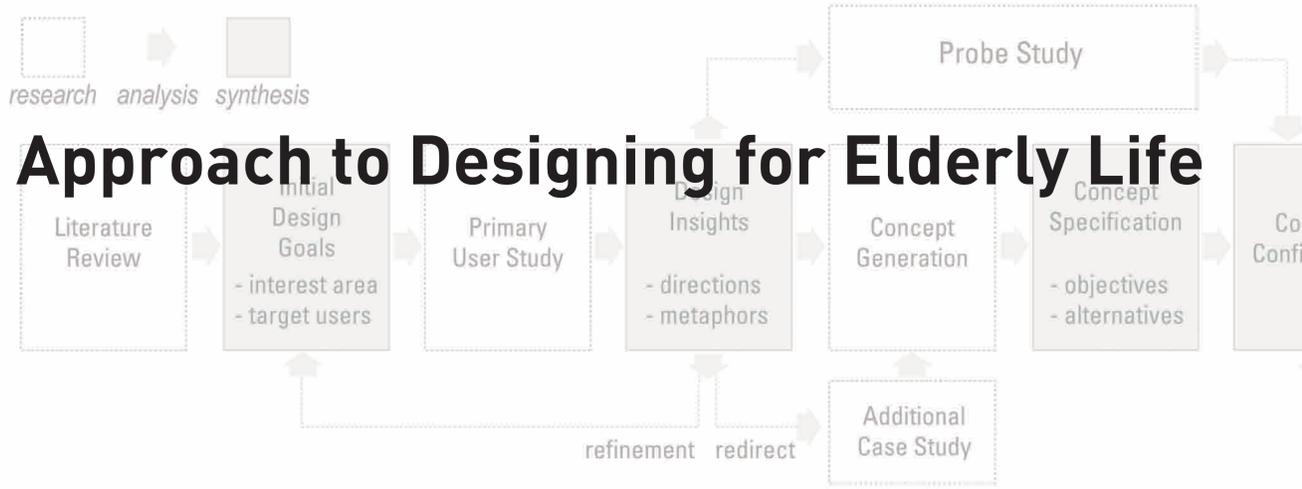


Reflective Inquiries A Multi-Dimensional Approach to Designing for Elderly Life

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Study1: Contextual Interviews

To develop a deeper understanding of everyday elderly life, we conducted in depth contextual interviews with two couples. The interview process involved: (i) touring participants' homes and (ii) observing participants sketching relationships among common domestic activities and objects.



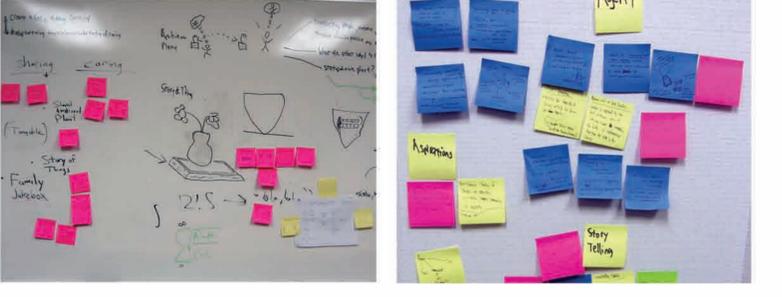
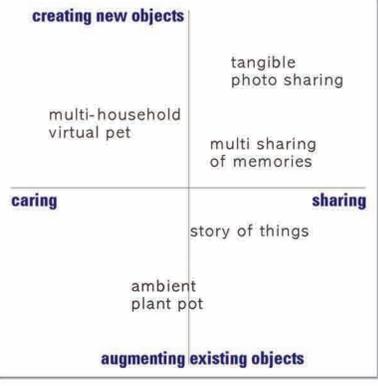
Study2: Cultural Probes

Based on our initial observations, we developed cultural probes to explore how interactions among participants and their domestic environments connect to separated family members. We provided two elderly households with diaries, disposable cameras, and an instruction sheet.



Concept Development

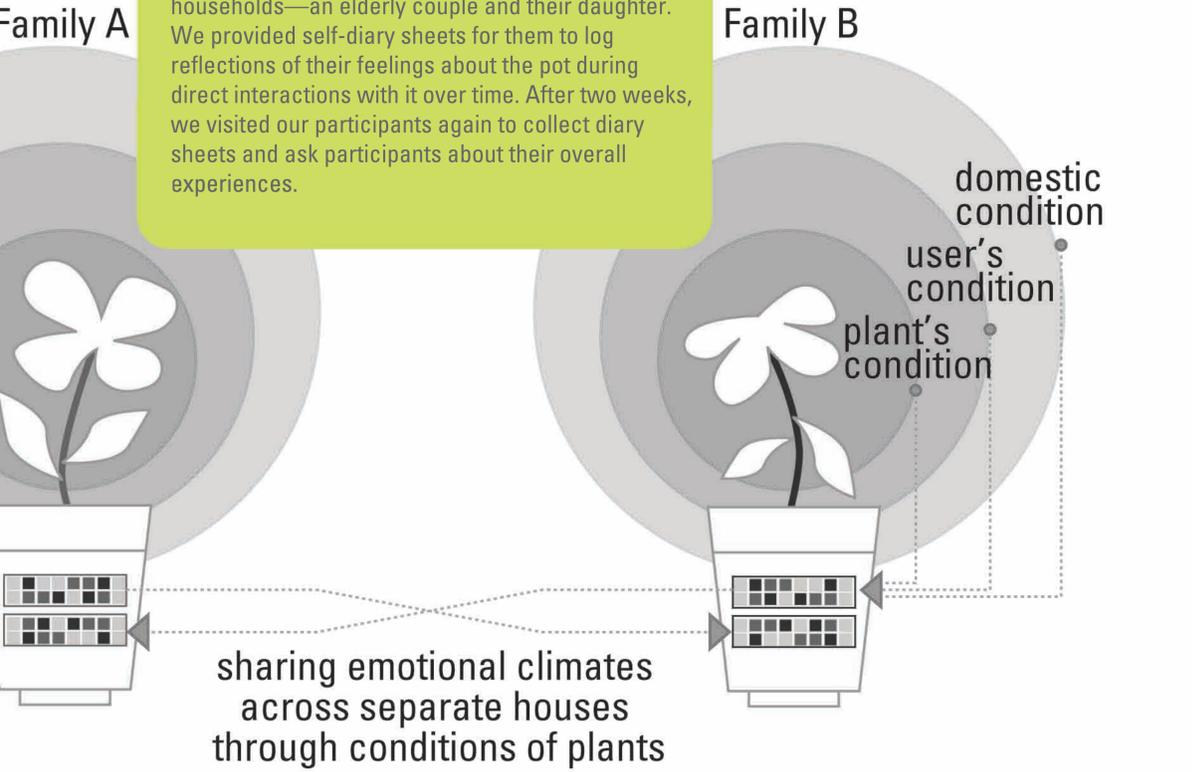
All concepts were categorized according to whether they would be embedded in an existing familiar object or created as a new device. We mapped each concept on the two dimensional axes of themes and interface, which allowed us to critique the potential benefits and drawbacks offered by each concept.



Study3: Technology Probe

Through the ambient plant pot, we aimed to explore ways in which feelings of social connection could be stimulated between separated family members and gauge participants' perceptions of ambient information and orientations to the device itself.

Two prototypes were deployed across two households—an elderly couple and their daughter. We provided self-diary sheets for them to log reflections of their feelings about the pot during direct interactions with it over time. After two weeks, we visited our participants again to collect diary sheets and ask participants about their overall experiences.



User Responses

Parents: "They [children] are busy with their work; their time is more important than ours. ... we have some kind of window into their world."

Children: "I cannot really visit them [parents] as much as I want. ... it's nice to know they're there [i.e. represented by technology probe]. I had presented my parents digital photo-frames before, but they do not use them at all. This pot feels like more absorbed in our home because it does not have a screen."