

Health: Chronic Illnesses

Peter Lowe, Dan Shiferaw, and Megan Wilson

Step #1: Initial Brainstorm



Peter's List +
Megan's List +
Dan's List →
Team List



Step #2: Casting a Wide Net

- ❖ anyone & everyone we could think of
- ❖ “extreme” interview candidates
- ❖ proposed interviews in comfortable spaces for interviewees



Participants



Student
Athlete



Yoga
Guru



Prediabetic
Retired
Researcher



Young
Professional

Step #3: Conducting Interviews

- ❖ Establish **consent and comfort**
- ❖ Develop **context** around problem; encourage **open-ended storytelling**
- ❖ **Explore and elaborate** on surprising information, deeply emotional experiences, and confusion
- ❖ Informally **discuss problems and potential solutions**



Interview #1: Riley Spain

- ❖ 19-year-old female
- ❖ Varsity rower
- ❖ Recently diagnosed with PCOS & Insulin Resistance



“a balanced, healthy diet’ isn’t healthy or balanced for me.”

Interview #2: Steve Farmer

- ❖ Mid-fifties
- ❖ Yoga Studio Owner, Health Researcher
- ❖ Suffered from Ulcerative Colitis in 30s



“It’s all poison in there anyway.”

“I didn’t find the idea of dying appealing from a young age.”

Interview # 3: Dr. Shiferaw

- ❖ Retired medical researcher residing in NJ
- ❖ Pre-diabetic
- ❖ Logs diet and blood sugar levels but struggles to easily summarize data and determine correlations
- ❖ Wishes high blood sugar was detected sooner



“I was scared after I found out”

“worried I won’t be there for my family”

Interview # 4: Patrick Harrington

- ❖ Young engineering professional
- ❖ Type I diabetes for 2 years
- ❖ “It was kind of like a cool challenge, but then it just got kind of tiring”
- ❖ Defiant that disease won’t hold him back, but giving up sports unnecessarily
- ❖ Doesn’t want to admit how much disease constrains him



“I don’t want people to see me as sick, because sick means helpless”



mapping it out

SAY

- it will be okay
- it will not be okay
- identity is lost
- life forever changed
- need to be more careful
- I'm glad it was me, not Maggie

DO

- blush
- get defensive
- laugh it off
- confide
- voice chokes

THINK

- people are misguided
- doctors are wrong, inconsistent
- her own fault
- less respect from others
- System needs to change
- I need to be strong

FEEL

- isolated
- misunderstood
- confused
- overwhelmed
- frustrated
- worried
- helpless

How can we help?

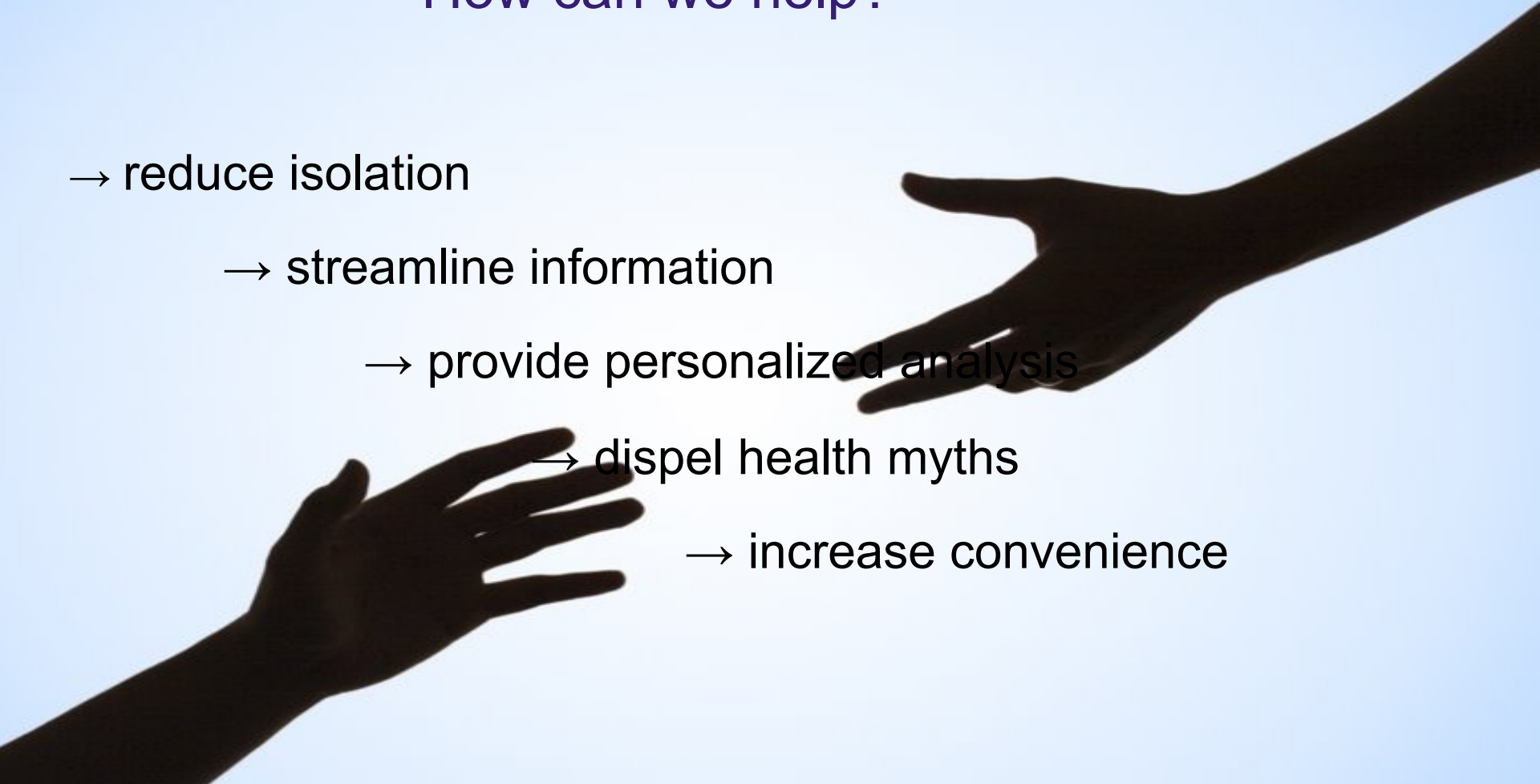
→ reduce isolation

→ streamline information

→ provide personalized analysis

→ dispel health myths

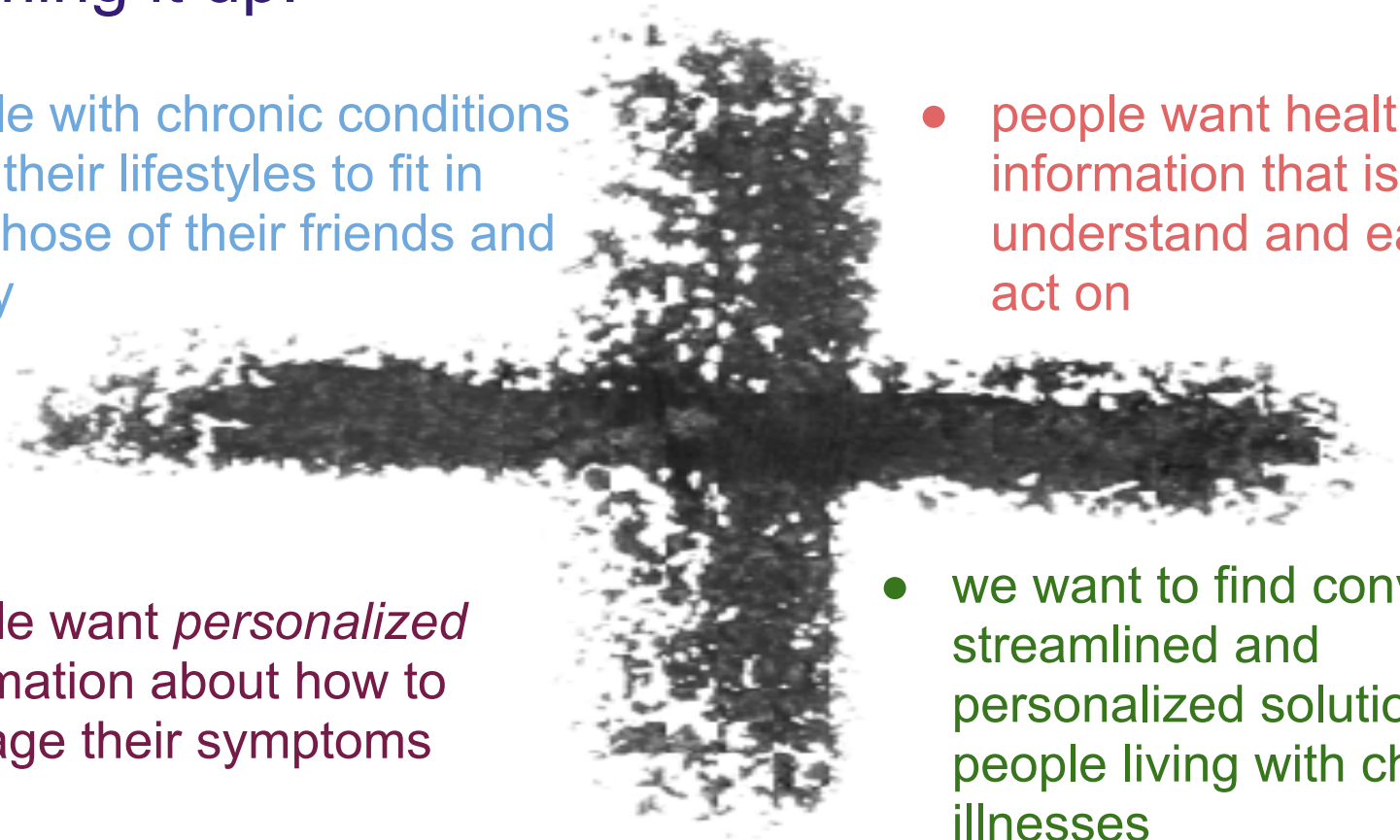
→ increase convenience



Summing it up:

- people with chronic conditions want their lifestyles to fit in with those of their friends and family

- people want health information that is easy to understand and easy to act on



- people want *personalized* information about how to manage their symptoms

- we want to find convenient, streamlined and personalized solutions for people living with chronic illnesses