



Capturing Resilience

A WHAI
Community
Art Project

What is Capturing Resilience?

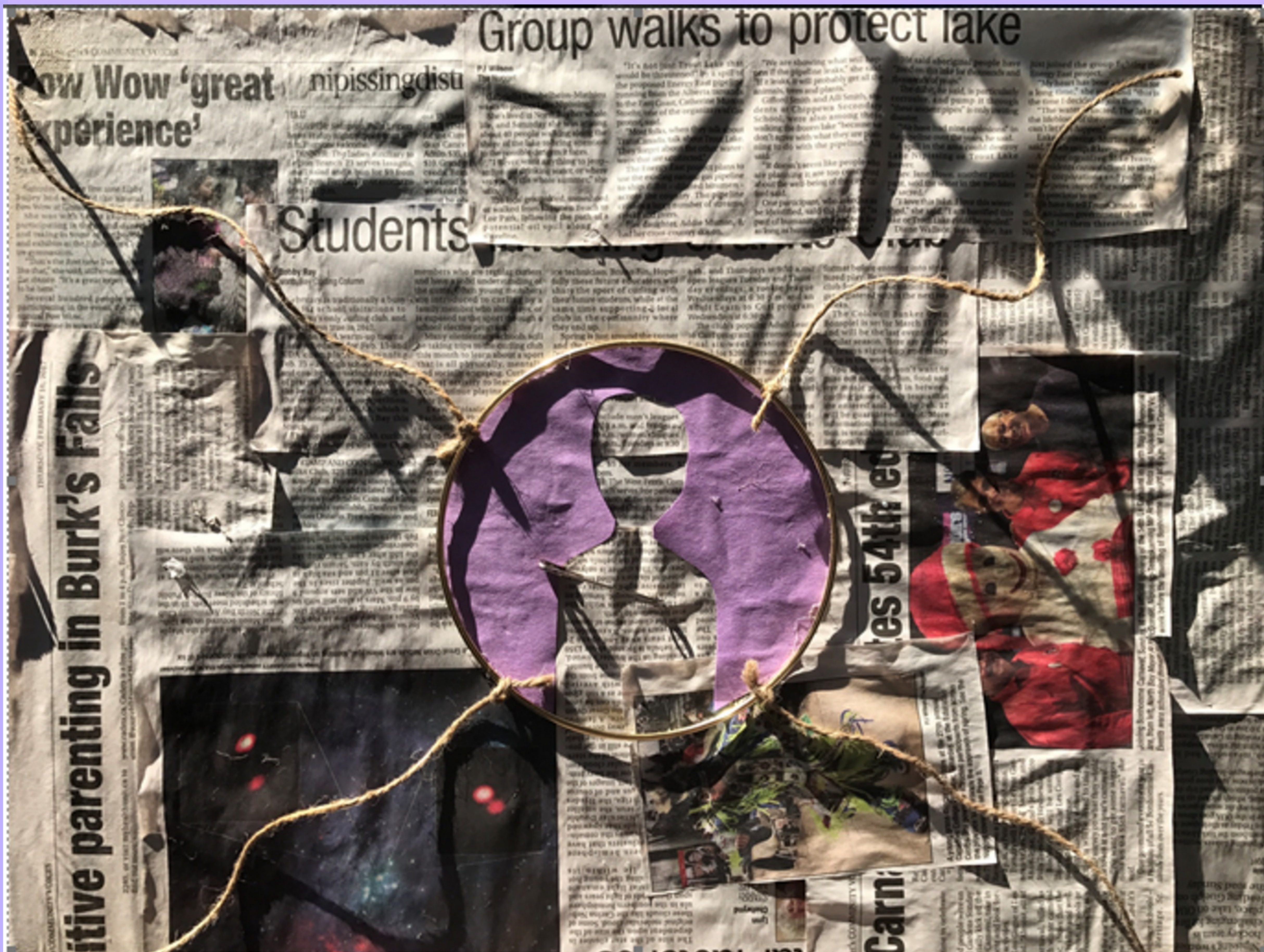
Collective Action, Community Response

To mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women on November 25th, 2016, the Women and HIV/AIDS Initiative (WHAi) launched an Ontario-wide call for community-based collaborative art submissions on theme of women and resilience.

Over the course of 3 months, women living with and facing systemic risks for HIV participated in art making events across the province. All forms of art and all levels of artistic ability were welcomed.

Women across Ontario are strong, resilient leaders of our community. This is what resilience means to them.

North Bay



"We used newspaper clips from our local North Bay community paper. The image in the middle is meant to be a woman navigating the world with all the news around her (how to be a good parent, ongoing Indigenous land rights and water protection issues). She is wearing a safety pin to represent advocacy. The circle around her is a symbol of unity, democracy, and strength in communities protecting marginalized groups. There are four pieces of rope that extend to each corner of the piece. These are meant to resemble the four quadrants of the medicine wheel. We will welcome any new women who join our groups or drop in and want to participate to bring their own images (photographs, magazine clippings, or items to include in the quadrant of their choice)."

Guelph

Makin
Ourselves



Makes Us **POWERFUL**



CHAPOLOGE TICALY
MYSELF



I CAN
AND
I WILL



Be Creative
Be YOU



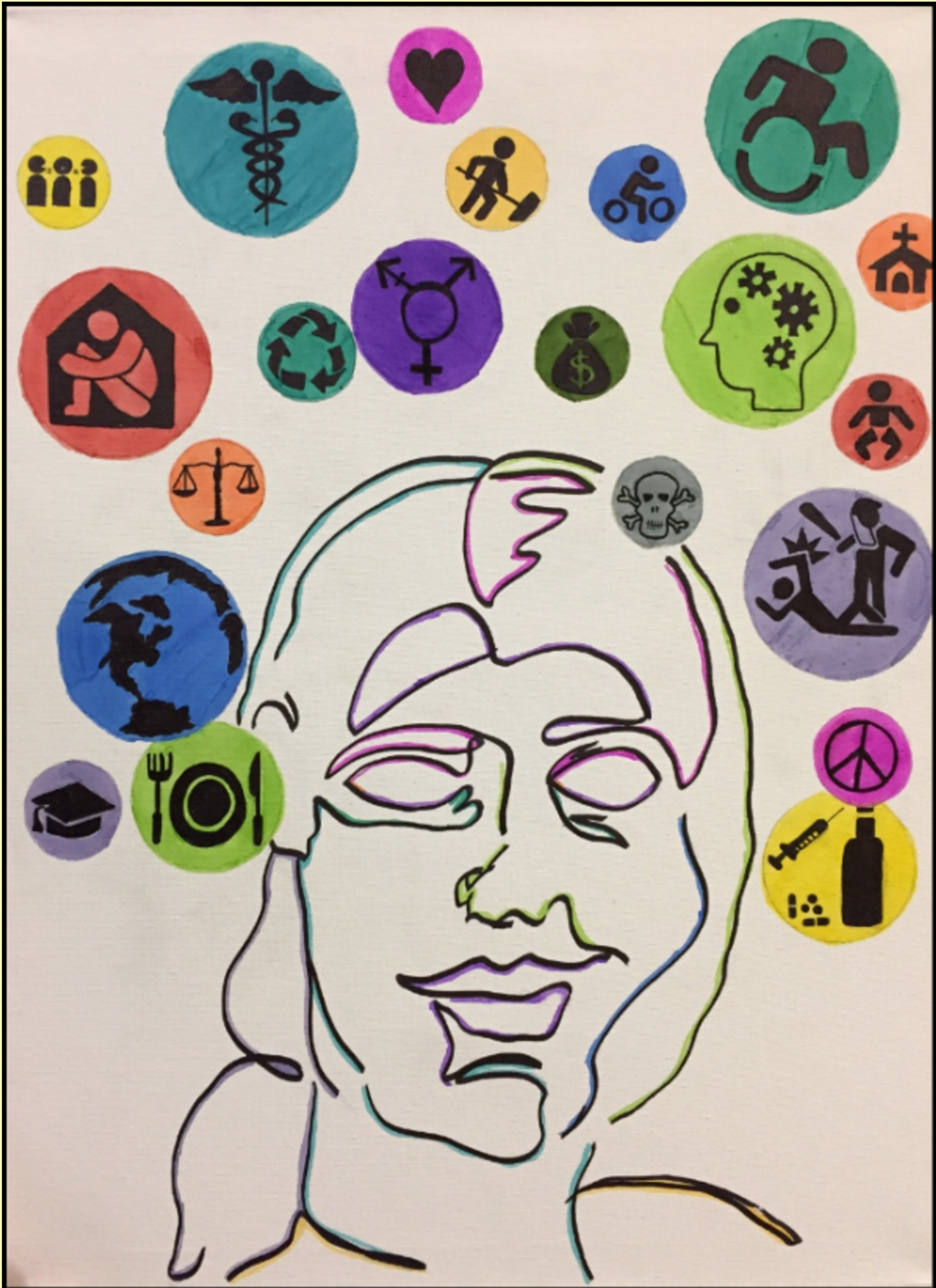
W
Love



Be Your Own Kind
of Beautiful



Guelph



"In collaboration with the Women's Health Alliance, we are currently coordinating a Women's Community Art Exhibition that will launch during International Women's Week on Monday March 6th at Guelph City Hall. The art exhibition is titled "What Makes Us Strong" and will focus on the diverse experiences of women in our community! We will have over 10 canvas from community organizations that have been created by women who are affiliated with each organization. "



"A small group of women at PARN-Your Community AIDS Resource Network in Peterborough got together with community based expressive arts practitioner Deb Reynolds and her tickle trunk of beautiful supplies. The group began with a guided visualization imagining ourselves seated at a still pond in serenity and safety. As we meditated on the stillness, we were invited to explore times when we were resilient in the face of hardship. As images or memories bubbled up in our consciousness, we said words that captured that experience of resilience. That was the inspiration that guided our making of twenty tiny books with messages for women living with HIV and facing systemic risk factors. It was a quiet, busy couple of hours that felt very free and healing for participants."

Peterborough

Hamilton



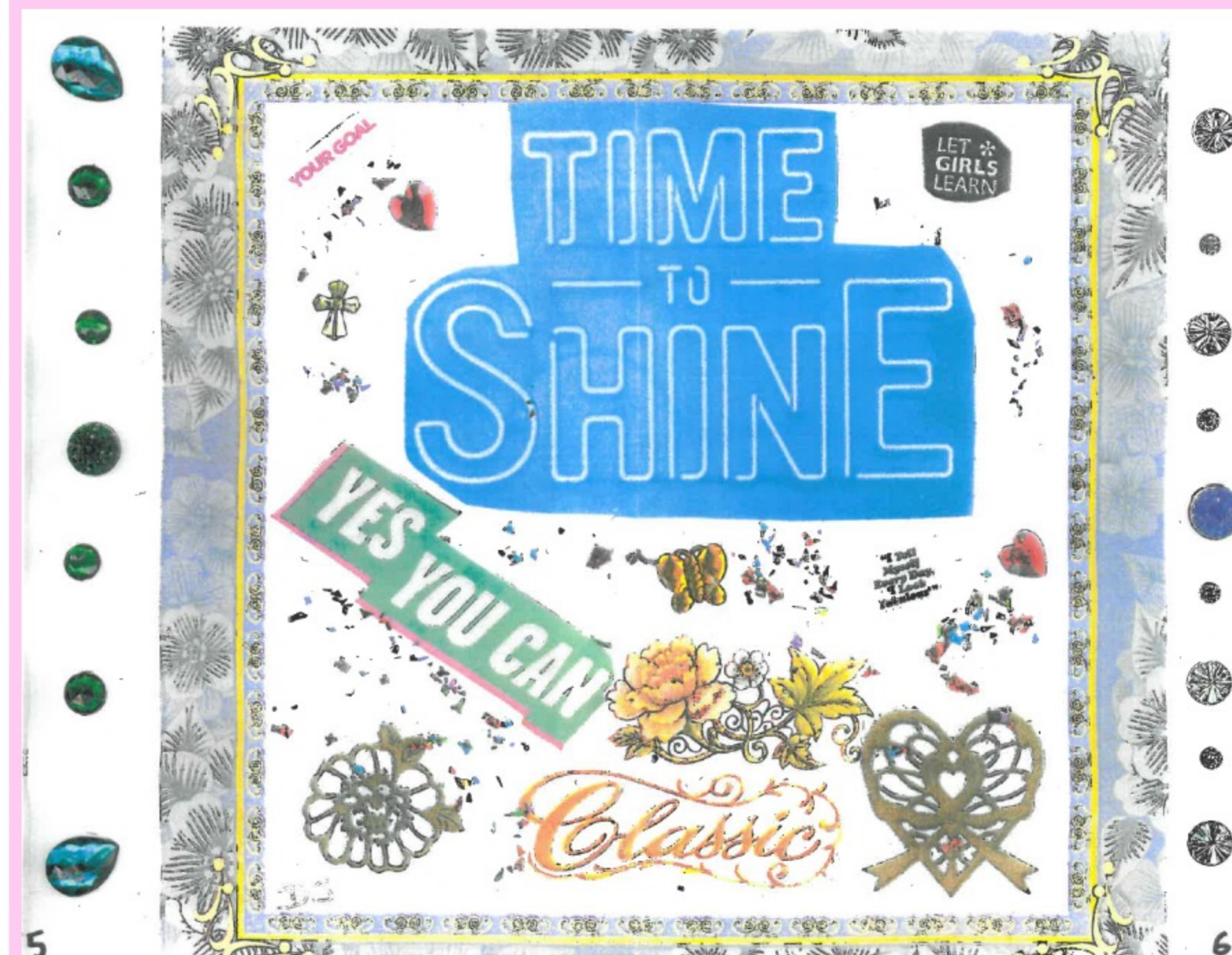
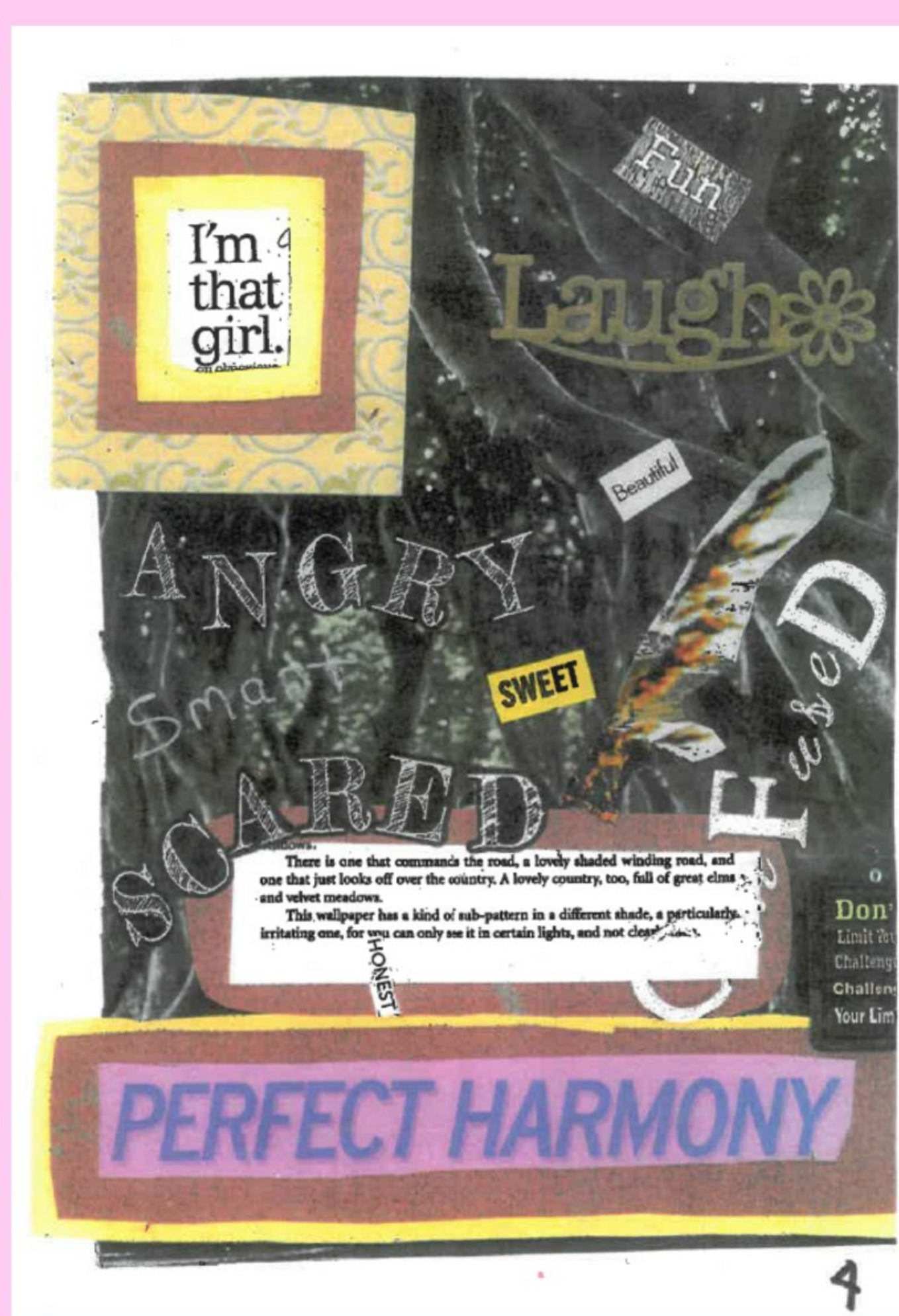
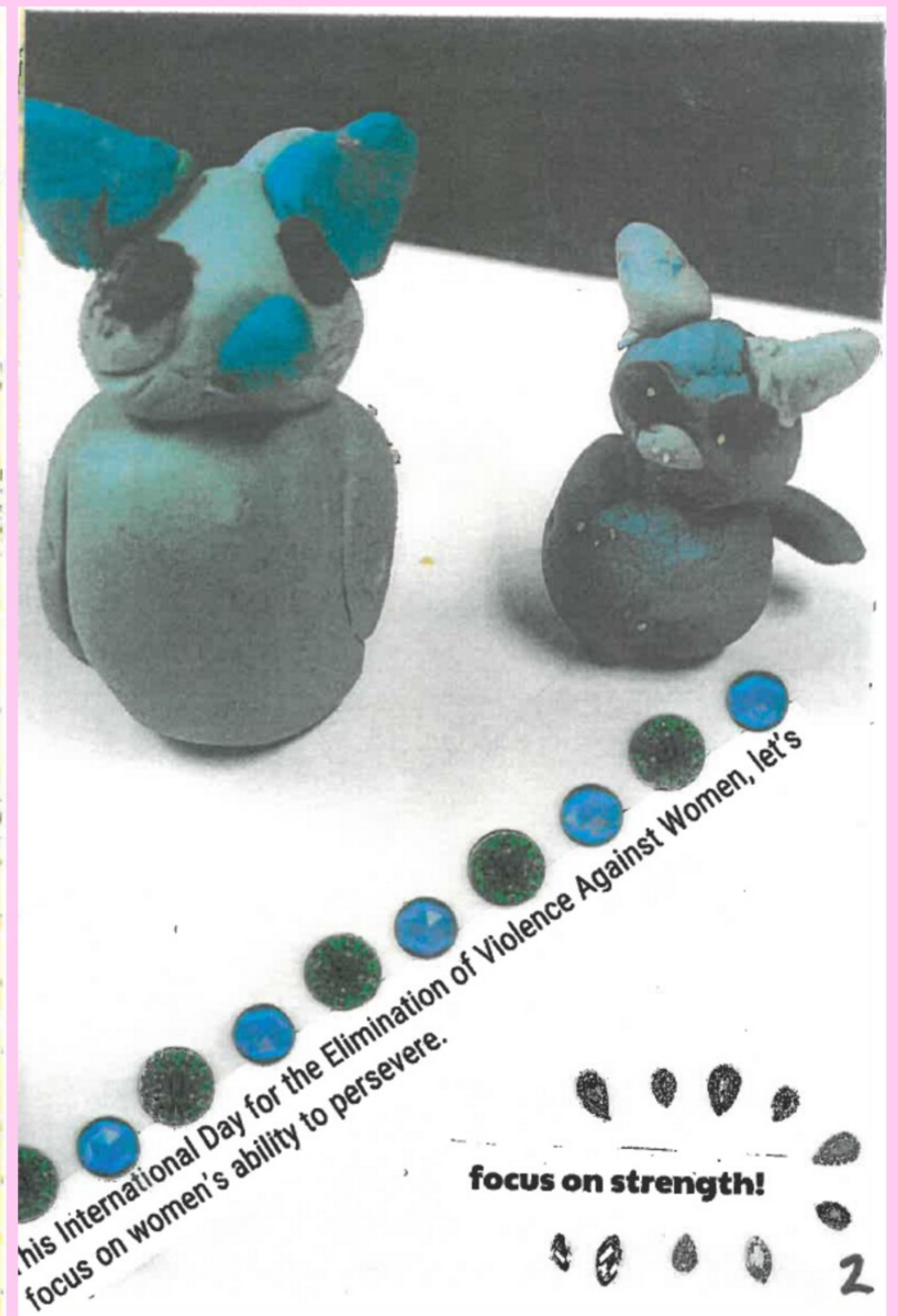
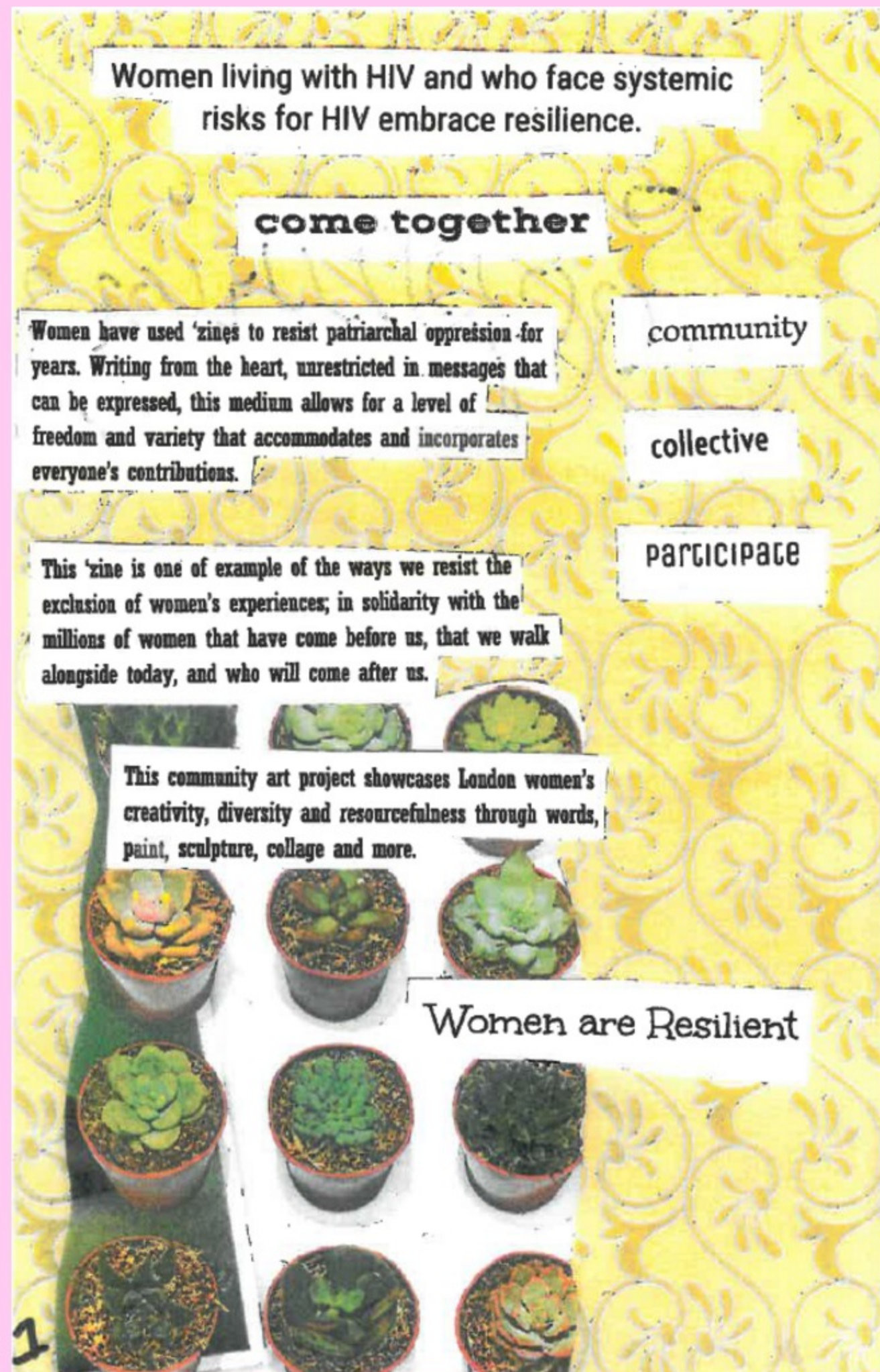
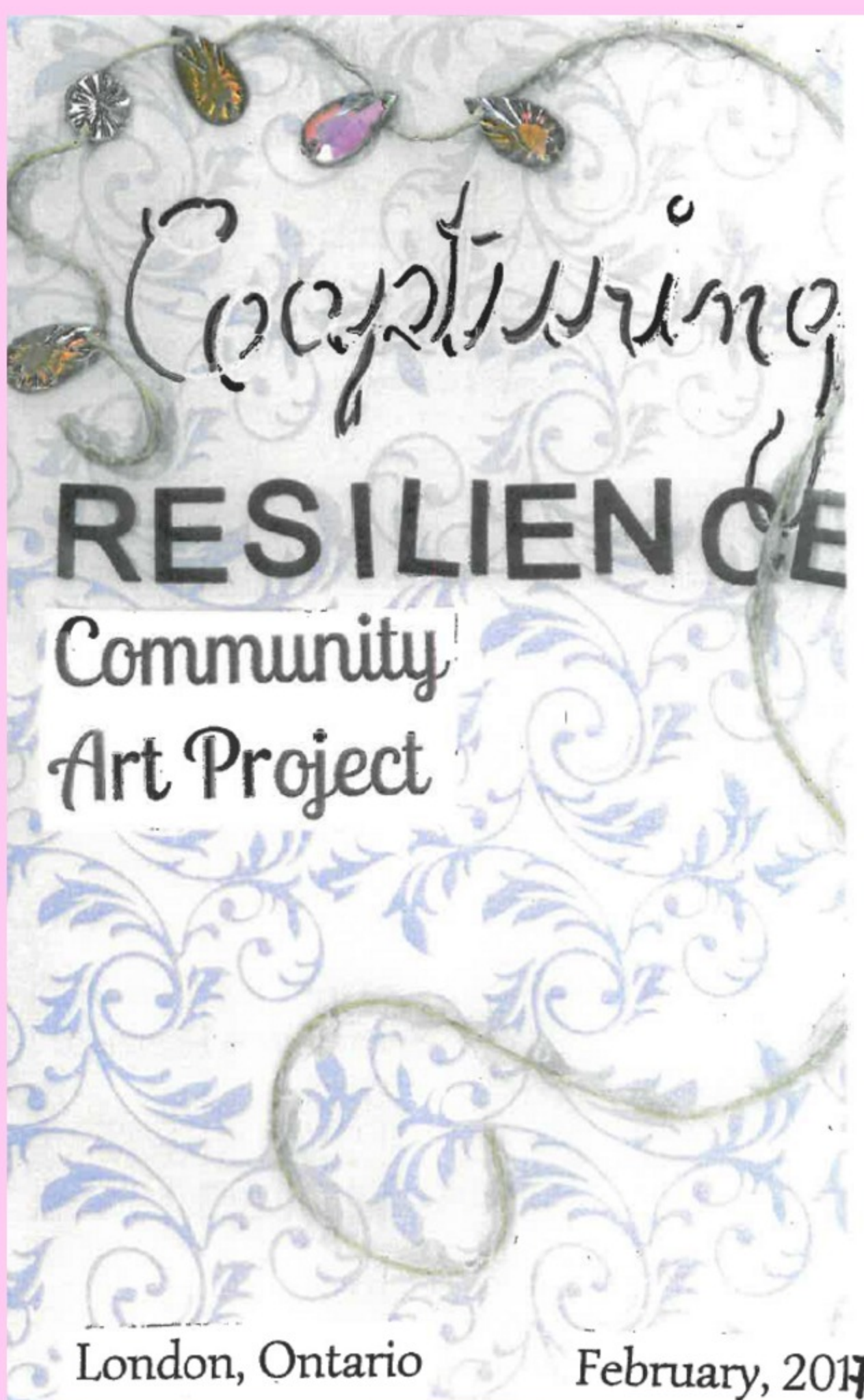
"These cards were created by one of the women's groups at The AIDS Network. They were made by women who are HIV-positive, who know the struggles of isolation, and the challenges of living with HIV. These women have overcome so many barriers and wanted to share love, support, and strength to women who may be struggling."

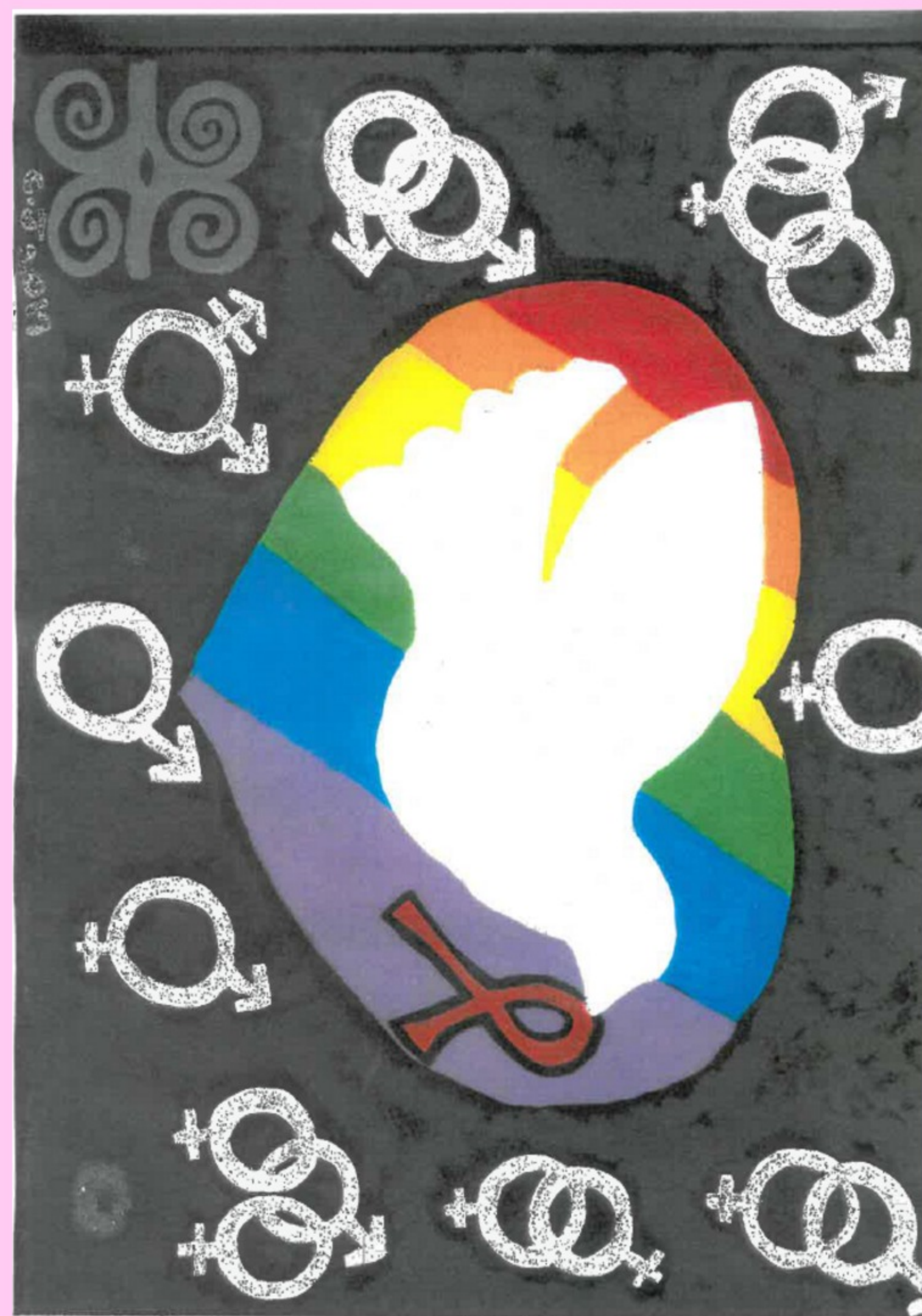
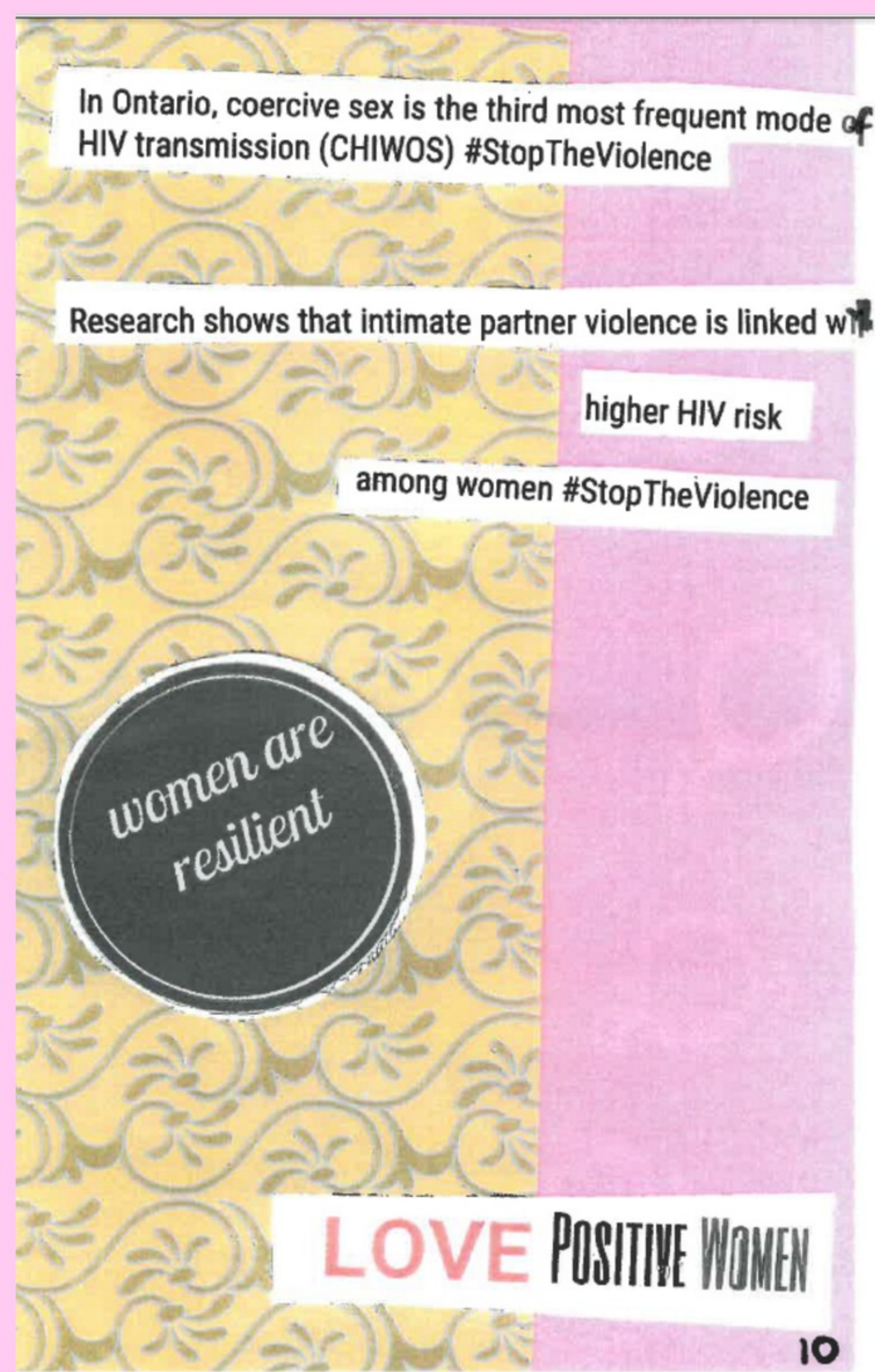
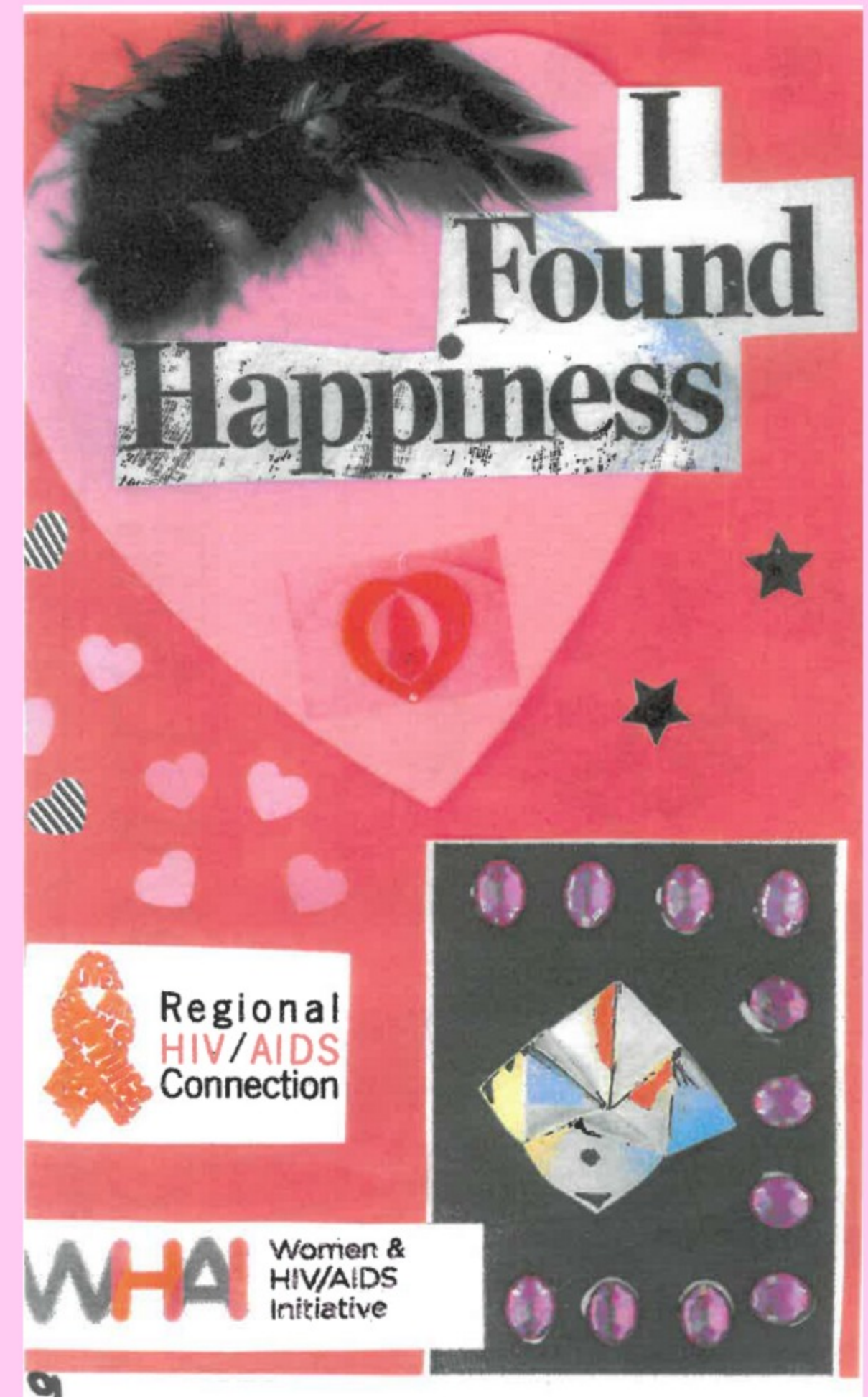
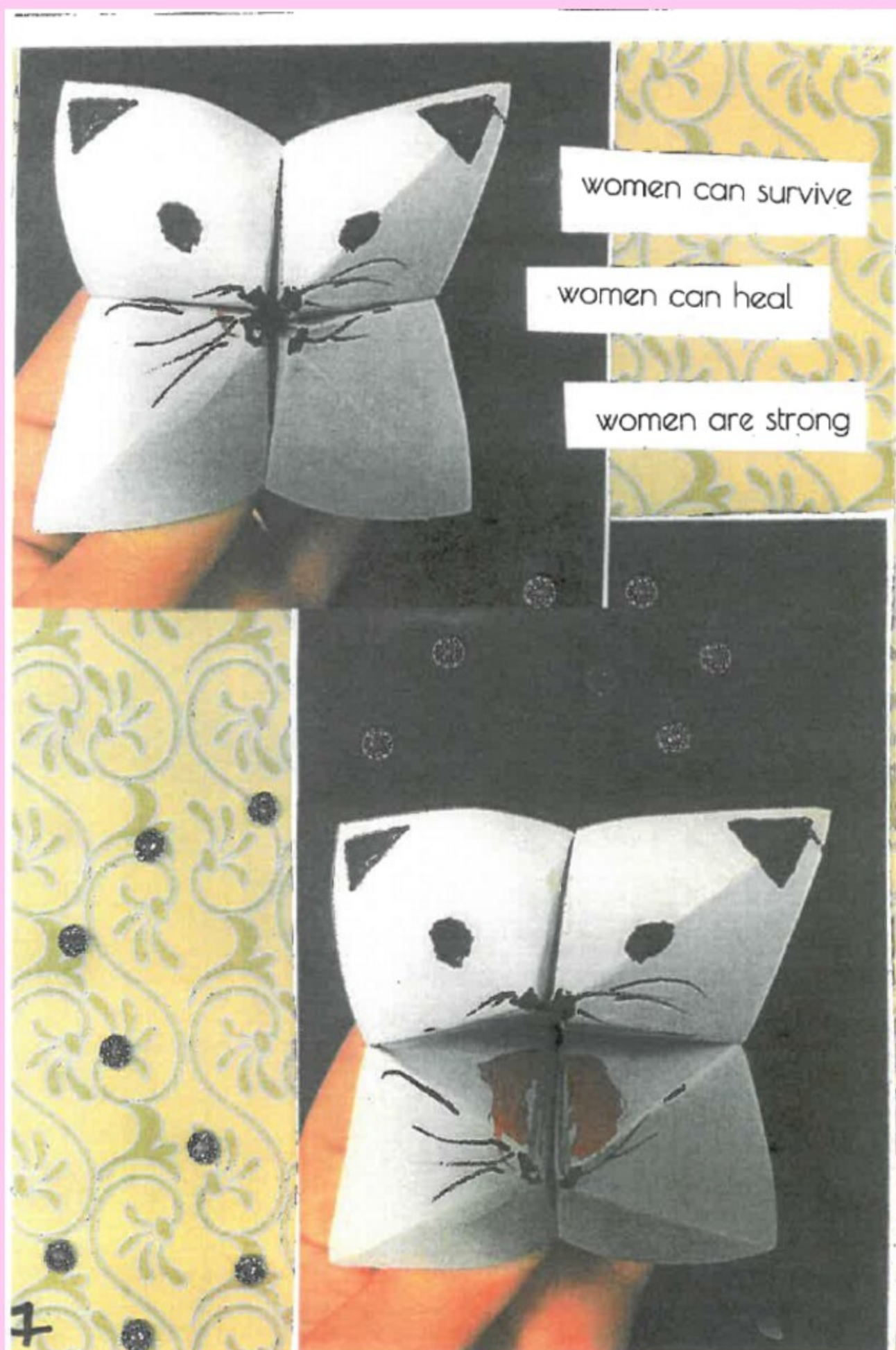
London

"Women have used 'zines to resist patriarchal oppression for years. Writing from the heart, unrestricted in messages that can be expressed, this medium allows for a level of freedom and variety that accommodates and incorporates everyone's contributions."

This 'zine is one example of the ways we resist the exclusion of women's experiences; in solidarity with the millions of women that have come before us, that we walk alongside today, and who will come after us."

This community art project showcases London women's creativity, diversity and resourcefulness through words, paint, sculpture, collage and more."





London

Ottawa

"These cards were made by women living with and facing systemic risks for HIV - many of whom are street involved. The AIDS Committee of Ottawa worked in partnership with another community agency to broaden connections between women. Women were happy to send messages of love, strength and beauty to others who may be in need of community support."



St. Catharines



"Positive Living Niagara in collaboration with TOES Niagara (Tool of Empowerment for Success), the YWCA and local artists held an evening of art for women in Niagara living with HIV and those with systemic risk factors for HIV. The goal of this event was to explore resilience through interactive workshops, visual arts, music and dance. As part of the event the group created a community art piece called The Resilient Community Puzzle Project."

The 6 Word Memoir activity was used to create the community art piece. Participants were led through an exercise to get them to reflect on the ways that they are resilient and to come up with 6 words that tell a story about their resilience. At the end of the exercise, each participant was asked to create a visual representation of their own resilience on a puzzle shaped piece.

The pieces have been laminated and assembled like a puzzle to represent how each woman is an important piece in building a resilient community. The intent is that this puzzle will continue to grow as more women add their pieces to the puzzle."

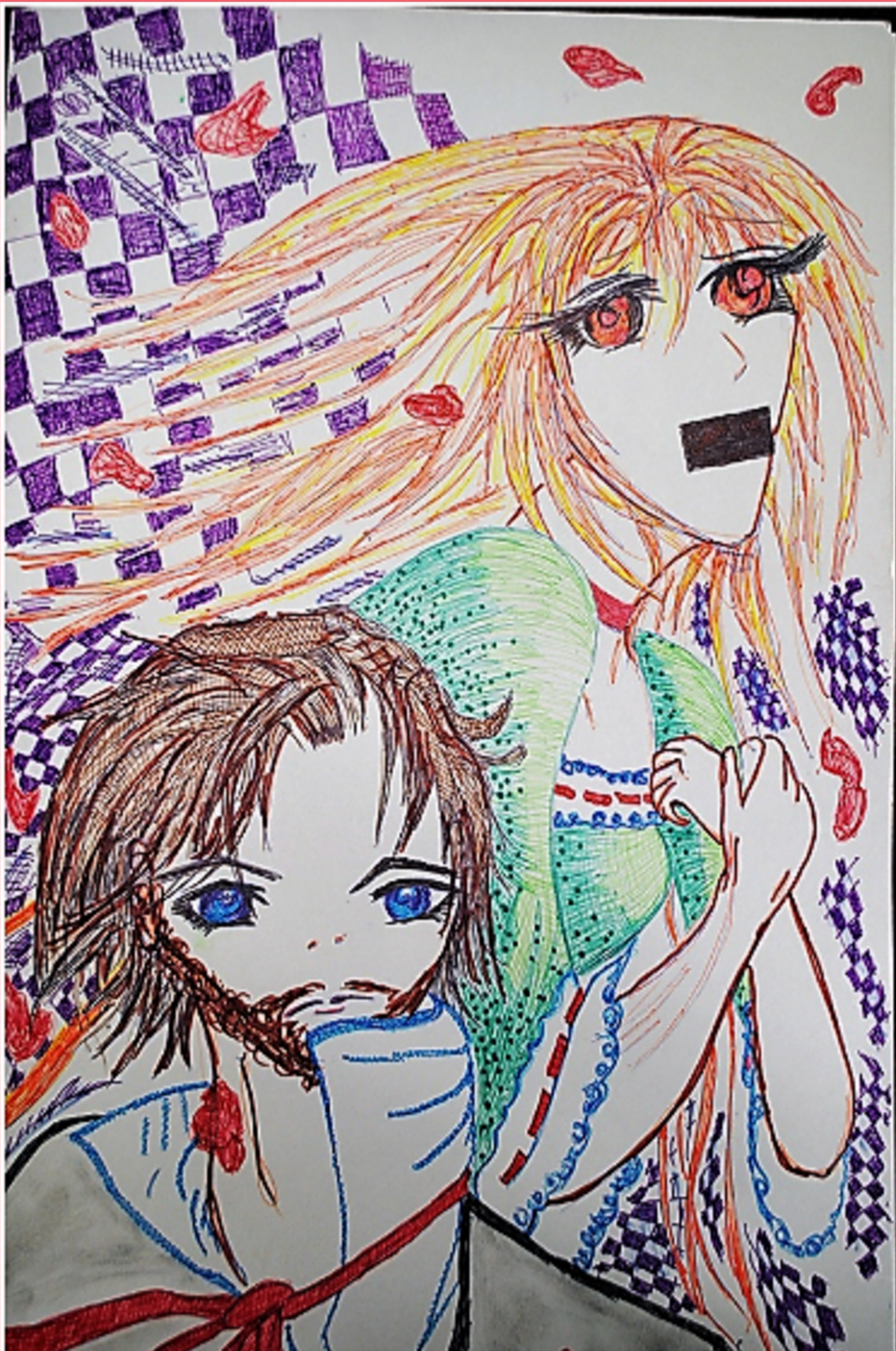
Kitchener



"At the AIDS Committee of Kitchener, Cambridge, and Waterloo, 8 women came together to celebrate Love Positive Women, the resilience of their community, and to make cards as expressions of love, strength, and solidarity."

Toronto

"In partnership with Sistering and Agincourt Community Services Agency, women came together to create a piece of art that reflected their resilience in the face of violence, HIV, and trauma."



Oshawa

"This beautiful work of art was created by the group of women living with HIV to reflect Resilience and will enjoy a prominent place in our community room where everyone can see and enjoy the inspiring messages."

Along its edge is painted words from the Maya Angelou poem, 'Still I rise' and words reflecting resilience are painted in 11 different languages: Arabic, Dutch, English, French, Mandarin, Ojibway, Portuguese, Spanish, Swahili, Tamil, and Urdu.

Language was chosen by participants to depict concepts surrounding resilience and inner strength. *Unyanyapaa* is a Swahili word that means stigma, and was included to represent resilience in the face of stigma."



Brampton



"The Peel HIV/AIDS Network held a community card making event that welcomed women living with HIV as well as women who face systemic risks. Women were able to connect therapeutically throughout the art making event by creating space for each other to share their experiences of resilience. The process provided support and strength within the group and a sense of shared resilience within the community."

The Capturing Resilience Community Art Project is part of ongoing work to build stronger communities for women living with and facing systemic risks for HIV across Ontario.

Connect with your local WHAI Coordinator at whai.ca to learn more.