



The Java Project: Addressing Loneliness and Social Isolation in Senior Living

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Loneliness:

An urgent public health concern*

Dr. Vivek Murthy

The White House - May 2023

“If I disappear tomorrow,
no one will even notice.”

[*Our Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation
\(hhs.gov\)](https://www.hhs.gov)



LONELINESS

Challenges around
loneliness among
residents



Poll Question

What percentage of residents living in long-term care homes do you think report feeling lonely?

- 10%
- 20%
- 30%
- 40%
- Over 50%





Loneliness

56% to 95.5%¹⁻²

The Need for a Social Revolution

(Journal of Aging Studies)

The overturning of activities
based mostly on
entertainment and distraction



Resident to resident
peer support and peer
mentoring





Java Music Club

Residents helping residents

The first standardized peer support group for senior living:

- themes
- photos
- readings
- music
- talking stick



Java Memory Care

- An adaptation of the Java Music Club
- For residents with moderate to late stages of dementia
- Residents helping residents

“I am amazed at how residents with dementia have responded... short, simple, yet profound answers.”

— Hilary Lipsett, Staff

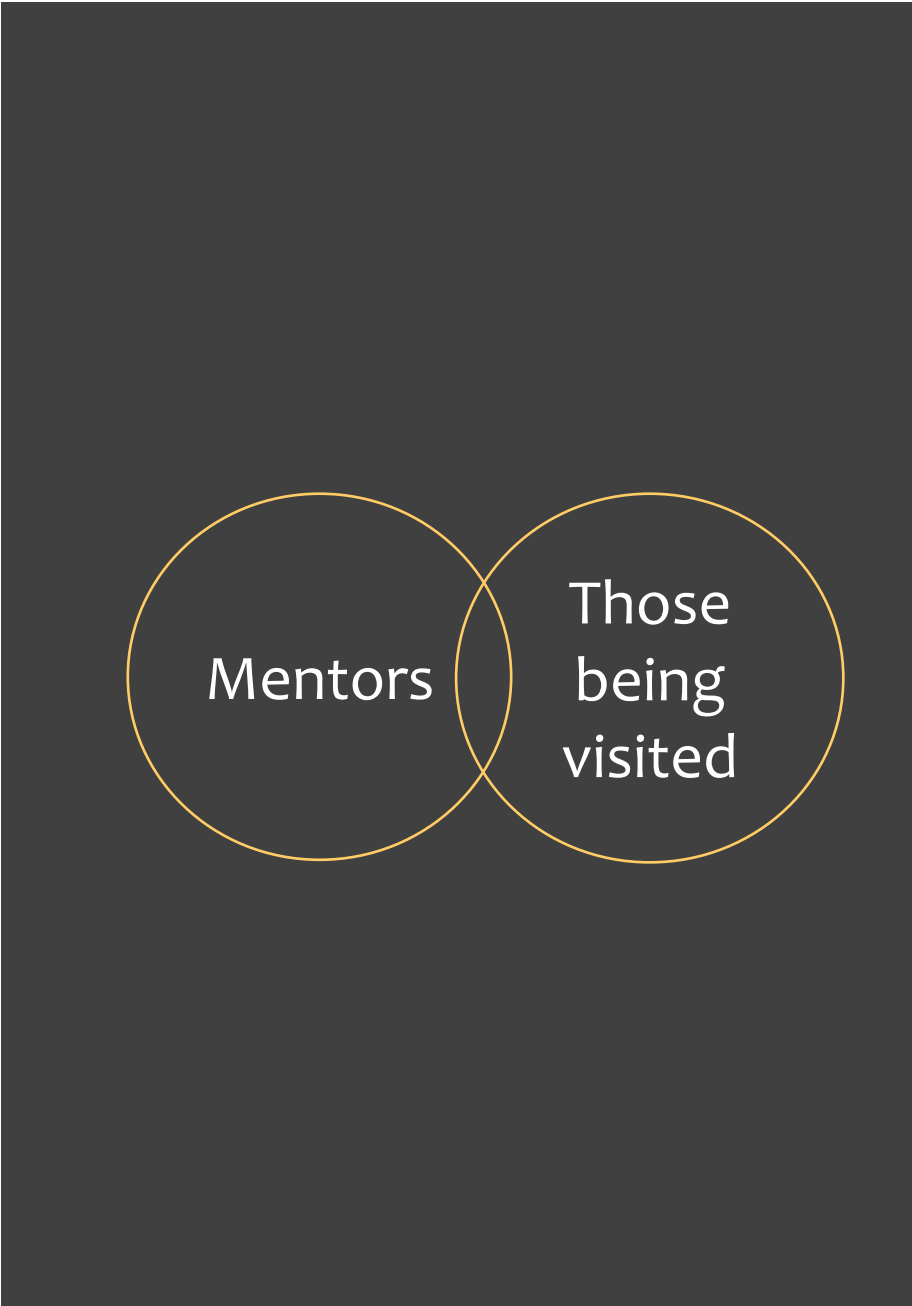


Residents
mentoring
residents

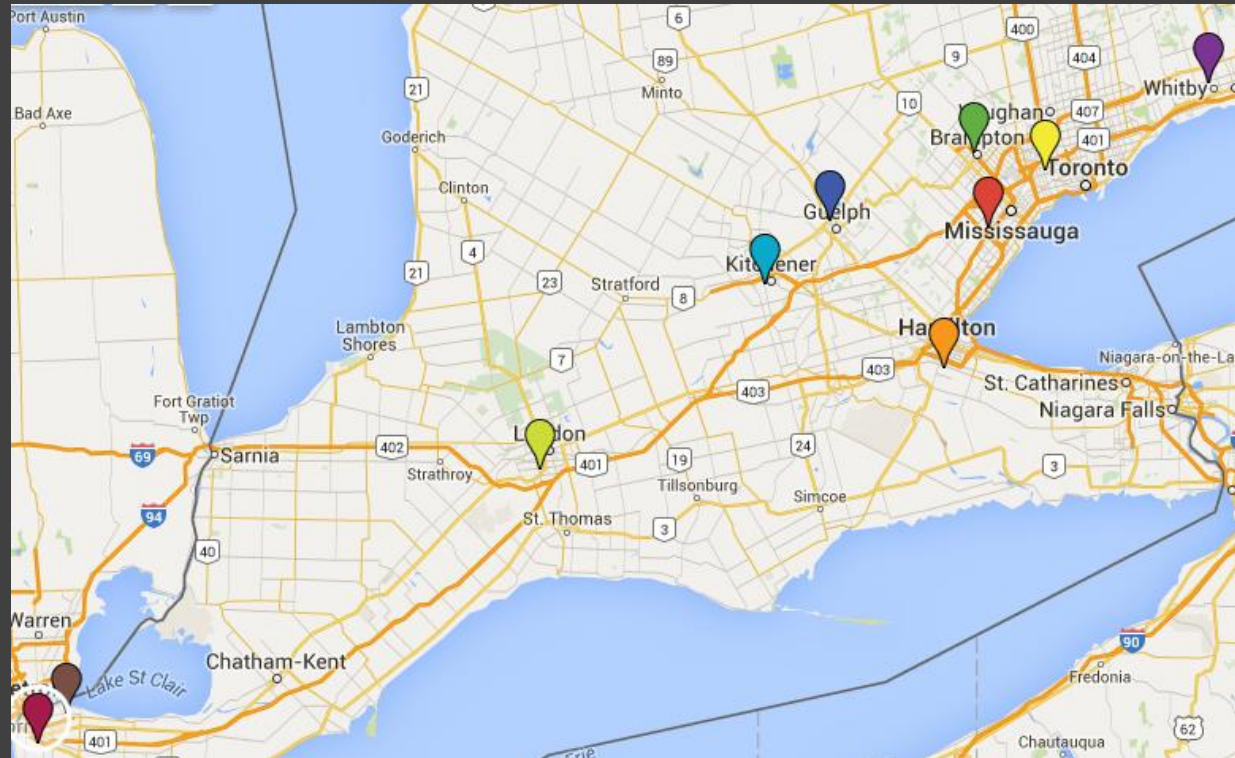
Java Mentorship



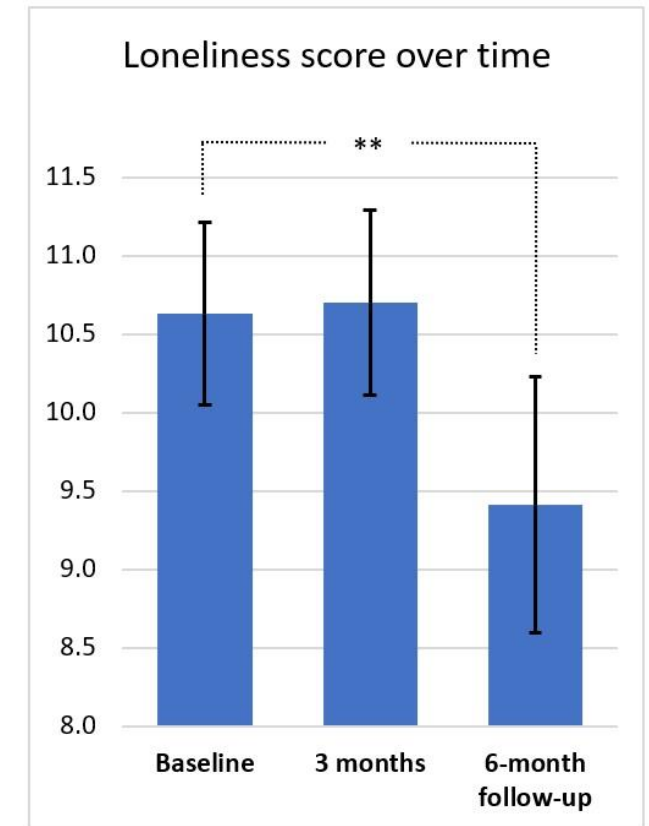
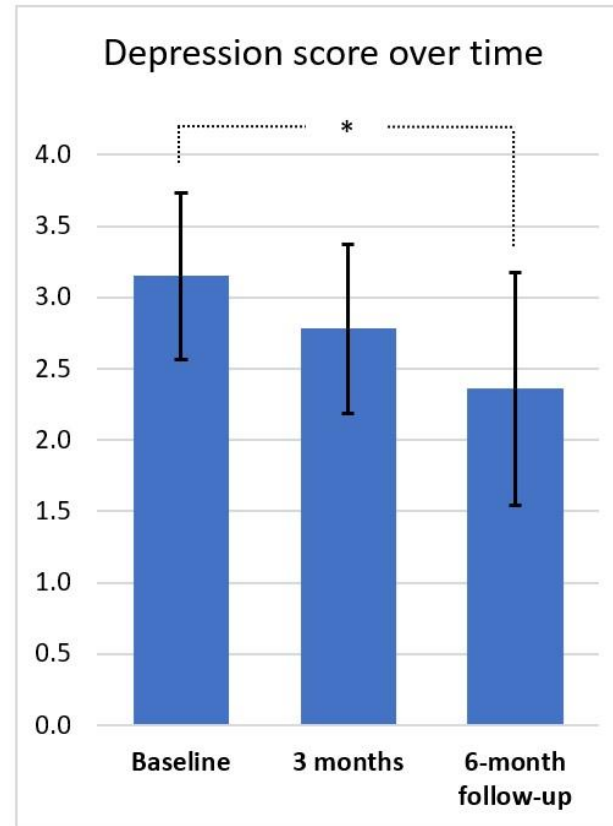
Program Structure



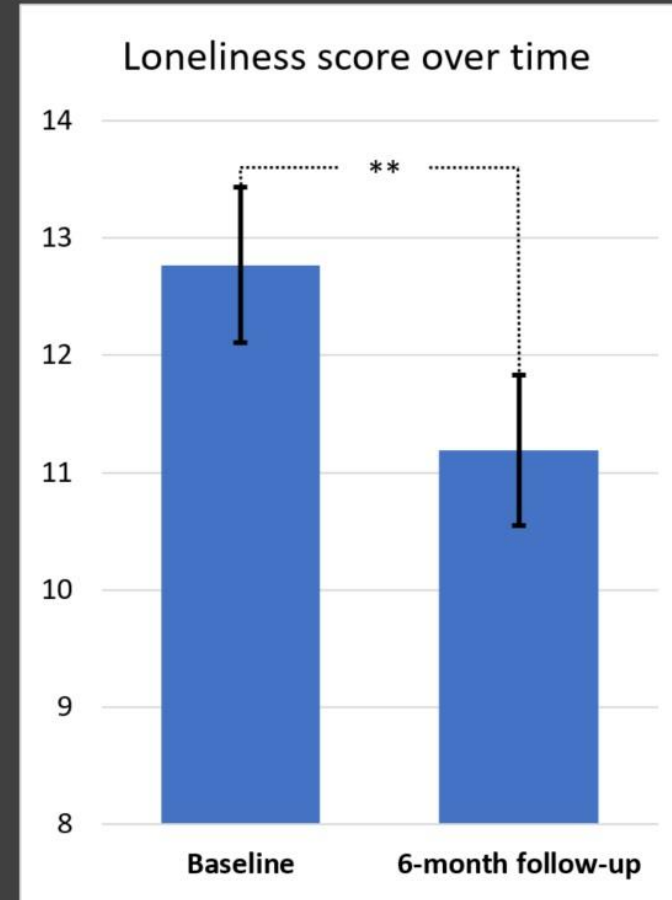
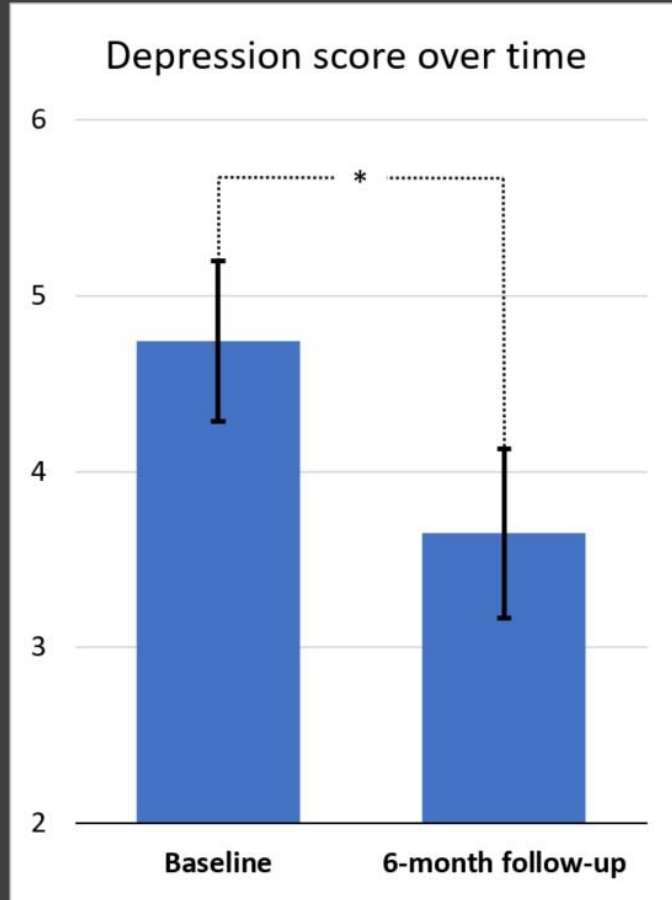
Java Study—New Research



Resident Mentors—
Depression and
Loneliness Scores
($n = 74$)¹⁴⁻¹⁵



Visitees—Depression and Loneliness Scores ($n = 43$)¹⁶



Visitees— Change in Program Attendance

- Increase in number of monthly programs attended
- (60%) at 6 months compared to baseline ($p = 0.01$)¹⁶

“Java is truly some of the best thinking to hit senior living in decades.”

*Juliet-Holt Klinger,
Senior Director, Brookdale*





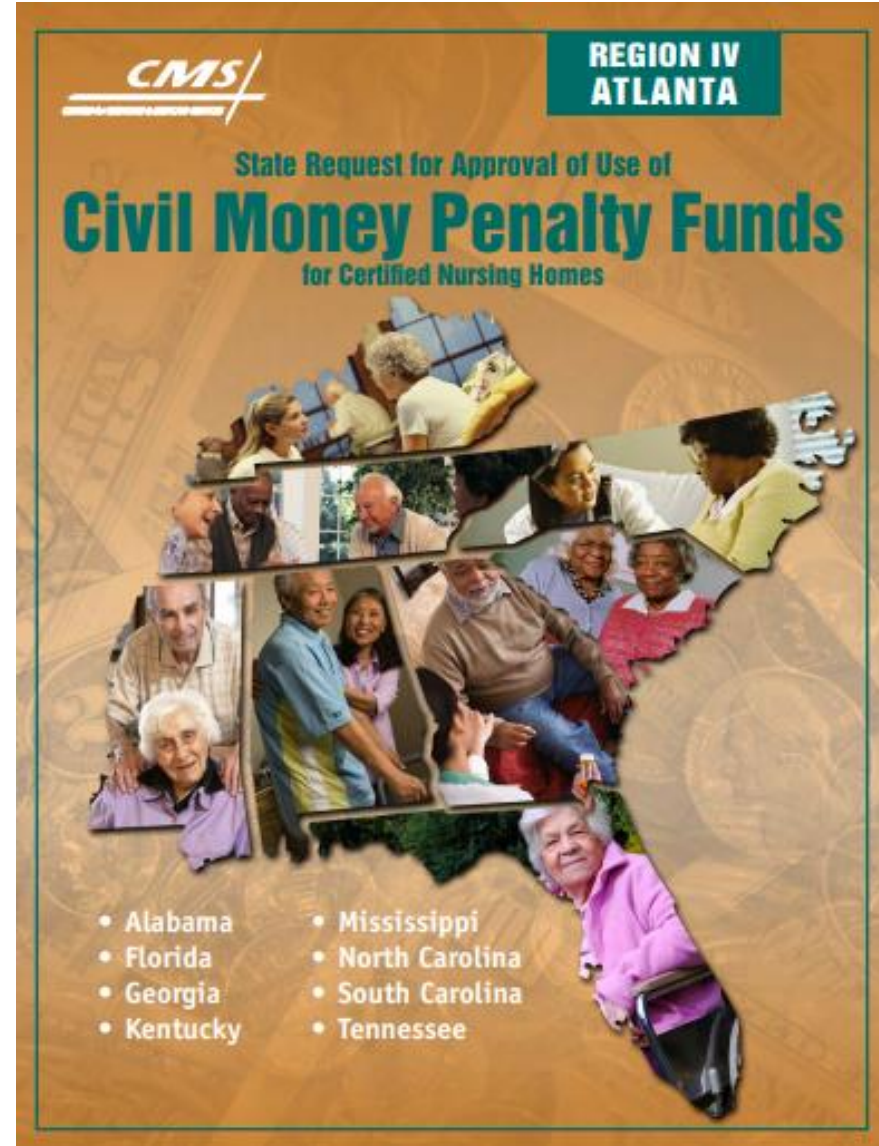
Java Music Club



- Group Manual
 - 52 themes, photos
 - Quotes, readings
- Step by step guide
- Talking stick
- CD9 – forms
- Training video
- 8 songbooks (lge print)
- Windchimes
- 8 CDs – 142 songs
- Facilitators guide
- Rhythm sticks



The Java Project and CMP Funding





JAVA CMP Grants Currently Underway

1. **North Carolina and Florida** - Consulate Health Care
 2. **LeadingAge Virginia**
– 30 Communities (*started July 2021*)
 3. **Minnesota** - Presbyterian and Cassia
– 23 Communities (*started January 2022*)
 4. **LeadingAge California**
– 100 communities (*start date May 2022*)
 5. **Florida**
– 14 communities (*start date May 2023*)
- 



Outcomes Example – LeadingAge Virginia

2nd Quarterly Report—30 Homes
Average Outcomes

- **Decrease in Social Isolation: 31%**
- **Decrease in Loneliness: 29%**
- **Increase in Happiness: 28%**



Outcomes in the Java Project – Consulate Health Care

1

**Average decreases in
Social Isolation: 36%**

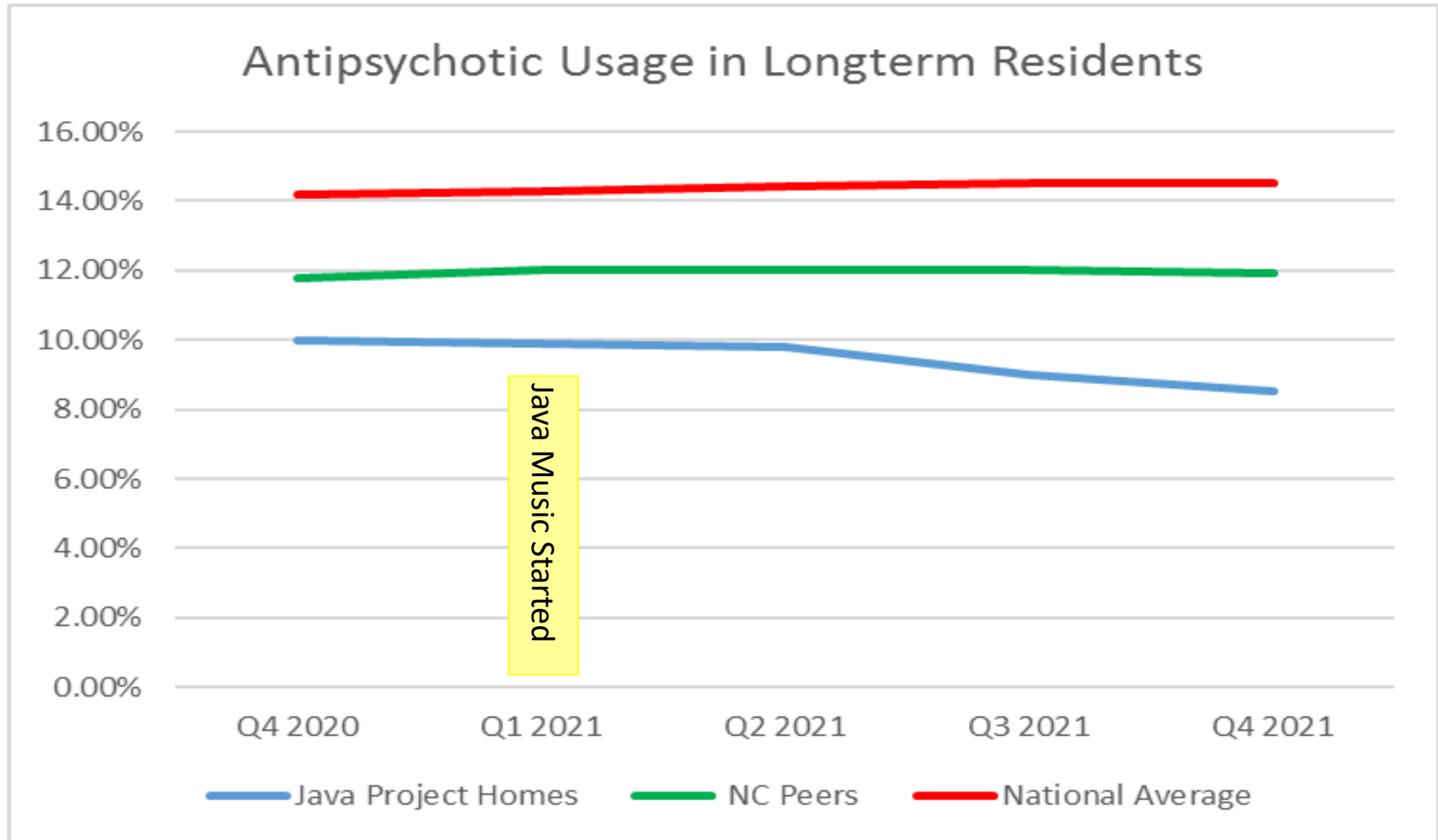
2

**Average decreases in
Loneliness: 34%**

3

**Average increases in
Happiness: 34%**

Antipsychotics




The Communities Tell their Stories





From Doing
Nothing to
Doing
Everything!

What the residents had to say about the Java Project

- "I love sharing our stories and getting to know one another."
 - "I don't feel lonely anymore"
 - "My favorite part is talking with each other."
 - "It has changed lives. My friend used to hate living here and now he enjoys it here. He stays involved."
- 



“They loved the program and bragged about it...”

Building Peer Support and Peer Mentoring in Your Home:

First Steps



Offer weekly peer support groups



At the end of each group, encourage residents to think about who may be lonely in their neighborhood



Copy the 7 tips on the handout to share with the group

HANDOUT

7 Tips to Foster Peer Support and Mentoring

7 Tips to Foster Peer Support and Mentoring



Research indicates that individuals engaged in peer support draw significant benefits from helping others. These benefits come about through the emotional connections, new relationships and the exchange of advice.

Peers helping Peers

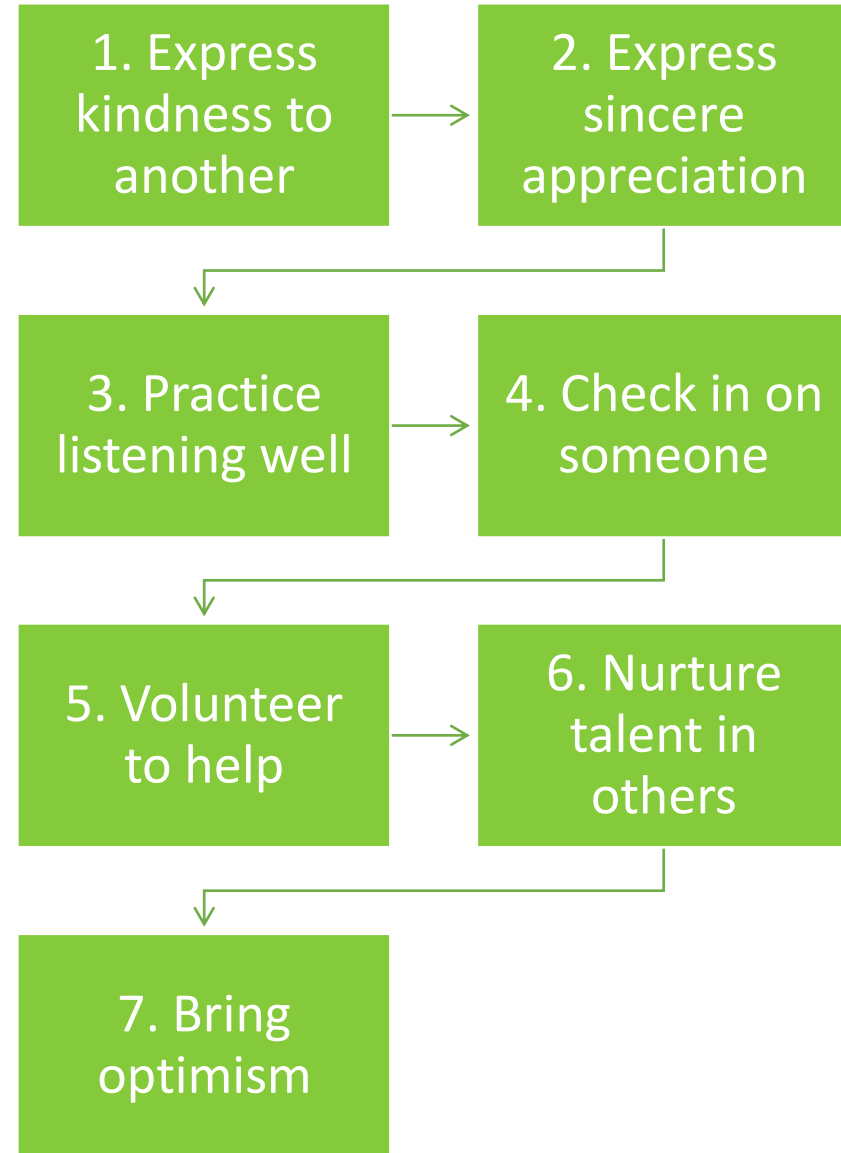
Peer support and peer mentoring offer opportunities to build a valued social identity, reduce loneliness and social isolation. Helping others improves health and happiness and there are many creative ways to do this. It only takes a little creativity and a lot of love.

Here's how to get started:

- Offer a weekly peer support meeting in each neighbourhood within your community. Invite participants to talk about how they are doing. Be sure that each member is offered an opportunity to share.
- Copy the 7 tips on the next page to share with the group.
- At the end of the group, encourage participants to think about who may be lonely in their neighbourhood. E.g., Who just moved into your community, lives alone, or has lost a spouse?
- Do a short brainstorming session using one tip at a time. What works for one person may not work for another. Explore options, discuss different approaches and evaluate weekly.

Please turn over...

7 Tips to offer Residents



Questions

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