Study App Proposal Report

1. Introduction

In early January 2020, a new virus was reported to have spread in Wuhan, China. This caused the world to break out in anxiety and uneasiness. On 23 January 2020, the very first case of the Coronavirus was reported in Singapore. Gradually, more and more citizens in Singapore were suffering the effects of Covid-19. Followed by this, was the constant lockdowns and Circuit Breakers happening in Singapore. This caused the disruption of lives in Singapore over the past three years years, such as work life for adults, and education for students. An article that studied the emotions that people had during this period stated that "the participants' emotions were deeply disrupted by life in lockdown. The participants felt both less happy and aroused and more anxious, fearful, and angry." (Frontiers in Psychology, 2021).

2. Effects on People

During this period, Singapore adjusted to a system where students studied from home (Home-Based Learning), and adults to work from home. It is no doubt that people felt lonelier during the pandemic. A study from a Harvard Staff Writer mentioned a survey that was conducted by researchers at Making Caring Common, that "36 percent of respondents to a national survey of approximately 950 Americans reported feeling lonely "frequently" or "almost all the time or all the time" in the prior four weeks, compared with 25 percent who recalled experiencing serious issues in the two months prior to the pandemic. Perhaps most striking is that 61 percent of those aged 18 to 25 reported high levels." (Walsh, 2021). This showed that people were strongly affect mentally during the pandemic. Even though this survey was conducted in America, it is inevitable that young adults in Singapore would feel that way too.

2.1 Effects on Motivation

Ultimately, being disrupted mentally or psychologically, will also affect a person's way of performing daily tasks such as studying, or working. A research conducted by Psyblog (Psyblog, n.d.) and studied by Psychology today, shows that "quarantines, lockdowns, and social distancing have left one-in-three of us depressed and anxious. We are feeling at once under-stimulated and deeply unsettled." (Braucher, 2021). This caused people to be less motivated in doing things.

3. "Buddy" App Proposal

With that being said, I came up with a proposal to introduce an app that helps ease the situation during Covid, by helping users feel more light-hearted and comfortable with staying home during the pandemic.

3.1 Buddy

This app is an enhancement of a previous study app called “Study Bunny”. This app was named Buddy, as to give users the message that this app provides them with a buddy to work with. Whether it is for studies or for work, Buddy offers a variety of buddies for users to work with.

4. Relation to Covid-19

This app relates to education. One of the groups of people that was heavily affected was students. Students are mostly used to the school-life where they have their lessons face-to-face in real life with their teachers. This allowed students to have an easy connection with a teacher whenever they had a problem with their work, simply by raising their hands in class, they are able to get the attention of teachers. In school, many students have a habit of studying with friends even after classes have ended. Most of the time, teachers also help students keep track of the things they have to do, simply by writing instructions on a whiteboard.

However, most of these changed after Covid lockdowns, where students are stuck at home. They attend lessons through Zoom, Google Meet or Teams Call, and ask questions through a screen. This made it harder for students to interact with other students and teachers. Due to this, students have a harder time planning their workload, or having teacher feedback on their studies. They also have a harder time meeting with their friends as everyone is busy at home.

4.1 Reasons for Working on This Concept

Planning on this concept was to help students get through this tough time with a buddy. It was difficult for students to adjust to a new learning system, thus it was essential that they had some sort of company that could help them adjust properly. Moreover, this app can also be found very useful to working adults, even after Covid comes to an end. The usability of the app extends beyond the use of only studies.

4.2 Goal of the App

The main goal of the app is to give users a new sense of motivation to carry out daily tasks and work. This is also to ensure studying does not make learning dull for students, but instead an enjoyable experience. In hopes of achieving this, the app will provide features that help ease balance of study or work life, at the same time providing some fun for the users.

5. Features

Buddy provides a total of 6 features for users to interact with, namely a planner, a buddy, a statistics system, a timer, music and working together with others. Both the mobile and watch view gives users the same features. However, the watch view is a more compact compared to the mobile view, this is so to simplify the look of the app on the watch.

5.1 Planner

The planner provides users with a calendar and a task list. When users enter the mobile view, users will see both the calendar and the task list on the same page. Users are able to select any day of the month of year and add a task to it. When tasks are completed,

users can swipe right on the task to clear it, or if they want to remove a task, they can select a bin button.

On the watch view, when users enter the planner feature, they will first see the task list. This is to bring more focus to the task that they want to do on that day. Swiping down will bring down the calendar, where they are able to select days from there.

5.2 Buddy

This Buddy features allows you to choose any buddy you would like to study or work with. The first time choosing a buddy will be free, however, any buddy you would like to work with next will require you to pay with points (which can be earned by studying). The feature will be named after the buddy you have selected. For example, if you have chosen the buddy Pibi the Monkey, the feature will be named Pibi. The theme of some features in the app will become yellow, which is a colour associated with Pibi. Currency type will also change to an icon that is associated with Pibi, which will be a banana. When other buddies are selected, for example Ruby the Pig, the theme will switch to pink, and currency type will be beetroot.

In the buddy feature, there is a shop for users to go to, to buy items for their buddies, such as hats, snow globes and more. The “change buddy” feature is located in the shop.

5.3 Timer

The timer feature gives users 2 options, a countdown, or a stopwatch. Stopwatch will start timing when you hit the start button. However, for countdown, you are required to set a time before starting. The countdown is flexible, you are able to set it in hours, minutes, and in seconds. For every ten minutes that a user studies, they are able to earn one currency point (which means one banana with Pibi). When the countdown or stopwatch has ended, there will be a congratulatory page that tells the user how much currency they have earned.

On the top right corner, there is a tag. This tag is called a label. Labels are the topics or subjects you are working on, for example Math or Science. Different Labels have different colour to represent different subjects. Right before you start a timer, users are required to select a Label, so that it could be tracked down in the Statistics feature.

5.4 Statistics

Statistics will help users keep track of the things they have done. By using the timer, the statistics feature tracks how much time you spent on each Label. This helps users to better see where their focus lies in, and better see which subject or topic they require more focus on. The users can view progress that summarises data daily, weekly, or monthly. The bottom of the page shows the total time spent on a certain day, week or month.

Statistics also allow users to select a Label that they would like to focus on. When clicking on a certain Label, the statistics will only show data collected for that specific Label.

5.5 Music

This feature allows users to play soothing and calm music that helps them to focus on studying or doing work. This feature does not require any currency to get.

5.6 Together

This feature allows for users to study or work together with friends in a study room made for the buddies. The study room can only fit up to 8 buddies. In this feature, users will get to earn a separate set of currency called “together” points. This means that when users study, they get their own set of currency for their buddy (e.g., bananas for Pibi), and another set of currency for the study group. Currency for the study group allows the users in that group to buy items for the study room. However, since there are more users contributing to earning currency in the study group, the prices of items will be higher than that of user’s individual buddy items. Users are also able to view who is studying together with them in the same group.

6. Competitive Analysis

This competitive analysis will involve three apps, namely Study Bunny, Forest, and Yeolpumta

6.1 Study Bunny

This app is an enhancement of Study Bunny, thus many of the features will seem similar, however, there are still several changes made to its system.

6.1.1 To-Do List

In Study Bunny, there is a feature called To-Do list, which is now the planner in Buddy. This change was made because there was only one such to-do list, which will make things messy, especially if users want to have a separate to do list for each day. Thus, the To=Do List feature, was merged with a calendar, to make planning more in depth for users

6.1.2 Timer

The timer in Study bunny was not very flexible, it only allowed users to set the countdown in intervals of five minutes, and the method of setting the time uses a drag button which essentially wastes time because users must slowly drag the button to find the right interval. The maximum hours that users can set in Study Bunny is only three hours, there are users that wish to study longer without interruptions from the app.

6.1.3 Currency System

Study also had a currency system of coins and carrots. Coins can be used to buy items in the shop. However, the use for carrots is very limited, it can only be fed to the bunny, and the carrot had no effects other than making chewing noises. The only way to earn carrots is by watching advertisements, which ruins the purpose of the study app. The idea of the current Buddy app is to prioritise studying, thus the only source of currency should only come from studying.

6.1.4 Music

In Study Bunny, music is also provided, but only a one or two are free to use, the rest require users to purchase with the in-game currency. However, music helps users be more calm or soothed when studying. Thus, this app aims to give users a more friendly experience by providing features that helps improve studying or working.

6.2 Forest

Forest heavily advertises the fact that they grow trees in real life when users study. However, to grow an actual tree, users are required to pay a small sum of money. Otherwise, users can only enjoy the in-game tree growth experience. A positive feature they have is that they include very in-depth statistics of the user's time studying. Aesthetically, the app also gives users a sense of comfort when studying.

6.3 Yeolpumpta

Yeolpumpta's main feature is to allow users to study with friends. Yeolpumpta study groups record the total amount of time each user studies for and displays them in the app for everyone else to see. While this encourages users to study longer. Some users feel stress when seeing other friends' study for long hours while they have not. This may cause users to intentionally clock in hours just to show that they have studied a lot too.

7. Core Objectives

Some core objectives for users when they enter the app would be:

- A student at home having no motivation to study or do any work.
- A working adult require a planner to help sort out their work.

This app strives to help users in handling task in their daily lives, as well as providing a digital companion that can be brought anywhere since the app can be accessed on phone or apple watch.

References

Walsh C. (2021, February 17). *Yong adults hardest hit by loneliness during pandemic*. The Harvard Gazette. Retrieved from

https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2021/02/young-adults-teens-loneliness-mental-health-coronavirus-covid-pandemic/#:~:text=As%20psychologists%20worry%20that%20the,older%20teens%20and%20young%20adults.

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Pandemic Psychology: How COVID Changed Us And How We Coped With It. (n.d.). Psyblog. Retrieved from

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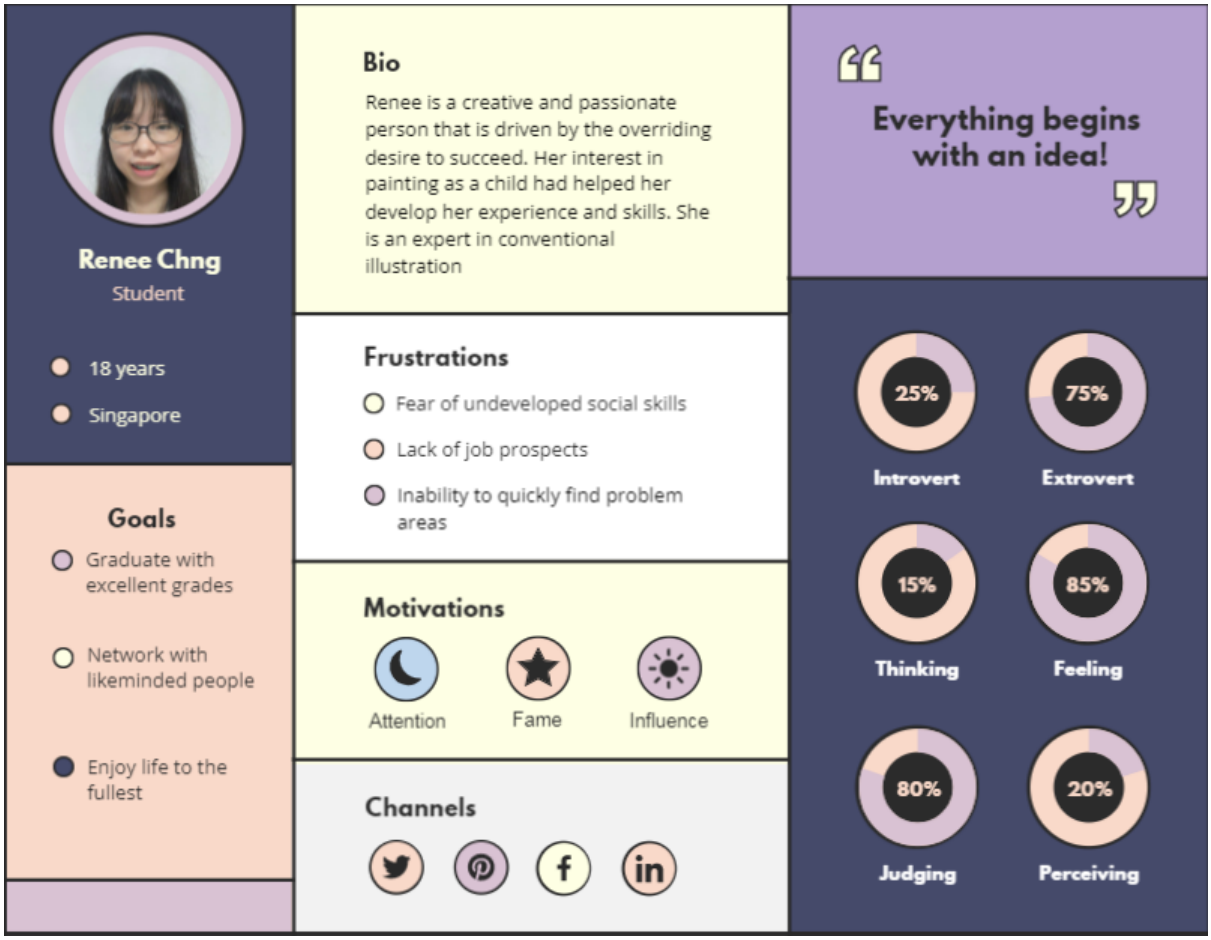
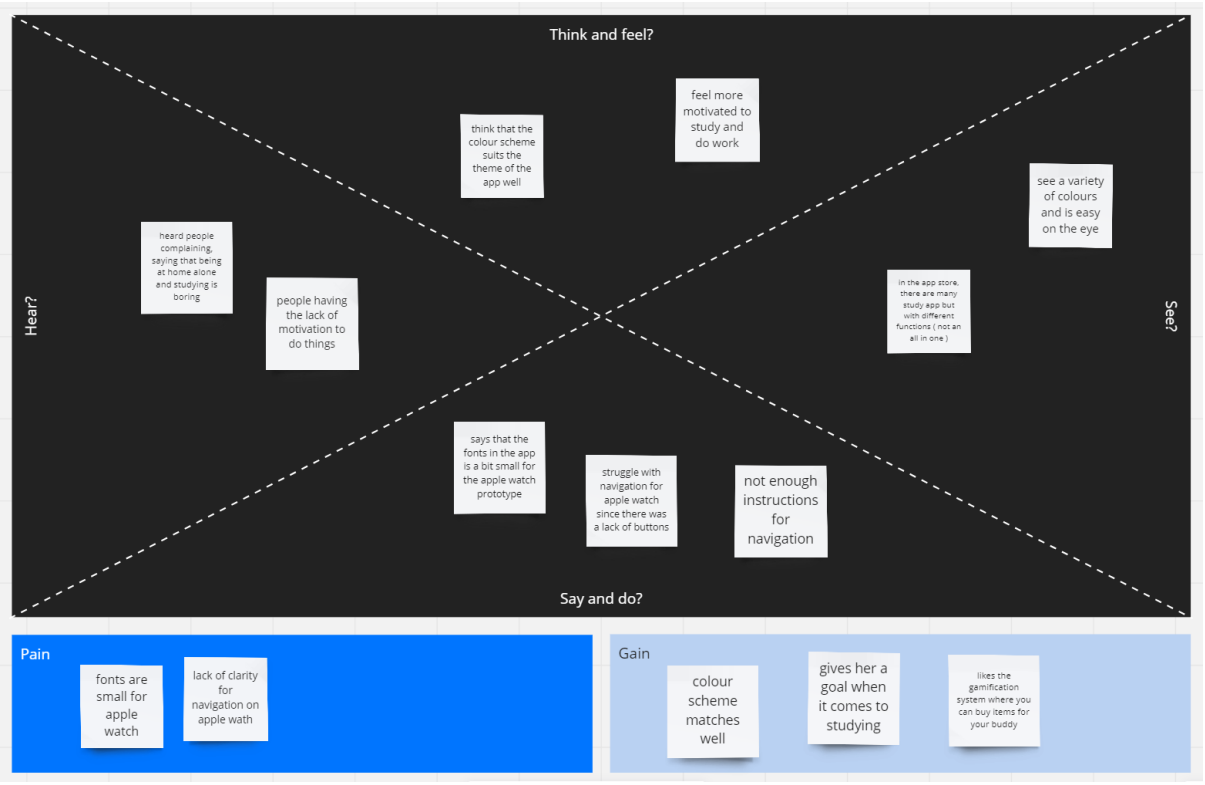
Persona



Empathy Map

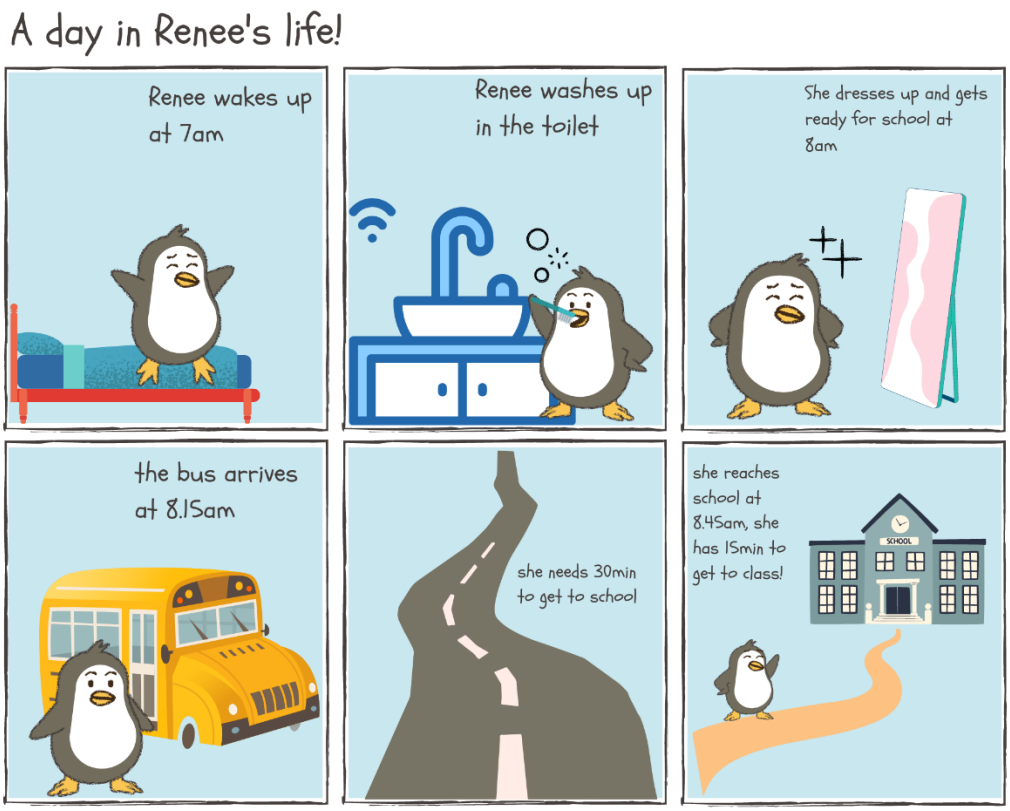
https://miro.com/app/board/uXjVMFhMhWw=/

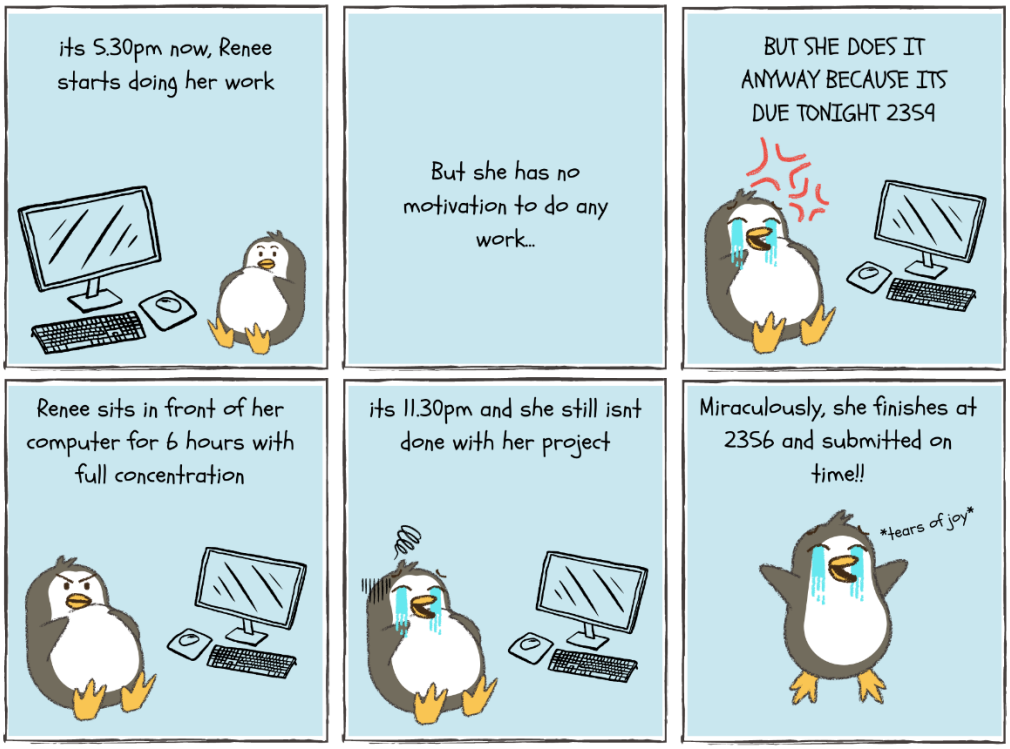

Think and feel?
feel more motivated to study and do work
think that the colour scheme suits the theme of the app well
see a variety of colours and is easy on the eye
heard people complaining, saying that being at home alone and studying is boring
people having the lack of motivation to do things
in the app store, there are many study app but with different functions (not an all in one)
Hear?
See?
says that the fonts in the app is a bit small for the apple watch prototype
struggle with navigation for apple watch since there was a lack of buttons
not enough instructions for navigation
Say and do?

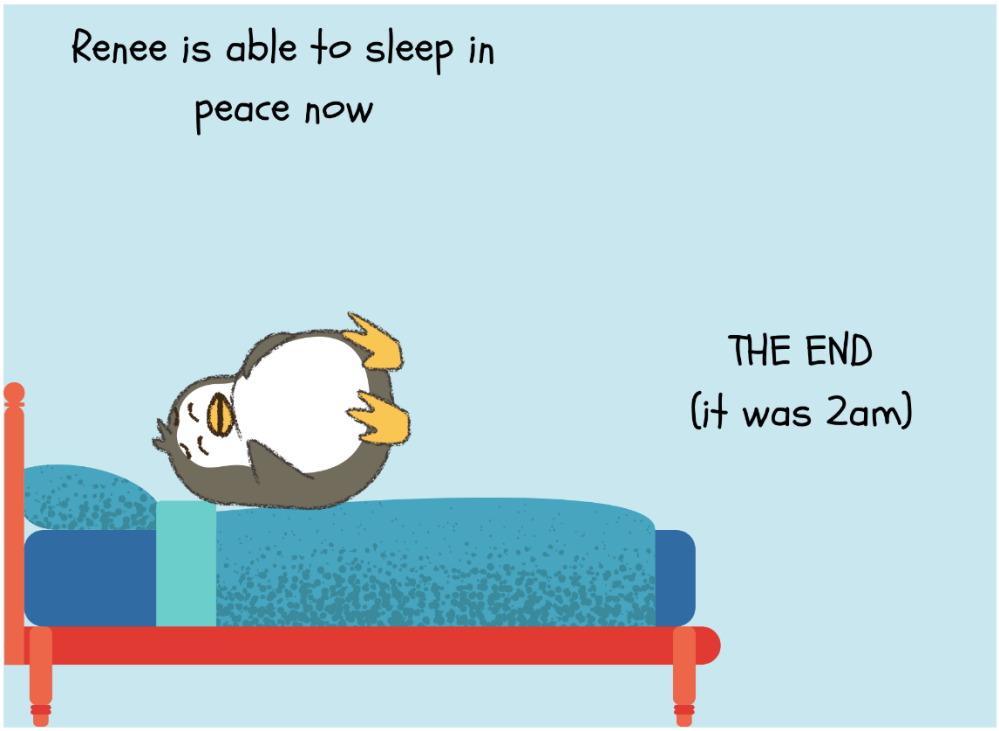
Pain
fonts are small for apple watch
lack of clarity for navigation on apple wath

Gain
colour scheme matches well
gives her a goal when it comes to studying
likes the gamification system where you can buy items for your buddy

“A Day in the life of Renee” Storyboard




its 5.30pm now, Renee starts doing her work
But she has no motivation to do any work...
BUT SHE DOES IT ANYWAY BECAUSE ITS DUE TONIGHT 2359
Renee sits in front of her computer for 6 hours with full concentration
its 11.30pm and she still isnt done with her project
Miraculously, she finishes at 2356 and submitted on time!!
tears of joy


Renee is able to sleep in peace now
THE END
(it was 2am)

Prototype link

https://youtu.be/eQ-vp31jJvo

actual video file :

DUX_ASG1_Demo.mp4

User Journey

Interview :

Interview.mp4

	Awareness	Consideration	Conversion	Customer Service	Loyalty
Activity	User using the app	User looks through features on the app	User added a task to task-list	User asks about maximum number of people in a study room	Adds to a task again
Customer Goal	To help with her studies	To see which feature is of use to her	To remind herself of a task that needs to be done on that day	So, she knows how many friends she can invite to the app to study with	Has more tasks to do
Potential Touchpoints	Probably recommendation from other students	The app	The app	The app store, friends	The app
Experience (1-5, 1 being the worst, 5 being the best)	3	3	4	5	3