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PROBLEM:

Mental Health Concerns of College Students

OVERVIEW OF THE PROBLEM:

Mental health concerns among college students are increasingly significant, with many reporting issues like anxiety and depression. According to the American College Health Association's (ACHA) Spring 2023 national survey of over 55,000 undergraduate students nearly 60% of students experience overwhelming anxiety, and about 40% suffer from depression severe enough to affect their daily lives. Common issues include anxiety disorders, depression, chronic stress, sleep disorders, substance use, and eating disorders. These mental health problems are often exacerbated by academic pressures, financial stress, social media influences, the transition to college life, and the stigma surrounding mental health.

These mental health concerns greatly impact students' academic achievement and personal lives. Students may receive poor grades, incomplete coursework, or drop out of college. Furthermore, personal relationships often suffer, with many students feeling alone and having difficulty with social interactions.

Colleges and universities are responding to the problem by providing a variety of support services. These include on-campus counseling, peer support programs, mental health awareness campaigns, stress-reduction courses, and academic modifications. Despite these efforts, demand for mental health treatments frequently exceeds availability, and misconceptions and stigmas remain a major obstacle to seeking treatment.

SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM:

In response to the growing demand for mental health support in tertiary education, our team recommends creating an application dedicated to college students' well-being. By adding stress management tools, an AI comfort chatbot, journals, and personalized coping strategies. Our method tries to reduce the negative impacts of virtual and face-to-face learning settings. We do extensive research, including surveys and user testing, to guarantee that our application tailors itself to college students' individual needs and preferences, allowing them to prioritize their mental health while achieving academic excellence in the digital era.

APPLICATION:

Name: Uplift;U

Description:

"Uplift;U" is an application designed by Team KEMFET that aims to aid college students in dealing with stress and other mental health concerns.

“Uplift;U” features a variety of stress management activities such as personal journals and communicating with a chatbot to express themselves when they have no one to talk to or avoidant when speaking their thoughts and feelings with others.

Features:

The application will integrate the following features for the team's use:

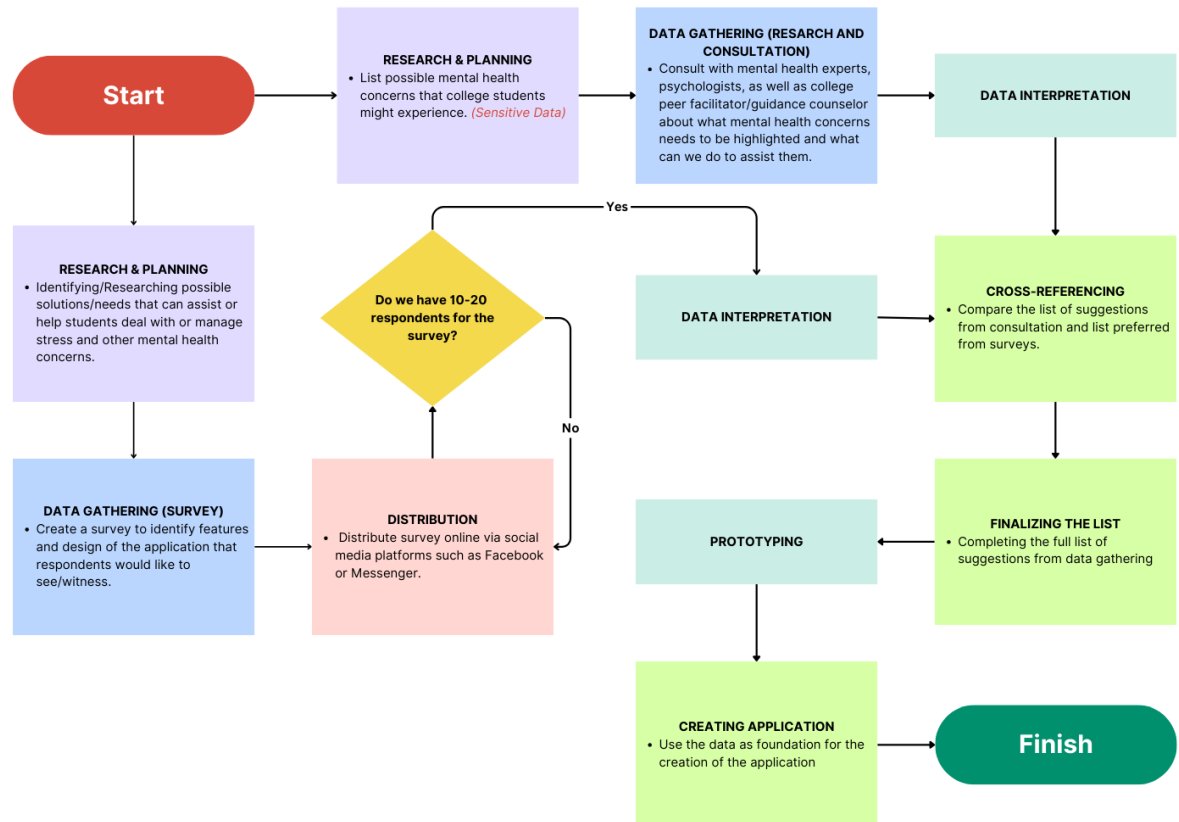
- **Chatbot:** The AI comfort allows the user to connect with it if they feel like no one is around to comfort or talk to them, and they can express their feelings without being judged.
- **Personal Journal:** This feature allows the user to write and express their views or feelings by typing them in a secret diary aka lockable journal.
Under the journals there's a feature:
 - **Password/Pin Lock:** For privacy purposes, this makes the user comfortable while keeping the key privacy matters.
- **Providing Comfort Music:** Listening to music can relax or calm the minds of the listener. The app will provide various genres of music and playlists for the user to listen to anytime.

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE APPLICATION:

- **Who are the potential users?**
 - The users of this app will be college students in general. Due to various stigmas surrounding mental health, not all people are open to sharing their mental health condition with others. With this in mind, we plan to make the app design simple but also comforting for the user.
- **What tasks do they seek to perform?**
 - Individuals seeking a comfort space for self-healing often embark on a journey to engage in different tasks focused on promoting their emotional, psychological, and, in some cases, physical well-being. These tasks may include introverted techniques like writing or meditation to promote inner thought and peace.
- **What functionality should any system provide to these users?**
 - The app's main functionality is to help college students find a comfortable space to express themselves and find solace.
- **What constraints will be placed on your eventual design?**
 - **Colorblindness:** As much as possible the palettes and elements used in the design would be friendly to those with unique vision. The elements, symbols and characters should be placed clearly and avoid using too many colors.
 - **Over-stacking elements:** Keep the app design simple by not overdesigning the UI by adding a lot of elements. Simple shapes can be used in the design and awareness of the proximity of the elements.
- **What criteria should be used to judge if your design is a success or not?**

- Team KEMFET's criteria for the success of the design is based on the following conditions:
 - The user can access the app's various features properly.
 - The design does not bother or annoy the user.
 - The user finds the app design comforting.

APPROACH:



References:

<https://www.bestcolleges.com/research/college-student-mental-health-statistics/>