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Cart 253 - Section B

Proposal for Project 2

Emotional Support Pet

Artistic Vision

In the fast-paced digital age we live in, stress, anxiety, and loneliness have become common challenges. Which is why "Emotional Support Pet", can be a unique game that leverages technology to create a digital companion that offers empathy, understanding, and encouragement and promotes mental well-being.

The core of the "Emotional Support Pet" project resembles a game, but it's not centered around winning or losing; it prioritizes mental well-being. In this envisioned game, the user encounters a virtual pet, a companion that's not only customizable but also deeply responsive to the user's emotional needs.

Within this game, users can freely share their emotions and concerns with their virtual pet. This digital companion serves as a confidant, a digital friend always ready to provide support and encouragement. The best part of this game will be the pet's ability to adapt and respond to the user's emotional state. If the user is feeling stressed, the pet can offer soothing words, and if they're anxious, it can guide them through relaxation exercises, including guided meditation.

What makes this experience truly unique is the personalized nature of the responses. The pet isn't bound by a one-size-fits-all approach. Instead, it adapts to the user's emotional state, creating a genuine sense of connection and empathy. Users also have the option to customize their virtual pet's appearance, selecting colors and features that resonate with them, deepening the sense of connection.

Additionally, the game's interface will use soothing pastel colors to create a calming environment, ensuring that users feel at ease during their interactions with the virtual pet.

Furthermore, the game will be designed to offer a variety of relaxing exercises, such as guided meditation, painting exercises, and the option to listen to soothing sounds. The emotional support pet can suggest activities based on the user's input, creating an individualized experience aimed at promoting relaxation and well-being.

This proposal outlines a creative game that aims to provide a customizable and empathetic virtual companion. It highlights the potential for technology to serve as a comforting and supportive presence in a world where emotional well-being is paramount, promoting both personalization and relaxation in the user experience.

Technical Challenges

Developing the "Emotional Support Pet" project comes with its own set of technical challenges that play a crucial role in bringing this idea to life. These challenges include:

Emotion Recognition: Ensuring that the virtual pet understands and responds to users' emotions is a significant challenge. My plan involves using text-based prompts to help the pet grasp how users are feeling.

Pet Behavior: The core of the "Emotional Support Pet" lies in its ability to provide appropriate suggestions based on users' emotions. This entails creating a program that can encompass all possible responses to various emotions and programming the pet to adjust its reactions accordingly. It's all about making the virtual companion appear empathetic.

Personalization: Allowing users to customize the pet's appearance goes beyond just picking colors. I want to create an interface that's easy and fun to use, so they can select the visual elements that resonate with them. It's about making the connection between users and their pet truly unique.

Guided Relaxation: Developing interactive relaxation exercises and mindfulness activities within the application is another exciting challenge. I aim to offer a variety of ways to unwind and find peace to alleviate anxiety, stress, or anger. It's like having a personal relaxation guide right at your fingertips.

Video or audio playback: Another technical challenge I'll face is integrating video or audio playback into specific parts of the game, particularly for playing relaxation or meditation videos. I'm currently unsure about the best approach for this, so I'll need to focus on finding a solution and acquiring new techniques.

These technical challenges are at the heart of the "Emotional Support Pet" project, where my goal is to seamlessly integrate technology with users' emotions. I aim to provide a personalized and interactive experience that feels like a natural extension of users' well-being.
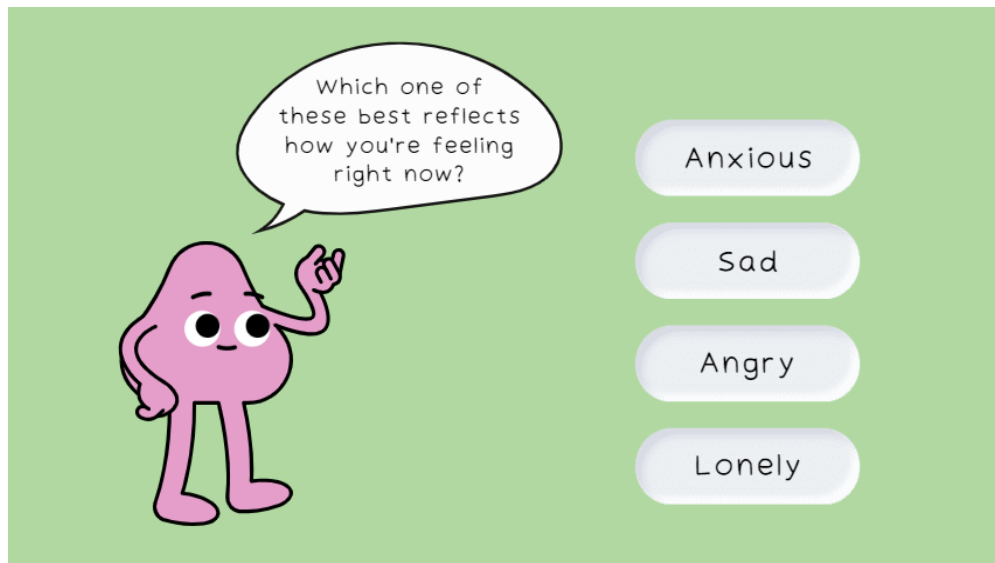
Sketches

Here are some sketches that illustrate my vision for various aspects of this program.
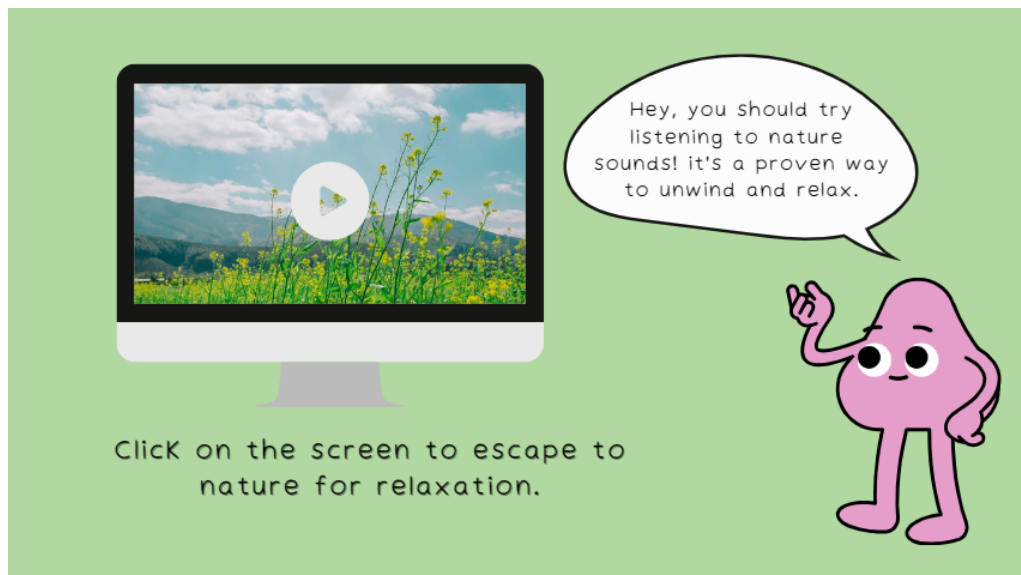
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Prototype:

In the early stages, the Emotional Support Pet prototype is all about getting the basic system in place and figuring out how everything should flow. Down the road, I'll be adding some simple games to address different feelings.

Project code: https://github.com/Dorsa-zare/cart253-2023/tree/main/projects/project2/prototype

Running program: https://dorsa-zare.github.io/cart253-2023/projects/project2/prototype/