



Come together

There's something special about the connection you find with fellow quilters... **Kim Smith Soper** celebrates the power of the quilting community

Isn't it fun to know how many people love quilting as much as you do? They get the magic of petting fabric. They, too, see quilt possibilities in every geometric pattern they meet. And they definitely know the thrill of having two seams align perfectly!

Being a part of the quilting community takes quilting to the next level. In fact, I'm willing to argue that the quilting community is one of the greatest, most uplifting communities to be a part of! Think I'm biased? Impossible! Step back in time with me for a moment...

It's late afternoon, spring 2018, and I'm off to the post office with the excited anticipation of a kid on Christmas Eve. Waiting for me inside a PO Box are envelopes filled with hand stitched words sent from women all over the world. Words like 'creative', 'loyal', 'brave', 'resilient' and 'enough'. It's an amazing and overwhelming response to a request for blocks that I'd made in an appeal over Instagram weeks before. In addition to the delicately hand embroidered blocks, some of the envelopes contain

the 'In Our Own Words' quilt project, I had no absolutely no idea how many women would participate. I just knew we had an awesome community out there, and seeing all our voices together would be powerful. In the end, the quilt became the combined words of positivity and empowerment from 196 women. It's a massive quilt – finishing at a whopping 112in square! It's a celebration of how, together, we can be all of those beautiful, empowering words at once. Connected as a community, we are greater than we ever could be alone. And that is powerful. This extraordinary experience

Community involvement offers a way for us to push ourselves to be better and to do more! Share goals with the quilting community and they will see you through, even on the days when your own motivation is lacking

handwritten letters expressing why the makers chose the words they did.

Letter after letter shares stories of pride, strength and self-love – giving even more meaning to this uniquely special communal project. When I began

was tangible proof to me of just how special the quilting community is. Whenever the call comes, like-minded people come together from their hearts, donating their time and talents, to stitch love and beauty into the world.

We have so much to learn from each other – varied experiences, alternative viewpoints and different ways of living, as well as quilting tips and tricks!



If my story isn't enough to convince you, here are a few more of the benefits we share as part of the quilting community...

1 Knowledge

Have you ever had a sewing question, and then put it out to the IG quilting community or your local guild? The quilting community is generous and extremely knowledgeable. Go ahead and try to stump them.

2 Motivation

Community involvement offers a way for us to push ourselves to be better and to do more! Share goals with the quilting community and they will see you through, even on the days when your motivation is lacking.

3 Support

There is so much support in our community. Sometimes the encouraging words of another quilter who has been in the same situation are just what is needed to keep going on a tricky project.

4 Inspiration

I could scroll all the gorgeous quilts on Instagram (and in this magazine!) for hours. So much inspiration everywhere. Look away, Kim, your family needs you.

5 Fun!

Let's face it, belonging is fun! As humans we are meant to belong, and the quilting community provides inspiration, encouragement and support, and does it with a shared love of fabric pulls and Half-square triangles.

Have I convinced you yet?

Whether you meet up with your quilty peeps over social media or in real life, connecting with other quilters is good for the soul. Belonging to this community allows us to thrive as makers. Simple. The quilting community is the best!

Through our love of patchwork, we can support one another's growth and evolution as crafters and as people sharing this planet

lelandvestudios.com
[lelandvestudios](https://www.instagram.com/lelandvestudios)