



From your Couch to the World!

Creative Ways Shut-Ins and Those Less Mobile
Can Make a Difference

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It may not be easy to get out and about and we may feel like we no longer add value to our world. But that isn't true! Our world needs every single one of us and there are many ways that we can contribute to making it better. After all, when we add value to the world, we feel more valuable and that in turn leads to a better outlook and often better health, both physically and emotionally.

That being said, if you feel technology challenged, it's time to get on board. In today's world, it is the way that you will stay connected, educated, and relevant. You have been challenged by many things on your journey and accomplished even more - you will be surprised how quickly you ramp up with the right tools and teachers. Call friends and family to get you up to speed but most of all, remain open and judgment free.

I'm convinced that through small acts of service, we can overcome loneliness and a sense of isolation. After all, you get what you give. Throwing the shackles aside and taking the initiative, we can once again find our place in society - as a new and better version offering all the wisdom we have accumulated.

Yearning to be connected to others with common goals or dreams? Wishing you had a great attitude ("Great-itude")? Then take a chance. I have chosen 20 out of the 520 examples offered in my book, *Great-itude: Overcoming Loneliness in a Disconnected World*, that might be perfect if you find yourself confined to home, feeling overlooked. Check out the ideas below and join in!

1. Advocacy. Vote in every election. Study the candidates, bills, and platforms and make informed decisions. They are your proxy.

2. **Education.** Sponsor the education of a child through a nonprofit. With a little research you will discover many opportunities. Two to check out are World Vision and Save The Children but there are many opportunities right in your own neighborhood.
3. **Family.** Write a letter to a relative that has left a positive impact on you and tell them how much they mean to you and how grateful you are for their presence in your life.
4. **Friendship.** Lost touch with an old friend? Do a little research and try reconnecting through a social media site. Life gets in the way, but old friends enjoy reminiscing about “the good ole days”! Or print and frame a photo of you with a friend on that unforgettable trip as a reminder of the special gift of your friendship.
5. **Curiosity.** Check out Babbel and Rosetta Stone and learn a language that you have always wanted to speak. Then consider teaching English as a second language online to someone who wants to be able to converse easily.
6. **Eco-friendliness.** There are many newsletters and websites that filter and present interesting new products. Order some and then introduce your family and friends to your favorite eco-friendly products and services. You will be a valuable resource and raise awareness.
7. **Creativity.** Pick up a copy of Julia Cameron’s book, *The Artists Way: A Spiritual Path to Higher Creativity* and find new ways to explore your personal creativity.
8. **Kindred Spirits.** Love to read? Join one or more book clubs that meet by video and choose interesting reading materials with kindred spirits with the same passion. Enjoy discussing the things you loved and hated about each book and find commonalities. Or host a monthly potluck at your home, bring the party to you.
9. **Affirmation.** Register a star for someone special at one of the online registries. They will receive a customized certificate showing them the coordinates and the constellation and the knowledge that you believe they shine brightly.
10. **Grief.** Create a treasure box of personalized messages for someone that is suffering, ones they can read each day for a chosen period of thirty days up to a year to let them know you care.
11. **Entrepreneurism.** Consider helping a farmer by buying a membership to a farmers’ cooperative. Have organic, healthy produce or meat regularly delivered directly to your home.
12. **Home.** Start an herb garden in your kitchen and bring the outside in with light and greenery. Enjoy the sensory aspects of your herbs when cooking.
13. **Ageism.** Host a viewing party for the documentary *Lives Well Lived* - it’s a reminder that age is just a number!

- 14. Communication.** Help a teen create a story book of some of the most fun or interesting things that have happened in their life. These examples will help them break the ice when they are meeting new people or joining clubs and organizations.
- 15. Hope.** Talk to someone about their dreams and aspirations and share what you learned on your journey - it may help them move forward with greater confidence. Remind them of their accomplishments if they are feeling defeated and help them create a detailed plan for moving forward. Check in with them often to gauge their progress and provide positive reinforcement.
- 16. Gratitude.** Creative? Go the extra mile and design personal thank you cards online using resources like Canva or Zazzle to say thank you to another.
- 17. Mentoring.** If you have ever been faced with a disability yourself, you know how difficult the road can be. Consider sharing your experience with another person with a similar challenge. There are several organizations supporting this effort (i.e., National Disability Mentoring Coalition) who would be grateful for your support.
- 18. Military Families.** Team up with your child or grandchild and write a letter of thanks or send a care package to a military family (those currently in the service or a veteran) through Operation Appreciation or Operation Gratitude. Like to knit? Check out Socks for Soldiers who will appreciate your handiwork.
- 19. Poverty.** Consider investing in microloans to help women in impoverished nations grow small businesses (see Kiva, Acción International or Grameen America.) There are many books, films, and resources available to learn more. Or, put dollars directly in teacher's hands who are serving low-income students. Check out DonorsChoose to help fund supplies, field trips and more.
- 20. Spontaneity.** Enjoy "Reverse Day" with your kids or grandchildren, a day full of laughter and brain twisters. Eat your dessert before dinner, read books from back to front, wear your clothes inside out, or call each other by your new names spelled backwards.

It takes courage to put yourself out there whether you are 70 or 14. It's easy to let that little negative voice get in our head rather than to act. But I promise you, the rewards are worth your audaciousness!