

Assignment 2: POVs and Experience Prototypes

The Team (Stress Busters)

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Our Problem Domain

Our problem domain is stress. We are exploring both physical and mental stress in the 12:30 health studio.

Our Initial POVs

Ari: We met Ari, we were surprised to hear that she struggled to find time in her schedule to do yoga. It would be game changing to help her find time in her schedule to do yoga.

Ashley: We met Ashley, we were surprised to hear that she struggled with anxiety. It would be game changing to help her improve her mental health.

Taylor: We met Taylor, we were surprised to hear that he was not interested in alternative medicine. It would be game changing to show him the positive effects alternative medicine can have both in mental and physical health.

Additional Needfinding

Last week, we received feedback that we had to solution-minded focus on yoga from week 1. So, this week, we decided to focus on a need we found recurrent through our previous week's need-finding interviews: stress is a serious issue for many, and we would like to understand the context for these stresses and find ways to help individuals better cope with their stress.

In order to engage our additional needfinding, we decided to find individuals with different types of life stresses, both physical and mental, to understand the context of their stress.



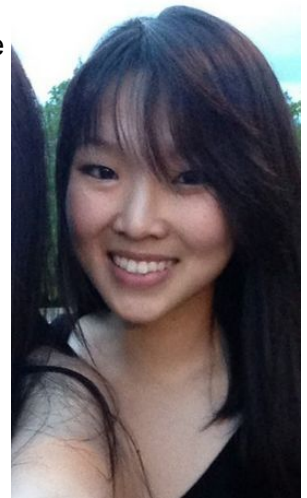
Rose:

We interviewed Rose, a young working professional in the Bay Area. Her day job brings her significant stress: she has a deteriorating condition of lower back pain caused by in large by her sedentary job and lifestyle. While she claims to be motivated to live more healthily, her

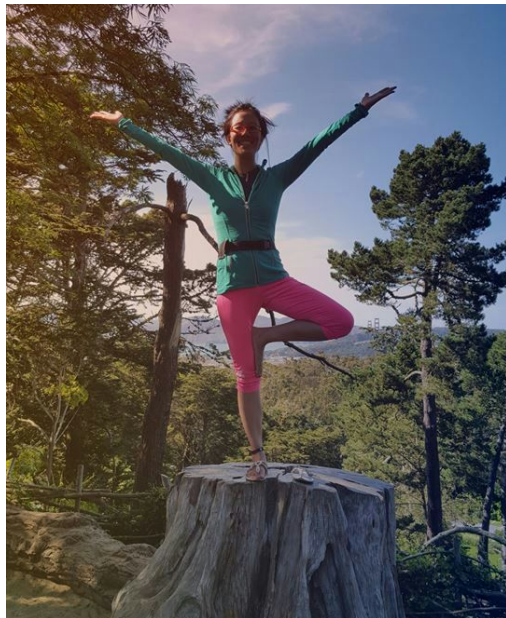
current habits show contrarily. She eats a self-admittedly unhealthy diet and refuses to exercise regularly. She admitted that she was unhappy with her health condition and insinuated that this lack of confidence discouraged her from going to a gym. Throughout the interview, she repeatedly mentioned the need to improve her flexibility, and her slumped body posture and defeated demeanor suggested that this was a serious nag for her. She had recently just started physical therapy to help improve her flexibility. We wondered if there could be a way to help individuals like Rose, suffering from deteriorating health, motivated to change, but lacking the confidence to find lasting improvement in their health.

Sarah:

We interviewed Sarah, a pharmacy student. Sarah previously enjoyed an active lifestyle, including regular jogging. Unfortunately, several years back, she developed chronic joint pain, particularly knee pain. This reduced the activity in her life, since she didn't particularly enjoy cycling or swimming. In addition, the academic stresses of studying in a competitive pharmacy school left her with perennial mental stress. We probed how she was dealing with her physical and mental ailments. She had been practicing bikram and flow yoga for several years on a regular basis. The slow methodical moves and stretches helped reduce joint stress while strengthening her body. Given that she had found a way to deal with her physical ailments, we wondered if we would be able to find a way to help her cope with her academic stresses.



Charlotte:



Charlotte does not currently consider herself as stressed, but she did cope with major issues of stress several years ago when she was working abroad in Japan. We asked her what helped her relieve her stress, and she immediately pointed to yoga as her source of relaxation. She would do yoga 4-5 times a week every time she would come home from Japan. She was able to do yoga so frequently during these times because she would be on vacation, but once she returned back to Japan, she had much greater difficulties finding the time and resources to do yoga. Nowadays, she is a more relaxed person because she has gained the ability to listen to her body and properly take care of it. She says this usually means doing cardio exercises a few days a week and practicing intuitive eating, which doesn't follow a strict diet.

Tia:

Tia is a specialist in personal health and well-being. We asked her to give us professional tips on how to effectively relax and relieve stress. She explained to us that the body has two different types of nervous systems: the sympathetic and the parasympathetic nervous system. The sympathetic nervous system is activated when someone is working towards a certain goal, and is used during most of the work day. The parasympathetic nervous system is engaged in the act of rest and contemplation. In her opinion, the best techniques to relieve stress is to teach people an activity that can switch between nervous systems, like meditation. She stated that, "People love the discovery of the sweet sensation of deep rest and vitality that comes from deep relaxation." She also provided us resources for further research that will help us as we continue to develop our project.



Revised POVs and HMW Statements

1. We met Ari, a college student with a hectic schedule. We were surprised to hear that she had trouble finding time in her busy schedule to destress. It would be game changing to find a way to relieve stress during the holes of her schedule. Listed below are some of the HMW statements we generated for Ari's POV:
 - a. How might we rearrange her schedule to open up more free time?
 - b. How might we help her find alternative activities that are more time-flexible?
 - c. How might we help her find the right stress-reliever given a constrained amount of time?
2. We met Rose, a working woman with a sedentary lifestyle. We were surprised to hear that her day job caused back pain and inflexibility. It would be game changing to help her maintain a healthy lifestyle during her 9 to 5. Listed below are some of the HMW statements we generated for Rose's POV:
 - a. How might we help her develop the habit to take breaks?
 - b. How might we direct her to products/furniture that have better back support?
 - c. How might we encourage daily healthy habits in and out of the workplace?
 - d. How might we partner with employers to encourage/support more healthy habits?
 - e. How might we make it more socially acceptable to introduce light exercise into the workplace?
3. We met Ashley, an active college student. We were surprised to hear that she had significant issues with anxiety. It would be game changing to help her improve her mental health with simple tasks. Listed below are some of the HMW statements we generated for Ashley's POV:
 - a. How might we make her more satisfied spiritually?

- b. How might we encourage a positive frame of mind?
- c. How might we help her improve her relationships with others?
- d. How might we point her to existing resources specifically about mental health

From these POV statements, we decided that the three best HMW statements were the following:

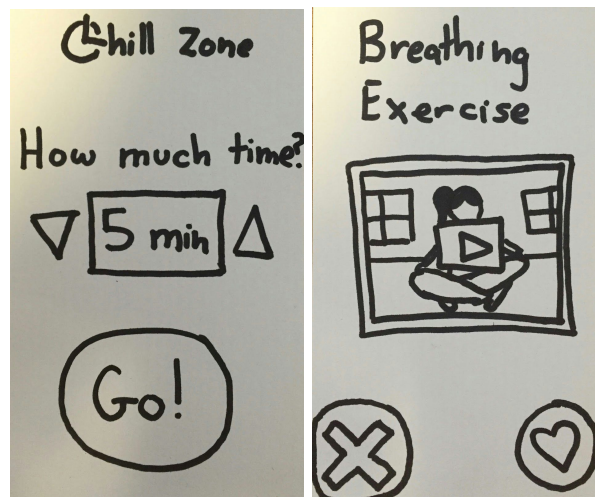
1. How might we help people fit in activities that could relieve their stress despite their busy schedule? (Ari)
2. How might we inspire them to live healthier lives, despite their sedentary, unhealthy lifestyle? (Rose)
3. How might we help them cope with their mental and emotional stress, given that they are suspicious of traditional western mental health medical approaches? (Ashley)

Three Experience Prototypes:

#1: Chill Zone

Assumptions: Users were already motivated to improve their health and relieve stress, but they can't find time in their busy schedules to go to the gym, go to the yoga studio, etc.

We prototyped our solution, "Chill Zone," as a way to help individuals with busy schedules to find openings to fit in quick exercises.



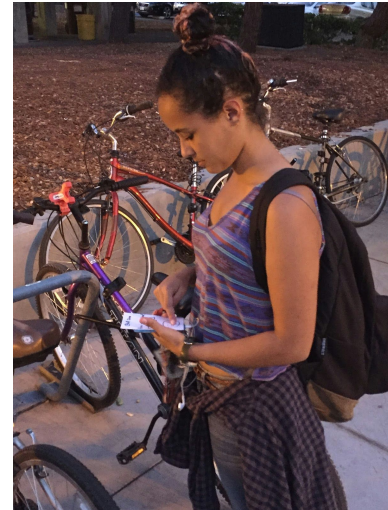
To test the prototype we met with Maia after her class and asked her if she felt some stress in her life, to which she confirmed. We queried her about her daily schedule, in particular if she had time to regularly go to the gym. She responded that said that she struggled to find time and that would make her more stressed. We then asked her how much time she had free until her next class/meeting. She said she had 20 minutes until her next class. We asked her what she would usually do in that 20 minutes and she said that she would bike for half the time and go on

facebook for the rest of the time. We then presented her with our prototype and told her that with our idea, she would be able to put in a certain amount of time and then get an exercise. And she really liked this idea and said that she would use it in her life.

She understood the paper prototype pretty easily. The user-interface was simple, and she knew what the app was trying to accomplish. So, this aspect of the prototype worked.

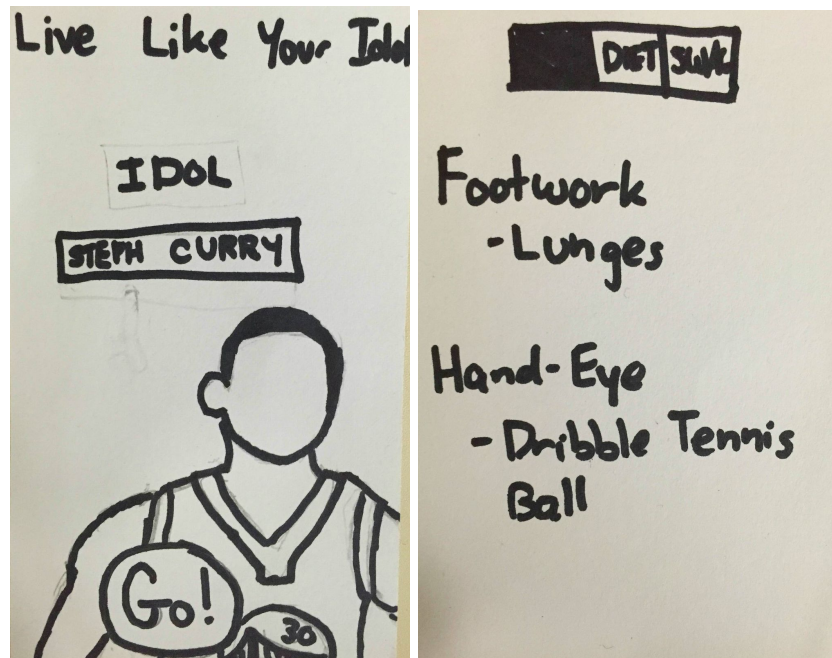
Improvements: She said she would like to see area to choose customized exercise type. She also suggested that there should not be a notification from the app that tells the user to open it.

In conclusion, our assumption was valid that users are motivated to exercise and relieve stress, but do not find the time to do it and for that reason, it seems like this prototype was a success.



#2: Live Like Your Idol

Assumptions: User has idols or role models that he or she aspires to emulate. User is motivated to improve their health physically, mentally and emotionally. User is open-minded to try new workout routines and understand different viewpoints on life. User is curious to know what a typical day for the users "idol" is like.



I tested my prototype by talking to Diggity, a student who was playing basketball at the Stanford gym. I first asked him if he had any idols in his life, and he told me that he looked up to Stephen Curry and J.J Reddick. Diggity's face lit up when talking about these figures. He was clearly very passionate about them, and he was particularly interested in learning about each of their journeys before they achieved the dream of playing in the NBA. He also commented that he was curious about the lives of these figures outside basketball, because he likes to see the sides of basketball players that we don't normally see. I then asked Diggity about how he approaches his health, and whether he proactively tries to improve his health. Diggity stated that while he does want to improve his health, it's not something he is obsessed with.

After testing my assumptions with Diggity, I showed him our paper prototype. Right off the bat, the first page of the prototype was easy to understand. The user-interface was simple, and he knew the general direction of the app. So, the general purpose of the app was clearly communicated to the user, making it an aspect of the prototype that worked.

However, on the second page of our prototype was an example of a typical Stephen Curry workout. Diggity immediately commented that we was not interested in content like this. As I previously stated, Diggity was interested in learning more about Curry outside of basketball, and for him, Instagram solved this need. Diggity stated that "he is definitely interested in following his idols like Stephen Curry", but he also wants to "maintain his own individuality as a person". By following the workout routines and diet of Curry exactly, Diggity felt that this was a bit "over the top", because he wants to live life his own way. Diggity said that "he has a lot of pride in himself", and while he looks up to Steph Curry, he doesn't need to know or want to know everything about him. Additionally, Diggity was also confused about the 3 tabs at the top of the page. He could read the middle tab "diet", but the outside tabs were difficult for him to read. Thus, it was clear to me that this part of the user-interface was not clear or intuitive enough.

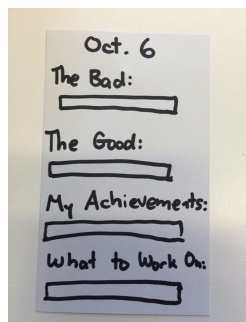
In summary, while my assumption was valid that people do have idols they care about, it was obvious that people don't want to know every little detail about other peoples live. People do want to be individuals in their own way, and just emulate aspects of their idol, not their entire life. I think this was the key insight I got from my interview. A new assumption that emerged for me was that people want to feel like their individuals by doing things their own way for certain aspects of their life. For Diggity, this was expressed simply by working out to his own routines, and practicing basketball they he was taught in high school.

#3: Pensieve



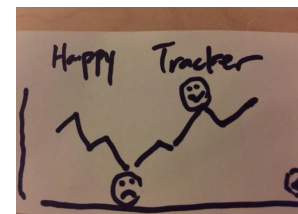
We experience prototyped our journaling app, nicknamed “Pensieve”. Through our “How Might We” exercise, we believed that encouraging journaling would be a productive way for individuals wrestling with life stresses to be able to relieve them productively. We quickly mocked up a few screens to demonstrate the core experience of the app: Users would, at the end of each day, be able to quickly write down issues causing them to feel bad, good, proud, or challenged. They would provide an accompanying “Happiness rating” that they would be able to track over time, to see .

In our test our experience prototype we met with Jingshu, a friend who recently has been working hard to complete her Statistics PhD. We thought that her situation would be applicable to see how Pensieve might be able to relieve her work stress. We walked Jingshu through a hypothetical experience of using the app. She was exhausted after a long day in the lab on a Thursday night and was looking for a way to quickly decompress. She had some anxiety issues on her mind so she chose to record a journal entry about how she was bogged down by the amount of work she had coming up, and rated her happiness a 4 out of 10, a recent downward turn. She loosed some of her worrying thoughts onto the page, and then inputted a challenge to be more organized in going about her work.



We assumed going into the prototype that users would want to use the app alone, given that they could potentially be storing sensitive personal information in the app. To our surprise, Jingshu quite enthusiastically recommended that we make the app socially online to her very close group of friends. She wanted a way to be connected when she was down without being pushy and broadcasting her tough times. A quick message with a representative emoticon would suffice, she recommended.

We also assumed that simple would be better. We wanted an app focused mainly on being able to reflect on your inner concerns. Jingshu wanted to have more therapeutic components. A quick joke of the day if she was feeling sad. A yipping congratulatory puppy video if she was doing well. A quick pick-me-up at the end of each entry input to round out her day.



Ultimately, Jingshu found the concept very interesting method for stress relief. She shook some of our assumptions on how users would want to use our product. She wanted to broaden the effect of stress relief not only from the relief from self reflection in journaling, but also the social effect of feeling connected and being able to indirectly reach out in tough times. She also

wanted quick pick-me-up features to boost her morale with each journal session. Certainly, Pensieve could be an interesting platform upon which to develop ways for coping with work stress.

Best Prototype:

Our most successful prototype was the “Chill Zone” prototype, which provides stress relieving exercises in the amount of time that you had available. From our needfinding, we found that one of the most prominent themes was the lack of time to do a stress relieving activity, whether it'd be yoga, or going to the gym. The chill zone prototype had the same response that we expected, the user was very intrigued by the idea because she too encountered the same problem of not finding time. It was simple enough for her to understand and would give her what she wanted: quick stress relieving exercises.