



“Little joice of everyday life”

Topic:

The Elderly's Sense of Uselessness & Loss of Purpose

Background (Scenario):

In many cultures, especially in urban areas, older adults may feel sidelined or less relevant as they enter retirement, or as their adult children move away. This phenomenon, known as “loss of purpose,” can have a devastating impact on their emotional and psychological well-being, resulting in feelings of worthlessness, loneliness, and isolation.

The elderly, once a pillar of the family and community, risks being seen as a passive observer, rather than an active and valuable resource.

However, in Naples, most of the elderly manage to maintain a central and vital role within the family and social fabric, particularly in the care and education of their grandchildren, often actively participating in their growth, to the point of becoming second parental figures for many children.

In addition to this, the elderly are custodians of traditions, historical memory and Neapolitan culture, transmitting values, stories and wisdom to the new generations.

Objective:

The aim of the project is to identify solutions that can restore a sense of purpose and utility to older people, giving them back an active role in society. The proposals should not only aim to improve the emotional well-being of the latter, but also foster their connection with younger generations and the social fabric.

Key Elements:

1. **Intergenerational Connection:** “How can older people feel useful and involved in supporting the new generations?”
2. **Role in the community:** “How can we rediscover and enhance the contribution that older people can offer to the community, both culturally and practically?”
3. **Digital Integration:** “What role can technology play in the social inclusion of older people, keeping them active and connected?”
4. **Mental and Physical Health:** “How can we improve the quality of life of older adults, through initiatives that promote both physical and mental well-being?”

Possible Solutions:

- **Mentorship Programs:** Create initiatives where grandparents can act as mentors to younger generations, sharing their experience and wisdom.
- **Volunteer Activities:** Design volunteer opportunities that allow older adults to actively contribute to the community (e.g., teaching skills, cooking for those in need, maintaining public spaces).
- **Digital Platforms:** Develop platforms or apps that facilitate connections between grandparents and grandchildren or between elderly people and local communities, promoting joint activities or exchanges of skills.
- **Dedicated Social Spaces:** Create physical or digital spaces where seniors can meet, participate in creative workshops, or share hobbies with people of all ages.