Reflection on goals and learning activities every week

## Week 1

Reflecting on my previous goals and personal development plan from the first semester helped me to set new goals for the next semester. Also thinking about what I wanted to develop and why in combination with my vision helped me set these goals. In the student mentor meeting I realized that my goals weren’t completely ‘smart’, mainly in the way that they often weren’t really specific or measurable.

Following the first part of the tutorial of HTML and CSS helped me understand how a website is created, and made me able to make simple elements like buttons and style them.

Using a new way of brainstorming helped me brainstorm in an user centered way. We as team decided to brainstorm with different target (age) groups as guidance, this forced me to design user centered around target groups in the early stages of the process.

During the teamwork training I told my team both about the fact that I sometimes struggle with trusting my team/letting go of different tasks because I’m scared they won’t get done and that I sometimes tend to talk a lot during meetings and that I therefore also decide to not (often) try to take the leader role in this project. Because we all want to improve in teamwork we decided to try to reflect on our teamwork every 2 weeks to make update our goals and give each other feedback.

I also told me team about my goal of staying in tunnel vision, to try and force myself to be aware of my thought process. This way people in my team can also make me aware if I don’t notice it.

## Week 2

Reflection last week: Reading the reflection again I realize that I was still descriptive and writing in a more diary way like I used to do. However, I also often wrote what I got out of an activity like the way brainstorming in that new way forced me to brainstorm user centered. I’ll focus on really writing what I got out of an activity more than describing it this week.

We decided to brainstorm on our own and come up with personal ideas. This was perfect for coming up with ideas I really like, while not sticking to it. Staying conscious about my behavior where I made sure I wasn’t ‘defending’ but explaining my idea when sharing them helped me to stay out of tunnel vision. Also actively ideating on top of other people’s ideas helped me to get enthusiastic about new ideas, and therefore stay out of tunnel vision.

From all activities of p2 from week 2 I’ve documentation. I’ve almost always consciously thought about taking pictures when doing something important, and the other times my team reminded documented which reminded me to do so as well. By staying conscious I’m trying to make it an habit.

For designing and brainstorming about my own ideas I stuck to brainstorming with a target group as guidance. This again forced me to design user centered early in the process.

I really notice trying to stay conscious about my behavior helped me in teamwork. Because of this goal I keep reflecting in action about my behavior, which also helps me realize when I’m talking too much.

Making this weeks part helped me get more skilled in using a lot of different ways to extrude/revolve sketches to make more detailed parts.

New exercises and theory from the tutorial taught me how to structure your code, structure the website and structure the elements in the website using divs.

## Week 3

Reflection last week: Some reflections can be a little shorter 🡪 practice writing reflections shorter. Try to take it to what does it mean for me as a designer and what future activities it will lead to if applicable.

Making a fictional persona for p2 helped me to focus on designing user centered. Therefore I’ll continue using personas in future processes/projects. I realized that I haven’t prototyped at all because I was too busy brainstorming. However, I learned from p1 that prototyping helped me in coming with new ideas, so next week I’ll focus more on prototyping.

Making documentation is becoming more of a habit which I notice to forget less, which is much better compared to the end of Q2. However, looking back at documentation I notice that some pictures are not that professional, which doesn’t really fit my identity as designer, therefore I’ll focus more on taking professional documentation next week.

The method of staying enthusiastic about other peoples ideas helped me again to stay out of tunnel vision, so I’ll keep up this method during upcoming weeks. During teamwork, staying conscious by reflecting in action on my own and others behavior helps me a lot to notice when I’m starting to talk way more than others, which is becoming natural.

Making the 4th exercise of vertanux1’s Youtube series in SolidWorks mainly taught me how to use spline tool, which I think is important to use more in the future to make dynamic shapes. Therefore I want to make my next part without tutorial focusing on dynamic shapes with the spline tool.

The end part of theory of the HTML and CSS course taught me mainly about grids and flexboxes to further structure a website. I think I learned the main elements to understand a website and therefore I’ll focus more on designing my website in Figma next week.

## Week 4

Reflection last week: I think the reflections are getting better, the hard part with the weekly reflections is finding a balance between always setting the goals for the next time and linking it to me as a designer and describing the process, since I notice that my progress in a certain goal in a week isn’t always that deeply related to me as a designer. This week I’ll try to write the same like last week, since I believe that reflection format was a nice way to practice shortly every week on reflecting.

The persona from last week helped me to design user-centered, also with prototyping. This week I prototyped more since I noticed that I haven’t been doing that yet, making my first very Low-Fi prototype made me notice that my initial idea might be hard to put into practice, since our target group mainly likes fidget toys that fit in your hand. Making a quick prototype of the size of what is nice in the hand made me realize that it would be hard to make the whole companion as small as that. Therefore I came up with new ideas about separating the companion from the fidget toy. Prototyping in this way made me come up with new ideas and realize what is and isn’t possible, even though it was really Low-Fi, therefore I’ll keep on prototyping, and aim on doing it as soon as possible so that I can realize these obstacles earlier. I also experimented a little with 3d-printing for the fidget toy to see the size, the feel and experiment with rough material which we wanted to be an element of the toy.

Again, documenting my process is becoming natural, and it is a habit to take pictures of what I’ve done. I’m also taking more professional pictures, however, I notice that I sometimes find it hard when I’m in an environment like vertigo. Therefore I might have to take some stuff to another place to take a nice picture, or make sure there is a nice background for next documentation.

I did notice that I was a little more stuck in tunnel vision this week since I also really liked my idea and we didn’t really define a discreet idea. However, at this point I don’t think it is that bad anymore to think about 1 idea more since we are already far in the process and I feel like we are getting stuck in the diverging phase, since we have so many features but we cant really make an idea. Therefore I made sure that we just start prototyping next week and try to focus on 1 idea, which we can always change slightly when prototyping or after, but we just need to start, also to keep the pace.

I didn’t make a new part this week since I was very busy, however I did make a really simple part of the rough and smooth surface to 3d print, but I did not learn much new techniques in SolidWorks itself.

I’ve made a start with designing my portfolio in Figma, and I found out that there is a way to translate parts of your Figma design into CSS which can help me when realizing my site nearing the end. I also found a way to host your website for free on Github which I might be able to use to host my final website in the end.

## Week 5

Reflection last week: I think the reflections are good enough for the weekly reflections, the portfolio is also coming up and I also made a reflection for the student mentor meeting, so I’ll have to reflect for more assignments. I do believe reflecting got more natural for me, also in the way we are meant to do, link it to me as designer, not too much words etc. So for upcoming weeks I’ll do quick reflections on my goals just to see if I’m on track, but a bit less focus on the reflecting part.

I prototyped a low-fi start of a possible look of our companion, which helped with communicating the concept and getting a feel for the size. Also it allows us to get feedback next week, especially in the silent critique. I’ve also made a small summary of results from the questionnaire mainly made by Ezster. I wanted to make a complete persona, but for making a complete persona I would need a little more personal information, which wasn’t necessary for us and therefore left it out. I did make a persona out of the information which we did get, to make decision decisions based on answers of our potential users, like designing the fidget toy small.

When documenting I try to think about making it as professional as possible, and also had some nice documentation. I think this goal is almost completed for me, since taking pictures feels natural, and I start getting conscious also about the quality of the documentation, which makes me more competent in a designer by being able to communicate my progress.

We decided to continue with the idea I had in mind, and work it out further, we were all enthusiastic about it and I think we all just wanted to continue prototyping and implementing electronics. In this phase I again made sure I wasn’t sticking around my own vision too much, and stayed open to additions and changes to the main concept. I also think this goal is getting closer to completed, not that I don’t experience tunnel vision anymore, but I think this is something that is part of me, however I do believe that I’m getting conscious about when I’m not looking for alternatives and force myself to do so.

Again, I realize I didn’t make a part, next week I’ll make sure that I’ll make a part for this goal, specifically a more dynamic part like a spoon.

Designing the website is going great, I made a start of the design in Figma and also made it partly with html and CSS. I believe I can complete this goal and make my complete website in html and CSS with the help of Figma and internet.