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Section AC: Mental Wellness
2h: Final Report

WISHING WELL

Team

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Problem and Solution Overview

Awareness and social interaction are two very important factors in mental wellness. The tasks of reaching out when in need, reaching out to friends in need, and thinking about personal mental wellness are all actions that we found that people already do, but would like to do more often, with more purpose and direction. We found that people get stressed and distracted by modern social media due to the public sharing and constant stream of information and opinions. Often on Facebook or Instagram, people only present the best of themselves, and this can make it intimidating to reach out. Additionally, simply sending a message on these platforms doesn't always feel appropriate for a serious situation. We want to design a product that allows people to avoid distractions that come with social media, such as friends you aren't as close with, lack of empathy, potential cyberbullying, and distracting news.

In our social application, we provide a medium to journal about personal wellness while providing a platform for sharing feelings to intimate friend circles and initiating social interaction. This allows for people to put more thought into mental wellness while keeping up to date with close friends.

Design Research Goals, Stakeholders, and Participants

Our design research consisted of a 10 minute survey of 50 University of Washington students, two interviews with UW Hall Health counselors, two complete diary studies, and one partial diary study. The goal of our survey was to develop a general sense of how people identify mental wellness, in addition to finding people with different backgrounds who already think about their mental wellness to participate in the diary study. The interviews with counselors were used to gain a better sense of the problems that are affecting students currently, and what kind of methods are helpful in maintaining wellness. Through the diary studies, our goal was to learn what aspects to tracking are helpful for people to track with respect to personal happiness or stability. It allowed us to gain insight on what we might include as an option to track in a journaling application. Stakeholders include groups of friends and families who are invested in both mental wellness and supporting each other.

Participants

Our first participant (P1) is a male senior at the University of Washington studying engineering. He reported that he thinks about mental wellness often. He participates in an active sport with regular practices and regularly listens to music, noting that music is an important indicator of his mental wellness. Social relationships seem to have a large impact on his mental wellness, with the main events that impacted his diary entries being interactions with and thoughts of a particular person. He mainly filled out entries at home, with occasional entries at locations on campus. P1 defines mental wellness as “being able to do the things I want without anxiety or fear.” When asked to elaborate, he said he knows he’s doing better mentally when he isn’t thinking about his mental wellness, and he is instead focused on his life and daily activities.

Our second participant (P2) is a female student at the University of Washington studying science. We completed the entry interview on Friday and she intended to begin the study on Saturday. She stopped responding to emails and messages, so she never began her study. We primarily used our other diary studies and interviews to inform our design.

Our third participant (P3) is a female student at the University of Washington. She currently has an internship and reported that she “always” thinks about mental wellness. She mainly filled out entries at home. Social relationships seem to be a very important element in maintaining her mental wellness. She seems to be aware of current events and social media as a source of stress in their life. Homework was also a source of stress in weekend entries. Putting together a puzzle, cuddling with her cat, watching TV, and reading are some of the ways she stays happy. P3 completed her diary entries, but never scheduled a final interview meeting.

Our fourth participant (P4) is a male student at the University of Washington studying Human Centered Design & Engineering. He reported that he thinks about mental wellness often. He commutes to school and work, and is slightly older than other participants. He often engages in meta-cognition, conducting what he calls a personal inventory, which involves considering how he appears from the outside, how many friends he has checked on recently, and reviewing a document he maintains with a list of new experiences he wants to have, such as activities, books he wants to read, and music from new artists.

We interviewed C1, a female mental health counselor in a therapy room in Hall Health. Her background is in providing psychotherapy and crisis intervention primarily to a variety of students, but has experience with other groups as well. C1 gave a lot of insight related to social interactions and wellness, in addition to providing information on awareness of emotions and feelings.

We interviewed C2, a female mental health counselor, at her office in the on-campus health clinic, Hall Health. She focused on students throughout the interview, due to her position in a campus clinic. C2 strongly emphasized the importance of a routine in maintaining mental wellness. She commented that she does not “make a distinction between physical health and mental health.” She believes routine, sleep and exercise are the most important factors for maintaining mental wellness.

Design Research Results and Themes

Our survey asked respondents about how they personally defined mental wellness, with a short-answer response form. After analyzing all 50 responses, we identified the following six themes in how participants define mental wellness: balance in life/time, daily happiness, peace of mind/feeling content, the absence of stress and/or anxiety, social relationships, and self care.

After analyzing data from our diary studies and our interviews, we decided to focus more on the themes of social interaction/support and awareness in our design. These aspects of mental wellness occurred commonly throughout the diary entries.

Themes

The first theme that we identified in our diary studies was the importance of social relationships in maintaining mental wellness. Relationships have a strong effect on mental wellness, and within a relationship taking care of each other can be mutually beneficial. Specifically, we identified that checking in on one another and reaching out for help are two of the most important aspects of maintaining mental wellness. During our interview with C1, she mentioned that communities of support for individuals can be extremely helpful; small groups of intimate relations can also foster healthy and lasting relationships. Through our diary studies, P3 noted that having friends to lean on was significant, and both P3 and P1 noted that helping a friend through a difficult situation helped them, too. We want to be able to support this kind of network between friends and families, and empower them to foster mutually beneficial, supportive relationships.

The second major theme we found in our research is awareness. From our interview with C1, we learned how important awareness is in maintaining mental wellness. C1 said “self-monitoring is an intervention in itself,” meaning that just the act of being aware of your emotions has a large effect on mental wellness. C1 emphasized awareness of feelings and emotions as one of the most important tactics to maintaining wellness. Our diary study participants noted that they had a positive experience taking the time to reflect upon their current wellness. P1 said he already does tiny mental check-ins on himself throughout the day without noticing, but the diary entries forced him to be even more aware and purposeful. We want our application to support purposeful awareness of mental wellness.

The third major theme that we found is that different people want to track different things. We allowed participants to design their own diary entries based on our interests in mental wellness. Although we were able to find themes by looking at the entries across participants together, we saw that each participant had a distinct style and tracking choices. For example, P1 used a rating system to quantify his wellness, then explained why. He also tracked how his music showed how he was feeling. P3 tracked what she was doing, where she was, and what was coming up in her day. P4 liked to write his entries by hand and send them in as a picture, and he tracked his feelings, chunked entries into sections, reflected upon his day and wellness, and thought about food a lot. From this, we know that it is important to support various types of tracking methods.

Answers to Task Analysis Questions

1. Who is going to use the design?

Our design targets groups of college students who are already aware of mental wellness and want to support each other, or individuals who would like to be more mentally conscious. The application is designed to best support groups, but could also be used by an individual who wants to complete check-ins for themselves and raise awareness of their mental wellness. If someone were to use the application by themselves, they would not benefit from the social aspect, but could still benefit from the application.

2. What tasks do they now perform?

People who would use this application already lightly track their emotions/feelings, check in on their friends, reach out to talk with their friends, and consciously or subconsciously check in on themselves. These are tasks that we hope to support in a more formal way through our application.

3. What tasks are desired?

People want their friends to notice how they are doing more often, and to help their friends out in hard times more often. People desire these tasks because they are beneficial from both people in the relationship. They also would like to be more aware of their mental wellness.

4. How are the tasks learned?

People already do these tasks, but now they would do them through the application and with more purpose. This means the tasks are fairly easy to learn. Tasks may be reinforced through reminders from friends, as a group uses the application together.

5. Where are the tasks performed?

Tasks can be performed almost anywhere, but usually when people have a second to do them. They may usually be done at home, at a friend's home, at school, or even in transit.

6. What is the relationship between the person and data?

The data would be partially public and partially private. People can decide what information they want to track but keep to themselves, and what would be public to a small group of friends they choose.

7. What other tools does the person have?

Most people have a cell phone they can use the application on. Some people may already do diary entries and self-check ins with pen and paper. Others may share personal information with friends on Facebook or another social medium. Additionally,

some people may already use an application to track mood, feelings, and other wellness factors. One example of another mood tracking application is Daylio.

8. How do people communicate with each other?

People can message or talk to each other outside of the application, but can see others' updates and "ping" them to see how they're doing through the application.

9. How often are the tasks performed?

In our diary studies, we had participants track mental wellness four times a day, which P1 said was often. On the application, people may only perform tasks once or twice a day, or more often when they experience more extreme emotions such as loneliness or happiness.

10. What are the time constraints on the tasks?

Tracking mental wellness should be a short task in order to make it an easier and more regular habit. Tasks should ideally supplement life outside of the application, rather than replace it.

11. What happens when things go wrong?

One participant communicated with us that something had happened that made it too difficult for them to complete a diary entry. This was fine. When something goes wrong, life outside of the application is more important than keeping up with the application. If a participant wants to, they can still perform our tasks outside of the application (such as checking in on a friend).


Proposed Design Sketches - "3x4"

Design 1: Self-Journaling App

This application helps with building the habit of journaling about your own mental wellness by having the option of setting regular reminders to create journal entries. In addition, reminders may also be received from friends if you are late on entries. You can determine a personalized structure of the journal entries when you are prompted to the "Create your Journal" screen during the initial setup of the journal. To complete a journal entry, you can fill in the text boxes on the "Complete an Entry" page and press "save" to create an entry. These entries can be viewed by selecting them from the homepage. To check up on friends, you can see a list of friends on the "Check on Friends" page and the time of each person's latest entry. If a friend is late to writing his or her next entry, you can send a quick reminder by pressing "Remind".

Create your Journal

Select a question:


- Rate how you currently feel
- Describe your feelings with 3-words
- 


Set a Reminder

Remind me

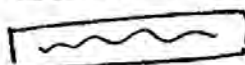
Every hours

Home Page


 New entry


 Check-in

Previous Entries:

- Monday 9:00 pm
- Monday 3:00 pm
- 

Complete an Entry

Time:

Q:

Q:

⋮

Check on friends



Tina Belcher
last entry
at 9:00 today



Leslie Knöpe
last entry
2 days ago



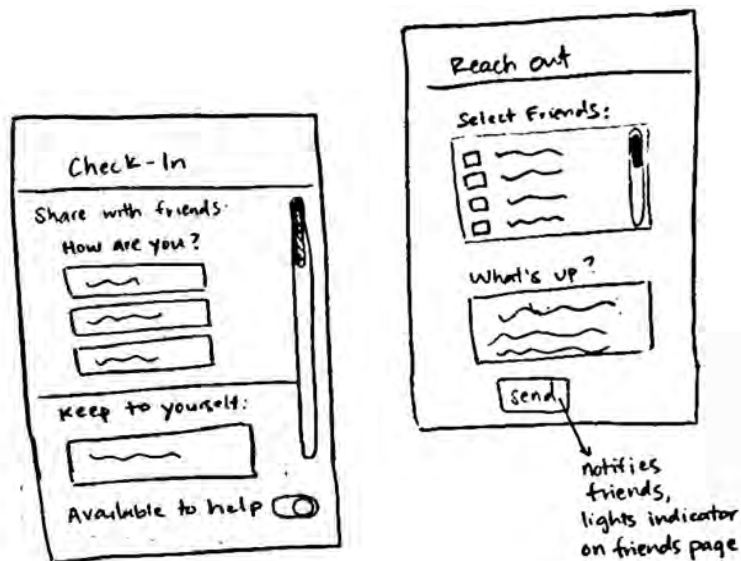
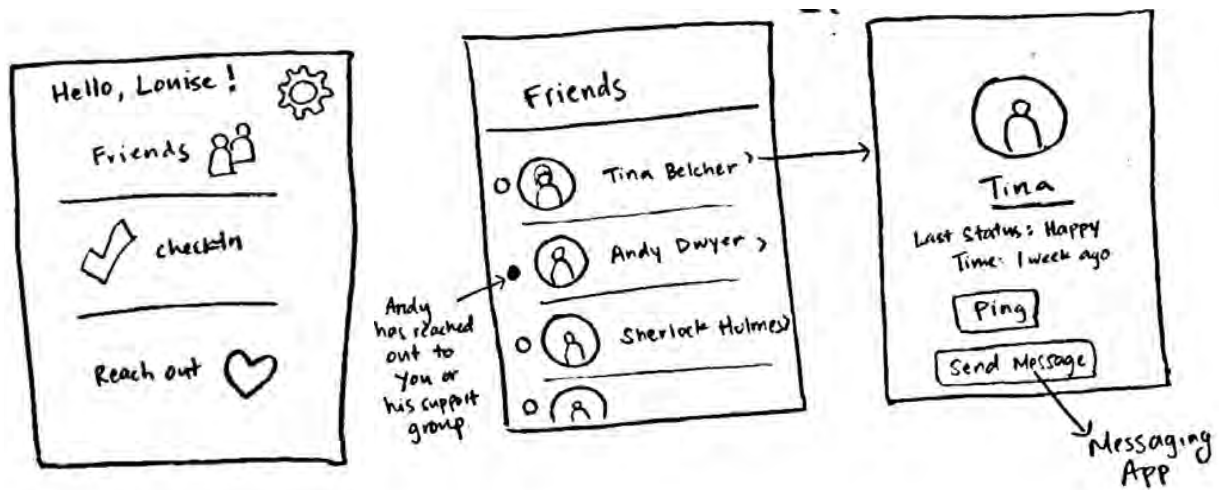




Red if missed entries

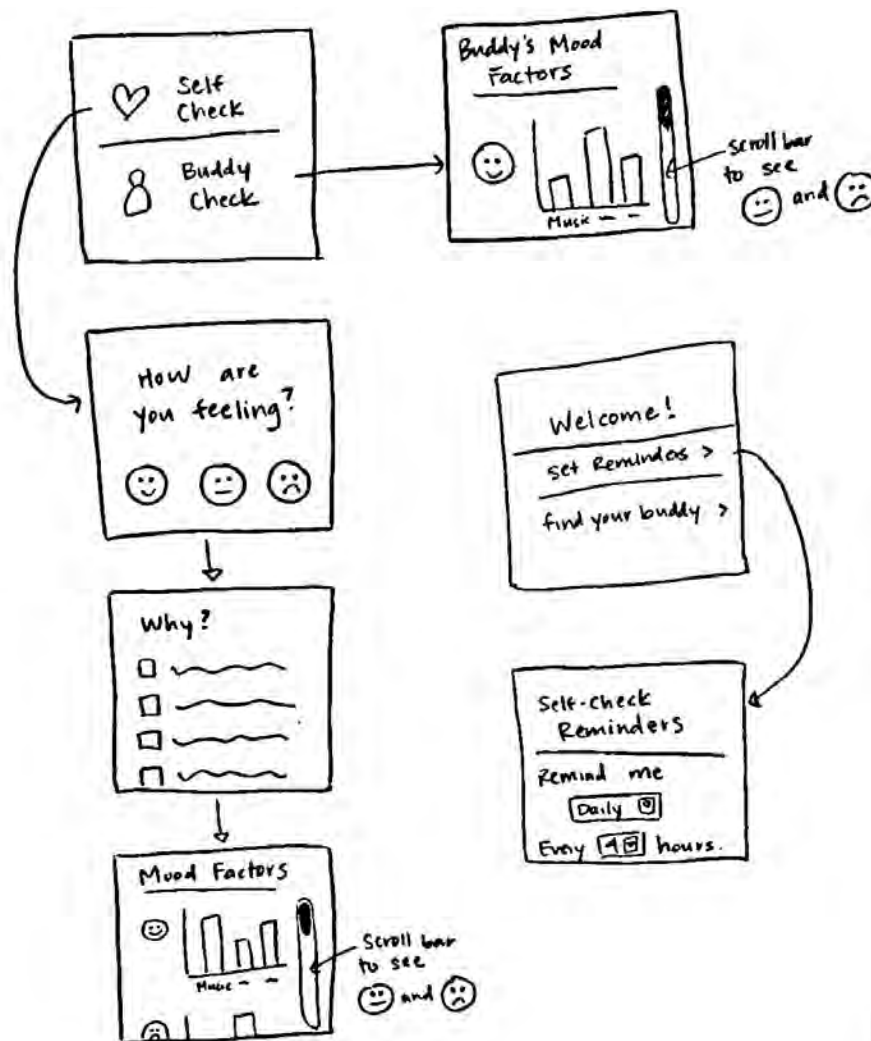
Design 2: Social App

This phone application focuses on the social aspect of maintaining mental wellness. A lot of these tasks are things that people already do, but ones that people would want more of in their daily lives. It allows someone to support and be supported by a group of people in a healthy way. Creating journal entries can be achieved through the check-in page and parts of the entries can be shared to friends as short statuses. The task of checking in on friends can be achieved by navigating to a particular friend's profile to view their status and send them a ping. Another panel in this design gives the option of selecting friends to "reach out" to during a time in need.



Design #3: Wearable

This watch application focuses on determining the factors involved in your mood and sharing these factors with a chosen individual. To build a habit, select how often you would like to be reminded to complete a self check, where you complete a short series of questions. To complete a check with yourself, you are prompted to report how you are feeling and the factors that may be affecting your mood. This information is logged and synthesized into a graph. To determine what is important in self checks, view the mood factors graph for yourself. This will display a bar graph of how each factor (maybe music, exercise, family, etc) affects your mood positively or negatively. To check in on a friend, open the app on your watch and select "Buddy Check". You will then be able to see how your friend is doing and see his or her mood factor graph.



We chose to proceed with the social application. We decided that social interactions were such an important part of our the diary entries and in our interviews that we wanted to make this a focus on our design. We thought that the social application design would provide the best platform for the most important themes that emerged from our research. At the time of creating our initial 1x2 design, we chose to pursue the tasks of reaching out for help and checking in with friends to see how they are doing. After getting our 1x2 design reviewed, we decided to refocus our design on slightly different tasks. The first task is creating content surrounding your mental wellness, which involves creating a diary entry and being aware of how you are doing. The second task is interacting with this content socially, which involves viewing the content that friends share and initiating social interaction with friends you want to help or want help from.

Written Scenarios - "1x2"

Task: Interacting with social content (storyboard 1)

- 1) Alice opens the app and selects the "Friends" option on the home screen to check in on her friends.
- 2) Alice sees that a couple days ago, Caitlin had shared with her network that she is feeling down about moving to a new city.
- 3) Alice goes to Caitlin's page and sees that her last few updates have been sad. She notices that Caitlin is probably feeling in need of help.
- 4) Alice decides to ping Caitlin to see how she is doing now.
- 5) Caitlin receives a notification that Alice wants to see how she is doing and decides to reach out. Caitlin sends Alice a text message about how she is not doing well.
- 6) Alice calls Caitlin. Alice is glad she could help Caitlin while she is sad. Caitlin is happy that Alice decided to check in on her.

Task: Creating content about personal mental wellness (storyboard 2)

- 1) Brandon has just finished a long week and opens the app to reflect on his day and his mental wellness.
- 2) He selects the "Entries" option on the home screen and presses "Add Entry" to create a new journal entry about his day.
- 3) He responds to the questions and fills in his responses to complete an entry. Then he presses submit to save his answers.
- 4) After creating his new entry, he views his old entries and reflects on his past week, seeing that he has generally been pretty happy.

Storyboards of the Selected Design

Storyboard 1



Storyboard 2

