GoWrite Team

App Development

14 May 2024

<div align="center">GoWrite Design Documentation</div>

The design decisions we made for GoWrite were done by reflecting on our target user: someone who wants to journal but needs motivation to do so and wants to relieve stress in the moment.

Design Decisions

I.   7 Day Display vs. Full Month Calendar Display

At the start of the process, we wanted to implement a similar layout to BeReal's calendar feature, where users could access past entries over the whole year. From this idea, we envisioned GoWrite's home screen as a calendar of the current month, where users had the option to narrow down their view of journal entries by month, week, or individual day.
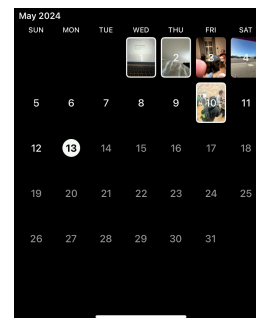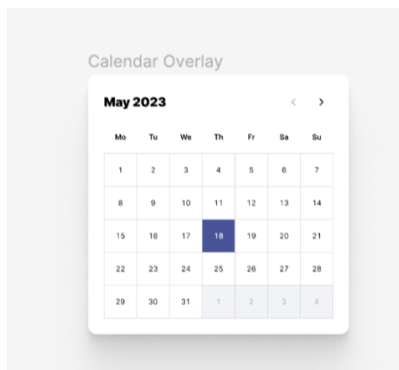

However, we realized that the full calendar could confuse users, especially if it would be the first screen they saw without any information on navigating through the app. Aesthetically, it could also clutter the interface. Instead, we opted for one day of the week to be displayed at a time, with the option to scroll between all seven days. With this setup, a user could only access the current week's journal entries. Not only would this make the app easier to navigate, but it would also align better with the app's purpose as a journaling app: by having a limited amount of entries to access that would disappear by the end of the week, users' focus would not be on writing entries to archive but rather, writing entries to destress and relax in the moment.

II.   Navigation through App: Sideways Scroll

To navigate through the app, users scroll sideways, rather than downwards. This decision was made to emulate the act of flipping through a journal's pages.

III.   Prompt Information Revealed Only Upon Clicking

Early on, we considered having prompts along with the text box displayed directly, with no need to access a separate screen. This meant that within the week view of seven days, each day would have the prompt and text box for the journal entry in one component. Reflecting on how users might interact with the app, we changed this design after realizing that if users could immediately see the prompts for each day, it might reduce their desire to journal for that day. So, we changed the design so that users would have to click on the day they want before journaling.
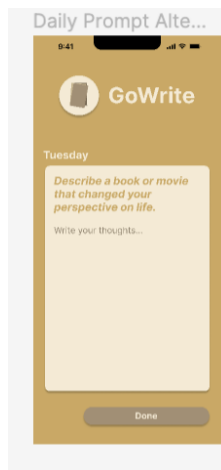
IV.   Aesthetic Decisions

To match the aesthetic of a journal, we chose app colors that are similar to off-white pages found in a journal and the brown of leather covers.

Challenges Faced

One of the challenges we faced was getting a definitive idea of what aspects of journaling we wanted to incorporate into our app. Journaling is a very creative hobby and there are endless ways to go about it. This manifested in ideas such as potentially limiting the amount of words users could use. We also wondered if we should have daily prompts which would update each week or incorporate images to add to the aesthetic of the journal. Ultimately we chose not to go in these directions but it took a lot of brainstorming to come to that decision.

The biggest challenge however was the styling of the app. The functionality wasn't too difficult to get a handle on but the styling was difficult because all the details can be finicky to configure. We had a vision for the designs which the Figma exemplified and tried our best to make the app reflect that.