**Stoic Unseen**

An Interactive Story

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**Abstract**

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## Motivation

I have witnessed numerous people, as well as their friends and families, struggle with mental health problems. Conversing with these individuals educated me about facets of mental health I was completely unaware of. The profound effect of having an open discussion about the subject became apparent. While it’s not possible to rectify mental illness itself, or lack of access to treatment, the effect of spreading awareness and having open conversation is unparalleled. Those who have seen close friends and family suffer can affirm the value of talking about it.

## Design Problem

Chronic health problems, both mental and physical, wreak havoc on the lives of humans. Mental health problems in particular abound from systemic failures in providing access to treatment. Mental health treatment is distinct from physical health treatment for several reasons. Mental health coverage is not offered by some insurance plans, and exists scarcely available for those insured. Most patients require pharmacological treatment for their illnesses, but the required medicines are not available without prescription from a medical doctor. Psychiatrists are often inaccessible due to overwhelming patient demand, exorbitant pricing, or lack of insurance compatibility.

Even when patients can see a psychiatrist, continued treatment along with talk-therapy is usually required for a successful treatment plan. To some, the inaccessibility of psychiatric care prompts them to seek unhealthy alternatives such as self-medication through alcohol and recreational drugs.

Mental health is also distinct from physical health in that it carries a stigma. Persons suffering from mental illnesses may feel guilty, responsible, or ashamed of their illnesses. However, mental illness is often caused by factors beyond the person’s control such as genetic inheritance. Uneducated people do not have a full understanding of common mental illnesses such as anxiety and depression, and may dismiss, ostracize, or disdain suffering individuals as a result.

*Stoic Unseen* intends to address the lack of awareness about the frequency and severity of mental health issues. The project strives to incite dialogue among players and spread awareness about hardships faced by those that struggle with mental illness.