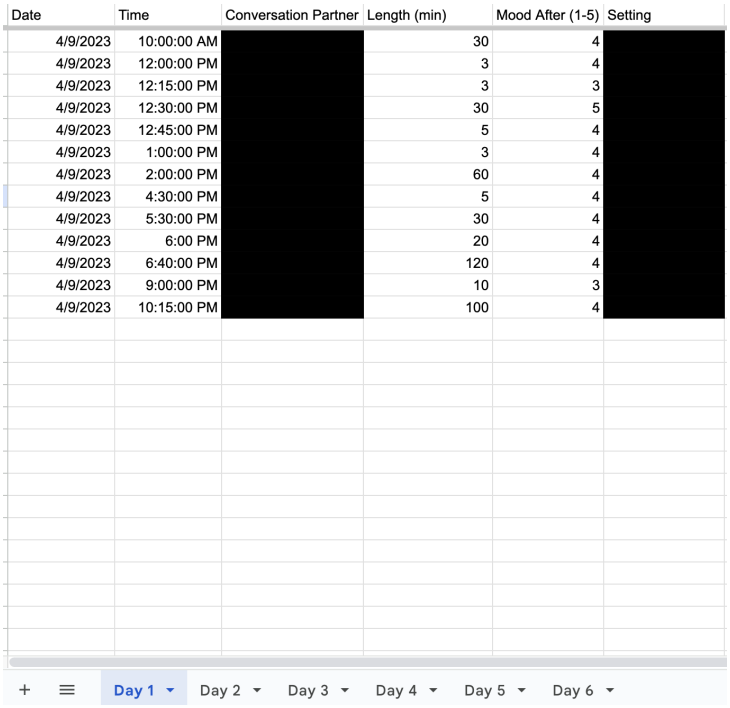
Conversations Data Collection

Ben Turner

Data collection

For this project, I decided to collect data on social events throughout the day and how they affected my mood. The data collection was successful but had some consistency issues.



Date	Time	Conversation Partner	Length (min)	Mood After (1-5)	Setting
4/9/2023	10:00:00 AM	[redacted]	30	4	[redacted]
4/9/2023	12:00:00 PM		3	4	
4/9/2023	12:15:00 PM		3	3	
4/9/2023	12:30:00 PM		30	5	
4/9/2023	12:45:00 PM		5	4	
4/9/2023	1:00:00 PM		3	4	
4/9/2023	2:00:00 PM		60	4	
4/9/2023	4:30:00 PM		5	4	
4/9/2023	5:30:00 PM		30	4	
4/9/2023	6:00 PM		20	4	
4/9/2023	6:40:00 PM		120	4	
4/9/2023	9:00:00 PM		10	3	
4/9/2023	10:15:00 PM		100	4	

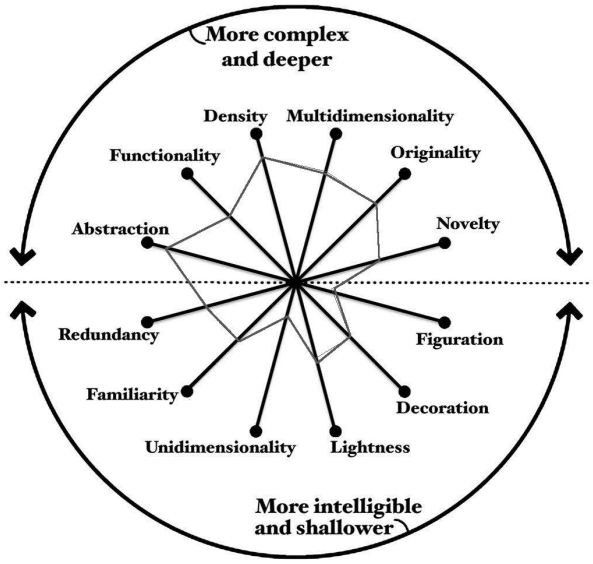
Day 1 | Day 2 | Day 3 | Day 4 | Day 5 | Day 6

The biggest challenge was remembering to record data. I usually found myself sitting down a few times a day to mentally recap the events of the day and record the data from memory. This worked fairly well, but definitely left room for error. I also realized that it would be impossible to record every single conversation, so I only kept conversations that were long or important enough to remember. I also experiences times with a lot of small conversations that I decided to combine into one social event. These simplifications did bias the data. By not including some of the small and fleeting social interactions, the data became more discrete than it could have been and so it was harder to track mood shifts. The length of conversations was also meant to highlight the influence an event may have had on my mood, but the combination of some smaller conversations bigger events diluted the effects of actual long and meaningful conversations. However, these simplifcations were necessary to make the project feasible. Another challenge was remaining consistent with how I “calculated” my mood. I found that telling people about my project made them express how they hoped I had good conversations with them. This made me feel slightly guilty and may have skewed my data towards “good” or “great” moods. Furthermore, it was only a slice in time and the data was not an average but rather particular to this week. In some ways it reflects usual behavior like that I am not very social during the morning (although this is commonly due to a solo work shift) but more so at night. However, it was also “party week” so that likely affected the data, for better or worse. If I

were to retake the data again, I would aim to do an entire week (7 days) and during what seems like would be a “normal” school week. I also would have tried to keep mood determination as consistent as possible. In future critiques of data visualizations, I will likely evaluate the data more in particular. I have found that removing bias from data collection is difficult. Attempting to understand the circumstances and methodology behind a visualization seems to be just as important in understanding the conclusions as the visualization itself.

Data Visualization

The events as individual points made my visualization more complex and provided insight into my mood throughout particular parts of the day. It also allowed me to convey more specific information about certain events (such as food or outside events) that can give some context on the setting and why I might be in such a mood. This level of detail allowed me to not only answer the broader questions such as “How does my mood change in day?” or “Does a bad conversation affect the following conversations?”, but also questions like “Am I happy because I just ate and/or because I was outside?”. Although it makes the visualization a little harder to read, this additional complexity is nice. Evaluating my visualization using Cairo’s wheel, I found it had strong multidimensionality, density, and abstraction.



The main purpose of this visualization is to understand how my mood changes throughout the day due to social interactions with other people. It also helps understand how mood shifts affect other interactions throughout the day. The visualization medium I chose was good for good for getting a blanket understanding of my mood for certain days and hours of the day. However, it is difficult to accurately identify how long or important a conversation was compared to others. The encoding I chose for conversation length was area, which draw by hand is not very accurate. Therefore, perhaps it would have been better to attempt a different method of encoding this information.

The data itself

My visualization tells the story of when I am conversing throughout the day, how much I am, and how my mood changes based of these interactions. It is easy to identify that I had good social interactions on Sunday (or was generally in a good mood) but a bad night Wednesday. We can also notice that my bad social interactions Wednesday night were preceded by “fine” interactions all day and followed by a morning of “fine” interactions on Thursday. However, Thursday ended very well with multiple “great” interactions but was followed by a morning of many small but mostly just “fine” interactions. This could mean that bad events have a stronger impact on me than good events, but it may also mean that mean that mornings are not a function of the previous day. I personally believe the former to the more likely effect, since I can remember Wednesday’s events affecting me Thursday morning. The data also displays that I am not a talkative person in the mornings but rather have more social interactions later on during the day. I do however have solo morning shifts which may be affecting the data, so it would be interesting to see how that pattern changes if I did not have work shifts. Going forward after this project, I plan to try and maintain awareness of my conversations and mood. It felt good to acknowledge my mood and attempt to right it myself. My data does not necessarily answer what is the exact cause of my mood shift. Yes, it may be due to a bad conversation. However, there are so many other variables that can impact it, that drawing a conclusion from this data would be surface-level. I could go about narrowing down the variables behind my mood and recording all of them. It would also help to have more information on the social events to get a sense of its role on my mood. However, much of this data can be private and so it may be impossible to display this data in a confidential manner. I also know that mood is a very complex component of the human psyche and sometimes just cannot be explained. This may mean that measurements and visualizations of this type might just have to settle with approximate results such as those presented on this data card.

Legend:

Mood

Bad (1) Poor (2) Fine (3) Good (4) Great! (5)

Conversation Length (min)

5 15 30 60 120

= conversation was outside
ψ = during meal
⊕ = during athletics

Description / How to Read:

Data was collected on social events from short 1on1 conversations to soccer practice to parties. The data included the time, length, and location of the conversation, as well as how it affected my mood. The visualization shows this data over the collection span of 6 days from 4/9 - 4/14. Data specific to each day is in the 6 "rows", which have data points that align with a certain time of the day measured on the x-axis. Using the legend, we can identify bad/good social events, how long did they last, and what activity it is. From this, we can ask how a long and bad conversation might impact my mood for the social events afterwards. We can also see when I am most social during the day.

From:

Stamp goes here

To:

* Note: The mood data was subjective and therefore has limited accuracy. The conversation data was also approximated. In many cases, multiple conversations were lumped together into a singular long conversation / social event.