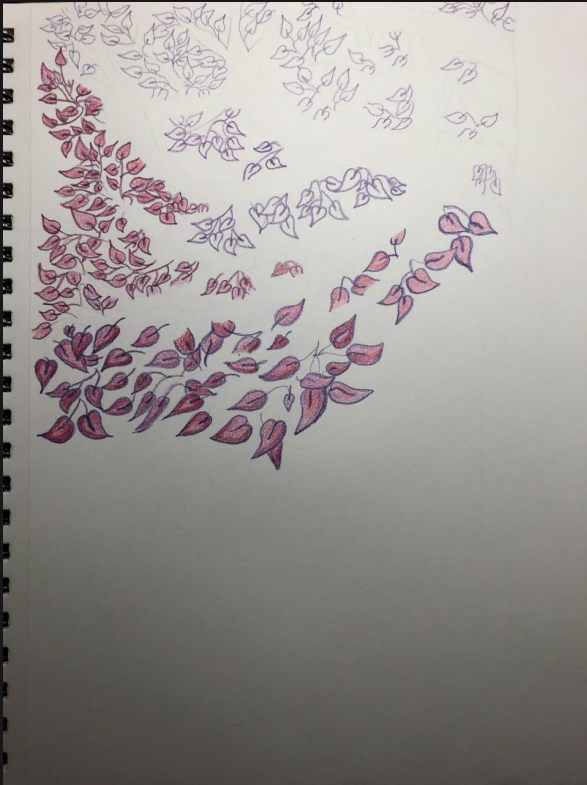
Many participants used these cards to create meaningful connection with friends and family.





# STORIES SHARED THROUGH CREATIVE VOICE

Creative activities provide an opportunity for people to share meaningful experiences and engage in self-reflection in a new way.





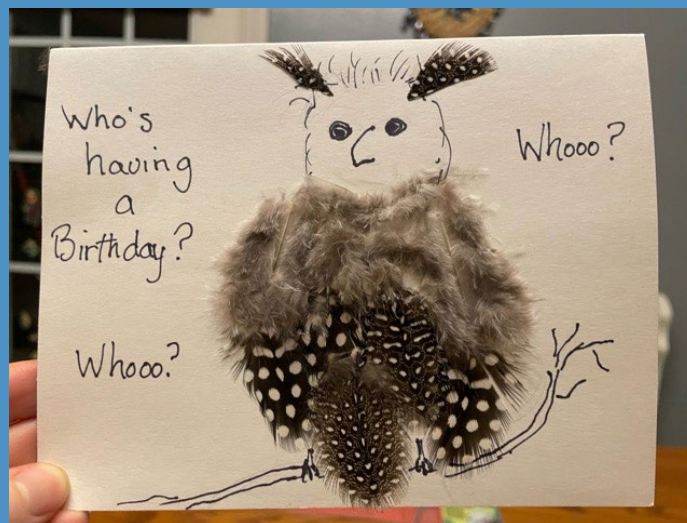
# SHARING MEANING WITH OTHERS

Why did you choose your subject?

What does this subject mean to you?

Is there a story about the subject that inspires you?

How would you represent your subject differently if you use it for inspiration again?





# CELEBRATING HERITAGE

A Lifepath Project takes shape for one older artist as a way to share her history growing up in the Philippines.





# OPPORTUNITIES FOR PLAY

An elderly person with short, wavy grey hair is seated at a round wooden table, focused on painting. They are holding a green-handled paintbrush and dipping it into a small glass of yellow paint. On the table in front of them is an open watercolor palette with various colors, a larger glass of water, and a piece of paper with a colorful dot pattern. To the left, another person's hand is visible, also holding a paintbrush. The background shows a cluttered room with a wooden chair, a small table with a basket of pens, and a book titled 'vision'.

Creativity encourages people to use imagination as a tool for connecting with people who struggle with memory challenges. Diminished memory does not mean the elimination of imagination.

Aging is not synonymous with decline. Our brains continue to change as we age, with new scientific understanding about cognitive reserve continuing to emerge.



# SUMMARY

1. Creative opportunities for older adults are a powerful way to build social connection, develop habits of mind, and utilize imagination and play as a means for self-expression – this is the foundation of ***creative aging***.

2. How we think of the word homebound needs to be adjusted when working to enhance social connection. Developing inclusive opportunities requires an understanding of why people stay at home.

3. Access to technology and digital skills training helps to facilitate social connection. Combining arts and technology helps motivate engagement and encourages sharing of creative work and stories.







# THANK YOU

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