Heuristic Evaluation of [Rekindl]

1. Problem

Rekindl is an app that aims to reignite faded friendships and maintain current ones by delivering reminders to keep in touch and allowing the user to communicate with friends and save shared memories.

2. Violations Found

1. **H1: Visibility of system status / Severity 2 / Found by A**
   Although clicking on a friend's profile from the home screen shows a stream of activity between the user and that selected friend, there is no notification system to inform the user directly of relevant actions directly in the homepage when the user returns to the app (for example to see if any high fives were sent or memories were added since the last time they used Rekindl). Creating a way to keep users informed of their status by displaying simple activity notifications with more informed (rather than just the total #) on the homepage would keep them informed about what is going on and make it easy for them to catch up on all the activity they might have missed.

2. **H1: Visibility of system status / Severity 2 / Found by A**
   In the "View All Memories" tab, visibility settings are unclear. Are the memories in "All Memories" public to all the friends the user has linked accounts with? When a memory is added with a particular friend, does that photo have shared visibility between the two accounts?
   Fix: A way to make it clear to the user the visibility of their uploaded content would be designating who can see a piece of content with an eye icon and a label of "Just Me," "Me and Caroline," or "All My Friends."

3. **H1: Visibility of system status / Severity 3 / Found by B, C**
   In the schedule page, it's unclear what the dark purple on the schedule signifies. As someone who is used to blocking off *busy* time in my schedule, I find it unintuitive to block off *free* time.
   Fix: Communicate to the user that dark purple signifies free time as opposed to busy time.

4. **H1: Visibility of system status / Severity 2 / Found by D**
   After adding a photo, user receives no clear status indication that the photo is added, other than seeing the photo in the album.
   Fix: Put clear animation/transition for a new photo, or have a glow or a color on the edge of a new photo temporarily, or pop up a short message indicating the completion of posting.

5. **H1: Visibility of system status / Severity 2 / Found by C**
   When adding a memory from the user's camera roll, the "Select" button in the bottom right corner of the screen is not extremely visible (in the prototype, it sort of blends in with the photos).
   Fix: Move the button to a more visible location, perhaps at the top of the screen (although be careful not to place it too close to the "X", since users might accidentally press "X" when they mean to press "Select").

6. **H1: Visibility of system status / Severity 2 / Found by C**
   When adding a new connection through Facebook, it's unclear how the recommendations are ordered. It's possible that if the user is aware of a good reason for why these particular friends are being recommended, they will be more likely to follow the app's suggestions.
   Fix: Add a brief description letting the user know how recommendations are computed (e.g. are they friends who you haven't contacted in a long time, friends you share a lot of photos with, etc.).

7. **H2: Match between system and the world / Severity 2 / Found by A**
   When adding new friends by connecting to Facebook, the "Least Recent" filter uses wording that's not natural to social network filtering. I assume the "Least Recent" quantifier applies to Facebook activity.
   Fix: Collapse "Least Recent" and "Recommendations" into one tab of suggestions that encapsulate the best candidates for reconnection based both on time and level of past interaction.

8. **H2: Match between system and the world / Severity 3 / Found by A**
   When adding a new event to the user's personal schedule, "Copy to All Days" language is unclear and unfamiliar. Most calendar apps use "Repeat" with options for daily, weekly and monthly recurring events to denote an event that happens with regularity.
   Fix: changing this wording to "Repeat" to make it more familiar and specific (and adding a pop-out with more precise selections for daily, weekly, etc.) will help this task flow in a natural and logical way users are familiar with.

9. **H3: User Control and Freedom / Severity 3 / Found by A, B**
   The home screen of the med-fi prototype allows users to add new friends to their list, but not remove them or undo an accidental friend add.
   Fix: This can be fixed with the addition of a small "Edit" button to allow users to remove friends from their list, or a small "x" next to their name in the list.

10. **H3: User Control and Freedom / Severity 3 / Found by A, B, C**
    It's unclear how friends are ordered on the homepage of the app. It doesn't seem to be in order of most/least recent connection or alphabetically, so users may be confused

about how to find a specific friend or specific type of friend (e.g. one who they haven't spoken with in a while) by scrolling through the list.
Fix: Use a clear and consistent rule to order friends in the user's friend list. Alternatively, you could add the option to filter friends in the same way that you do when the user is adding a new connection through Facebook.

11. **H3: User control and freedom / Severity 3 / Found by A, C**
    The user currently does not have the option to delete a memory once one has been uploaded. This could be a problem if the user accidentally uploads the wrong picture or decides they no longer want a particular memory in their collection.
    Fix: Add a "Delete"/"Remove"/"-" button to the memories page.

12. **H3: User control and freedom / Severity 2 / Found by C, D**
    After navigating to a friend's page and clicking "Memories" to see the user's memories with that friend, there is no option to go directly back to the friend's page. To get back to the friend's profile, the user must navigate to the app's home page, find their friend in the friends list, and finally click on that friend's name to get to their profile.
    Fix: Add a back button to the memories page. Alternatively, you could make the selected friend's name a link to that friend's profile.

13. **H4: Consistency and standards / Severity 1 / Found by A**
    On the user's profile page, there are redundant icons and function for the "View All Memories" task. Having two identical buttons accessible that complete the same action (both on the profile page and in the control bar) may be confusing.
    Fix: Removing the second button (the one on the profile page and not in the control bar) will solve this problem.

14. **H4: Consistency and standards / Severity 1 / Found by B**
    The floating action button (the little red circle primarily used for "+") has the label "Select" when we choose a photo and "Save" when we confirm that photo. When we are selecting friends to add to our friend list however, the label for the button is "Done." Since there is a selection process in one view that uses "Select" and another selection process in a view that uses "Done", the "Done" button seems a bit out of place.
    Fix: Update the "Done" button to either be "Select" or "Save" to make it consistent with the memories view

15. **H4: Consistency and standards / Severity 2 / Found by B**
    There is a search button on the right side of the navigation bar on the home screen, but this button does not appear on the navigation bar of any other screen. While this is probably due to the fact that you would want to just search for friends on the home screen, having the button only on one page but not the others may draw users' attention away from it. Additionally, when we are adding friends to our list, a search button appears at the top of the page but not in the navigation bar.

Fix: If the only view we're supposed to search on is the home screen, it may be more helpful to users to just put a search bar directly below the navigation bar (iOS and Android both automatically hide this bar when you scroll through the list). Otherwise, another possibility is to add the same search button to the navigation bar of the Memories page, so you can search for a specific friend. The search button for the "add friends" view could be in the navigation bar.

16. **H4: Consistency and standards / Severity 2 / Found by B, C**
    In the memories page, after selecting an option from the "Memories With" menu, the items in the menu rearrange so that the currently displayed friend is on top of the list. This rearranging can make it a bit more difficult to find another friend on that menu after making the first selection, since the menu items will be in a slightly different order. This especially becomes an issue when the user accidentally selects the wrong friend, and then immediately revisits the list to find the correct friend.
    Fix: Instead of rearranging the friends list after making a selection, keep all items in the list in the same order and "separate" the currently selected friend from the rest of the list. For example, you might highlight or otherwise distinguish the name of the currently selected friend. If you want to keep the currently selected friend at the top of the menu, you could also have a designated section at the top of your menu for the currently selected friend, while leaving the list of options below unaltered.

17. **H4: Consistency and standards / Severity 2 / Found by C**
    After sending a text, the user is immediately taken to a screen that says "Text Sent!", which quickly drops away to reveal the homepage of the friend the user was texting. However, this may violate the expectations of users who regularly use iMessage, which does not transport users away from their messaging history after sending a text. Users may also want to view their ongoing conversation after sending a new message.
    Fix: Instead of taking the user back to their friend's profile when the "Text Sent!" screen drops away, take them back to their messaging history with that friend. Additionally, if you plan on using the default functionality of iMessage, you likely will not need a separate screen to confirm the text has been sent, since iMessage automatically tells you when your message has been delivered.

18. **H4: Consistency and standards / Severity 2 / Found by D**
    The interface guides user to tap a already selected photo to select more photo. This is not a usual way to add new photo, which can confuse users.
    Fix: Use "+" button or other conventional add button

19. **H5: Error Prevention / Severity 2 / Found by A**
    Currently in the medium-fi prototype, the user is not presented with a confirmation option before changes to their schedule are added.
    Fix: Adding a pop-up to confirm the schedule addition before an event is added will help prevent simple user mistakes, like selecting in the wrong date or time.

20. **H6: Recognition rather than recall / Severity 2 / Found by A**
    The home screen provides information about the last time the user connected with each friend and their friendship's "status" in the form of a flame icon reflecting their level of connection. As the user delves into more complex tasks in the app, this information and icons are not consistent.
    Fix: Adding the flame status icons next to friends' names in the "Memories" tab would help users remember which friends they have not connected with in a while and prioritize connecting with those individuals, incentivizing them to complete the task and add a relevant memory.

21. **H6: Recognition rather than recall / Severity 2 / Found by D**
    After sending a text, a very short "Text Sent" page pops up and disappears. The app does not provide further access to history of their action the user can refer in the future. If the user wants to recall what recent action the user has done to the friend, the user has to physically remember, which could be hard. This problem applies to both text and high five.
    Fix: Have a recent activity log where user can see their past actions - maybe with the fire, or incorporate the information on the existing notification page.

22. **H7: Flexibility and Efficiency of Use / Severity 2 / Found by A**
    Instead of having to navigate to each friend's profile to interact, expert users should be able to access their most frequent activities with a friend (like sending a high five) on the home screen, for easiest and most direct task completion.
    Fix: for example, for a friend that the user exchanges high-fives with often, displaying the small hand icon next to their name in the list would create a shortcut and reduce friction for experienced users.

23. **H7: Flexibility and Efficiency of Use / Severity 2 / Found by A**
    A user may want to upload many memories at the same time, or may want to attach multiple photos that are associated with the same memory. Currently there is only an option to select one photo at a time, and each photo is represented as its own "memory."
    Fix: Allow users to add multiple photos for the same memory, or multiple memories at the same time, so the user doesn't have to keep individually hitting the "add" button.

24. **H7: Flexibility and efficiency of use / Severity 2 / Found by C**
    There is no shortcut to get to the user's schedule, which seems a bit arbitrary, since there is a shortcut to get to the user's memories. To get to the schedule page, users have to first navigate to their profile.
    Fix: Create a shortcut to get to the user's schedule.

25. **H7: Flexibility and efficiency of use / Severity 1 / Found by D**

When filling schedule calendar, user cannot overview the week or the month but only can view one day. This can make the process slow and prevent user from reviewing their week or month.
Fix: add option to view it by week and by month

26. **H8: Aesthetic and Minimalist Design / Severity 1 / Found by A**
Edit Account" dialogue is unnecessary on the Profile page, the pencil icon is enough of an industry standard that it can speak for itself.
Fix: Moving the pencil icon next to the Profile name reinforces users recognizing its archetypal usage and frees up space.

27. **H8: Aesthetic and Minimalist Design / Severity 2 / Found by A**
On the friends' profile pages, there are two strips of iconographic controls: the main persistent navigation bar at the bottom, and another 4 icons for actions that can be taken directly in relation to the friend that is selected. The Memories icon (for individual memories with the selected friend) is directly above the Memories icon in the navigation bar, which introduces another level of confusion.
Fix: Removing the text below these icons (and making them smaller), will reduce competition for user attention. Altering the Memories icon to reflect its linkage to specific shared memories page with that friend (perhaps by using the memory icon with a silhouette over it) will help to differentiate similar icons.

28. **H8: Aesthetic and Minimalist Design / Severity 2 / Found by B, C, D**
We see a full-width list screen containing the list of friends first on the home screen, but when we tap on a friend to see the activity history with that person, the list embedded in the page does not fill the screen and makes the user scroll through a small square to see all the information. This may be tedious if there is a lot of information to scroll through. Meanwhile, the action buttons take up a large amount of screen space.
Fix: Include a button dedicated to viewing your activity history with that person. The button then opens up a separate view with a full screen list of your activities with that friend (high fives, memories, etc.). Could also increase the size of the friend's newsfeed to make it easier to read, and decrease the size of the action buttons.

29. **H8: Aesthetic and Minimalist Design / Severity 1 / Found by D**
On the user profile page, icons and texts of 'connect account', 'edit account' could be better aligned to each other. Especially the height of Facebook icon and the connect account text height is very different, which reduces the aesthetic of the page. The distance between icon and text can be decreased to give more obvious visual cue that they are supposed to be one element together.
Fix: align the vertical center of icon and text (side by side) or adjust the font size to match with the icons. Reduce the distance between icon and the corresponding text.

30. **H9: Help users recognize, diagnose, and recover from errors / Severity 3 / Found by A, C**
    In the "Update Schedule" task, the only way to undo an error when adding an event to the schedule is to clear the whole schedule and start over. This becomes an issue if the user accidentally selects a time when they are not free, or if they later become unavailable at that time and want to mark it as busy.
    Fix: Allow the user to deselect free times from their schedule.

31. **H10: Help & Documentation / Severity 1 / Found by A, B**
    The home screen of the med-fi prototype does not provide any information regarding what the differing imagery (levels of how large the flames are on the fire) signifies.
    Fix: A simple onboarding pop-up to explain visuals and how they're determined would help user transparency and understanding especially during their first few usages, and help users understand how to associate this imagery as an incentivization of task completion (like sending a high-five or text, checking a friend's schedule or adding a memory).

3. Summary of Violations

Category	**# Viol. (sev 0)**	**# Viol. (sev 1)**	**# Viol. (sev 2)**	**# Viol. (sev 3)**	**# Viol. (sev 4)**	**# Viol. (total)**
H1: Visibility of Status	0	0	5	1	0	**6**
H2: Match Sys & World	0	0	1	1	0	**2**
H3: User Control	0	0	1	3	0	**4**
H4: Consistency	0	2	4	0	0	**6**
H5: Error Prevention	0	0	1	0	0	**1**
H6: Recognition not Recall	0	0	2	0	0	**2**
H7: Efficiency of Use	0	1	3	0	0	**4**
H8: Minimalist Design	0	2	2	0	0	**4**
H9: Help Users with Errors	0	0	0	1	0	**1**
H10: Documentation	0	1	0	0	0	**1**
Total Violations by Severity	**0**	**6**	**19**	**6**	**0**	**31**
Note: check your answer for the green box by making sure the sum of the last column is equal to the sum of the last row (not including the green box)						

4. Evaluation Statistics

Severity / Evaluator	**Evaluator A**	**Evaluator B**	**Evaluator C**	**Evaluator D**
sev. 0	0	0	0	0
sev. 1	50%	33%	0	33%
sev. 2	42%	16%	37%	26%
sev. 3	83%	25%	33%	0

sev. 4	0	0	0	0
total (sev. 3 & 4)	83%	25%	33%	0%
total (all severity levels)	52%	26%	35%	23%

5. Summary Recommendations

One area of focus would be continuing to build out functionality to help users recover from and prevent errors. This was a theme we found with violations across all three tasks; we recommend creating more flexibility for users to remove memories, friends, and scheduled events after they've been added. Additionally, in several places, there were issues with clear and consistent ordering of friends lists. Making this standard (and very clear to the user) across the application will increase transparency and reduce confusion.

One other issue we saw was icons and text fighting for the user's attention. Scaling icons to be smaller, removing unnecessary text and reorganizing visuals will help to keep the emphasis on task completion and avoid distraction and UI clutter. These problems can be fixed by maintaining a predictable ordering of these lists and in some cases, a brief description to communicate the ordering schema to the user. Overall, we've enjoyed the process of working through your app, discovering your thoughtful design choices and are looking forward to seeing how it turns out!