

Needfinding

I found a user, (referred to as “T”), to test an online game that had a similar intent (meditation & inner peace) to that of my app, Zandbox. My observations, which I recorded during the testing session, were used to inform a brainstorming exercise, which, in turn, was refined into a list of concrete user needs.

App used for testing

Forest; located at <http://www.zovirl.com/2011/09/forest.html>

Observation & Notes



- T did not appear to see the “space bar” prompt
- Hand now resting on (expecting?) to use space bar
- Looks bored, unamused

- After ~30 seconds of perceived inactivity, T scrolls down (game is no longer in view) to read 'about' blurb... = trying to see if she missed something?
- Appears to physically relax when prompted by "relax" message on screen
- T experiments by pressing space bar a few times even when unprompted - anxious/bored?

Feedback

- Playing *Forest* required less brainpower than a visualization meditation exercise
- Green monochromatic color palette was not distracting
- An intro screen w/ a segue into the game is desirable (vs being placed immediately into the game)
- "What am I supposed to do?" = controls, options, information were too vague
- An expectation of certain graphics and indicators was not met
- A reward would be nice upon completion
- Time it takes to complete *Forest* could increase each time a user returns
- "A whole different take on how to relax"

Brainstorm

- Progress tracking
- No confusion
- Novelty
- Calm, non-jarring
- Just enough instruction
- Form should follow function (stylistic choices)
- Take effort away from user (brainpower)
- Balance between passive and active interaction

User Needs

- (App) Needs a way to track progress
- (User) Needs to be able to easily determine affordances of app/UI
- (User) Needs a way to quickly understand controls
- (App) Needs to be able to give feedback
- (App) Needs to have a non-distracting color palette
- (User) Needs to a way to not feel stagnant or stalled
- (User) Needs a way to feel rewarded
- (App) Needs to be able to feel novel, 'fresh' with each visit
- (User) Needs to feel like they don't have to think
- (App) Needs to be able to feel dead simple