

Design Dossier

Team:

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Course: Design for Emotions

Lecturer: Iefke Bloothoofd

Date: 13 / 04 / 2022

1. A description of the chosen emotional situation

The emotions chosen are sadness and empathy. We chose these emotions after brainstorming different key events in our group's lives that we had in common and we settled on the death of a loved one. After finding our emotions, we explored these themes; sadness in this situation is about losing someone close, the emptiness felt, the missing feeling, these are used to describe sadness. On the other side we have empathy which has two sides, the receiving and giving; they both consist of one person showing understanding of another's emotions, which results in comforting and raising one's emotional state.

2. EXPLORATION 1: Personal exploration

Our intention:

For this emotional situation exploration, we are looking into the death of a loved one. We will be doing so by each doing an exploration showcase of a personal experience related to the death of a loved one. After identifying the emotions related to the event, we are going to link two emotions to a sense and create an exploration of the senses. We will compare the explorations and come to a conclusion.

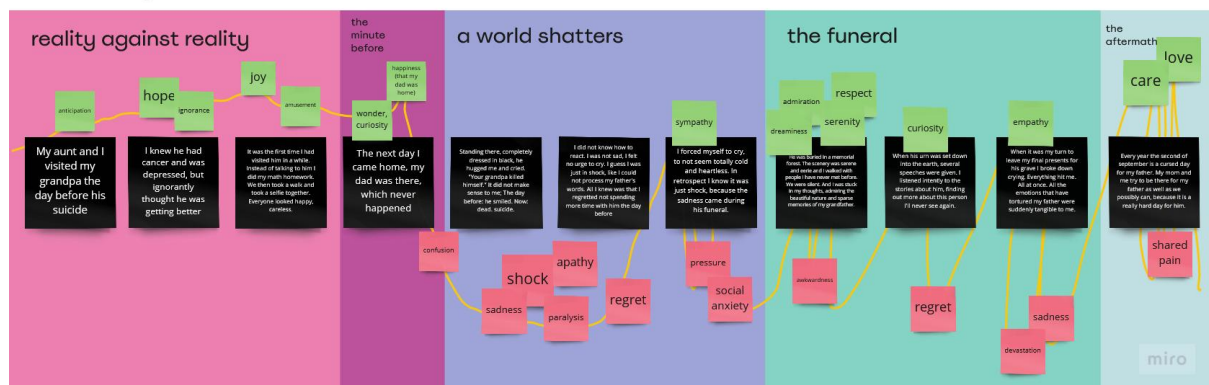
Execution:

To do so we decided to each create a timeline of our own experiences. The timeline is split into key events of the whole situation. Each key event had an emotion or more linked to it. We then transformed the timeline into a dramatic arc.

Individual findings

Zaya:

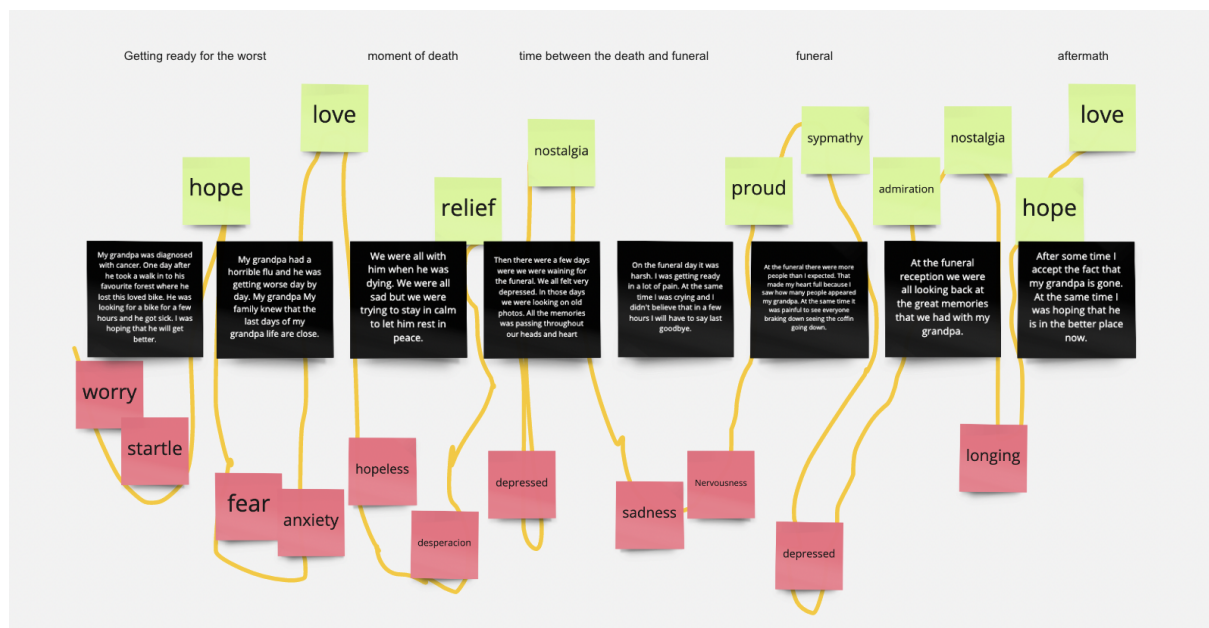
ZAYA: Finding out about the death of a loved one



Findings:

The death of my grandpa came by surprise. There were a lot of positive emotions on the day before his suicide, never suspecting his sudden death. I was ripped out of the dream world the moment my father brought the news, but was not very sad on the day itself. My negative emotions were centered around my father and my suffering with him. The funeral had a lot of positive emotions, like serenity and empathy, but also my lowest point of reality hitting me during the burial - in the aftermath, I feel mostly positive emotions directed at being there for my father who was hit hard by the event, but no personal pain for me.

Pola:



Findings:

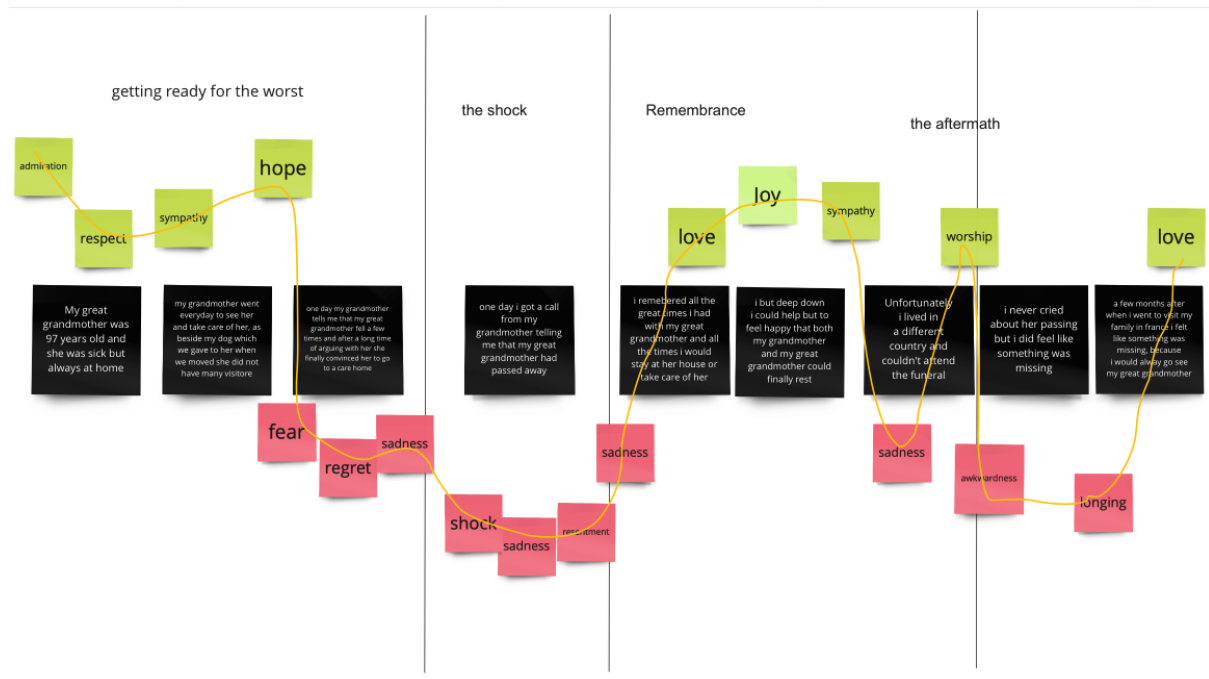
The emotions felt most strongly in the event of the death of a loved one are usually negative ones.

The most common emotions for me were: depression, hope, love, longing, nostalgia.

Feeling depressed was the hardest and the strongest feeling.

Love was the most strongly felt positive emotion.

Morgan:

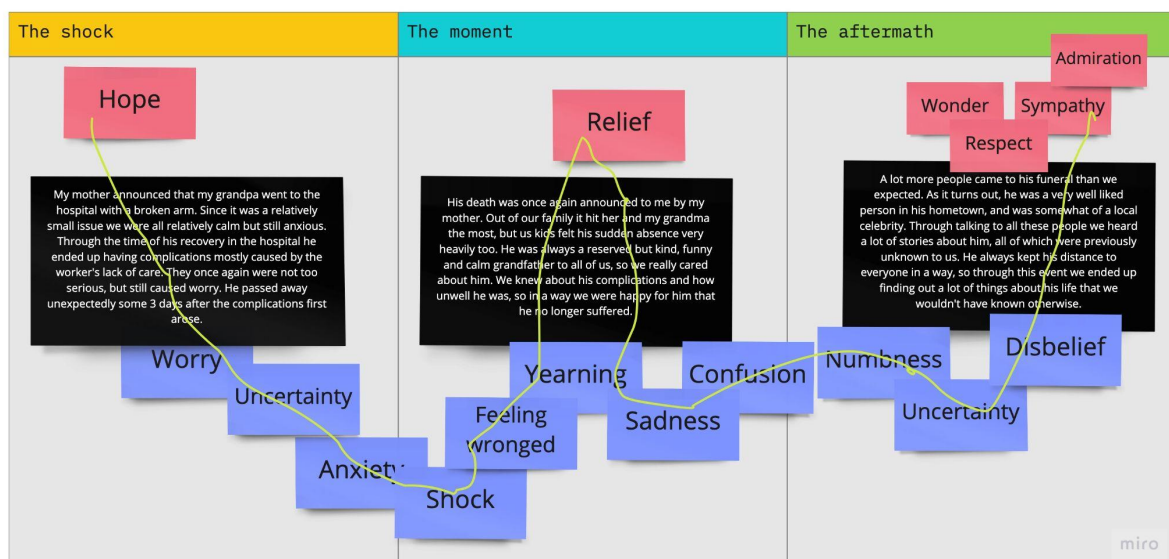


Findings:

I was never someone who gets very emotional about things, and I tend to keep things inside. When I went through this event, my emotions were somewhat expected. The most significant emotions I felt were: sadness, empathy, and love.

I was pretty sympathetic towards my grandmother even if I was very close to my great grandmother.

Balázs:



Findings:

The emotions I felt the most were uncertainty, shock, sympathy and admiration. All my emotions were relatively muted, as I didn't quite know how to express them; I had never gone through a situation like this, so I had no experience. Many of my emotions were influenced by the things that people around me felt, but over time I "grew" my own interpretation of the events.

Group findings and insights:

During an event such as the passing of a loved one there are a lot of mixed emotions in play. By comparing the different experiences we all had, we noticed that most of us had positive emotions with the said loved one despite their passing. When the event happened the shock made it feel unreal to most of us, this is likely due to the fact that we were resenting the passing as none of us wanted to accept it. The feeling of sadness heavily depends on the closeness of the person and the loved one along with the other negative feelings, they are usually very subjective; meaning that they differ from person to person, some may find it very hard and have very strong negative emotions whilst others will be able to take it quite well. An emotion that is recurring is empathy. In our cases most of us knew that there was someone that was closer to the loved one, who felt very strong emotions. Even though we may not all have felt sadness we could all feel it through the people who the deceased was close to.

After the event had passed, we all had quite positive emotions. This is very likely due to the fact that we had all time to accept the event and were in some sort of way ready to move on. The strongest emotions felt were hope and love, as we all suspend our disbelief in hopes that they are all in a better place even if we thought that the best place for the passed loved one is at home with us where we can give them all our love.

Reflection:

The objective of the individual exploration was met, we gained a lot of insights on the situation and it will help us farther into the document. Everyone was comfortable about sharing their story which really helped. Maybe in the future we could have more stories (if possible).

3. Exploration plan for further explorations

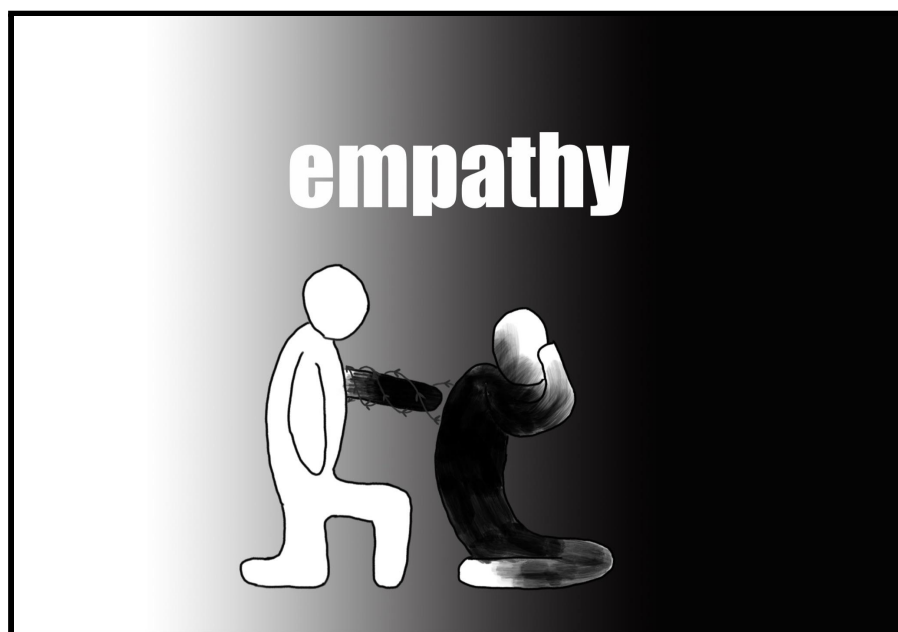
Intention:

For the explorations using senses we chose to use visual and sound as these are the more appropriate senses for the emotions chosen: empathy and sadness. The reason for

choosing these emotions is that we felt that in our experiences they are the most relevant emotions. For empathy we will be representing it using visual sense as empathy is an emotion that can be seen rather than heard or felt using touch. Empathy can be felt using touch through another person but not represented using touch through an object. Empathy can be represented in: movies, pictures. Sadness will be represented using visuals and sound, as sadness can be felt through sound such as in: music, vocals, and speeches but also represented through visuals such as: movies, short animations, pictures...It is not possible to feel sadness through an object as that would be sympathy.

Execution & Findings

Empathy



The first exploration will be focusing on empathy. It will be explored using a visual sense. To do so we will be using photoshop and drawings and using a simple color palette of black and white. The black represents the negative emotions someone is feeling, and the white represents neutral emotions. In the picture the person with neutral emotions is trying to help the other and while doing so is absorbing their negative emotions whilst relieving the other. This represents the meaning of the word by visualizing someone feeling some else's pain through trying to help them get over the event.

Sadness



For the visual exploration we focused on the elements associated with sadness. To show these elements we did a collage of pictures. Sadness is represented using black and gray. The main elements we agreed should be part of representing sadness are: rain, loneliness, and emptiness. In the exploration above: the black hole represents the emptiness felt when being sad, the rose represents the joy being burned out and feeling like you run out of joy, the little boy represent the loneliness felt, as if no one understands you and your narrow mindedness of thinking no one is here for you, and finally the rain represent the setting of a sad environment. The rain is an extinguisher of joy, as it hides the beauty of the sun and leaves you in a dark and gray environment. When looking at the event that we are exploring, the rain is just like the event as it covers the people involved with a cloud and they are unable to see the joy that surrounds them.

Sound exploration Pola:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1WSqrT28J4CPghHxyrRUPWVA8yaAPXlqB/view?usp=sharing>

Exploring sadness with the sense of hearing was an interesting experience for me. I looked for new sounds, and melodies that I could identify with this emotion. I also included previously known songs. I put all the melodies into one mix. Listening to the recording, I noticed a pattern. I often equate sadness with slow-played piano. Melodies are often slow, there was also a sound of rain. In cases where the vocalist appears in the songs, it is emotional. In the vocalist's voice, you can hear sadness/suffering. Even if the song is in an unfamiliar language, the sound evokes melancholy and is associated with sadness.

Sound Exploration Zaya:

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The emotion of sadness can be evoked through various triggers. It is strongly tied to recognizing something in the present moment that makes one remember a sad moment or situation in the past, at least this is what I have noticed for myself, which is why I included songs I personally associate with sad memories, as they evoke sadness in me. The personal interpretation of my soundscape rests on the listener, but I can explain my intentions. The soundscape creates a subtle storyline that starts out with the protagonist skipping through commonly known sad songs. I often notice people, and also myself, running away from sadness, hoping they'll never have to feel it, and the protagonist shares the same naivete. The protagonist settles on an initially calming song and starts walking, with the sound of rain blending in, and musters up the courage to make a phone call, metaphorically reaching out to someone and doing something to resolve the situation that causes the sadness, while the song in the background grows progressively sadder. But as this attempt proves futile, the protagonist runs with more fervor and vehemence, only to be caught by reality, the feeling of sadness, and lets out a desperate scream that blends into the sound of the rain that has become an ocean. The ocean metaphorically represents sadness and its intensity coming on and off in waves. Fight against waves (sadness) and you lose energy and drown. Stay calm and you'll stay afloat and get to land (happiness) eventually. The takeaway of this exploration is that sadness can have multiple reasons. You can be sad because of your own memories, your own present, or someone else's present (seeing someone who is sad at the moment). This exploration encompasses all possibilities. The songs selected in the beginning are well known sad songs (own memories of listener and creator), the soundscape and running from sadness is relatable to most people (own present experience) and follows the protagonist being sad (someone else's present experience). This soundscape exploration personally makes me sad because it reminds me of sad memories as well as sets a gloomy mood with rain turning into an ocean, reminiscent of singular tears turning into a crying fit.

Reflection

The objective was met, we gathered visual and sound representations of the emotions chosen. The executions went well, they helped us sense the emotions, some of the explorations were a bit harder to express. In the future having an equal amount of explorations for both emotions may help farther down the line.

4. Exploration Insights & Design Principles pre Emotional installation

Insights

- Sadness is often associated with the loss of something or someone of emotional value

- Sadness can be triggered auditorily by hearing the sadness in someone else's voice characterized by shakiness and a low vocal volume.
- Sadness is associated with slowness as sadness is a low-valence, low-arousal emotion.
- Empathy is the absorption of someone's negative emotions in hopes of relieving them from those emotions.
- Sadness is a complex emotion that is hard to trigger immediately by one singular trigger but can more easily be triggered using a storyline
- Sadness is often represented by rain, loneliness, and emptiness.

Design Principles

After analyzing our data we found that these were the principals we wanted to go utilize

- Greyscale can be used to create a sad atmosphere.
- Rain, both visually and acoustically, is associated with sadness.
- Use visual elements associated with night and dark, gloomy colors to evoke sadness.
- Slow music can be used to make the user feel sad / be reminded of sad memories.
- Sadness can be evoked through empathy, by making the user experience someone / something else being sad.
- Empathy can be used to motivate people to do something that benefits others, but not directly themselves.
- Make users see / hear someone else's pain to evoke empathy.
- Guide users through negative emotions to prevent them running away from them / your product.
- Use sensory memories to evoke sadness.
- Monotonicity
- To evoke sadness, give the user something they get attached to and then take it away.

5. Emotional Installation

Intention:

We want our users to feel sadness through empathy. We want to find out whether in order to strengthen empathy, we first need the users to emotionally attach to something in the experience, so they will feel more deeply. Furthermore, we plan to examine the impact of sensory memories like past smells, familiar music / sounds and aesthetics (colors, luminosity) on human emotions.

Execution:

To make the user feel sadness we want to use our emotional insight that sadness is associated with a feeling of heaviness and a lack of energy. We want to achieve this by physically making movements more difficult by adding weights to the arms of our participants using laces and weights.

Furthermore, we have also discovered that sadness leads to tunnel vision so we want to simulate this by lighting the room very dimly and having one better lit focal point.

The focal point will be a slideshow of sad faces, because seeing sad faces makes one sad too. These photos will be in grayscale or dark, gloomy colors as these aesthetic values are often associated with sadness. We want to test whether the mere association is beneficial for actually evoking the emotion of sadness.

Contrarily, the screen and the area lit by the screen will become the participant's automatic comfort zone as that is the zone the participant will be naturally drawn to and spend most of their time in, even though this comfort zone will be the source of the participant's sadness. We want to test whether humans are willing to explore areas outside their comfort zone, in our case these areas are the surrounding darkness of the room, or whether they will stay within their known comfort zone, even if it makes them sad.

The visuals of sad faces will be accompanied by rain sounds, crying sounds and sad, melancholic music.

Findings:

During our exposition for our emotional research we got to interview the users. The atmosphere in the room where everyone (the presenters and users) had their heads down made the users feel a connection like we were sharing the sadness. Some users felt the emotional part of empathy rather than the cognitive part of it. Telling the user that the heavy bag was their emotional baggage, the position, black and white pictures, the low sound, and the pictures of sad people looking at them, all helped to create a sad atmosphere and a lot of our users felt the same way.

The lifting of the heavy bag, the warmth of the jacket and the pathing on the shoulders, helped to make the user feel the empathy we were trying to portray.

Reflection:

We achieved our goal of making the users feel the emotions we wanted, through our methods even though we could have done some things better. We noticed that the sudden change of slides was not fitting that much and would change it to have a smooth transition. We were also told that if the room was colder for the sad part it would further aid the sadness aspect of things. Overall it was a good exploration and we achieved our goals of making the users feel empathy and sadness.

6. Exploration Insights & Design Principles post Emotional installation

Insights:

- Most people feel more sad when seeing sad puppies than other sad humans. therefore using animals in our product would benefit to help release emotions
- having warmth helps users feel empathy

Design Principles:

- Greyscale can be used to create a sad atmosphere.
- Use visual elements associated with night and dark, gloomy colors to evoke sadness.
- Slow music can be used to make the user feel sad / be reminded of sad memories
- Sadness can be evoked through empathy, by making the user experience someone / something else being sad.
- Guide users through negative emotions to prevent them running away from them / your product.
- Empathizing with other user's situations can help the user release their emotions.

7. Evidence of your ideation

During our product ideation, we started by coming up with a How Might We, HMW use sadness and empathy to relieve the user of their emotion. We all came up with ideas that fit the HMW and ended up combining them together. After getting two combined ideas we made a final idea for our product.

Ideas for product

A set of products that will provide the user with a empathy to the user by activating various smart home appliances to warm the room, play happy music

A bear that when you hug, it warms up and gives back empathy that will end into relief and love

A platform where people can share experiences

A personal diary as an app where people write down their emotions and things that went on during the day so that they can release their emotions by writing them down. The app will encourage the user to write everyday about their emotional state for the day.

Final idea

Floodgate (name of the product) is an online forum that allows users to express their bottled up emotions in a safe environment and share their personal issues anonymously, on a thread or their own page. Other users would comment on the user's story and make them feel empathy through the comments. Along side the forum, Floodgate, we also offer a teddy bear that comes in various shapes, which is linked to the user's own profile; which will notify their anonymous friends that the user is not feeling well when the user hugs it.

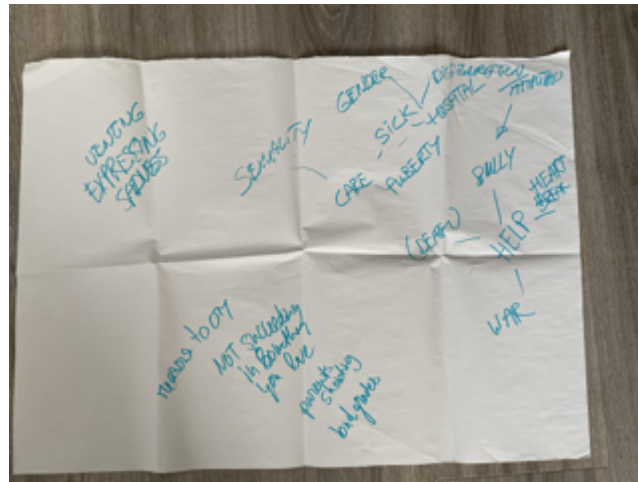
Combined idea

A platform where users can: exchange stories, comment on each other's stories, and empathies with each other. The users will use the platform when they feel sad to help them release the emotions that they keep bottled up by reading the user's stories or write their own stories for other users to read and comment on.

An anonymous platform where users can exchange stories about their day when they feel sad in the goal of having other users empathies with them. There will also be a bear which will be able to be ordered. the bear will serve as an empathy factor, when the user feels sad they will hug the bear and the bear will send a message to the user's anonymous friends to tell them that they are not feeling well and that they should text them. The aim of the platform is to encourage the users who keep their emotions bottled up, to release their emotions.

Once we had an idea, we started to think about what type of emotion we would like to fix, such as: are we focusing on sicknesses, bullying, break up? We ended up choosing to make

the platform with different categories where users can choose the topic in which they feel like they can relate to the other users.



8. Iteration 1 of an Emotional Design

Intention:

For our first iteration we wanted to check that everything was clear: meaning, the problem, and our aim. We also improved the dramatic arc to make it less about comfort of the user and more about making the user let their emotions out and we also focused on the empathy part. We also added more design principles to our product such as: music, darker themes. We worked on implementing everything into the user flow to make sure it all goes as smoothly as possible.

Execution:

For this iteration we made an interactive storyboard that had a low-fi prototype embedded into it. The storyboard showed the users we tested on how the product works, how every feature implements into the flow.

Interactive storyboard:

<https://xd.adobe.com/view/346d8602-8714-4d8c-8d73-f85d7fad5a65-613e/>

Findings:

After presenting it we found that our problem and aim was not clear enough to understand. From the testing we found out that some users may not want to get a bear, so the we have to find a way to introduce the bear as an option rather than a need.

Reflection:

This iteration is the baseline of our product, it helps to have it visualize as we can always look back to it and check if we are not steering too far from our original idea unintendedly. In the future, having a more descriptive visual baseline for our product could help us, as we had a lot of the ideas written down but not visualized.

9. Iteration 2 of an Emotional Design

Intention:

For our second iteration we decided to make a storyboard of how the user would use the platform. The storyboard shows the dramatic arc of our platform. We wanted to visualize how the user would use the product and how the features work.

Execution:

We created a storyboard which depicted how a user would use the product while showing the user's emotion to create a sort of dramatic arc. To make the story we were thinking of how we would show the product in the video.

storyboard: <https://xd.adobe.com/view/83cc7226-6176-43af-810c-5c9eb42ab835-d69f/>

Findings:

we found that from that storyboard the emotional aspect of the product is not necessarily clear, the use of sadness is not shown clearly. One of the people we tested on said they could tell the user in the storyboard was sad but they don't understand clearly from the storyboard how the sadness is shown.

Reflection:

In this iteration we had started implementing some of the triggering factors. It is the somewhat finished version of our final product but we could have made some of the features more noticeable or explained them more in this storyboard.

10. Final Emotional Design

Intention:

After finding our final concept/idea our intentions are to showcase how all the features are going to be implemented and a clear triggering event that would lead the user to our platform.

Execution:

We made a final storyboard which was used as a guideline for our video of our prototype. The storyboard shows various frames that depict what the video will look like, and how the features are going to be introduced.

Final storyboard:

<https://xd.adobe.com/view/d5534fa9-e8d5-417c-8ddc-bf92707d5b14-8000/>

Findings:

We found that the storyboard was good but needed 1 or 2 rearguments. the storyboard didn't explain exactly how the user found the platform. We also found that having a scene where the user hides their emotions when they are with their friends works really well as it shows that the user bottles up their emotions, rather than releases them.

Reflection:

This last iteration/ emotional design is the closest thing to the video. It shows all the scenes of the video clearly but less detailed than the video. there are some features that will be shown in the video that are not shown in this final storyboard.