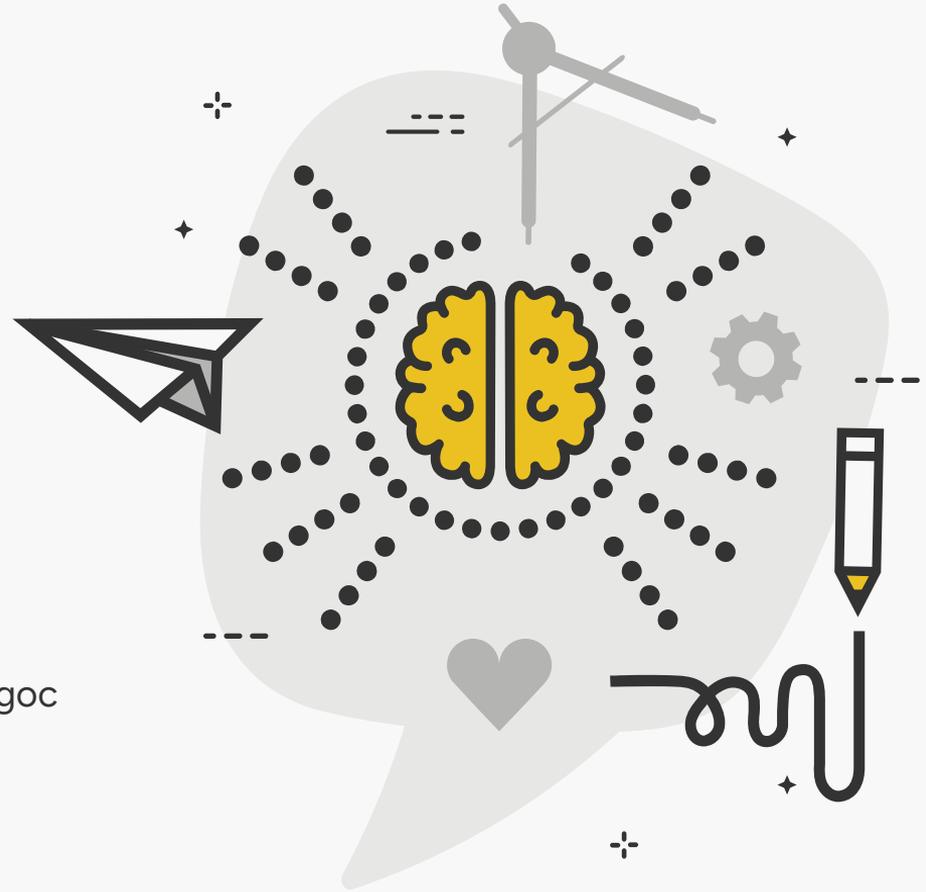


Creating Solutions

Team 2: Eliza Bazakas, Hera Lasseau, Ngoc Tran, Renn Su



Team Mountain Lion



Hera Lasseau

Computer Science '25
Motueka, NZ



Renn Su

Computer Science '26
Vancouver, Canada



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Eliza Bazakas

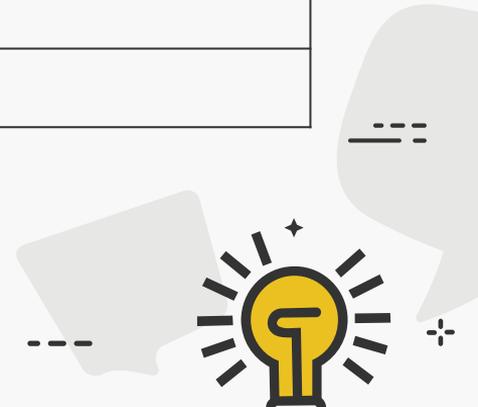
Computer Science MS '26
ChemE B.S. (MIT)
Berkeley, CA



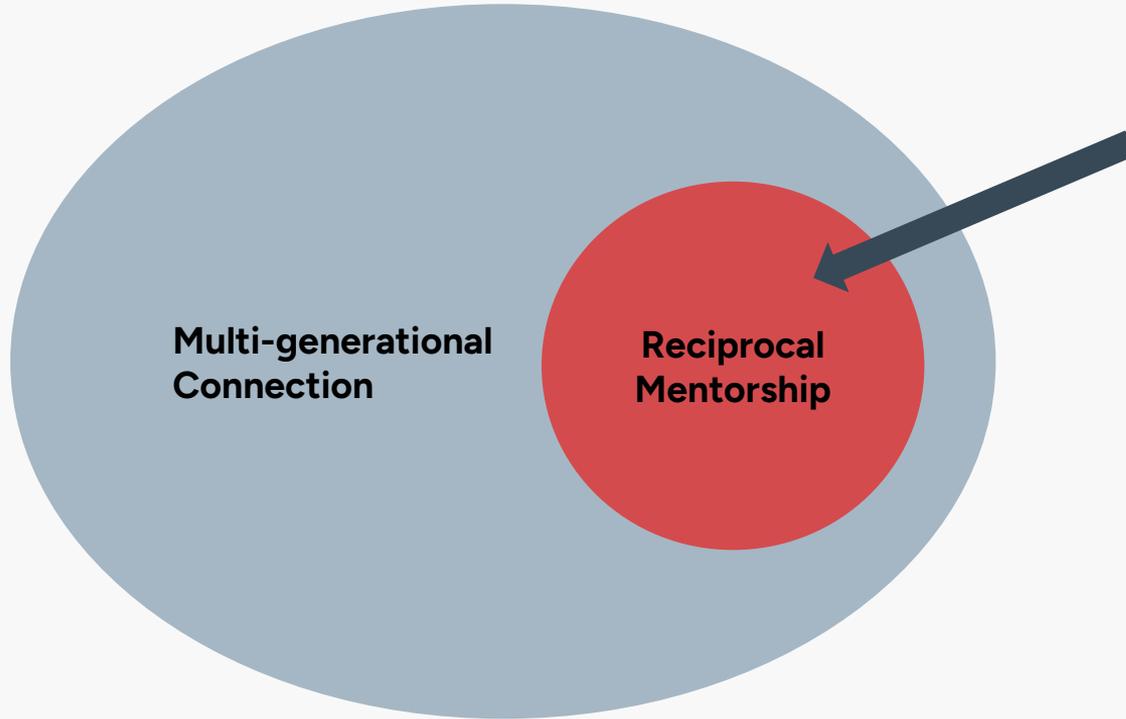
Overview

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Domain Narrowing



Multi-generational
Connection

Reciprocal
Mentorship

Older adults wanted to both **share** and **listen** to others

Young people were open to **providing help** to older adults

There is **unshared wisdom** as there are few structured ways to share it to strangers across generations.



01

Needfinding Interviews

Additional week 2 interviews and learnings

This Week in Interviews



Daisy and Patrick

Ages 89 and 86
Southern California
Retired clinical psychologist
and IBM worker



Abigail

Age 22
Berkeley, CA
First year PhD student

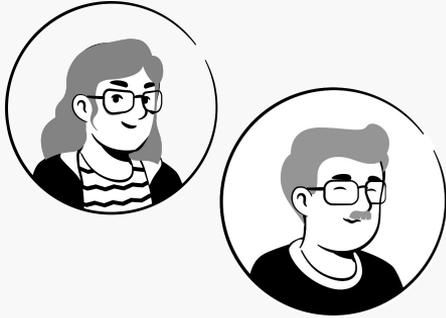


Sasha

Age 74
Cupertino, CA
Art educator at public schools
and Stanford



We learned that...



Daisy and Patrick

Lived in a very social senior center but wanted to connect with young people other than their grandchildren



Abigail

Attended garden party of elderly neighbours but felt awkward about initiating contact with them

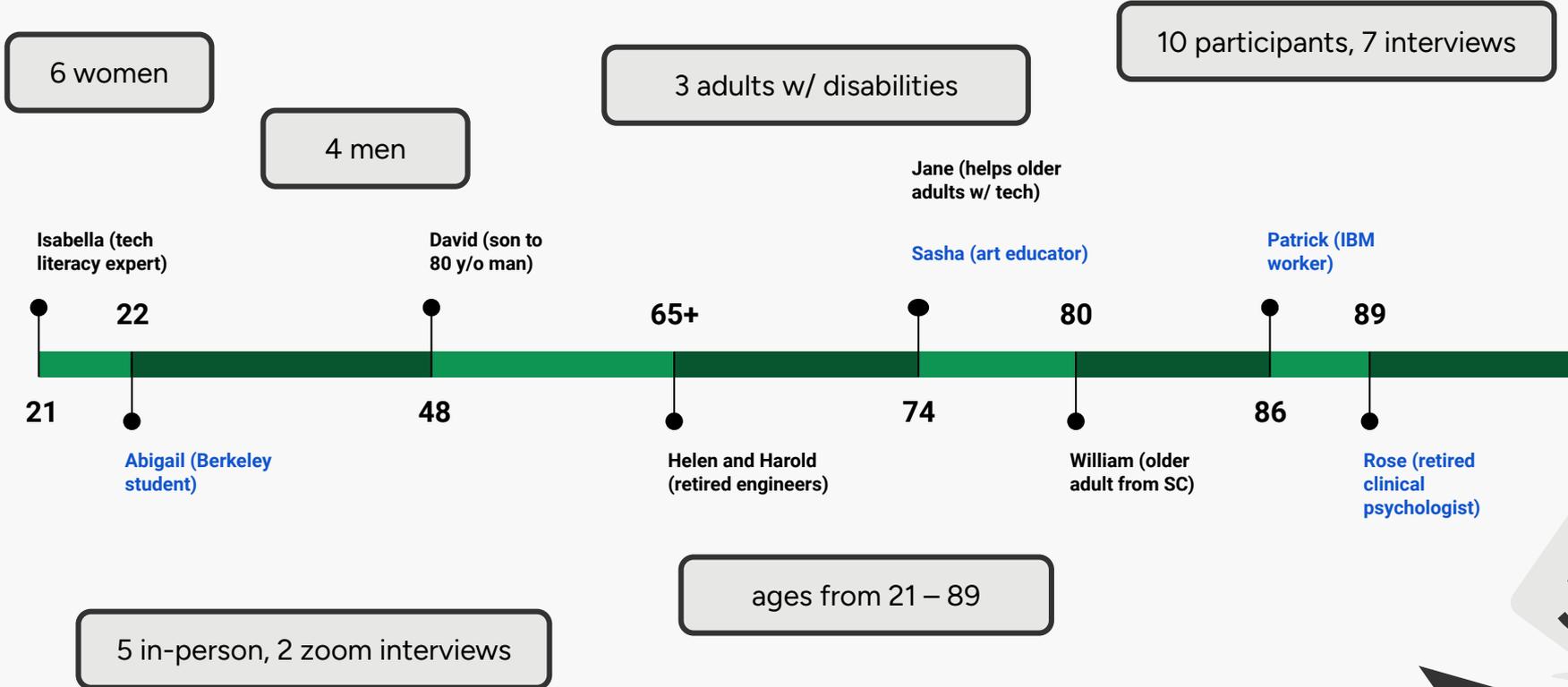


Sasha

Felt many current apps were confusing and wishes that digital content was more focused



Interviews at a glance...



Week 2 Findings

- 1 For older adults, apps should have a **clear purpose**, and content should be **focused** and **catered**.
- 2 Older adults felt **disconnected** from society even when they had strong social ties with other older adults, and wanted to hear from younger people
- 3 Young people are **open** to learning more about their older neighbours



02

POV Development

POV statements

POVs

“Jane”

74 y/o woman who volunteers at
the United Effort Organization
for Hope’s Corner



We met...

a retired lawyer whose
volunteer work
helping people
navigate digital
paperwork adds to her
vibrant social life

We were surprised to notice...

she texts older adults
about in-person plans,
so her phone helps
fulfill social needs
without social media

We wonder if this means...

she sees digital
connections as a
means to physical
connections because
she feels that they are
more meaningful.

It would be game changing...

to facilitate creating
new opportunities for
meaningful physical
connection.

POVs

“Helen”

65+ y/o woman who is a retired
engineer



We met...

an older adult who used to be an engineer and had strong opinions about user interfaces.

We were surprised to notice...

that she didn't like looking up things on Google, and felt that it was not a useful resource despite knowing how to use it.

We wonder if this means...

she believes Google answers are unintuitive or hard to follow, and she would prefer a person to explain things to her.

It would be game changing...

to give Helen a way to access a broad range of information while emphasizing human connection.

**We met...**

A first gen student in the first year of her PhD in bioengineering at UC Berkeley.

We were surprised to notice...

she liked interacting with her older neighbors and thought it was interesting talking to them, but would not initiate contact.

We wonder if this means...

she feels a social disconnect with people not of her generation, making her unsure how to approach them.

It would be game changing...

to allow Abigail's interactions and meetings with older generations to feel more facilitated and structured.

03

HMW & Solutions

How Might We Help Statements, proposed solutions

Dishonorable Mentions...

- App that takes your location and searches for events near you on a bunch of different event aggregating platforms, then spams you with reminders to go to the event 🗓️

- Shared photobook: people share photos of their valuable memories with one another 📷

- App that takes your personal data and shares it publicly online so random people can approach you knowing everything about you
 - I cannot think of any way this could go wrong

- Profiles that require you to publicly share an embarrassing fact about yourself
- Age-blind meetup app
 - With strict moderation

- Have someone else manage the tech for them and set up meetings (... is that a pimp?) 🐱



We voted for our top 3 solutions:

Abigail

HMW make older adults seem less intimidating or distant?



Storytelling

A storytelling app where older adults can share their life, tips, and advice and also pairs older adults with younger ones via video for storytelling sessions

Jane

HMW help people socially connect others who do not want to rely on technology?



Penpals

A penpal matching app where users are digitally matched with someone to correspond via physical letters

Jane

HMW make digital connections more meaningful?



Hobby Matching

Connect people with common interests like chess, cooking, gardening, etc. for in-person meetups.

04

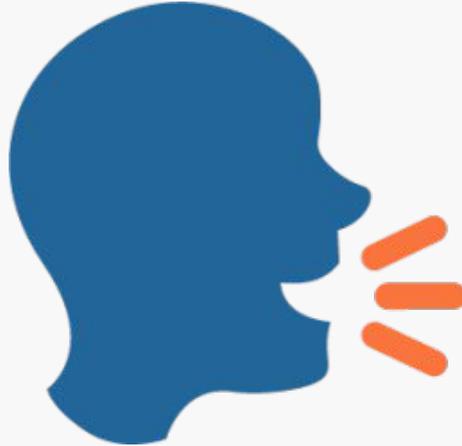
Experience Prototypes

HMW Statements, proposed solutions

PROTOTYPE 1:

storytelling

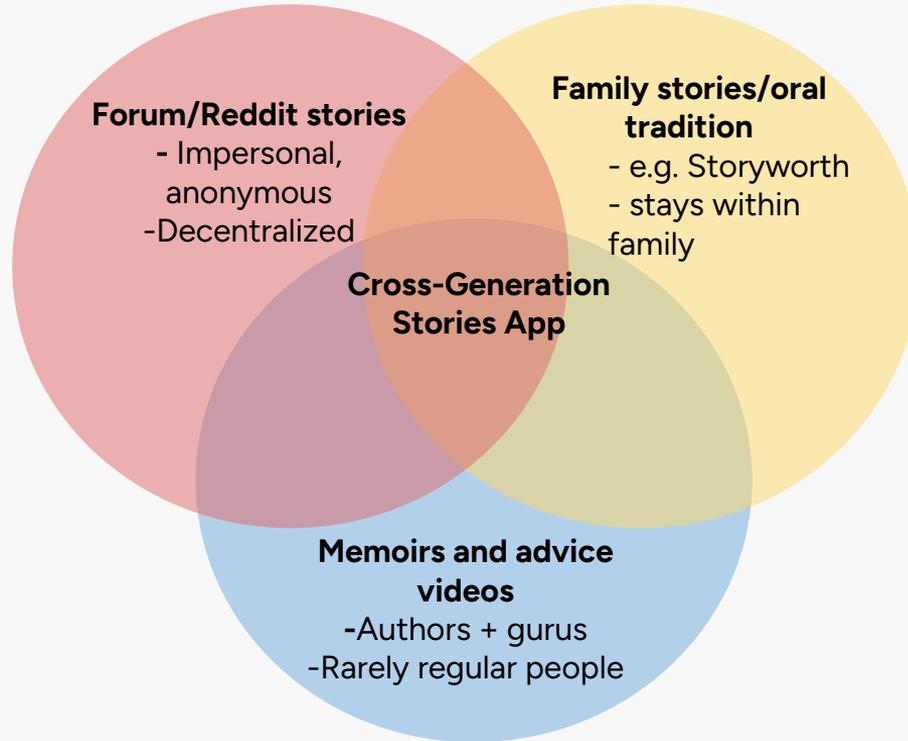
mentorship via recounting lived experiences



Cross-Generation Stories

HMW make older adults seem less intimidating or distant?

Proposed Solution: a tool for older adults to talk about their lives and impart advice; also pairs older adults with younger ones via video for storytelling sessions



ASSUMPTION VALIDATION

ASSUMPTION:

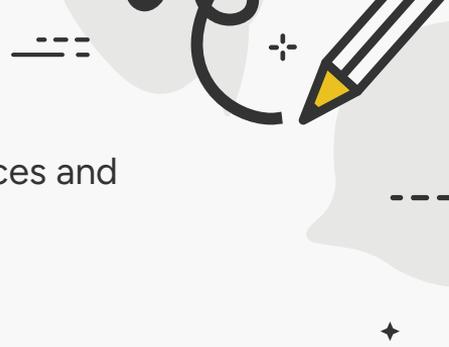
Older adults want to share their personal life and experiences and younger people find value in listening to them.

PROTOTYPE OVERVIEW:

Storytelling Cards: A set of 6 open-ended prompts for older adults to answer

Audience: A selection of younger people who listen to the recorded video of the older adults in question

Questionnaire: Ask both storyteller and audience participants to complete a survey about their experiences telling or listening to the story



participants

1

Edith - Grandmother (88 yrs) with a lifetime of stories

A descendant of the mason who built Jordan Hall, she likes to share stories with her daughter.

2

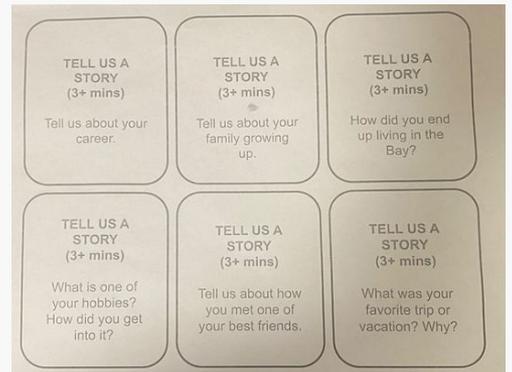
Vanessa - Writer (56 yrs) who enjoys fiction

Creating interesting narratives is part of her career and she is interested in the act of storytelling

3

Corinne - Dancer and college student (22 yrs)

She is interested in learning about the stories of other people.



Results

What Worked?

- Older adults expressed they **rarely had similar opportunities** to share stories to strangers
- Young adults **enjoyed hearing stories** from their elders even though they did not want to approach them
- **Improved mood:** "This is lovely! Thank you for this." - Edith

What Didn't?

- Some people expressed **anxieties being recorded** when telling their stories.
- **Video and audio quality** affected audience ability to understand some parts of the story
- **Language barriers:** "I dunno, my grandparents don't speak English" - Corrine



Corrine

"I wanna know [older adults'] lore... like I don't know too much about my grandparents."

Result:

Our assumption was proven, since there is demand for story exchanges from both younger and older participants.

However, not everyone has the ability or willingness to share personal stories to strangers.

PROTOTYPE 2:

penpal tool

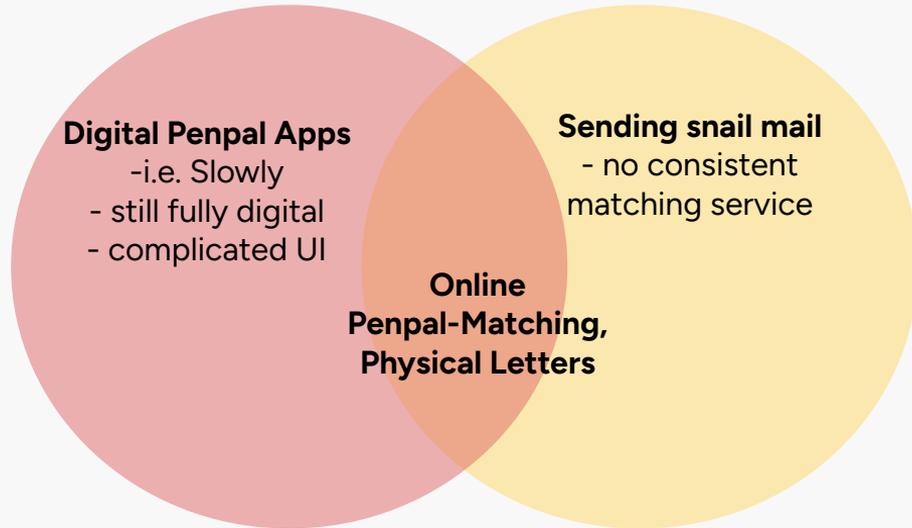
sharing tangible wisdom



Penpal Matching System

HMW help people socially connect others who do not want to use technology?

Proposed Solution:
Tool that digitally matches penpals and handles the logistics of mailing physical letters



ASSUMPTION VALIDATION

ASSUMPTION:

People of different generations find more depth to writing to a pen pal compared digital emails or text messages

PROTOTYPE OVERVIEW:

Physical Letter: A physical letter from a hypothetical person

Digital Message: A text-based message on a computer from another hypothetical person with the same structure, length, and level of detail compared to the physical letter.

Questionnaire: Ask participants to respond about their opinions about each form of communication experience, desire to continue the correspondence, and willingness to share in each case.



participants

1

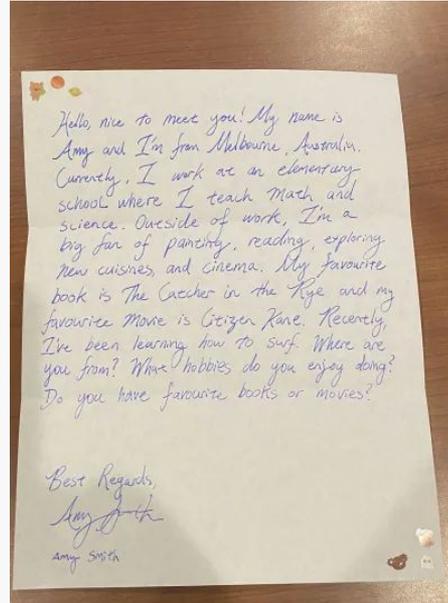
Jeremy (22) - Poet who writes long emails to close friends

He enjoys writing but does not send physical mail.

2

Ellie-Mae (87) - Retired information services worker

A professional who regularly used digital-textual communication for her job, and expressed a pragmatic preference for it in professional contexts, but preferred to use physical mail for more personal communications, especially when communicating within the country and with people inside of her age group.



Hi, it's lovely to meet you! My name is Saskia and I'm from the Netherlands. I work as a veterinarian for cats and dogs. In terms of hobbies, I'm a big fan of traveling, drawing, cooking, and music. Recently, I've been trying to read more. My favourite book is Jane Eyre and my favourite musician is Pink Floyd. Where are you from? What hobbies do you enjoy doing? Do you have any book and movie recommendations?

Results

What Worked?

- There exists **demand for penpals**, even if people were not active penpallers
- Ellie-Mae noted that letters feel more **“social”** and **“intimate”** as text/email was associated with her professional life
- People enjoyed the **physicality** of the text and decorations

What Didn't?

- Sending mail overseas “can be **expensive**” if you have multiple penpals - Ellie-Mae
- **High time investment** to write a letter to a stranger without a sentimental reason
- There are concerns about the penpal **matching process**, as some preferred other ways to meet penpals



Jeremy

“I don't wanna write letters all the time... [but] it is more sentimental than a text for sure”

Result:

Our assumption was proven, as participants believed letters held more sentimental value than text.

There are concerns about the time and monetary cost.

Existing solutions already worked for participants.



PROTOTYPE 3:

hobby-based friends

sparking conversation through shared interests

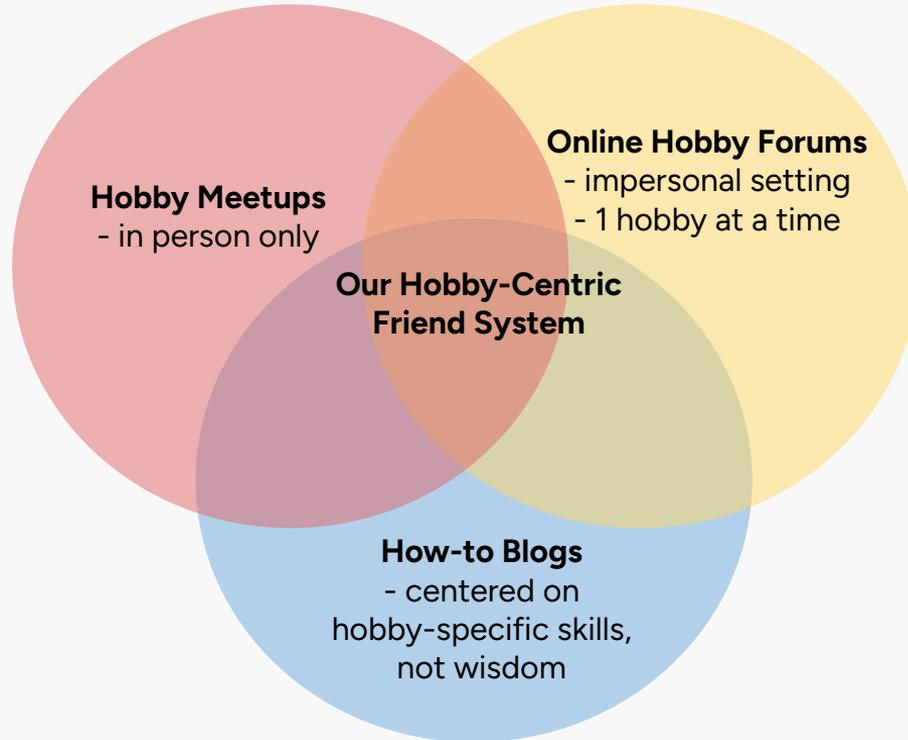


Hobby-Based Friends

HMW make digital connections more meaningful?

Proposed Solution:

Connect people with common interests like chess, cooking, gardening, etc. for in-person meetups.



ASSUMPTION VALIDATION

ASSUMPTION:

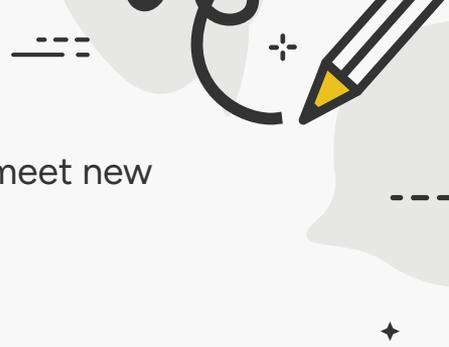
Common interests are a stronger motivator for people to meet new connections compared to age

PROTOTYPE OVERVIEW:

Character Profiles: cards of 18 different people spanning from ages 18-90 who have a range of different interests

Hobby Questionnaire: Ask participants to discuss their own age and their hobbies

Data: Participants are asked to select up to 5 profiles of people they are most interested in interacting with. They are also asked to provide reasoning for their decisions



participants

1

Matt (19 yrs) - student

A teenage student who already possessed a healthy social circle, he didn't want to make new friends through an app at all, nevermind outside of his age group.

2

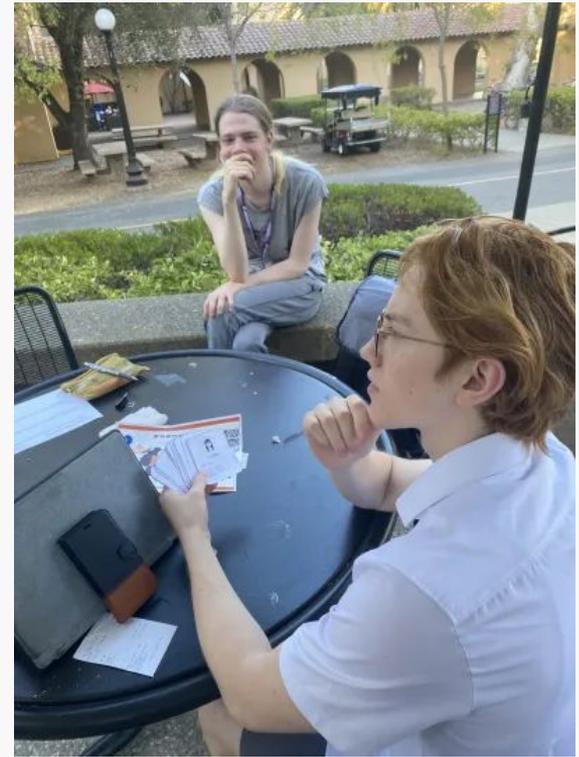
Derrick (60 yrs) - retired aerospace engineer

An ex-NASA engineer and sports car collector who came to Stanford to attend a talk, he told us that his people-meeting needs were already filled by the events he attends.

3

Samantha (20 yrs) - student

A student anxious about talking to older adults as she grew up as a minority in the South



Results

What Worked?

- Older adults were receptive to **befriending young people** with common interests
- We found **common interests** to be a **motivator** for friendship

What Didn't?

- Young people **prioritized age** above common interests
- Some younger people viewed older people as **safety threats** or likely to turn 1-on-1 friendships **inappropriate** due to perceived mental decline.
- Young people and older adults found **existing ways to meet** new people more effective



Samantha

"A lot of older people are conservative, religious, queerphobic... especially back home"

Result:

Our assumption was false, since younger participants felt more connected to people of their age.

Existing solutions and in-person meetings already work for people.





**What do our results
suggest?**



MOVING FORWARD - STORYTELLING:

- Older adults wish to **tell stories**
- Younger adults willing to **listen**
- This solution got the most **positive, receptive** feedback and has space for novel innovation.

ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS:

- User **privacy, safety** and **interests** of older adults
- Triggering or **sensitive content** for audiences and users
- Possible **toxicity** and **nefarious actors**

WHO DOES IT SERVE?

Serves

- older adults with the **willingness and ability** to tell stories
- younger people who wish to learn from other generations
- people who wish to connect with other generations **outside of close family**

Leaves Out

anybody who lacks the **dexterity, knowledge, or presence of mind** to use technology and/or tell stories

- people with **physical ability limitations**
- people with **neurodegenerative diseases** or **memory problems**
- those with **traumatic pasts**

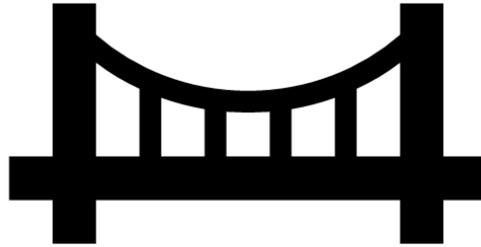
New Considerations



Younger people who grew up in traditionalist areas found older generations to be **intolerant, unaccepting, judgmental.**

Perspectives on elders were **culture-dependent.**

YET... young people **still wanted to help** reduce elder loneliness.



Our design of features, mechanisms, interfaces



Our younger participants mentioned **interest in learning** about the lives and wisdom of older adults.

BUT... some young people find the insights and approaches of older generations **outdated** or **misguided.**

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Any questions?

Thank you for listening!

05

Appendix

Extra content, Sources

Additional Assign 2 Deliverables

Assign 2 Consent Forms

[Link](#)

Brainstorm Images

[Link](#)

Assign 2 Empathy Maps

[Link](#)

Additional Assign 2 Deliverables

Updated Interview Plan

[Link](#)

A2 Solutions

[Link](#)

Assumptions

[Link](#)

Insight

As an older adult, Sara found that she would only stick to using apps that only had necessary functionalities, as too much information confused her.

Need

For older adults, apps should have a clear purpose, and content should be focused and catered.



“Sasha”

Zoom, 60 mins

74 y/o, art educator

(avg. user)

Empathy Maps - "Sasha"

"I would like to show what I'm doing now, and they could show me what they're doing now. That would be good"

"I tell them all the times that I did dumb things. I think that's important for people to know"

Ended up drifting into stories sometimes, but would be excited to tell them (smiling, expressive, playing into the roles within the story)

Happy that technology is able to aid in education (easier to see hands during art)

Less is more.

"I'm president of the Calligraphy Guild. So I have to keep in touch with the board, who are all very savvy on the computer"

"But I really like Zoom, because you can see people and talk to them. I've done some classes on Zoom, but I had to have a friend nearby [to help]"

"Like half the time. When I download something I can't find it again, and things like that really"

[about Facebook] Sometimes I was getting extra information that I didn't want, and I didn't even know the people. And I thought, 'Why haven't I say anybody contacting me'."

"I write everything down. I have my, my hideously large book of of passwords that's been revised and revised and revised a thousand times"

[about Siri] "It doesn't seem wonderful to me. I think I would probably get frustrated."

"My husband and I have had our identity stolen twice. So we're pretty suspicious about some things, you know concerning the computer"

"She could write comments and read it back to you in an electronic way, and then you would know what she thought, and then she evaluates the work at the end of the class."

"I tell them all the dumb things. I think that's important for people to know"

[pen pals] "I think it was through school but there was a lot of kids from different countries, and I picked England because I figured I don't know any other languages, so it'd be better to do England."

"Because of online. I gave them the dimensions and everything else, but people could pick them out and then say, I want to buy that."

"I would like to share my art with more people with my students in particular"

"I would like to show what I'm doing now, and they could show me what they're doing now. That would be good"

Says



"Sasha"
74 year old art educator that teaches at public schools and former lecturer at Stanford

Does

Uses her iPad/iPhone and doesn't have a laptop.

Used to keep stamps from her Pen Pal when she was 12

Went to calligraphy and art events after hearing about it via word of mouth

Uses iPad for Duolingo, email, keeping up with friends / family

Takes and teaches art classes

Coordinates meetings for her calligraphy guild (president)

Likes to write notes to remember things

Ended up drifting into stories sometimes, but would be excited to tell them (smiling, expressive, playing into the roles within the story)

Gets excited about talking about the advancement in organizing things digitally vs. making multiple calls

Thinks

Feels

Laptop interface is more complicated compared to using iPads or iPhones

iPad is nicer to use to bigger text size and screen

Technology is able to help when teaching, but being in person is still better

Mentorship is a two-way street

Digital formats can get her art spread more / more visibility

Using technology for mostly just needs is sufficient

Having technology while abroad is needed (language learning, navigating)

Less is more.

Physicality is nice, because its manageable.

Feels cautious about giving out information online

Happy that technology is able to aid in education (easier to see hands during art)

Not isolated or lonely at all

Likes expressing her opinions and mistakes as they happen

Confused about some online things, but generally likes technology

Like some people might find helping her w/ tech bothersome

Sophisticated when using tech

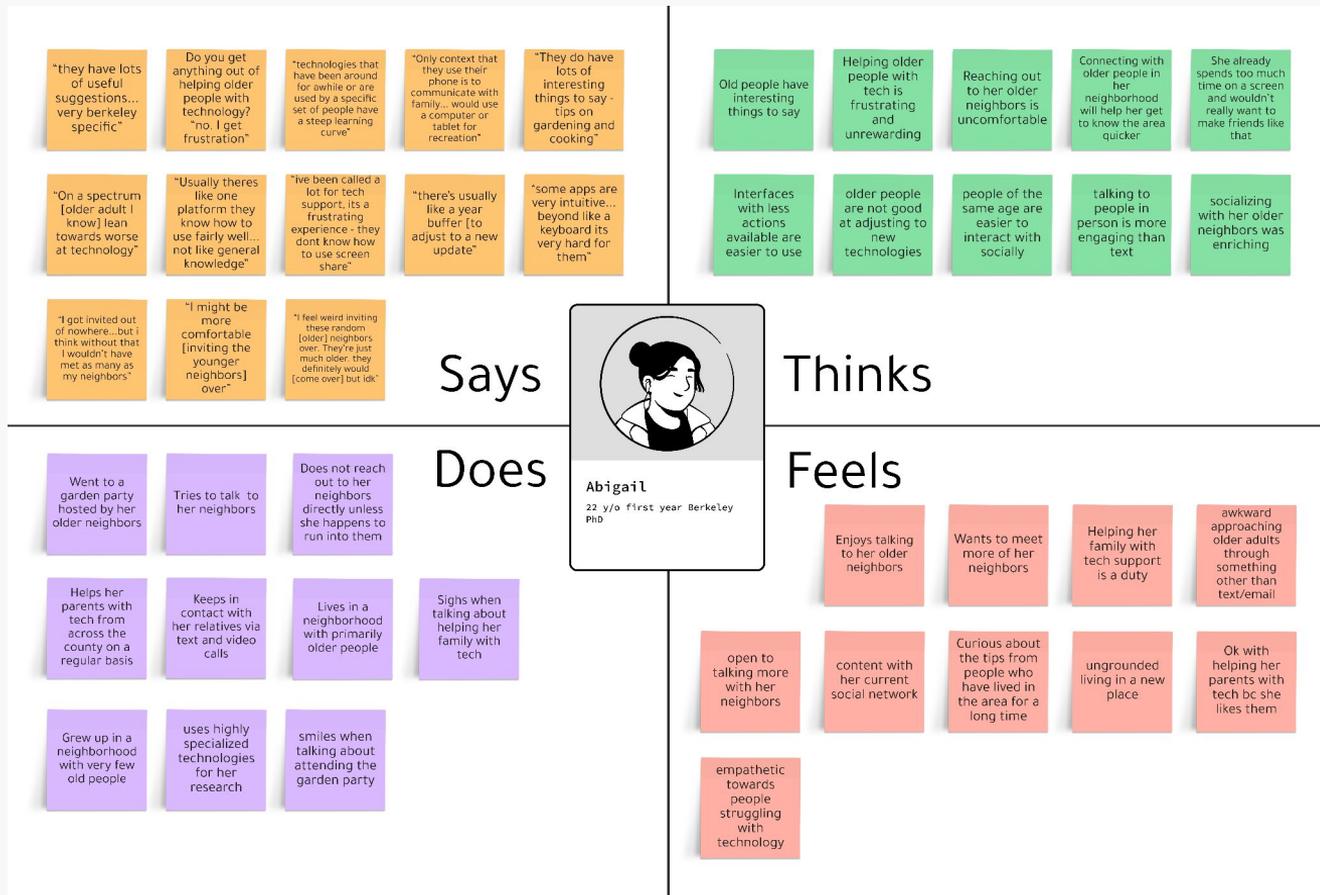
Nostalgic when thinking about former students

Happy when she gets the technology working, even if she doesn't know what she did

Satisfied with the bare minimum usage of tech



Empathy Maps - Abigail





Empathy Maps - Daisy

"The internet offers a lot of opportunities to suck people into things they otherwise wouldn't [be interested in]"

"procedures are not uniform (across different platforms)"

"things change very rapidly" (and its hard to keep up all the time)

"its not how old peoples brains are wired, we are used to more of a physical map. Navigating tech is like navigating a rat maze"

"There's all this [technical] language I dont know, i need a dictionary to tell me what all this stuff is"

"sometimes something will happen, and my sons tell me i must have done something but i dont know what it was or how to fix it"

"There are too many social medias, i dont want to use them and neither do my friends"

"Sometimes things are different between devices. When we do our zoom class on the computer vs the iPad the raise hand button moves and we cant find it"

"Its difficult to reprogram the brain to adapt to new technologies... but its also because the programs are not intuitive"

"Young people are so naive. That's a good thing... they're less jaded more open minded... a different way of looking at the world"

"The weekly zoom with my sons connects me with the world outside of the village"

"i really liked staryworth. It gave my sons and grandchildren a way to know where they came from"

"We go to starbucks every sunday. It helps us stay connected visually, but we love to be more connected with younger people [like talking to grandchildren]"

Talking with younger people is interesting because they have a different perspective

Technology is helpful but frustrating

Often the thing at fault is actually the technology, not her skills

It's important to stay connected to the world outside of their bubble

Senior communities often feel like bubbles of similar age groups

Meaningful connections can be established without using social media

Connecting with family is vital for learning about perspectives outside of her generation

It is important to keep up with tech literacy even if using tech is not preferred

It is valuable to connect with younger people who are not immediate family

It could be good to be naive or open to new information

The speed of change in technology has been difficult to keep up

Telling stories to family has been meaningful

Says

Thinks

Does

Feels



"Daisy"
89 y/o woman who is a retired clinical psychologist

Outside of interview
Lives in a senior (65+) living community

Is very active and athletic

Outside of interview
Socializes with the people in the living community

Has a weekly zoom call with her adult sons (and sometimes grandchildren)

Outside of interview
Attends classes on zoom

Asks sons for tech support

Outside of interview
Takes paper notes on how to do new things she learns about with technology

Outside of interview
Has a stack of papers she consults associated with how to do things on her devices

Outside of interview
Uses an iPad

Interview Action
Turns to husband to confirm things shes saying

Interview Action
is moving to an assisted living apartment within the village

Interested in learning about tech, even if it frustrates her

Nostalgic for times where she felt more connected to others

Excited about the lives of her sons and grandchildren

Proud of her sons

Proud of herself for the technology she can use well

Frustrated when technology does not behave the way she expects

Confused by the underlying workings of technology

Joyful to talk to younger people and those outside of the senior community

Skeptical but open-minded about technological developments

Annoyed by the inconveniences of having to learn new features

Tired when online services are unintuitive and she is stuck in digital feedback loops

Curious about the stories of other people

Happy when asked for advice or mentorship



POVs - extra

“Harold”

65+ y/o man who works in teaching, wears hearing aids and has vision problems



We met...

an elderly man who had a background in tech and has disabilities that obstruct his use of technology.

We were surprised to notice...

that he sometimes helps his mother with her own tech problems, despite being technologically challenged himself.

We wonder if this means...

Harold wants to help people his own age overcome the same struggles with technology that they are facing.

It would be game changing...

to give Harold the tools to help others of their demographics with technical problems.

Image and Graphic References

Placeholder Images for Interviewees: [Figma Notion-Style Drawkit](#)

Slide Theme: [Design Thinking Workshop Slides - SlidesGo](#)

Team member photos provided by team

Interviewee photos provided by interviewees and used with permission