

Helping

A cosy serious game that teaches healthy wellbeing habits

INTRODUCTION

88.2% of people feel that their mental health and emotional wellbeing could be improved.^[1]

Healthy habits and wellbeing practices can be very effective at supporting mental health^[2], but often times people have to either hit a crisis point and be offered support, or take the time to seek out and sift through self-care resources themselves.

Helping uses principles of educational games and psychology to create an enjoyable experience that offers both immediate escapism and longer term healthy habit forming to support users' mental wellbeing.



DISCUSSION

The game design of *Helping* follows the Conceptual Framework of Serious Games^[3], combining game mechanics with learning outcomes.

The learning outcomes in this instance are focused on mental health, with a particular focus on introducing and practising nature-based therapies for wellbeing.

This information is combined with a cosy narrative centred around a main character who moves to a new town and starts befriending and assisting their new neighbours, which in turn helps them feel better and learn new skills. Soft visuals and branching narrative options make the experience calm and immersive, providing an attractive way to spend time whilst simultaneously learning how to better support their own mental health.

CONCLUSIONS

The finished product demonstrates how serious games can be created to improve users mental health in both the long and short term.

The delivered game is a vertical slice of what the concept could be with more development. In future, it could be expanded to include more characters and interconnecting storylines to create a longer experience with more therapeutic approaches represented.

maybe a walk
would help?

...maybe.
where?

the highstreet?
the meadows?
→ the woods? ←

