Group 2 - Project Plan

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Description:

In a day and age where mental health is getting a lot of attention, much more so than in the past, we are beginning to understand more about what causes issues like depression and ways to help treat it. As college students we are more than aware of the staggering statistics when it comes to the correlation between students and mental health problems. Our goal is to create either a smart wearable device with app connectivity, or perhaps simply an app. This App or device would help people with mental health issues keep track of how they are feeling, provide custom feedback and tips to help treat mental health issues, and it would track their progress towards a mental health goal.

We understand that mental health is a hard issue for many people to talk about, and for some it's even harder to face or accept the fact that they might have some problems they need to address. The aim of the app or device is to be extremely adaptable to each user. The problems people suffer from can come in a wide variety of symptoms and often differ drastically from person to person. As we stated, many people aren't comfortable talking to others about these types of problems, so our goal would be to make even those with reservations about seeking help feel welcomed.

The app or device would ask the user questions about themselves and their general mental wellbeing and habits. You could tell the device what goal you had, whether it is to be more positive or even trying to battle depression. You would set goals and strategies with help from the app so that you have something to strive for. The app would keep track of your progress by asking you daily questions and looking at biometrics and location data, as well.

Feeling like you have something wrong in your head can really damage a person, and often times it takes a very long time for people to ask for help. The goal of this app is to facilitate that help but in a way that seems private and personal. Obviously there is no substitution for real help from family, friends and professionals but this app or device would hopefully help to bridge the gap between hopelessness and happiness.

Meeting time: Thursdays around 12:30 - 1:00 PM

Documentation: Primarily use Google drive to share documents and work on the project together. We communicate via text and while we are working we can set up a Google hangout to help.

Data collection:
- Survey - We plan to set up a Google Form and distribute it to a variety of different college students asking them to comment on mental health in their lives in addition to questions about how an app could help people with mental illness'.
  - On a scale of 1-10, how anxious are you before a significant life event?
  - What are some techniques or strategies that help manage symptoms of mental illness?
  - How do you perceive anxiety and stress? Does it motivate you or does it make you feel down?
  - Is there a history of mental health issues in your family? And if so, what are some things you've learned about mental health from those people?
  - Would you prefer an app or a wearable device that would help people track their mental health day-to-day?
- Observation - We plan to observe students before an important midterm or test to see if there are any signs of stress or different behavioral patterns that we can observe, and how the students deal with this stress.
- Interview - We plan on sitting down with average students in addition to students that identify themselves as having problems with their mental wellbeing. We want to ask more in depth questions about what might make them feel anxious or depressed so that we can better fine tune the tools in our app or device to help these people.
  - Do you identify yourself as someone who suffers from some kind of mental illness? And if so, what?
  - Do you ever feel hopeless or overwhelmed? And if so, how long do you usually feel this way?

- ○ Would an app or device that helps you keep track of bad moods or signs of mental illness help you form better habits for the times in the future when you feel this way again?
- ○ What are some useful ways to distract yourself or keep yourself occupied if you're feeling down?

Research:

We plan to do research in a number of ways: we will do a lot of reading of scholarly articles written about how to help people with mental illness form better habits and lifestyles which could improve their general wellbeing. The CU library database has a large number of articles we can look at and reference. In addition, we will do a lot of online research into how professionals approach this type of challenge in order to develop our own strategies for our app or device. We will also look at other mental health apps that have already been made in order to remix some of their ideas for our own, or to avoid ones which seem badly implemented.