CS 147 Autumn 2015: Assignment 9
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Wellness

https://meredithmarks.proto.io/share/?id=69f6a1c8-af24-4745-81ad-4b568f766a67&v=2

Heuristic Evaluation of [Momental]

1. Problem

Momental is an app that connects students with trained peers (eg. RAs, PHEs, etc.) the moment they need to talk to someone, allowing student users to specify the peer's location, gender, and topic of choice.

2. Violations Found

1. [H2-2. Match between system and the real world] [Severity 3] [B]
The leftmost button on the bottom row is a little misleading if the user doesn't know what the app is for. "Now" is a little ambiguous, although would make a lot of sense to users that know what the app is for.
Fix: Rethink the wording, maybe use an action verb instead (eg. "Find now," "Talk")

2. [H2-4. Consistency and standards] [Severity 2] [B, C]
The "Now" and "Search" buttons seem to deliver the same type of result (disregarding time sensitivity). Why is it that the "Search" panel allows for so much more customization and leads to more pages.
Fix: Allow for a more equivalent process for "Now" and "Search" OR distinguish more between what these two different searches are for

3. [H2-3. User control and freedom] [Severity 2] [C, B, D]
"Nevermind" and "Cancel" buttons that occur after pressing "Talk Now" under "Now" seem to have the same function but different wording. They also occur a little redundantly.
Fix: Explain the difference between the two buttons to the user with a small label

4. [H2-4. Consistency and standards] [Severity 3] [B]
There is a more comprehensive bio if we navigate to the same counselor from "Search" than from "Now"
Fix: Make it possible to navigate to the more complex bio from "Now" in case the user wants more information OR distinguish between a short bio vs long bio (call them different things)

5. [H2-7. Flexibility and efficiency of use] [Severity 2] [B]
The ability to "star" a peer counselor is only available from "Now" and "Talk Now." Should there be restrictions on when the user can perform this action (only after talking to this counselor) or should the action be available in other places?
Fix: Allow for starring in "Search" functionality, maybe on the counselor's bio page

6. [H2-3. User control and freedom] [Severity 5] [B]
Currently, it is impossible to jump to another tab (ie. go from "Me" to "Search." It makes navigation confusing for the user and disallows them to quickly undo actions and switch to another set of actions. (Could be a proto.io thing)
Fix: Allow for bottom row to be clickable and either to navigate to the last page that the user was on in that tab or the landing page of that tab.

7. [H2-1. Visibility of system status] [Severity 4] [B]
If there is no counselor available at the moment to talk about "academic stress," the app should display an error message to this effect to alert the user. (Might be an assumption for medium-fi prototype)
Fix: Either link to a page with further resources when there are no counselors or suggest another category or set of specifications for the counselor that will actually return people who are free.

8. [H2-5. Error prevention] [Severity 5] [B, D]
The typable bar in "Search" seems to have zero constraints, although you are only allowed to input popular tags and search by those. The user might be disappointed when they attempt to search and there are no results, or they find out that they aren't allowed to type completely freeform only after they press search. Would it just search for tags that don't already exist? If the user types garbage into the search box, what should happen? Is the user only allowed to choose from your pre-canned topics below, or can they search up anything? This isn't clearly demonstrated in your prototype. I would have an autocomplete on the search box if the search can only be of specific things, or warn the user if their search term came up with no results.
Fix: Display a message to the effect that tells users about the limitations of the search bar or eliminate the search bar completely.

9. [H2-10. Visibility of System Status] [Severity 4] [A, B, D]
After the user clicks "Talk now," it tells the user that the counselor has been alerted. Is the user now expected to cross campus and find the counselor in person? Can they just call or text the counselor? What are the expected next steps. What is happening? What should the user be doing?
Fix: Display a message or some sort of new user experience training that tells the users about their options after pressing "Talk now"

10. [H2-7. Flexibility and efficiency of use] [Severity 2] [B]
There are many taps required to navigate to "My staff," and I feel like that is a list that users would want to access as much as they want to access their starred counselors.
Fix: Make the "My staff" link a bottom row click-through button as well, or allow it to be an option from "Starred" and change the name of that button.

11. [H2-6. Recognition rather than recall] [Severity 2] [A, B, C]
After the user specifies what type of person they want, that options disappears and the user is unable to view what they chose.
Fix: Display the specifications that the user chose at the top of the screen so the user can look at it, refer to it, and click back to edit if necessary.

12. [H2-8. Aesthetic and minimalist design] [Severity 2] [B, C, D]
There are a lot of tags displayed on the "Search" tab, which might overwhelm the user when they first encounter the page and increase the amount of time the user takes to make a decision about what to enter.
Fix: Reduce the number of tags, or group tags into more general groups that the user could click through.

13. [H2-4. Consistency and standards] [Severity 3] [B]
After navigating to a counselor's profile in "Search," is "Quick Book" a button, or just a description of the page? It is a little unclear.
Fix: Reformat "Quick book" to make it more or less like a button or simply a description.

14. [H2-8. Aesthetic and minimalist design] [Severity 5] [B]
The calendar button that allows users to book appointments is rather small on the counselor bio page, along with the other buttons that users can click on to actually interact with the counselor.
Fix: Make these buttons larger or emphasize them somehow (using color, labels, etc.)

15. [H2-3. User control and freedom] [Severity 2] [B]
Once the user clicks "Nevermind," it will decrease the amount of time the user will take to cancel actions if we are directly presented with the original customization page.
Fix: After clicking "Nevermind," redirect to the page that allows them to re-choose their options instead of simply navigating back to the person that they just decided to cancel on.

16. [H2-3: User and Control Freedom] [Severity 2] [A,D]
On the Search Screen, if a tag is chosen, the tag is shown on the search bar but is removed from where it was originally located, allowing room for a new tag that the user did not see earlier. Include all options on this screen so that the user does not need to remember the options that are available to them.

17. [H2-6: Recognition not Recall] [Severity 2] [C, D]
At least in the "who can talk about" section, there is no real ordering of the issues, making it hard to find what I am looking for. It might be helpful to have some sort of alphabetical sorting in here.

18. [H2-8: Minimalist Design] [Severity 3] [D]
The text isn't aligned exactly to the selection boxes, so it's hard for me to figure out what each scroll chooser corresponds to. I like that it reads as a sentence, but its laid-out a bit poorly so it's a bit hard to navigate through the sentence. I would fix this by making the text a bit smaller and have it fill in like a mad-lib, where the scrollboxes are inline with the text.

19. [H2-3: User Control] [Severity 3] [D]
If the user wants to talk about a specific topic, there is no method to do so right now. They must choose from a specific set of canned topics, or choose "Anything". Enable the user to input other fields so they feel like the app personalizes their experience.

20. [H2-4: Consistency] [Severity 2] [A, C, D]
There are currently two ways to make the view bio popup appear, by clicking on the image, and by clicking on the "view bio" button. In general, it is good practice to not have two actions do the same thing – it can lead to user confusion. I would choose one to use.

21. [H2-3: User Control] [Severity 3] [A, C, D]
Once you star someone, there's no way to unstar them. I expect that if I click on "Starred", then the app would know for me to unstar the person

22. [H2-3: User Control] [Severity 2] [D]
After I perform a search, I can't get back to the previous page. Clicking on back does nothing. I would allow the user to go back to their original search when they hit "back"

23. [H2-5: Error Prevention] [Severity 3] [D]
When I click on anywhere with the phone button, it actually launches me right into a call. While this is great, a user may hit this on accident and awkwardly call someone, even if they were just trying to

figure out what the button does. I would put in a dialog box that says something like "You will now place a call to X. Proceed?"

24. [H2-10: Documentation] [Severity 2] [D]
Your app seems to have many features, so it would be useful to take the user through an onboarding flow first, so they know what to do and how to use your app.

25. [H2-7: Efficiency of Use] [Severity 3] [D]
I'm actually not sure what category to put this in, but when you choose a location, another location pops out. What is the reason behind this? (When I choose Wilbur, Arroyo [which wasn't there before], rolls out). It looks cool, but should each of these rows be swipeable? Why wasn't I able to choose Arroyo beforehand? If it is a swipe interface, I would suggest putting in clear identifiers to show the user that the list is swipeable.

27, [H2-2: Match Sys & World] [Severity 2] [D]
On the Me page, one of the buttons is labeled "My Staff". What does this mean? In the real world, this could me that you're the boss of a team, and your staff are the people that are reporting to you. I'm guessing that is not what is meant here? Perhaps a more descriptive name describing what this list of people are would help.

28. [H2-8: Aesthetic & Minimalist Design] [Severity 3] [C]
On the second task, when the user is trying to navigate the search page, the tags are very overwhelming. Especially under topics, it is hard to navigate through all the tags just by reading them left to right. There needs to be more organizational structure, perhaps using a scrollable list.

29. [H2-8: Aesthetic & Minimalist Design] [Severity 2] [C]:
On the "me" pages, it is hard to distinguish where one result stops and another result starts where it lists people the person can view. Add lines between the results to make this more clear.

30. [H2-6: Recognition not Recall [Severity 3] [C]:
The user might find it non-useful to have to type in a name and not have the ability to search through different people from a list on the search page. Insert a list of names on the search page.

31. [H2-4: Consistency & Standards] [Severity 3] [C]:
Before you tap "talk too", there are two dots to indicate what page you are one, and what page you can navigate too. However, on the second page, these dots disappear, which is confusing. They should still be present to indicate what pages I can still navigate back too.

32. H2-2: Match Sys & World [Severity 2] [C]:
It is confusing as to what quick book on the potential appointment's page is referring too. Perhaps a better term could be "book slot" (If it is intended to book that RA at the next available time which is displayed)

33. [H2-6: Recognition Rather Than Recall] [Severity 3] [A]:
The first time that I went on the match screen, I did not realize that I could be matched to more than one person. I saw my first option, and if I decided that I did not want to speak to that person, I was tempted to hit the back button, without realizing that I could have swiped the screen to view more

options. Make it more explicit on the match screen that the user can be matched to more than one person.

34. [H2-3: Match Between System and the Real World] [Severity 2] [A]:
On the Me Screen, the Recent Icon does not match well with the information that is presented under this tab. The clock icon had me thinking that I will be seeing a list of recent appointment times. Add an icon that reflects the recent individuals that the user has talked to.

35. [H2-4: Consistency and Standards] [Severity 2] [A]
On the Search Screen, I see a lot of different formats for each tag. The first letter of each word is capitalized. Initials are capitalized and are the only letters that are seen. Some words, such as "first-gen", are abbreviated, while other terms are spelled out completely. There should be a consistent format to all tags on this search screen.

36. [H2-3: User and Control Freedom] [Severity 3] [A]
On the Match Screen, there is an option that allows the user to talk to someone right now but does not give them the option to schedule an appointment. However, on the profile screen, there is a book option but no option to book right now. I think these two screens share a lot of functionality and should be combined together the user flexibility of choosing a time to talk to a RA.

37. [H2-6: Recognition Rather Than Recall] [Severity 2] [A]
On the Match Screen, when the user clicks on the image of the matched person, a short bio pops. The user should have a friendly reminder to press me if the user wants to see the bio. This could be done through a word bubble that could simulate the image talking to the user and suggesting to the user to click me to find more information about the person.

3. Summary of Violations

Category	# Viol. (sev 1)	# Viol. (sev 2)	# Viol. (sev 3)	# Viol. (sev 4)	# Viol. (sev 5)	# Viol. (total)
[H2-1: Visibility of Status]				2		**2**
[H2-2: Match Sys & World]		1	1			**2**
[H2-3: User Control]		5	2		1	**8**
[H2-4: Consistency]		4	2			**6**
[H2-5: Error Prevention]			1		1	**2**
[H2-6: Recognition not Recall]		3	3			**6**
[H2-7: Efficiency of Use]		2	1			**3**
[H2-8: Minimalist Design]		3	1		1	**5**
[H2-9: Help Users with Errors]						**0**
[H2-10: Documentation]		1				**1**
Total Violations by Severity		**19**	**11**	**2**	**3**	**35**

4. Evaluation Statistics

Severity / Evaluator	Total	Evaluator A	Evaluator B	Evaluator C	Evaluator D
sev. 1	0	0	0%	0%	0%
sev. 2	19	32%	32%	48%	37%
sev. 3	11	27%	27%	27%	45%
sev. 4	2	50%	100%	0%	50%
sev. 5	3	0	100%	0%	33%
total (sev. 4 & 5)	5	20%	100%	0%	40%
total (all severity levels)	35	28%	43%	34%	40%

● We used severity ratings of 1-5 instead of 0-4. (Sorry.)

5. Summary Recommendations

1. Tricky navigation

   There are a lot of features baked into this product. It seems that there are some screens that be navigated to in several different ways (Bio page with the actions and quickbook). When I used it, I was a bit confused as to how I got to that page and how I could get back to where I came from. Part of this was because Proto.io is a bit buggy when it came to animations between different screens. Of course, not everything was implemented too, so I couldn't get the full navigation experience. Other than that, it is important for the user to be able to "reset" (or to use the heuristics' words, "undo" and "redo") while on whatever task, so adding navigation for that would be helpful.

2. Color

   We mentioned in section about the color of the app, but I thought I'd remind you here again. Blue colors are peaceful, but they're also a bit under-stimulating. I would try to choose a color that can excite or invigorates the user. Even if you want to keep the color scheme simplistic, don't be afraid to put in extra features that distinguish different sections.

3. Functionality

   As the user learns how to use the app, provide more functionality and options that allows the user to complete tasks easier and faster. For further recommendations include more user assistance interfaces on navigation. In fact, there were functions, such as finding the bio of the user that can be different for experienced and inexperienced users. For experience users, one can know the secret detail of viewing the bio of someone buy clicking the image of the RA. This type of flexibility can allow the user to learn more about the app and make it more personalized for the user.
   On this front however, I think there is an imbalance of options for the user when they are in the former group compared to the latter, and it would be cool for these two paths to be more equalized in terms of user customization. There is also a slight lack of user error notifications, which is entirely understandable given the limitations of the medium-fi prototype.

4. In conclusion

Overall, I really enjoyed your UI! It allowed for a lot of customization from the user and really did account for most of the choices that the user would want to make (eg. choosing the location, gender, and type of topic). I also enjoyed the "starring" functionality and think that differentiating between the "talk now" and "maybe I could just talk to them later" user groups was a good idea…. In conclusion, great job on the UI and already existing functionality. I am excited to interact with your high-fi prototype.

Severity Ratings

1 - don't agree that this is a usability problem
2 - cosmetic problem
3 - minor usability problem
4 - major usability problem; important to fix
5 - usability catastrophe; imperative to fix

Heuristics

[H2-1: Visibility of System Status]
- keep users informed about what is going on

[H2-2: Match Between System & Real World]
- speak the users' language
- follow real world conventions

[H2-3: User Control & Freedom]
- "exits" for mistaken choices, undo, redo
- don't force down fixed paths

[H2-4: Consistency & Standards]

[H2-5: Error Prevention]

[H2-6: Recognition Rather Than Recall]
- make objects, actions, options, & directions visible or easily retrievable

[H2-7: Flexibility & Efficiency of Use]
- accelerators for experts (e.g., gestures, kb shortcuts)
- allow users to tailor frequent actions (e.g., macros)

[H2-8: Aesthetic & Minimalist Design]
- no irrelevant information in dialogues

[H2-9: Help Users Recognize, Diagnose, & Recover from Errors]
- error messages in plain language
- precisely indicate the problem
- constructively suggest a solution

[H2-10: Help & Documentation]
- easy to search
- focused on the user's task
- list concrete steps to carry out
- not too large