

The Story of MyGoodLinks

An emerging social bookmarking service to help people find resources to support their mental wellbeing



Mike is in his late 20s and lives alone in a small apartment in Sydney.

He works as a marketing officer in a car sales company and has been working from home using video conferencing to connect with colleagues since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Given the circumstances, he worries about his job security.

The constant lack of in-person contact starts to make him feel lonely and disconnected from the world. He tries to cope up by chatting with his mates over phone calls, watching Netflix, engaging in social media and browsing the internet where he stumbled across fun useful apps such as Tiktok and Houseparty among others.

Having been used to a lifestyle of going to the gym, eating at restaurants, partying in music festivals, and attending in-person meet up events, Mike wants to find a variety of useful alternative set of activities to do while in self isolation at home to avoid having a very bad case of cabin fever.

UNDERSTANDING THE CHALLENGE WE WANT TO SOLVE

There are many people like Mike dealing with the impact of social isolation in the time of Corona.

Social isolation and loneliness can be harmful to both mental and physical health. They are considered significant health and wellbeing issues in Australia because of the impact they have on peoples' lives, according to an article from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

<https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/australias-welfare/social-isolation-and-loneliness>

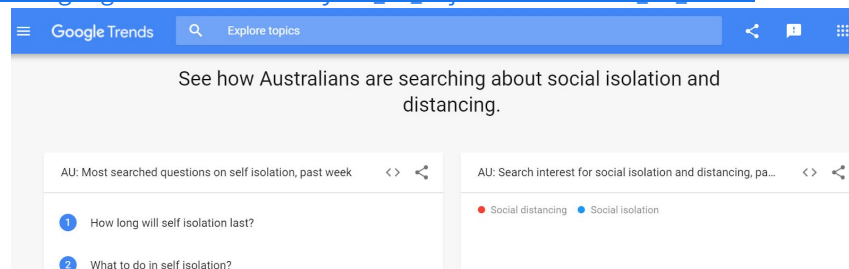
Social distancing policies introduced in Australia to slow the spread of the novel Corona virus could have a devastating impact on our mental health. The mental health service Beyond Blue experienced a 30 per cent jump in calls to helplines in the past two weeks and they have recently launched a dedicated COVID-19 service.

<https://www.theage.com.au/national/what-impact-could-the-lockdown-have-on-our-mental-health-20200409-p54inz.html>

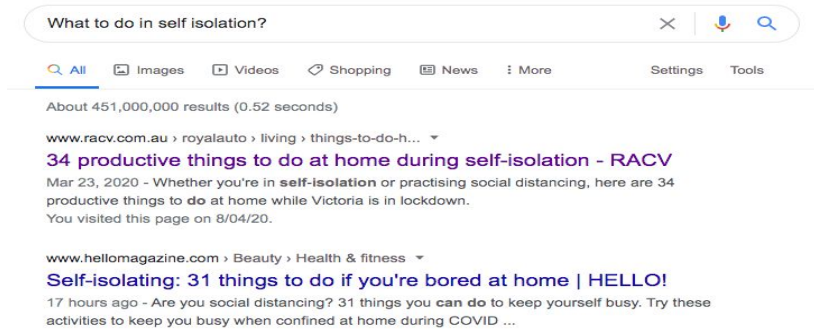
In a briefing note on addressing mental health and psychosocial aspects of COVID-19 outbreak, the World Health Organisation (WHO) Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) outlines fourteen globally recommended activities that should be implemented as part of the response to COVID-19. One of the activities is Item Number 12: 'Establish measures to reduce the negative impact of social isolation in quarantine sites. Communication with family and friends outside of the site, as well as measures that promote autonomy (e.g. choice in daily activities) should be facilitated and promoted (Intervention 4)'. Intervention 4 is further elaborated as Mental Health and Psychosocial Support activities for adults in isolation/quarantine, where possible, safe communication channels should be provided to reduce loneliness and psychological isolation.

https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/2020-03/IASC%20Interim%20Briefing%20Note%20on%20COVID-19%20Outbreak%20Readiness%20and%20Response%20Operations%20-%20MHPSS_0.pdf

A lot of Australians are actively looking for what they can do while in self isolation as shown from Google trends. https://trends.google.com/trends/story/US_cu_4Rjdh3ABAABMHM_en_en-AU



Here is an example of the search results of what to do in self isolation.



The challenge is that there is way too much information to navigate through and get relevant information, leaving people overwhelmed and confused. Overloading people with too much unstructured information becomes counterproductive.

So our team decided to tackle this challenge: **How might we help individuals access useful reliable information to support their mental wellbeing during social isolation?**

REIMAGINING AND CO-CREATING AN INNOVATIVE SOLUTION

The World Health Organisation (WHO) Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) provided guidelines that offer essential advice on how to facilitate an integrated approach to address mental health and psychosocial issues. The guidelines include prescriptive action sheets for minimum response, one of which is the facilitation of community self-help and social support.

https://www.who.int/hac/network/interagency/news/mental_health_guidelines/en/

Our team ideated on a solution that allows people to continue to socially connect despite social distancing in a way that is meaningful to them. We were compelled to think out-of-the-box, away from the traditional means by which mental health support would have been normally provided (e.g. over-the-phone or face-to-face counseling, self-help access to online contents from a mental health authority, attend therapy sessions).

Given the time constraints of the hackathon, we were looking to see where we can leverage yet streamline resources that already exist in order to generate value previously untapped. So instead of creating a specific mechanism (e.g. games, gadgets, mobile apps) that may address only a very particular area of mental health, our team thought of becoming an inclusive platform hub which facilitates community self-help and social support through people exchanging useful information of already existing multitude of solutions.

Our team reflected on the following capabilities of existing platforms:

- The extensive reach of connecting people through social networks such as Facebook and LinkedIn
- The power of influence over followers as reflected in sites as Twitter and Instagram
- The diversity in crowdsourced content creation as seen in platforms such as Youtube and Wikipedia
- The reliability of personal recommendations in the case of TripAdvisor, Product Hunt and Good Reads
- The difficulty in tracking information discussion threads within online communities such as Reddit, Couchsurfing and Facebook groups
- The convenience of having a central hub of information such as City of Melbourne's "Whats On Melbourne" site
- The advantage of social bookmarking for discovery and saving information such as the case with Pinterest
- The value of saving and organising information for later reading as in the case of online bookmarking sites such as Pocket and Instapaper, as well as note-taking apps such as Evernote and Notion
- The usefulness of having curated lists in the case of Travelsites, 43 Things and Day Zero Project

We reimagined a best-of-breed solution which is a social bookmarking navigation and social network services used primarily for helping people find specific information or resources on mental health and wellbeing. Our solution would leverage the use of folksonomy (also known as collaborative tagging, social classification, social indexing, and social tagging) which is a classification system where users apply public tags to online items to make those items easier for themselves or others to find later.

So we created MyGoodLinks (www.mygoodlinks.com) as an online directory portal providing personalised

curated lists contributed by trusted crowdsourced recommendations for practical useful websites supporting relevant mental well-being categories. We envision MyGoodLinks to be your reliable go-to for a collection of website recommendations to support your stay at home lifestyle and mental wellbeing, as there is no structured crowdsourced site of this nature that currently exists.

People in self isolation would find this useful for their wellness because of the key benefits of:

- **Convenience:** A person could easily search and bookmark the list of websites recommended by others and share new ones if they find them to be useful in supporting people's mental wellbeing
- **Reliability:** The website recommendations are ranked based on the likes and subscriptions by fellow users without an arbitrary subjective rating system. There is no single biased opinion that becomes the dominating source of truth because the recommendations are based on a crowdsourced pool
- **Personalisation:** A person can pick and choose the relevant websites that are tailored for their needs and wants in order to enable the creation of one's routine during social isolation. A future feature of the website would be to be able to provide to a person some recommended websites based on one's profile and suggestions from others with similar demographics
- **Inclusion:** Every person gets to have a voice and contributes their own diverse knowledge and experience without judgment of background.
- **Connection:** The site becomes an online community hub where people connect by sharing and recommending what they know, as well as benefiting from finding new useful information based on the contribution of others.

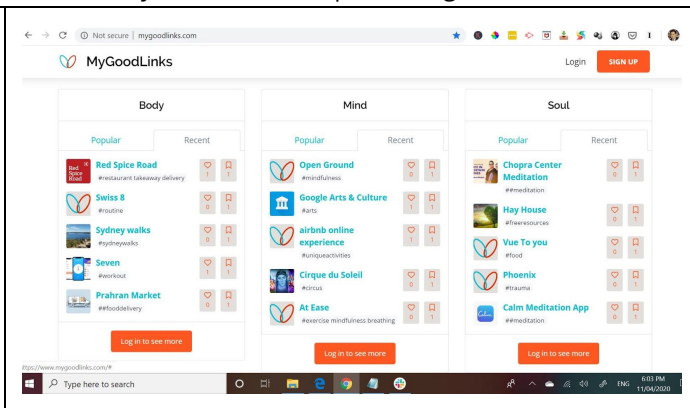
The team decided the brand name MyGoodLinks during Good Friday 2020 as it reflects the main principle of the solution where a person tells oneself: *"I'll share and keep my good links of useful websites to support each other's mental well-being"*. The logo was designed to reflect the "links" concept and make it resemble the heart as well as angel wings which represent the "good".

MAKING THE MOST OF THE SOLUTION

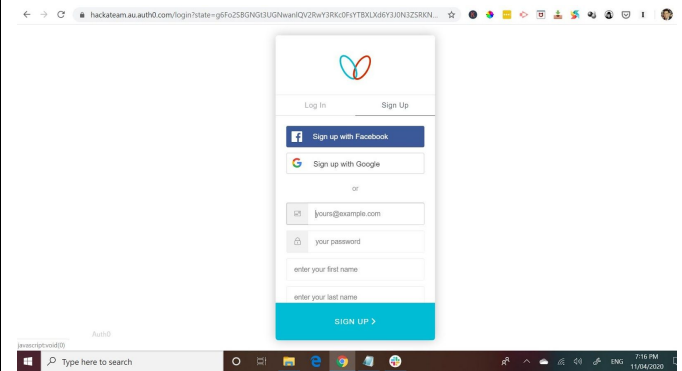
You may check out <https://www.mygoodlinks.com/> to experience the solution and be delighted.

Here are the 6 user stories that constitute the core functionality that was developed during the hackathon.

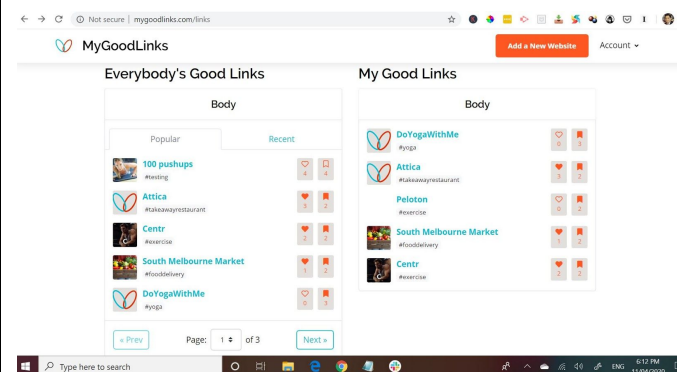
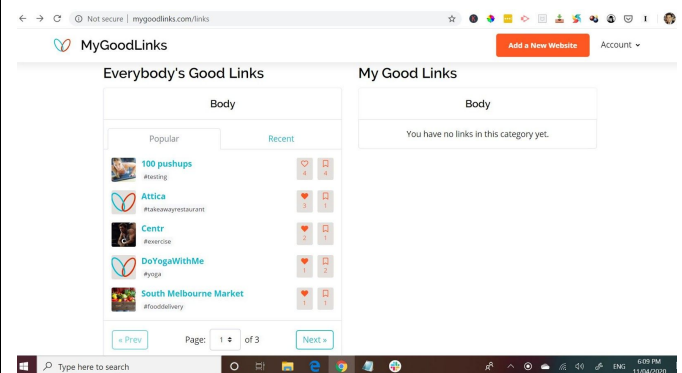
As a casual user (not logged on), I can view a page of lists of top 5 websites in various categories identified by group of hashtags and displayed in the order of being recommended and selected by others so that I can have the option to sign-in and choose which one I'd like to bookmark.



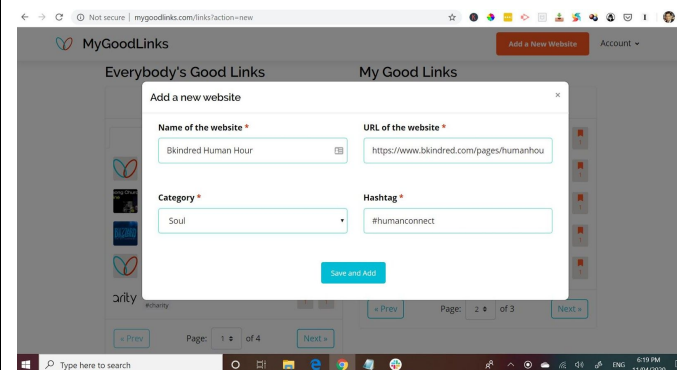
As a user, I can log in using my FB or google account or a new email/password so I can view additional lists (on top of the top 5), have my own personal page list, and can make new recommendations



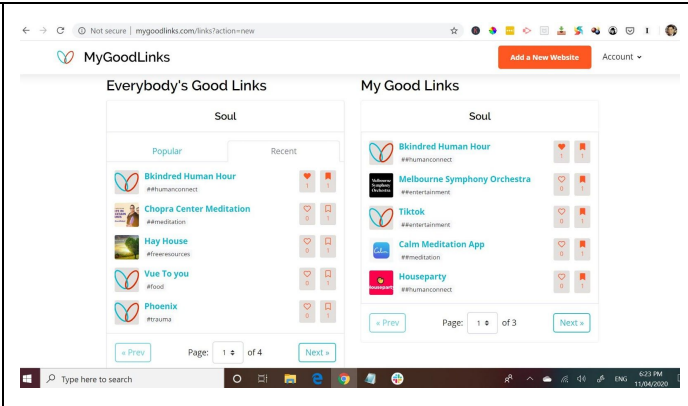
As a logged on user, I can select a hashtagged item on the main page list which then gets added to my personal profile list so that I can save and curate my personal preferences.



As a logged on user, I can add new hashtagged websites and the category to my personal list which will be made available as new items on the main page so that I can suggest sites that others may find useful.



As a logged on user, I can highlight recommended sites in my personal list so that this will increase the ranking and visibility of the websites on their category.



Personal Information Context of Portal

The MyGoodLinks.com portal will provide support for 'online directory portal providing personalised curated lists contributed by trusted crowdsourced recommendations for practical useful websites supporting relevant mental well-being categories'. To be effective, this portal will involve storage of information not only of personal details but also history of link usage and preferences. Under Australian Privacy Principles and the Privacy Act 1988, the portal would have privacy obligations in:

- the collection, use and disclosure of personal information;
- governance and accountability of privacy
- integrity and correction of personal information; and
- the rights of individuals to access their personal information

<https://www.oaic.gov.au/privacy/the-privacy-act/rights-and-responsibilities/#WhoHasResponsibilitiesUnderPrivacyAct>

<https://www.oaic.gov.au/privacy/australian-privacy-principles/australian-privacy-principles-quick-reference/>

Privacy Impact Assessments (PIA) are an essential part of managing the privacy risks of information collection, storage and usage. Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC), in response to COVID-19, has released a guide to "Assessing privacy risks in changed working environments: Privacy Impact Assessments", which although aimed at remote working does address issues associated with the MyGoodLinks.com portal.

<https://www.oaic.gov.au/privacy/guidance-and-advice/assessing-privacy-risks-in-changed-working-environments-privacy-impact-assessments/>

Privacy and security planning

This will be initially a Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) to identify the privacy risks of the portal and the controls to be established and maintained to address these risks. This will include minimisation of personal information contained, rules on sharing this information with other parties, cybersecurity measures for the information and addressing security incidents to ensure protection of the information is maintained.

GAINING TRACTION AND PLANNING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Traction

As of 11 April 2020 (Saturday) 5:45pm, just over 2 hours since the site was launched at 3pm for User Acceptance Test by end users outside the team, there already have been 12 sign-ups. We received 10 survey response forms with the following results:

SURVEY QUESTION	RESPONSE
Do you think MyGoodLinks could help you access useful reliable information to support your mental wellbeing during social isolation?	YES - 80% NO - 20%



Do you see an essential need to highlight a link where it is Highly Recommended by bonafide mental health wellbeing professionals?	YES - 80% NO - 20%
On a scale from 1 to 5, how likely would you share MyGoodLinks now to your family and friends in your network?	3.4 average rating

The following feedback were provided when asked what they like about MyGoodLinks:

- Access to lots of services under one roof 🙌
- Good idea - a collection of people favorites especially for those who need inspiration
- Clear and simple way to enter and view useful links that would help in physical isolation
- Easy to use
- Variety of choice

The feedback provided are good inputs in crafting the future set of product enhancements. Among high priority features to be developed would be having a wellbeing panel to endorse the links with evidence informed tick of approval in order to increase credibility and reliability of the suggestions.

Potential Challenges and Constraints

A 'whole of society' approach requires addressing the Mental Health and Psychosocial Support needs of the entire affected population regardless of their direct or indirect contact with the virus, race/ethnicity, age, gender, vocation or affiliation. This makes it a bit difficult to focus on a specific niche group though our team endeavours to target GenY single Australian young professionals as the beachhead market. According to the latest 2016 Australian census, out of 23.4 million Australians, 24.4% consist of a lone person household . So our target beachhead market is estimated to be around 5.71 million people. The website is open to participation by everybody so the contributed links by the users may not always be relatable for the target market segment (e.g. lists of websites to support mental wellbeing needs of parents or teenagers).

Sustainable Business Model

Post this hackathon, a strategy would need to be in place to fully productionise various features of the product as well as come up with a business model that will ensure this can be a self-sustaining venture in the real world. Though it's possible to obtain mental health support related grants, it would be prudent to look for other long term ways of funding the project moving forward to cover for the costs of product enhancements, site maintenance and expansion in order to have a more impactful reach to the larger global community. Potential business models could be through targeted advertising and data licensing similar to how Twitter, Pinterest, Facebook and Google makes money. For the short to mid term, a Freemium business model which allows people to utilise the basic features of a service free but then charges for 'upgrades' to the basic package to get more value, could possibly be used as seen on platforms such as LinkedIn and Tinder. We can also explore using upfront low cost membership fees charged similar to how companies like Pinboard and Medium do it. These business models can be validated only once there is a critical mass of users in order to consult and test the market's appetite on paying for the service.

Big Picture Vision

We envision MyGoodLinks to be useful not just during the period where people are self isolating due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but to become the leading hub for mental wellbeing crowdsourced information that is utilised for many years to come. Given that mental wellbeing is such an essential element to humanity, we would like to extend the offering of MyGoodLinks to as many people as possible knowing the positive impact it would have to people around the world. We are keen to scale MyGoodLinks globally in the future to become an emerging social bookmarking service known for supporting mental wellbeing, and join the ranks of other established portals such as Pinterest, Pinboard, Producthunt, GoodReads and TripAdvisor.

MEET THE HACKATHON A-TEAM: PETER, MINJIE, DONALITO



We are a multi-disciplinary team bringing together our skills in agile design, development, project management, and business case validation. We have a good track record of volunteering for not-for-profits and social enterprise initiatives as we are passionate about creating a sustainable innovative solution to address the challenge to mental health and wellbeing due to the COVID-19 pandemic impact.

Our diverse collective experience working in corporate and start-ups puts us in a good position to tackle the challenge. Check out our LinkedIn profiles:

- Peter Tylee from Newcastle (Developer)
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/peter-tylee-728483188/>
- Minjie Shi from Sydney (UX/CX Designer)
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/minjieshi/>
- Donalito Jr. Bales from Melbourne (Project Manager/Product Owner)
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/dondonbales/>

During the course of the Hackathon, our team has been guided by the following mentors:

- Jane Burns - mentor on well-being, mental health, innovation
- Anne-Marie Elias - mentor on government, mental health, well-being
- Brucer Hunter- mentor on system safety, reliability, security and privacy standards

HOW CAN YOU HELP BRING THIS TO LIFE?

Visit www.mygoodlinks.com, sign-up and share the most useful interesting websites you know that would help other people with their mental wellbeing and deal with social isolation at home. You never know what a big difference you can make to someone by simply contributing your knowledge and recommendations. Share your good links!

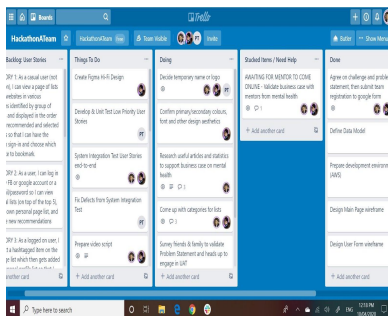
Feel free to provide us feedback on the current features and we welcome suggestions for improvements.

We hope you get delighted with MyGoodLinks and that you share it with your friends and family. Help us reach out to more people through your network through the press, social media, and word of mouth. The more people know about it and contribute, the bigger the community becomes in helping each other share reliable and useful information.

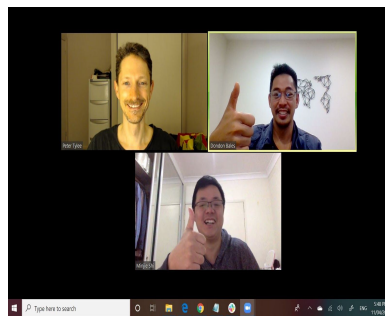
BEHIND THE SCENES: OUR 48 HOURS HACKATHON JOURNEY

- **Thu 6pm:** Attended the ACS Hackathon Kick-off streamed in Youtube
- **Thu 9:30pm:** 1st Team checkpoint meeting in Zoom to agree on the challenge; Created Trello tasks and defined solution user stories
- **Fri 2am:** Completed initial Figma wireframe design for team review
- **Fri 9am:** Set-up of backend project shell in .NET Core and front-end project shell in Nuxt (vuejs)
- **Fri 10am:** Completed data model and wireframe design updates

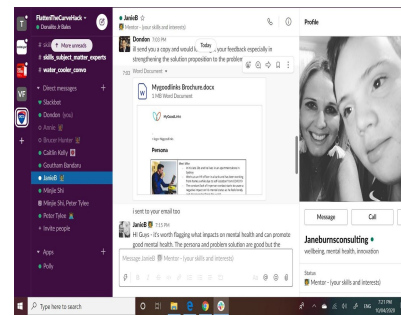
- **Fri 12pm:** Implemented authentication in the code
- **Fri 1pm:** Checkpoint meeting with assigned Mentor (Brucer Hunter)
- **Fri 2pm:** Brand name agreed and registered a new .com domain; Designed logo and agreed on color schemes
- **Fri 3:45pm:** 2nd Team checkpoint meeting in Zoom to monitor progress on design, development, and business case validation
- **Fri 5:30pm:** Completed initial documentation draft and sent to mentor (Anne-Marie Elias) for feedback
- **Fri 7pm:** Obtained feedback from another mentor (Jane Burns)
- **Fri 10:30pm:** 3rd Team checkpoint meeting in Zoom to monitor progress on development and documentation
- **Sat 12:45am:** Basic functionality of code working in both front and back end systems
- **Sat 4:30am:** Completed 2nd version of documentation draft to be used as content for the video script
- **Sat 10am:** Applied site branding and design
- **Sat 12pm:** Set-up domain, deployed website and ready for System Integration Test
- **Sat 2pm:** Completed System Integration Test (SIT)
- **Sat 3pm:** Complete SIT Defect Fixes and sent out to users for UAT
- **Sat 3:30pm:** Checkpoint meeting with assigned Mentor (Brucer Hunter)
- **Sat 5:45pm:** 4th and Final Team checkpoint meeting in Zoom to review remaining tasks; Obtained 12 sign-ups from the users and 10 survey feedback
- **Sat 7:30pm:** Completed the 3:59 minutes video and loaded to Youtube
- **Sat 9pm:** Completed the final documentation and ready for submission



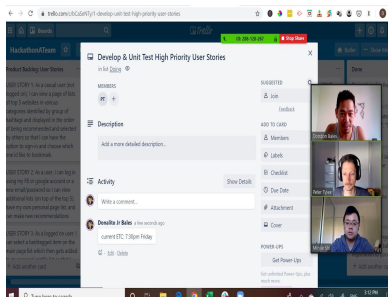
Trello board



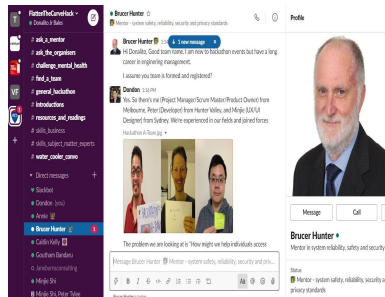
Final Team Meeting (Sat)



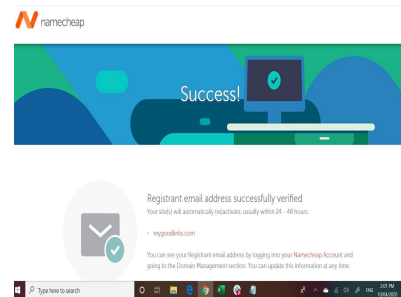
With mentor Jane



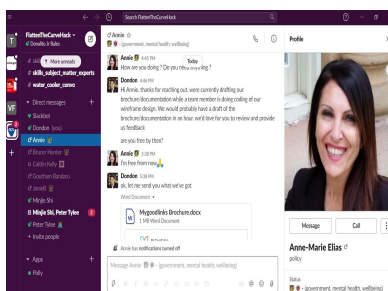
Second Team Meeting (Friday)



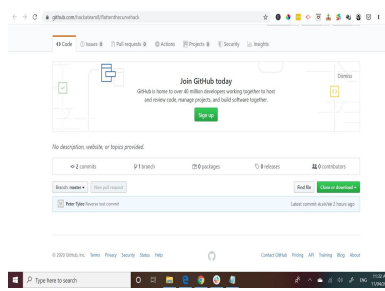
With mentor Brucer



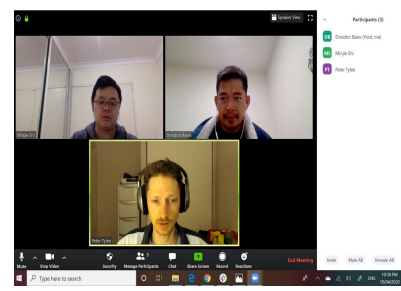
Registered mygoodlinks.com



With mentor Anne-Marie



Stored code in Github repository



First Team Meeting (Thursday)