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# BRIEF ★

Our project focuses on improving the daily lives of seniors by bringing movement closer to where they live.  
We asked ourselves: what can truly help older adults move more, feel safer, and stay socially active?

The answer is a solution that:

- connects seniors with safe and familiar physical activity
- reduces the environmental and psychological barriers that limit movement
- encourages gentle exercise as part of their everyday routine
- creates community-based opportunities to move together
- is extremely accessible and low-cost, so anyone can join

The request is to design a solution that allows seniors to engage in physical activity near their homes, in ways that feel simple, safe, inclusive, and socially meaningful.



# BACKGROUND ★

Europe and Italy are experiencing a rapid increase in the elderly population.  
The challenge is no longer just living longer, but living better.

- Today:
- **42%** of older adults are sedentary
  - Sedentariness rises to **67%** among people over 80.

- The reasons behind this include:
- unsafe streets and sidewalks
  - lack of accessible green spaces
  - distance from fitness facilities
  - fear of falling
  - social isolation

These elements create a vicious cycle of immobility, reducing autonomy, confidence, and quality of life.



# REQUIREMENTS ★

- Accessible for seniors aged 60–80+
- Safe and supervised spaces
- Simple, familiar, low-impact movements
- Low-cost or free activities (max €10 per participant)
- Use of public or community spaces
- Encourages social interaction
- Inclusive for different mobility levels
- Scalable and easy to replicate
- Sustainable and low-maintenance structure



# INITIAL DESIGN ★

The team developed three initial ideas:

- **Home Personal Training**  
Personalized sessions at home with qualified instructors. This solution supports seniors who struggle to move around or feel unsafe outdoors.
- **Neighborhood Fitness Areas**  
Installation of simple exercise equipment in local parks or squares. It promotes safe and accessible physical activity near home and improves local public spaces.
- **Community Shuttle Service**  
A small bus that picks up older adults with mobility difficulties and takes them to activities or social spaces, reducing transportation barriers. Only one idea was truly aligned with the goal of lowering barriers and gifting seniors a more active and connected lifestyle.



# IMPROVED DESIGN ★

We selected and refined the idea that best integrated movement, safety, and social engagement.

The improved concept is the Joyful Walk Companion — an outdoor walking device that allows seniors to engage in gentle, familiar movement in a safe and social way.

This solution brings physical activity directly into the neighborhood, making movement part of daily life for people like Sara.



# FINAL DESIGN★

## JOYFUL WALK COMPANION

An outdoor structure with moving footplates that simulate a natural walking rhythm. It allows 3–4 seniors to walk together, encouraging conversation, confidence, and motivation.

Key features:

- Stable, intuitive structure
- Handrails for balance and safety
- Anti-slip surface
- Low-impact, gentle movement
- Supports collective use → social interaction
- Designed for installation in neighborhood parks

Impact:  
It transforms public spaces into accessible wellness areas, encourages daily activity, reduces fear of falling, and strengthens community bonds.



# TECHNICAL DRAWINGS★

We created several technical materials to support the design:

- Structural diagrams of the moving footplates
- Top-view layout of the device
- Material suggestions (wood, anti-slip surfaces, steel handrails)
- Spatial integration diagrams for public parks
- Illustrations showing how 3–4 people interact with the equipment



These technical drawings serve as a guide for future iterations and real-world implementation.

# PROTOTYPING★

A low-fidelity prototype was built using simple, accessible materials:  
Rigid cardboard for the park base  
Wooden sticks for handrails and supporting poles  
Thick cardboard for footplates and seating  
Acrylic colors to visualize the environment  
Small-scale figurines to demonstrate interaction  
Recycled rough paper for non-slip surfaces

The prototype clearly communicates:  
how the device works  
the collective walking experience  
the sense of community and shared activity  
the accessibility and safety of the structure



# COMMUNICATION★

Our communication was managed through digital tools, shared documents, and regular team discussions.

Strengths:  
Clear alignment on goals  
Smooth exchange of research and ideas  
Effective feedback loop throughout the process

Challenges:  
Occasional issues with deadlines  
Required periodic coordination to stay on track  
Overall, communication supported a productive and cohesive design process.



# OVERALL FEEDBACK★

This project allowed the team to:

- Understand and apply the full Design Thinking process
- Explore a socially significant problem affecting older adults
- Gain insights from qualitative research
- Design a meaningful, community-oriented solution
- Learn how design can support health, inclusion, and mobility
- Strengthen teamwork and cross-disciplinary collaboration

**STOP BARRIERS** highlighted how design can transform movement into an accessible opportunity for well-being and social connection.

Thank You