

COMMON WEAL COMMUNITY ARTS

Artful Isolation Activities

The Inspiration: Encouraging Banners



Share a positive message with your community!

What is an Encouraging Banner? “Create an encouraging banner” is Assignment #63 in *Learning to Love You More*, a book (the result of a collaborative public art project) by artists Miranda July and Harrell Fletcher. These banners are a way to reach out to neighbours with positive messages and encouragement.

Why Encouraging Banners? As people across the world retreated to their homes in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, our Southern Artistic Director, Shaunna Dunn, was reminded of July and Fletcher’s work. In her own words, “*Learning to Love You More* is an inspiring and heartwarming examination on how people think, act, and love. The assignments that July and Fletcher offer in the book and on their website, are beautiful entry points to exploring our relationship with the world, ourselves, and each other. These engaging prompts are sure to bring creative connection during days when physical distance has us longing for community.” She encouraged all those isolated at home to share messages of connection with neighbours by beginning with Assignment #63. This initiative became the inspiration for our ongoing *Artful Isolation* series.



Suitable For: All Ages (note that wee ones may need hands-on support and supervision).

What You'll Need: Construction Paper, glue or tape, scissors, pencils, string, markers, or other drawing implements.

Getting Ready:

- Explore responses to this activity shown on this page and online. We did a Google image search for “[Learning to Love You More 63](#)” and found lots of great inspiration!
- Consider: What does the world need now? This is a particularly uncertain moment in time. What kinds of messages would you find encouraging given the current social context? Are these messages universal or tied to our collective experience of COVID-19?
- Think about the people in your neighbourhood. Be thoughtful about the potential for this message to encourage your neighbours, be they friends or strangers. How can your encouraging banner facilitate community resilience and connection?



Activity:

- Explore the step-by-step instructions for [Assignment #63](#) at the *Learning to Love You More* website.
- If you don't have all the materials available to do this assignment as outlined, consider how you can make a banner with a simple message using what you have on hand.
- Hang your banner in your window or yard and share your message!

Reflection:

- Take a tour of your neighbourhood. Do you see any other encouraging banners? What other methods are people using to connect with their neighbours (ex. hearts for healthcare workers).
- Share photographs of your banners with us via Facebook or Instagram, tagging [@skcommonweal](#) and using the hashtag [#cwneighbours](#).