

# **Secondary Research + user persona**

# Mental Health Overview

College students experience high psychological strain due to academic pressure, lifestyle imbalance, and emotional vulnerabilities.

Key levels:

- 78% report moderate-high stress.
- 20% experience serious psychological distress.
- Anxiety (35%) and depression (25%) are common.

Required focus: prevention, accessibility, emotional regulation support, and reduction of academic/digital cognitive load.



## Scale and Functional Impact

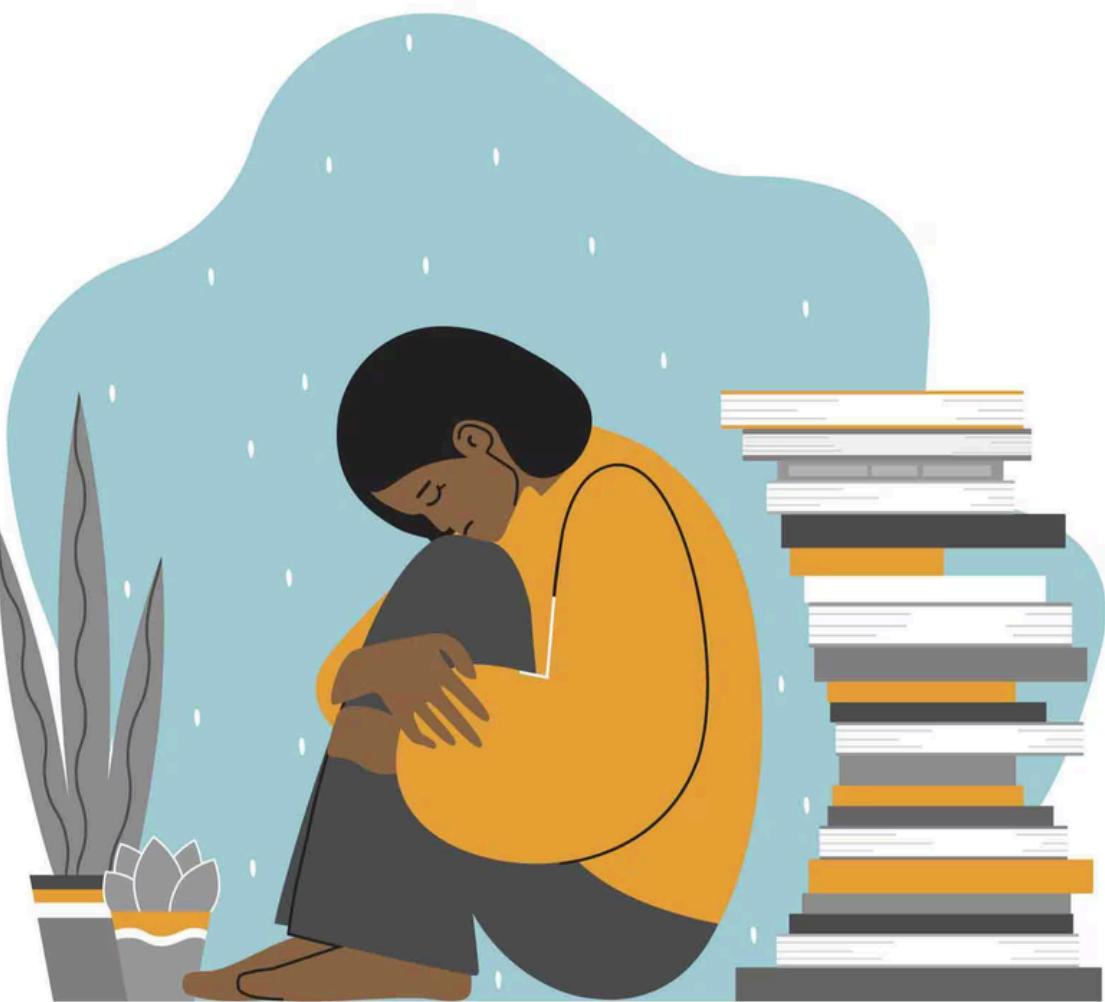
Loneliness affects nearly half of students; 27% often feel isolated.

- Anxiety impacts academics for 29% and depression for 18%.
- High-risk behaviors include suicidal ideation (27%) and self-injury (12%).

# Psychological and Behavioral Drivers

Emotional dysregulation leads to avoidance, suppression, and chronic stress.

- Procrastination affects 80–95% of students, driven by fear of failure and unclear first steps.
- Maladaptive coping is widespread; nearly half meet criteria for a substance use disorder.
- Stress symptoms appear through sleep change, irritability, fatigue, and loss of interest.



# Academic Burden and Performance

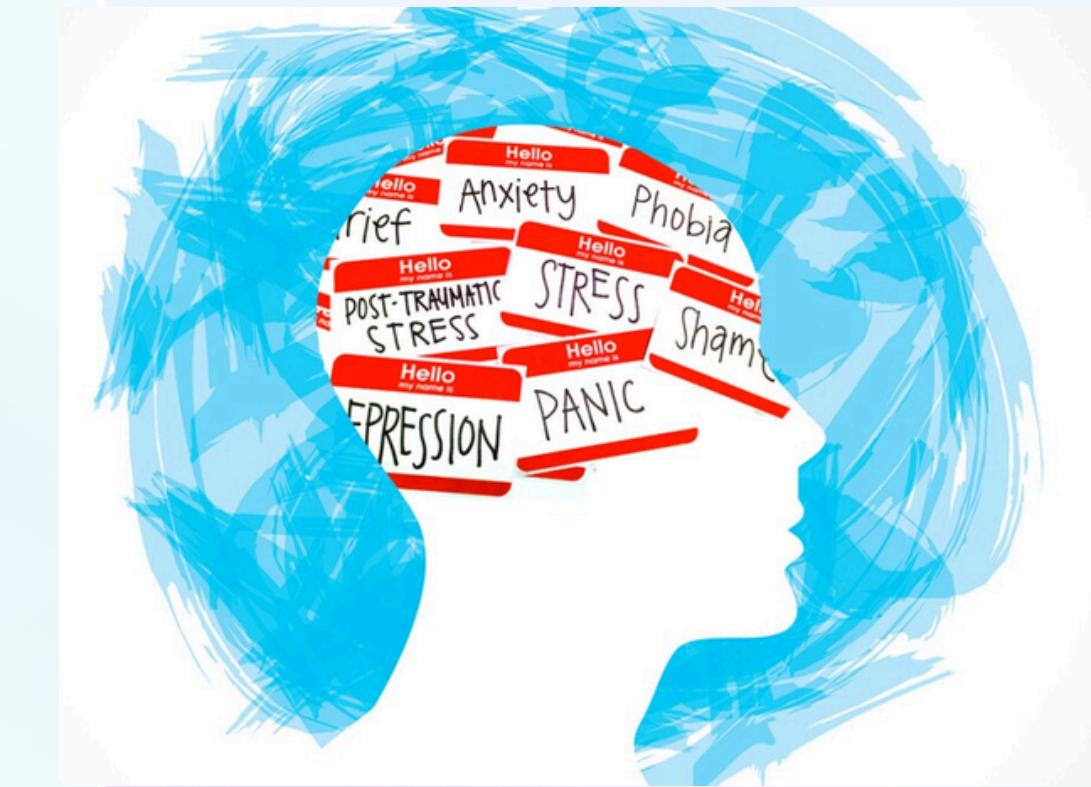
- 85% facing academic difficulty report significant distress.
- High workload, long lectures, and dense content contribute to burnout.
- Deadline structures fuel sleep deprivation; late-night work increases sleep loss risk.
- Fear of failure and competition intensify across college years.

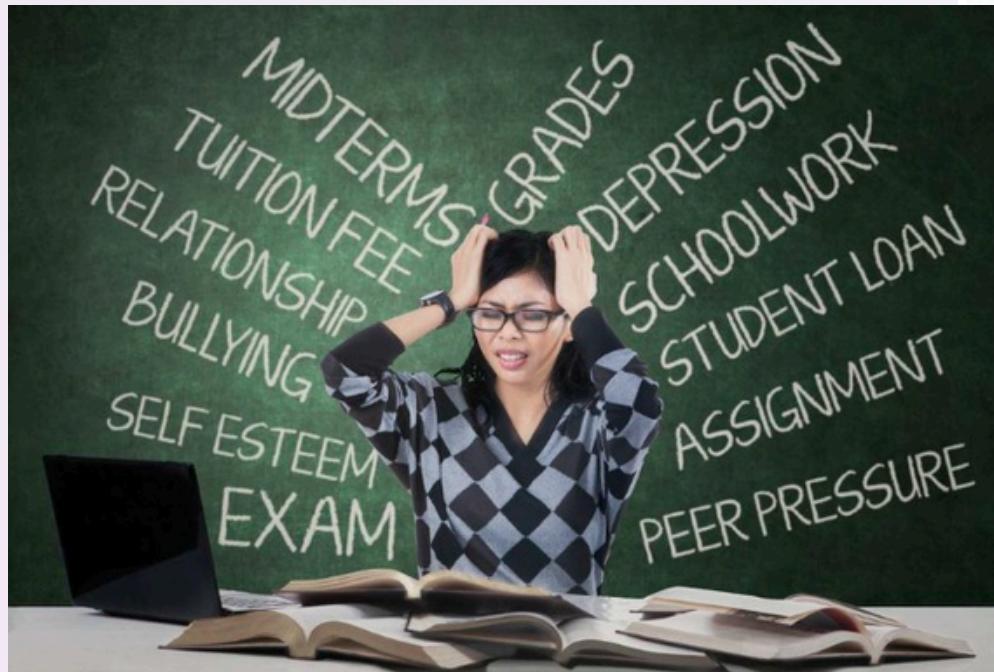
# Why Users Struggle with Stress, Anxiety, and Poor Focus

College students commonly face overlapping psychological, academic, social, and lifestyle factors that contribute to high stress and anxiety. Academic pressure remains one of the strongest triggers, as students navigate heavy coursework, tight deadlines, and performance expectations. Sudden transitions from school to college also create adjustment stress, especially when students lack effective time-management and study habits.

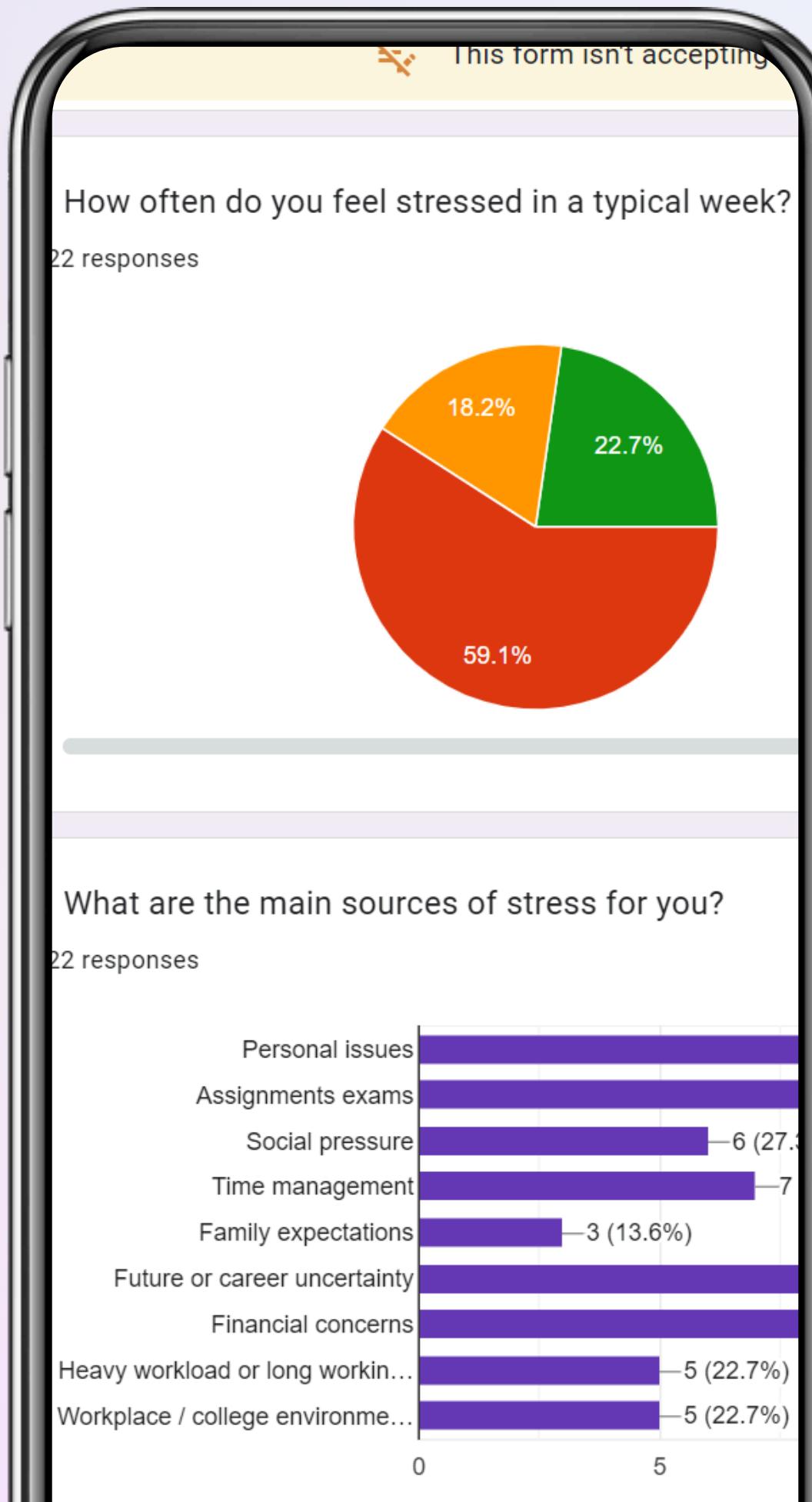
Financial concerns add another consistent layer of anxiety. Many students rely on limited allowances, part-time work, or family support, which creates uncertainty about fees, daily expenses, and long-term career prospects.

Social factors contribute significantly. Students experience peer comparison, fear of judgment, relationship issues, and pressure to meet social expectations. Limited emotional awareness or difficulty expressing emotions increases internal stress.





Lifestyle patterns also affect focus and mental stability. Irregular sleep cycles, excessive screen time, long hours on mobile devices, and lack of physical activity reduce concentration and increase mental fatigue. Continuous exposure to digital notifications lowers attention span and creates constant cognitive overload. Psychological barriers such as overthinking, perfectionism, low self-esteem, and fear of failure intensify anxiety. Many students do not have structured coping mechanisms, and some avoid seeking help due to stigma or lack of access to mental health support. Overall, the combination of academic load, financial uncertainty, digital distraction, emotional pressure, and limited coping skills explains why college students struggle to maintain consistent mental wellness, focus, and emotional balance.



# User survey

Untitled form - Google Forms x Untitled form (Responses) - Google Sheets x mental health college - Google Sheets x

docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1OItThx6yWO4XWtHC0cz6Xa\_1veFLinC9rqEVxJ0MpU/edit?resourcekey=&gid=2140966387#gid=2140966387

Typography Day 2025 Qutb Minar Vector... Fitness Tracker App... (2) Discord | #ru... Stitch - Projects Landing Page Build... All Bookmarks

Untitled form (Responses)

File Edit View Insert Format Data Tools Extensions Help

Share

Timestamp

Timestamp	Age	How often do you feel stressed in a typical week?	What are the main sources of stress for you?	How do you usually handle stress?	Do you currently track your mood or mental health?	Would you be interested in us...
11/17/2025 12:27:10		Almost every day	Personal issues, Assignments exams, Family exp...	Listening to music, Sleeping or resting, We...	No	Yes
11/17/2025 12:29:54	48	Almost every day	Assignments exams, Heavy workload or long wor...	Using meditation or breathing exercises	Maybe	Yes
11/17/2025 12:31:33	22	Often (5-6 days)	Personal issues, Assignments exams, Social pres...	Listening to music, Sleeping or resting, We...	No	Yes
11/17/2025 12:48:58	42	Sometimes (3-4 days)	Personal issues	Using meditation or breathing exercises	No	No
11/17/2025 13:01:27	20	Sometimes (3-4 days)	Assignments exams, Time management, Future o...	Listening to music, Talking to friends or fa...	Maybe	Yes
11/17/2025 13:01:44	20	Sometimes (3-4 days)	Future or career uncertainty	Using meditation or breathing exercises	No	Yes
11/17/2025 13:02:57	22	Sometimes (3-4 days)	Personal issues, Social pressure, Time manageme...	Listening to music, Talking to friends or fa...	Maybe	Yes
11/17/2025 13:11:17	20	Sometimes (3-4 days)	Assignments exams, Time management, Future o...	Listening to music, Talking to friends or fa...	Maybe	Yes
11/17/2025 13:15:46	20	Almost every day	Future or career uncertainty	Sleeping or resting	No	Yes
11/17/2025 13:16:15	21	Sometimes (3-4 days)	Heavy workload or long working hours	Talking to friends or family, Sleeping or res...	No	Yes
11/17/2025 13:29:11	21	Sometimes (3-4 days)	Future or career uncertainty	Sleeping or resting	No	Yes
11/17/2025 13:32:49	20	Almost every day	Personal issues, Social pressure, Future or car...	Talking to friends or family, Avoiding tasks	Maybe	Yes
11/17/2025 14:03:46	24	Sometimes (3-4 days)	Personal issues, Assignments exams, Future or...	Listening to music, Talking to friends or fa...	Maybe	Yes
11/17/2025 15:35:05	19	Sometimes (3-4 days)	Assignments exams, Time management, Future o...	Listening to music, Talking to friends or fa...	No	Yes
11/17/2025 16:30:58	25	Sometimes (3-4 days)	Social pressure, Time management, Future or ca...	Listening to music, Talking to friends or fa...	No	Yes
11/17/2025 17:48:35	19	Sometimes (3-4 days)	Assignments exams	Listening to music, Watching videos or en...	No	Yes

# Key Pain Points Identified

## 1. High and Frequent Stress Levels

Most respondents selected “Almost every day” or “Often (5–6 days)” for stress frequency.

This indicates consistent and chronic stress, not occasional spikes.

**Pain point:** Users experience stress almost daily and lack effective coping systems.

## 2. Multiple Overlapping Stress Sources

Common stress sources repeatedly mentioned:

- Assignments and exams
- Family expectations
- Personal issues
- Financial concerns
- Work pressure (for working professionals)
- Academic deadlines

**Pain point:** Stress is coming from several areas simultaneously, making it harder to manage.

# Key Pain Points Identified

## 3. Difficulty Managing Emotions Due to Time and Overthinking

Key challenges identified:

- Lack of time
- Overthinking
- Difficulty expressing emotions
- Inconsistent routines

**Pain point:** Students and professionals want emotional support but have limited time and unstable habits.

## 4. Strong Need for Calm, Simple, Guided Support

When asked what makes a mental wellness app useful, users preferred:

- Simple UI
- Reminders
- Easy navigation
- Basic guidance rather than heavy content

**Pain point:** Complex wellness apps overwhelm users; they need simple, fast, minimal tools

# Key Pain Points Identified

## 5. Demand for AI-Guided Support

Users prefer AI assistance that provides:

- Suggestions
- Breathing exercises
- Journaling prompts
- Routines
- Reminder-based activities

Even working professionals chose routines and reminders, indicating they want structure.

**Pain point:** Users lack consistent self-care habits and want AI-driven nudge systems.

## 6. Evening Stress Peak

Users repeatedly selected “Evening” as the time they feel most stressed.

**Pain point:** Stress accumulates throughout the day; evenings require targeted support (calming routines, journaling prompts)

## 7. Preferences for Mood Logging

Users are comfortable sharing emotions through:

- Mood logs
- Quick entries
- Guided prompts

**Pain point:** Mood tracking must be fast, private, and low-effort.

# USER PERSONA

## Background

- 💍 : Single
- 💰 : lower - middle class

## Tech Behaviour

animation  
Social Media



## Persona Quote

"Take a deep breath and try all over again."

## Goals & Motivation

Purpose reduce daily stress and overthinking, find stable ways to manage finance and to build a consistent habits

## Pain Points (Challenges)

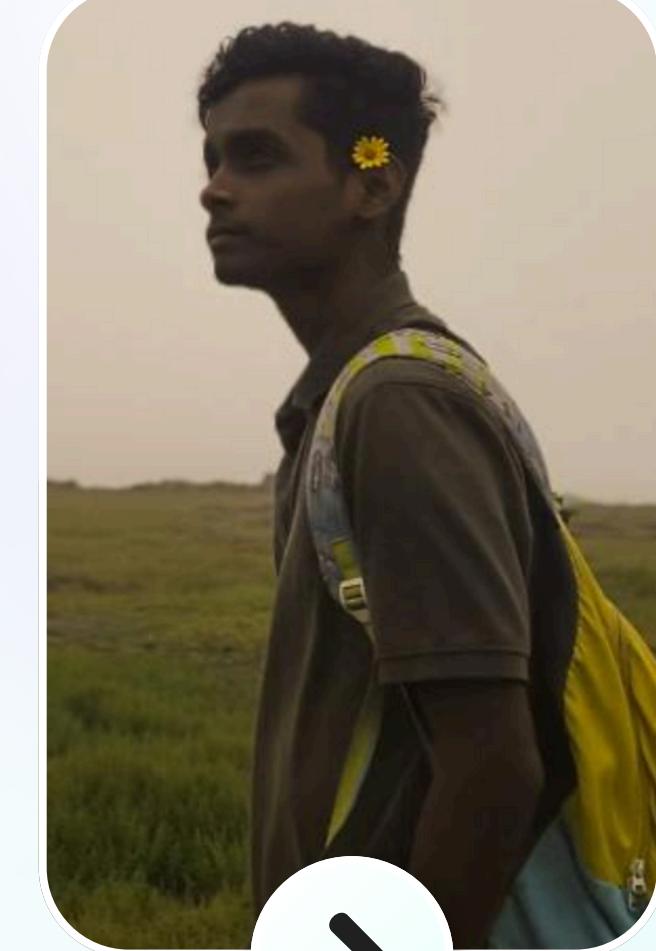
- Frequent anxiety related to exams and deadlines
- Overthinking small decisions,
  - Financial instability causing continuous worry

## Behavior & Preferences

- Uses phone throughout the day
- Prefers apps that are minimal, fast, and easy to navigate

## Persona Quote

- A way to log emotions quickly
- AI-based suggestions for reducing anxiety
  - Budget-friendly recommendations and reminders
  - Visual insights to understand stress triggers and patterns



## Sudarshan

## Persona Identity

- 👤 19 yr:
- 💼 college student

# Overall Insights

1. Users face consistent, daily stress driven by academics, work, finances, and personal issues.
2. Overthinking and irregular routines are major emotional barriers.
3. Users want simple, minimal UI and quick guidance, not long content.
4. AI suggestions, routines, and reminders are highly preferred, showing reliance on support systems.
5. Stress peaks in the evening, indicating when the app should focus interventions.
6. Emotional logging tools should be light, fast, and private to ensure consistent use.

## Problem Statement:

Users struggle to maintain consistent mental well-being due to a lack of simple self-tracking methods, limited awareness of emotional patterns, and the absence of guided coping tools that fit into their daily routines.

# Brainstormed App Features (Based on Survey Insights)

## 1. Quick Mood Logging

A fast, one-tap mood tracker using emojis or sliders so users can log feelings without spending time.

## 2. AI-Based Personalized Suggestions

Recommendations such as:

- Breathing exercises
- Short breaks
- Focus tips
- Stress-relief routines
- Journaling prompts

## 3. Evening Calm-Down Mode

Since most users feel stressed in the evening, provide:

- Night journaling
- Slow breathing sessions
- Gentle reminders to unwind
- Reflection prompts

## 4. Stress Trigger Tracking

Automatically track and visualize what triggers stress:

- Exams
- Workload
- Deadlines
- Family pressure
- Financial concerns
- Short check-ins
- Reflection questions

## **5. Routine Builder**

Users requested routines and reminders:

- Morning routine
- Study/work routine
- Night reset routine

With customizable notifications.

## **6. Simple, Minimal UI**

Survey responses showed preference for a clean interface:

- Minimal screens
- Light colors
- Easy navigation

## **7. Smart Reminders**

Timed or AI-driven reminders for:

- Mood check-ins
- Drinking water
- Taking breaks
- Journaling at night

## **8. Guided Breathing & Focus Tools**

Short tools users can do in under a minute:

- 3-minute breathing
- Focus timers
- Anxiety grounding exercises

## **9. Financial Stress Support**

Because some respondents mentioned financial pressure:

- Budget tips
- Expense note section
- AI micro-tips on money habits
- Reflection questions

## **10. Data Insights Dashboard**

Graphs showing:

- Mood pattern over the week
- Stress peak timings
- Progress in routines
- Most common stress triggers

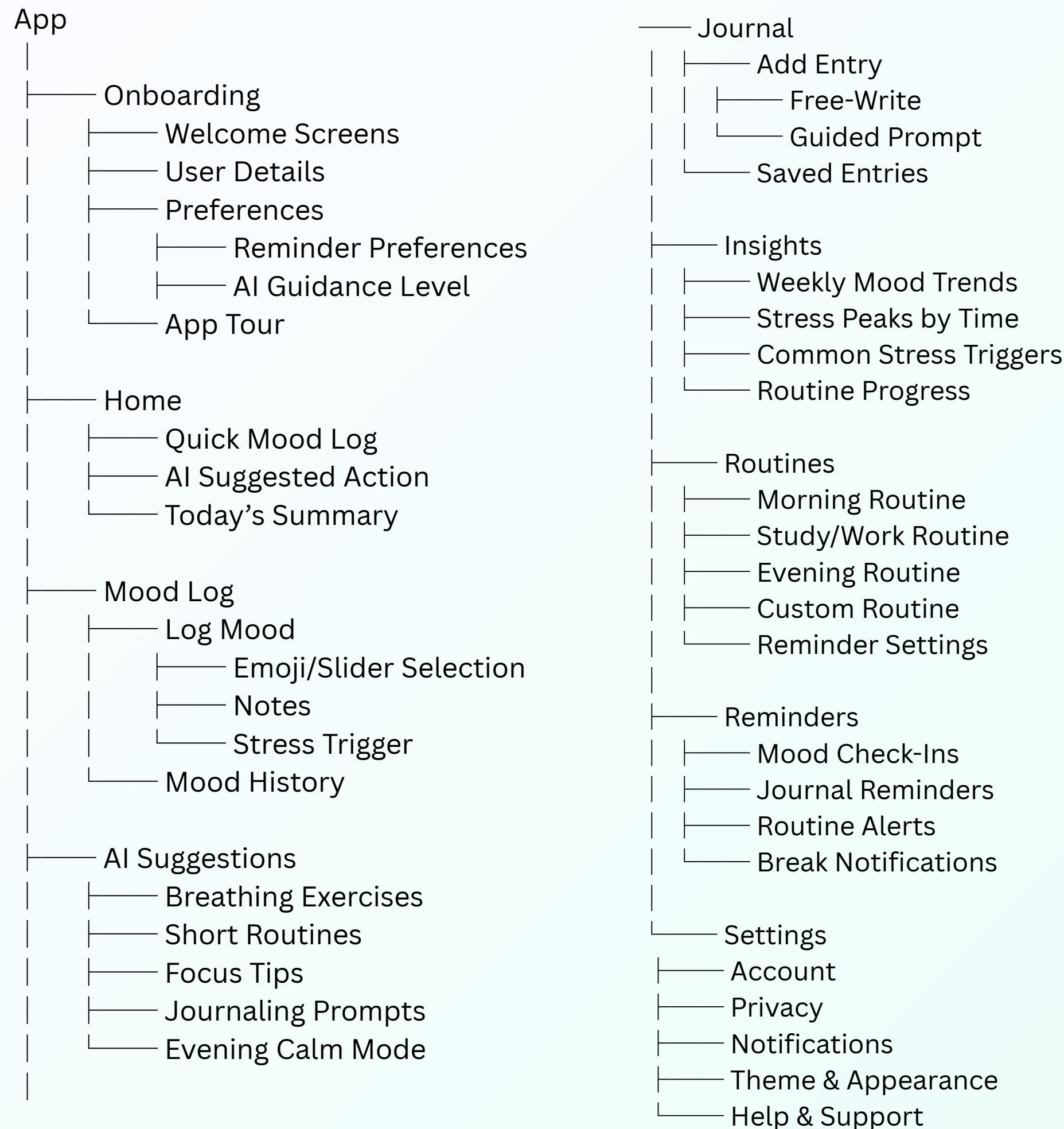
## **11. Private Journaling**

A private space with guided templates for users who find it hard to express emotions.

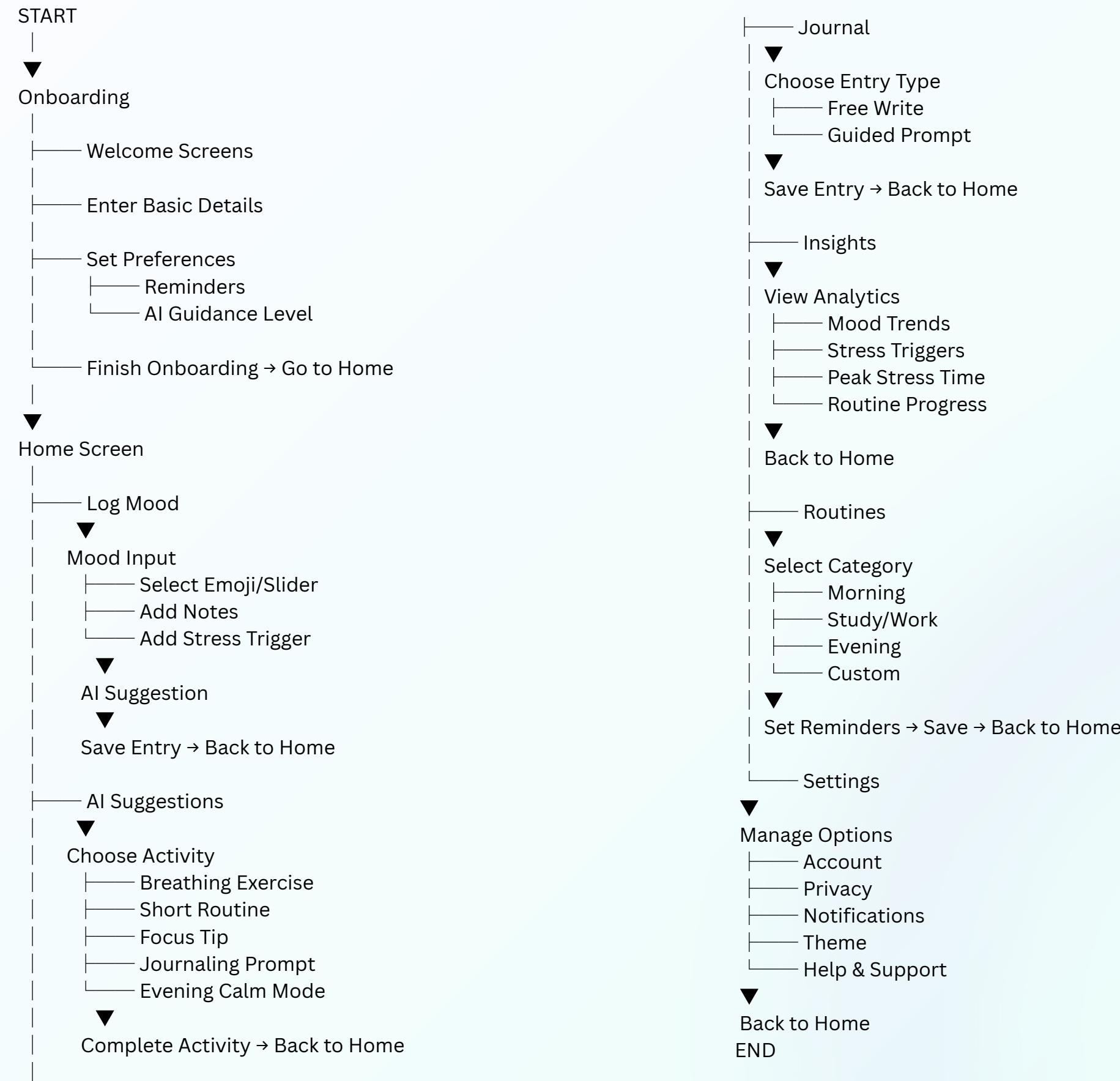
## **12. Optional AI Therapist-Style Chat**

Because many respondents were open to this:

- AI emotional support
- Short check-ins
- Reflection questions

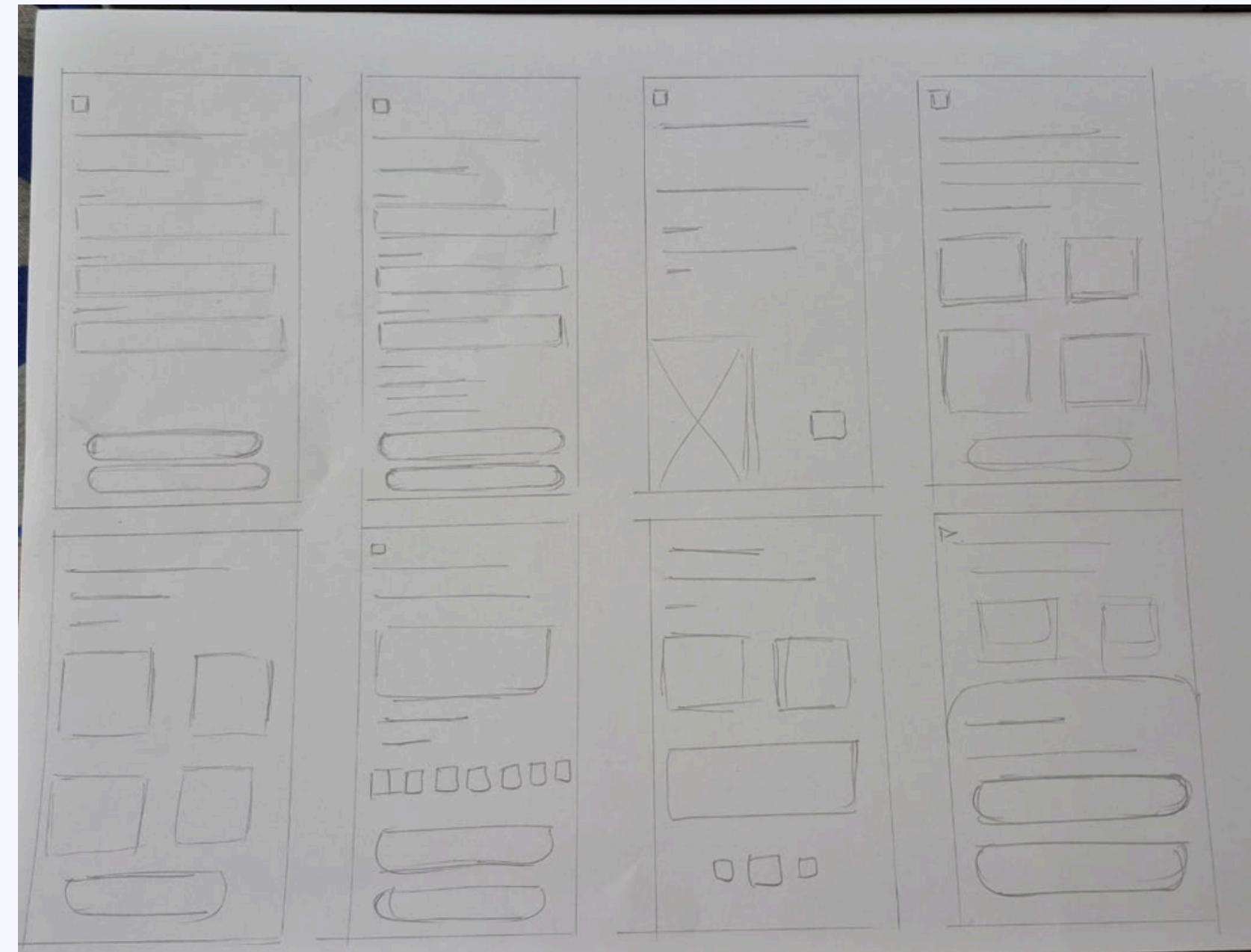


# Information architecture



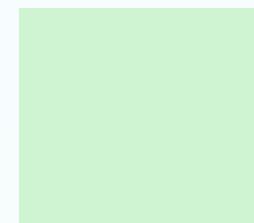
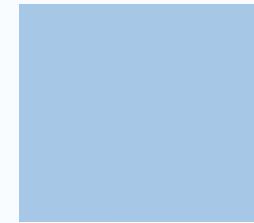
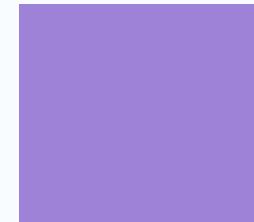
# User flow

# Low fidelity



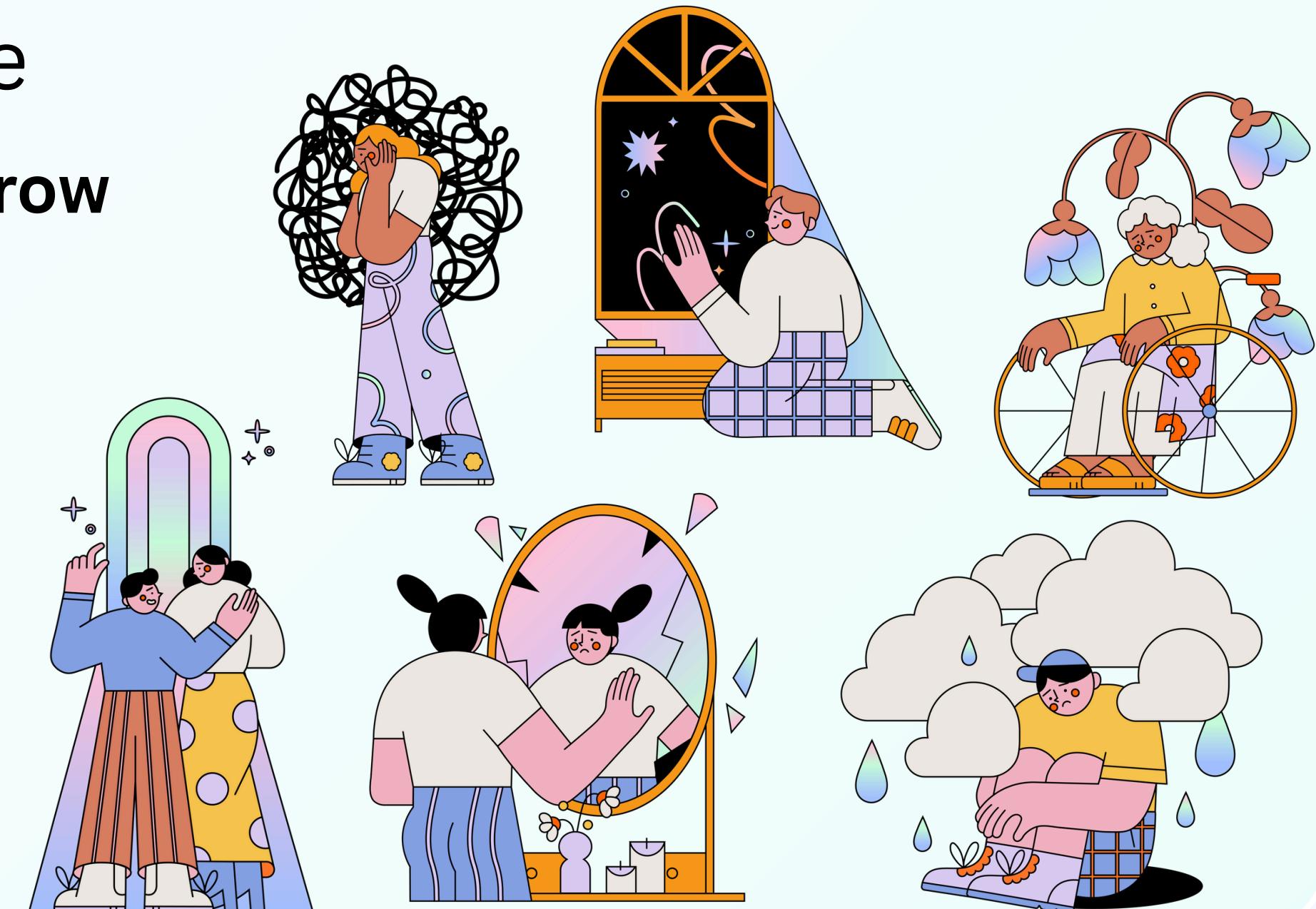
# Visual design

## Color palette

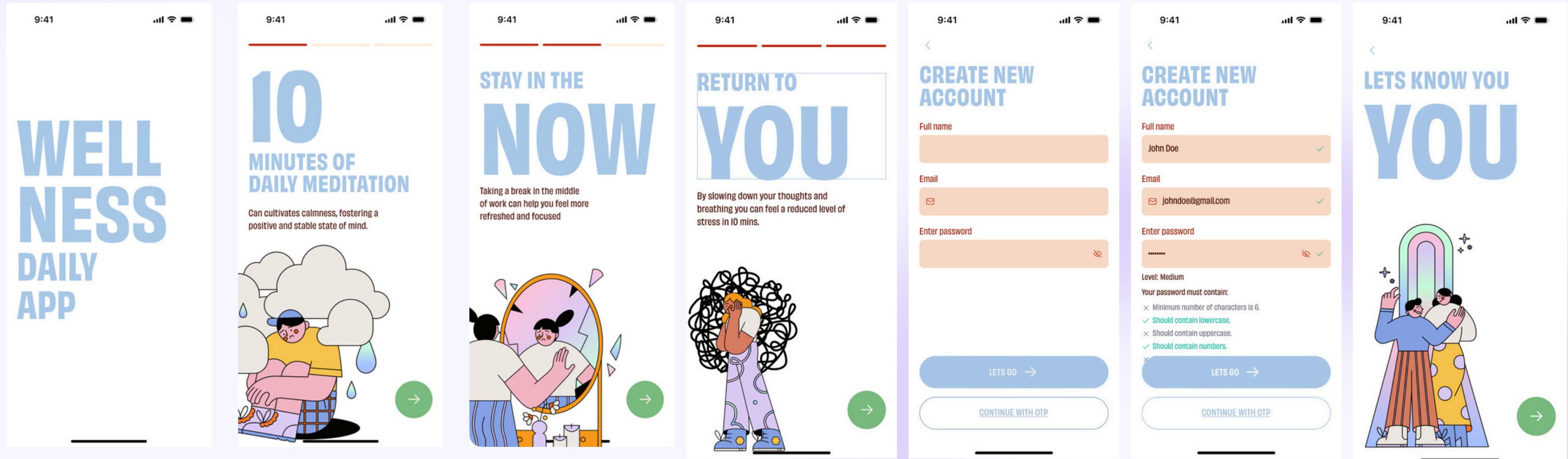


Font name  
**Obviously Narrow**

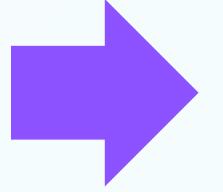
## Illustrations



# High fidelity



**Demo of prototype**



**Prototype link**

# Conclusion

The project demonstrates how a structured UI/UX process can address real mental wellness challenges faced by college students and working professionals. Through research, surveys, and persona development, the key issues identified were stress, anxiety, overthinking, and inconsistent self-management habits. The final design presents a minimal, calming mobile app with AI-based mood tracking, personalized suggestions, journaling, and visual insights to help users build awareness and healthier routines. The solution aligns with user needs by focusing on simplicity, accessibility, and guided support.

# Key Learnings

- Research insights are essential for validating user needs and shaping meaningful features.
- Students and professionals want quick, easy ways to track emotions without complex interactions.
- Visual clarity, color psychology, and minimal UI significantly influence user comfort in wellness products.
- AI-driven suggestions must remain simple, supportive, and non-intrusive to ensure trust.
- Usability testing highlights real navigation issues and helps refine the final experience.
- Designing for mental wellness requires balancing functionality with sensitivity and clarity.