Burnt-out Student: Angelina

Interviewer: Can you share some of the external factors or influences that contribute to your mental health struggles and burnout?

Angelina: I recently had a loss in my family, I also have to work 2 jobs besides going to school, and I try to help others as much as I can, which leads to me not having time for myself.

Interviewer: How do these challenges affect your ability to study and stay organized?

Angelina: It's very stressful, on top of all the stuff I have going on with my life, I have school. School is a main priority for me, it just makes me have less time to work on what I need to work on and I don't like being late for things, like assignments and projects, even if it's working on stuff an hour before it's due. It just stresses me out and makes me feel like I'm not doing as well as I need to be doing or should be doing.

Interviewer: Are there any coping mechanisms or support systems you currently rely on?

Angelina: I try to rely on my friends the most as a support system. For stress I also like to go outside and get some fresh air as I do homework or assignments, it just makes me feel less stressed.

Interviewer: Do you think incorporating mindfulness or relaxation features into a study app would be helpful for managing stress and burnout?

Angelina: Yeah, because if you are using an app to study and it prompts you to take a minute or five as a break or even to just breathe and do nothing, it would cut off some part of the stress. Let's say you're like studying for an hour or two and the app says to take a 10-minute break, that way when you come back you will have decompressed from all the stress and you can come back to your assignment with a more open mind. And you would feel like you had time to relax for a second before going back to studying.

Interviewer: Are there any specific aspects of our app's proposed features that you believe could support your mental well-being during your academic journey?

Angelina: The planner category with the habit tracker, that way you can see what your time is going into and you would be less stressed about the deadline because you had knowledge of it like weeks or days before it was due.

Interviewer: Can you tell me about your current study habits and routines?

Angelina: I study at the library usually, I try to avoid the first flood because of how noisy it is, so I usually just get a room on the top floor, that way I can have the privacy and time to study and focus on my assignments.

Competitive Students: Stella and Mystery Guy
Interviewer: What drives you to excel academically and be competitive in your studies?
(not recorded)

Stella: To be Successful in the future.
Mystery Guy: The desire to do/be better.

Interviewer: Have you used any apps or platforms that incorporate gamification or competition in your learning experience?
(not recorded)

Stella: Quizlet
Mystery Guy: No

Interviewer: How do you envision friendly competition benefiting your study routine?

Stella: Friendly competition just gives you that adrenaline to continue to do better, it doesn't necessarily have to be "Am I better than someone", it's just like let's do good together and progress together.
Mystery Guy: I think just having driven people around you motivates you to do better and you all aim at a high goal together.

Interviewer: Are there specific aspects of competition, such as leaderboards or challenges, that you find most appealing?

Stella: I guess when you hear the average of the class and you have a higher grade than that, it makes you feel better and accomplished. And when you look at your GPA and it's lower than a 4.0, you feel like a disappointment in life.
Mystery Guy: When you have challenges and goals you have an incentive, it's like milestones all the way to the end goal.

Interviewer: Do you think that the social aspect of competition, like messaging and stories, would enhance your motivation to study?

Stella: No, I feel like it would be a distraction.
Mystery Guy: I wouldn't say it would enhance my way of studying but when you see other people studying it would feel motivational for some.

Interviewer: Can you tell me about your current study habits and routines?

Stella: I try to study 3 days before anything is due or a test is on that date. I also try to study 10 hours per week.
Mystery Guy: I come to the library when I can and study at home mostly nights.

Interviewer: Which features from the list catch your eye?

Stella: The study category is the most eye-catching, I like to make flashcards.
Mystery Guy: The study category as well.

Procrastinating Student: Rima

Interviewer: What are some challenges you face when it comes to staying organized with your schoolwork?
Rima: Mostly just trying to have the discipline to start.. It's like, once I start I'm fine, but then actually being motivated to sit down and do it, like, I always put that off; I always procrastinate it. And also, actually managing studying- when it comes to assignments I feel pressure to do it, but with studying, I'm less likely to actually do it.

Interviewer: Yeah I've noticed the momentum, just getting started, is pretty difficult for a lot of people, and then you get started and it's not so bad… How do you currently manage your time and deadlines?

Rima: Well, I have a planner that.. actually works way better *when* I use it, and I usually like telling my friends– that I text too much, like I procrastinate [by] talking to– when I have something so they make me go do it when I have to do it. (laughing)

Interviewer: Is there anything specific in your planner that helps you? Or is it mostly just writing it down that's most helpful?

Rima: It's mostly just writing it down in a certain timeframe. If I say, "oh I'll do it", I won't do it. But if I say, "I'll do it at three", I'll do it.

Interviewer: What motivates you to study or work on assignments? I know you kind of answered that with your friends, is there anything else?

Rima: I don't have anything else.. I need motivation to study! (laughing)

Interviewer: Would you say your grades motivate you?

Rima: Oh, yeah, when they're bad. When they're good it doesn't work.

Interviewer: Would competitive aspects of our app motivate you? Like a leaderboard, point challenges, stuff like that..

Rima: Actually that sounds like a good idea, yeah.

Interviewer: Is there anything specific that distracts you from studying?

Rima: My cell phone… (laughing) I look for ways to procrastinate on there.

Interviewer: Are there any specific features or tools that you believe would help you overcome procrastination and be more organized with your schoolwork?

Rima: It sounds a bit weird, but if you have a test or something coming up that you need to study for and you have a streak going. I don't know, streaks work for me; if something has a streak it actually helps

Interviewer: Would you want to participate in a paper prototype? It's so see how the app will work and the step before our digital prototype.

Rima: I'm not super creative but I don't mind helping out.

Interviewer: I think we kind of answered this, but what are your current study habits and routines?

Rima: They're all over the place; they barely exist. Studying is so hard.

Interviewer: Do you find it easier to study here at the library? Like, do you find it motivating to come *here* and get stuff done?

Rima: I used to like studying in the library but I kind of change environments, because if I stay in the same place it stops working. My current place is the UC- once that place **expires** I'll have to find somewhere else.

Interviewer: Do you find the noise of being in the UC helpful or do you like it to be quiet?

Rima: Noise.. Because I zone out a lot.. I usually like to be far away from people but also close to people because then I feel judged, like, "oh they're staring at me, I better actually do stuff". (laughing)

Interviewer: We highlighted our categories that we have so far and we were wondering what's the most appealing to you.. Also, if none of them appeal to you, feel free to let us know.

Rima: I like the social media category- if you guys make it an addictive layout, I would actually use it and it'd force me to be productive.

Interviewer: What would you say is addictive? If there's anything that stands out..

Rima: When you get notifications telling you something you think is important in the moment, like, "oh I'm doing this right now but I'll stop to answer this notification", and then once you're in the app you're pulled into other things. It's usually that with Instagram, like it'll pull you into Reels. I'm always stuck in Reels- they're not even that good! I'll go there to answer a DM and thirty minutes later I didn't even answer it yet, I'm on reels. (laughing)

Interviewer: That happens to me too but with YouTube! I go to look something up but it opens on the [Shorts] page and I never get to what I was there for,

Rima: The worst thing is when I go to YouTube to study. If I want to look up a video, I don't get to the search bar; I get stuck on my recommended videos.

Rima: I have a suggestion that the app kind of does something like that where it pulls you towards something but it pulls you towards your calendar or something that will *make* you go do what you *gotta* do. That's something that would brainwash me in the right way that I feel like would maybe work with other people.

Newly-Adjusted Student: Kim

Interviewer: What aspects of college life have been the most challenging for you as a freshman? (not recorded)

Kim: (not recorded; based on notes) So much.. I need help putting it all together. A calendar would help for assignments.

Interviewer: So you would say it's a big difference from high school in the amount of assignments?

Kim: Right.. I think a calendar would help. Somewhere you can put all of your assignments, quizzes, tests.

Interviewer: How do you currently manage your academic and personal responsibilities?

Kim: Right now I kinda wing it. I would like to try to write it down and put it somewhere, but you know, if the app was there maybe I'd be more willing.

Interviewer: Do you have an easier time when it's, like, a digital to-do list?

Kim: Probably, since a lot of people's work is already on the computer.

Interviewer: Are there any resources or support systems you wish you had as a freshman to make the transition smoother? Like a mentor, peers, friends- a support system, basically.

Kim: Oh yeah, it would be nice to have people older than you who already have done that class so you can text them.

Interviewer: In terms of studying and organization, what tools or features do you think would be most beneficial to you as a college freshman?

Kim: Reminders. Or like, maybe links that are relevant to whatever you're studying.

Interviewer: Do you have any concerns about balancing your social life with your academic responsibilities?

Kim: A little bit, because sometimes you would rather not do your work and do other stuff.

Interviewer: Can you tell me about your current study habits and routines?

Kim: Any time that I have in between classes, I try to do some homework.. And then, it's bad, but I only start studying or doing my homework once I'm *in* bed, and then you get tired so you just put it to the side.

Interviewer: Which features stick out to you from this highlighted list?
Kim: The test maker, mistake reviewer.. School planner.. Syllabus import, Study buddy, messaging.

Non-Traditional Student: Anonymous Woman

Interviewer: What prompted your return to a school setting after a period of absence?

Anonymous Woman: I had a law degree in my country but it was hard to get a job with that in America, so I returned to school to learn English. I wanted to help my family and be able to communicate with them and my community. I also wanted to learn to talk to doctors in english and not rely on translations. And be able to meet and talk with my children's teachers. It was also a good opportunity, here in America it's full of opportunities.

Interviewer: How do you feel about adjusting to the academic environment again?

Anonymous Woman: I was older than everyone in my class so it was a bit weird for me. It was really harder than the past because now I have more responsibilities, including house work, my children of course, and stuff like that.

Interviewer: Are there any specific challenges you've encountered in terms of organization and study habits since returning to school?

Anonymous Woman: The technology, back when I was in school there wasn't such accessibility to computers and the internet so it was hard to get adjusted. Canvas and other tools are also what I had to learn about. I had a class called "Social Media" and they taught us how to post on social media and how to use those apps. I had trouble at first organizing my assignments with everything else, but it got easier as time went on. My four children helped me get adjusted as well.

Interviewer: What tools or features do you think would help you adapt to the school environment more effectively?

Anonymous Woman: I think having an option for multipole languages in the app would help very much. Just having that accessibility to change the language to the language you are more comfortable in. Also having a calender in the app would help me stay organized with everything going on outside of education.

Interviewer: Are there any unique needs or concerns you have as an older student that you'd like to address through our app?

Anonymous Woman: Having a tutorial would help. The gap in my education made me miss out on many technological advancements so it would be helpful to see how to use the app while you use it.

Interviewer: We highlighted our categories that we have so far and we were wondering what's the most appealing to you.

Anonymous Woman: Like I said the planner would be best for me with all the responsibilities. Especially the habit tracker I can keep up with stuff outside school as well.

Newly-Adjusted Student: Richy
Music major, transfer.

Interviewer: What aspects of college life have been the most challenging for you as a transfer student?

Richy: 1:54, Getting settled in definitely. When your credits don't transfer, that puts you back a little bit. Luckily I was able to at the very end to work it all out, and am now back on track but that was pretty frustrating.

Interviewer: How do you currently manage your academic and personal responsibilities?

Richy: I think now with the amount of time that I have after class, I am kind of able to keep up this mentality that like if I do this thing when it is immediately given to me then I can just do whatever I want afterwards.

Interviewer: Are there any resources or support systems you wish you had as a transfer student to make the transition smoother?

Richy: I think I would have, but now I feel like just having a strong relationship with my advisor and my teachers and everything, I feel a little more secure than I did last year.

Interviewer: In terms of studying and organization, what tools or features do you think would be most beneficial to you as a transfer student?

Richy: I think definitely. Make things more transparent between the students and like the actual people that handle all the financial aid and handle, you know, your credit. I feel like sometimes it's like if you don't find out about it until the last minute. That you have like credits that are missing and stuff. You know, a lot of people I knew dropped out last year because of that.

Interviewer: Do you have any concerns about balancing your social life with your academic responsibilities?

Richy: No, but probably because of the major I am in. I mean most people in my classes are people I am friends with, as musicians we're like all pretty much one like big group.

Interviewer: How do you currently manage your time and deadlines?

Richy: Well, like I said. When I get the assignment, I try to do it like almost immediately. Which used to be like kind of hard, but now I just kind of put myself in this mentality that like, I'm good enough to do this stuff. So like that kind of gasses me up a little bit. So it's like I want to do it now and get it over with. So then I feel good when I see that if there is nothing to do this weekend I can chill out.

Interviewer: We highlighted our categories that we have so far and we were wondering, which features stick out to you?

Richy: Probably the Study Buddy. I study in groups for all my tests. We organize groups and we will study like after class or study during the weekends before a test usually, like twice a week.