

olive

Olive is an app that is designed to enable users to take charge of their mental health by equipping them with a licensed therapist, a community that understands what they are going through, as well as a learning tab, daily journaling, and daily mood inputting.



Project introduction and my role

Ever feel like you need some extra help with your mental health but you can't find any app or resources that meet your needs, help you take charge of your story and truly help you while also being financially friendly?

I encountered some users with this issue and I realized that something needed to change. Designing this app, Olive, was a part of my course at Careerfoundry with the objective of helping users find an app that meets them where they're at, and helps them as best it can.

This project took me four months, and I was the designer on this case. The stakeholders in this project were Careerfoundry, as well as my mentors.

The tools that I used were:

1. Pen and paper
2. Adobe XD
3. Adobe Illustrator

My design process

At first, before tackling this issue, I had to figure out how I was going to approach and tackle this problem. I use a user-centered approach, and here are the steps I use:



1. Discover

2. Define

3. Ideate

4. Prototype

5. Test

6. Iterate

As a UX/UI designer, my number one priority while designing is the user. First and foremost, I am here to design a platform that caters to my user as best as it possible can, and everything else comes second. Now, follow me along this journey:



1. Discover

Competitive analysis

First, I conducted a competitive analysis of the following mental health apps: Mind Doc, and Bloom: CBT Therapy and self care. I found that without paying, these apps are very limiting in what they can give their users. This makes users feel that the platform just wants their money instead of helping them overcome their struggles. Mind Doc seemed to be useful in identifying any potential mental health red flags in users and thus had a limited lifespan, and Bloom had a similar issue, and it seemed to push itself as a replacement for doctors, which isn't necessarily the best for users who may be seriously struggling. View the full competitive analysis [here](#)

I then interviewed 4 young women, since according to an article published by the CDC in 2019, women are more likely to reach out for therapy than men. The interviewees are girls that I know, and I knew that some of them did struggle with mental health, which is why I interviewed them so that I could have relevant information for my user research. Here is my script:

Interview script

- What do you think about health apps overall?
- Have you used any before? If so, what was it like?
- What's your opinion on apps geared towards mental health?
- Have you used any before? If so, what was it like?
- If you were to envision the perfect health app, what would it do for you? What about mental health app specifically?
- What are your mental health needs? Are they being met? How do you know?
- What motivates you to take extra time to take care of yourself?
- What does self care look like for you? Do you reward yourself for it?
- Are you interested in trying new forms of self care? If so, what kind and why?
- What's your opinion on mental health education? Do you think it's really necessary?
- Are there any mental health topics you'd like to learn about?
- How would you like to learn more about mental health?
- What helps you get the most out of your education?
- When tracking things, do you like to see your progress? How would you like it to be presented to you?
- How does being in a community and having a sense of community make you feel?
- What helps you know that you are in a community?
- Would knowing that you are in a community make any impact on your mental health journey?
- Would a mental health app with a community feature be something you'd be interested in?

Sharpened focus

Interacting with potential users and talking to them about their past experiences, frustrations, needs, wants, and goals, as well as what they look for in an app was one of the best stages of this project for me.

Here, I really got to know my users on a deeper level, and I was determined to design a product for *them*. I wasn't going to design a product with a goal of making money, making some businessman happy, or meet some kind of a sales goal. I was going to design an app that users were lacking that would help them.



2. Define

Some conclusions:

After my user interviews, I was able to make the following conclusions

1. Users need motivation
2. Users need an app that pushes them to be better and take care of themselves
3. Users need inexpensive, online therapy
4. Users need mental health education
5. Users need a community
6. Some interviewees were frustrated with previous apps that they used and weren't able to afford therapy in the past.

After this, I was ready to create my user personas.

Eileen

Needs and goals:

- She needs to be surrounded with people who are going through the same thing as her and have some kind of a community
- Inexpensive therapy + coping mechanisms + treatments
- Mental health education through short lessons, slightly longer videos, longer and podcasts and a place where she can find information and explanation for what she's going through
- An education that's focused on big topics but is also specific to her
- Work alongside a therapist with a check in at the end of every week
- Journal daily to let all of her negativity out and have something that cheers her up
- Self care encouragement



- She mainly uses her phone for personal use and a laptop for school
- She'd use the app at the end of every day

"I'm emotionally damaged"
"Journaling and therapy is a good idea"

Demographics:

- 20 years old
- Lives in a somewhat urban area,
- she's a broke college student, studying early childhood education
- She's also always on the go and works at a local cafe when for up to 30 hrs a week
- from an immigrant family that has a very old fashioned view on mental health and they look down on mental health struggles
- Single
- Seriously struggles with mental health struggles and has a hard time getting help for it
- Tried to use therapy apps before but they were too expensive
- Sees herself as "damaged" and covid made her struggle all the more

Shannon

Needs and goals

- Not in touch with her emotions and where she's at mentally
- She needs something that continuously pushes her to be motivated, organized, and get stuff done
- She needs to see that her work and progress is not only doing good to just her, but also to the people around her and the world as well
- She needs something that takes her away from negativity and encourages self care
- She needs daily journaling to let all of her negativity out
- She needs mental health education in the form of short lessons
- She needs a place where she can get answers instead of going to a doctors office
- A way to de-stress
- She **loves** journaling



"I don't really know where I'm at mentally, which I know isn't a good thing but laziness gets in the way"

"I journal anything and everything.

Anything that's bothering me or made me in a good mood. I feel like we tend to bottle it up and journaling helps you release that negativity."

Demographics

- 19 years old
- Lives in a city
- A college student studying fine art
- She works weekends at the library and is trying to get an internship Pixar
- Is also super busy and involved in church volunteering plus community service
- Struggles with stress and overwhelmed with negativity
- Has tried mental health apps before but she didn't get what she needed so she saw them as worthless
- Would use the app at the end of the day
- Uses her laptop for work and schoolwork and her phone for personal things so she'd use the app on her phone

Problem and solution statements:

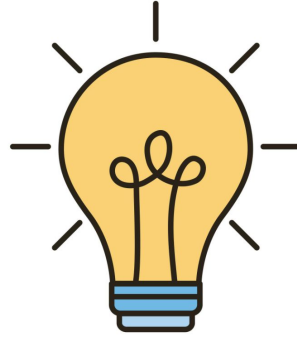
I now had a full grip and understanding of this issue, so it was time to make the problem and solution statements

Problem statement:

Our user needs a way to boost their health and overall wellness because oftentimes, this aspect is neglected in the business of everyday life. We will know this to be true when we see that our user uses the app for over 6 months and is actively meeting their goals and progressing in their health.

Solution statement:

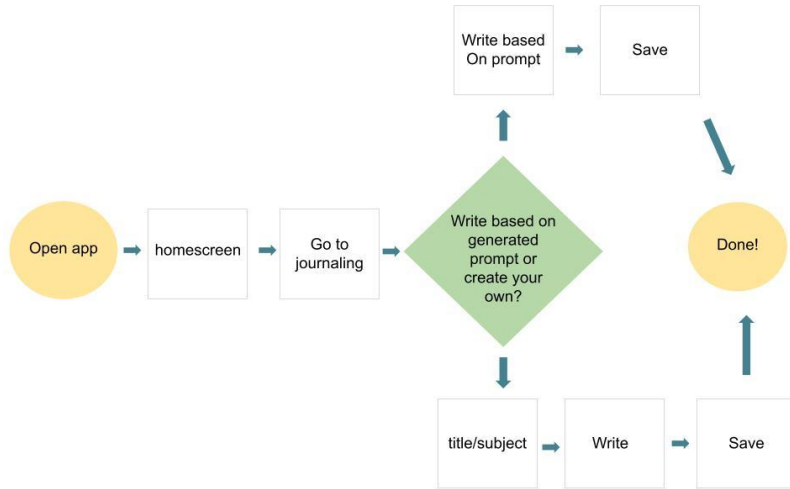
An app that does not overwhelm the user in trackable health data and educates the user to be more in tune with their health, and an app that automatically inputs data as much as possible for maximum comfort. This app would also provide the user with a sense of community, pushes the user to meet their goals and to expand their self care, doesn't neglect mental health, and provides them with a licensed therapist. The app would be secure and won't unintentionally harm the user.



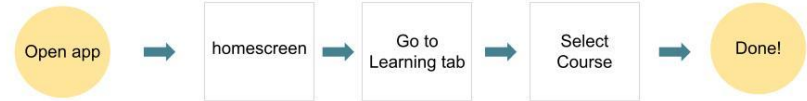
3. Ideate

User flows

I was now ready to craft my user flows:

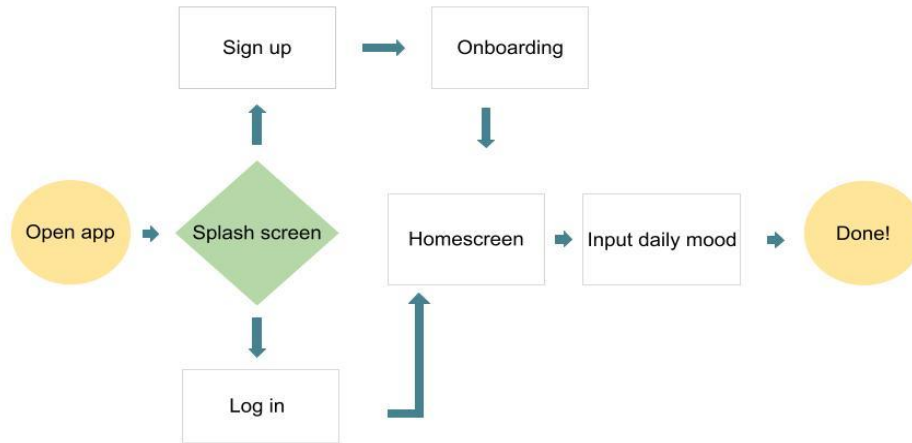


Journaling user flow



Learning user flow

User flows, cont.



Inputting daily mood
user flow

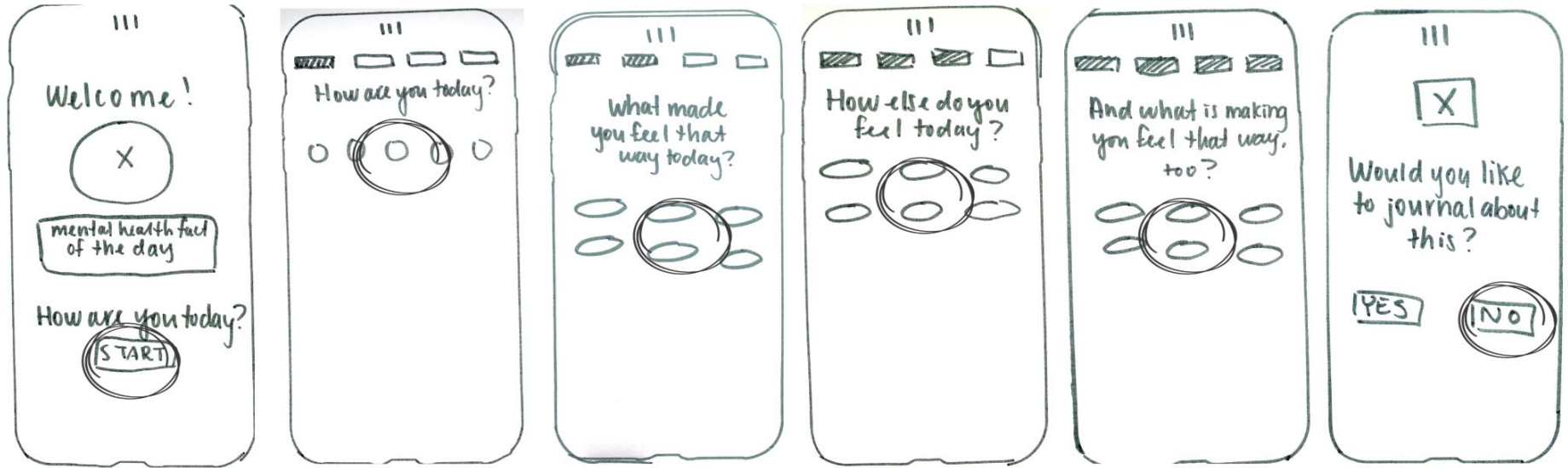
After this, it was time to move onto the prototyping stage and put my ideas to paper.

First, I started out with low-fidelity paper prototyping, and then I moved onto mid-fidelity prototyping on Adobe XD. I then tested that prototype and made iterations to the design as were needed. This iteration process turned my design into a high-fidelity, functional prototype.

Here is mt process:

4. Prototype

Paper prototyping



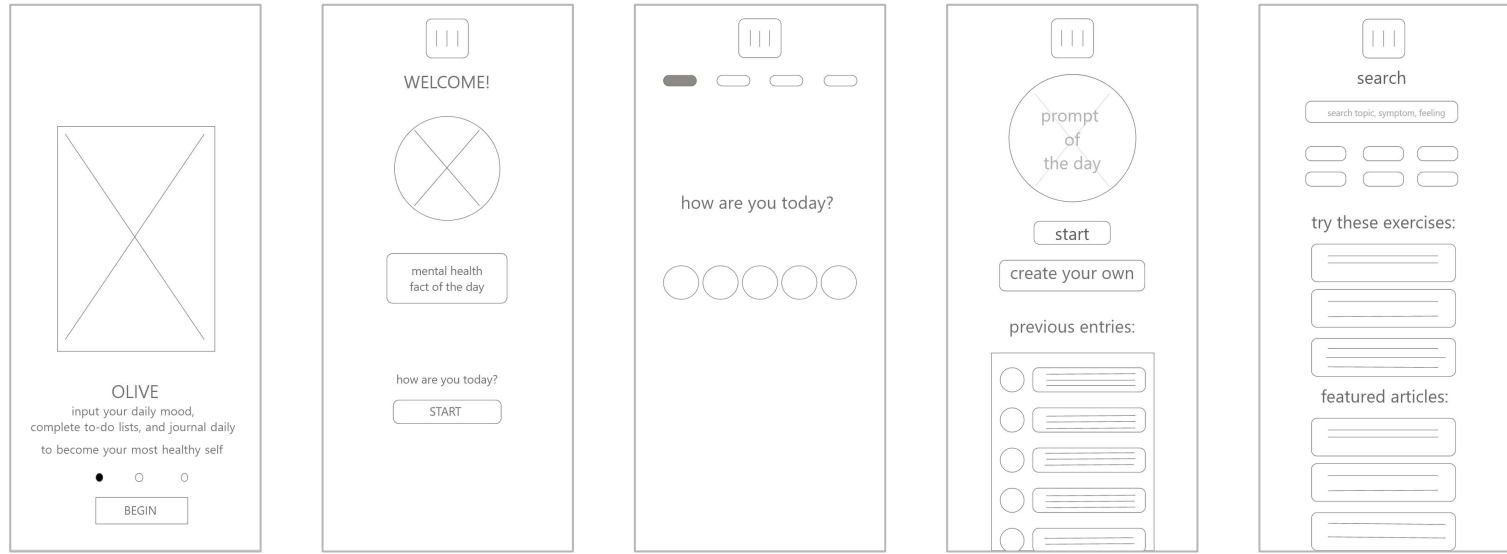
** the circles are where the user would click **

Mid-fidelity prototyping

With all of my research in hand, it was officially time to begin to put my ideas to paper. This was the first time that I put pen to paper to figure out how to visually lay out every element of Olive to create a seamless UX. It was exciting, and honestly a little overwhelming.

I was challenged here because of just how overwhelmed I felt, but I was able to get through it by just focusing on one task at a time.

After this, I threw my design onto Adobe XD to create a mid-fidelity prototype.



Here, I began to suspect that the hamburger menu probably wasn't the best idea, but I left it to see how my users would react to it. This was because here, my main priority was just translating my wireframes onto Adobe XD. I also began to suspect that some of my pages such as the learning page (last pic) were too cluttered and overwhelming with info, but again, I left it to see how users would react.

Here, I was also challenged because I had to learn how to use XD in a really short timeframe. But, I managed to stay on my toes, focus on one task at a time, and I got through it and learned a bunch of new skills in the process. Now, it was time for the usability testing stage.

5. Testing

Usability test script

I decided to test six users of different demographics. I made sure to have one of my testees be someone who speaks English as a second language to see whether or not my design was intuitive and understandable for everyone or not.

I asked users to perform the following tasks:

1. Input their mood
2. Watch a video about depression
3. Journal about what makes them happiest
4. Go back to the homepage

Before conducting the tests, I asked the participants for some demographic info and conduct a survey with them afterwards to see with how much ease they were able to perform the tasks, as well as seeing their levels of satisfaction with the app.

After conducting the tests, I organized my findings as follows:

Usability test findings



Affinity map of interviewee's comments, actions, and discovered issues with the app.

Discovered issues:	Rating:
Users were confused about the homepage and inputting mood as it wasn't clear on the homepage -- needs to be more clear with abundant information and background knowledge, so there's a need for a clear, precise and concise onboarding	3
Use simple, easy to understand terms as someone who doesn't speak english as a first language was confused	3
Need settings	3
Natasha and kristina were both confused by the opening pages before getting to the homepage and felt frustrated with them not working	2
Every participant wanted to type in the journaling stage	0 -- it'll be resolved with the app being fully functional once it's completed
Navigation system is not properly working -- not every working feature was accessible, and the button doesn't work at the end of the learning page	4
There was confusion regarding the learning page and finding the video -- let users know what is entailed in the learning page	2
Users wanted to sometimes select multiple options in the inputting mood function and that wasn't possible And one user requested adding 'school' as a reason in the inputting mood function	2

Jakob Nielsen scale of discovered usability issues

Further findings

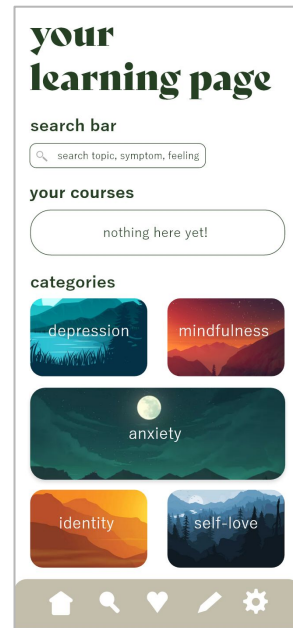
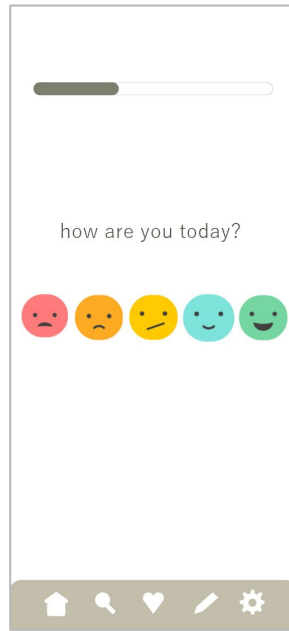
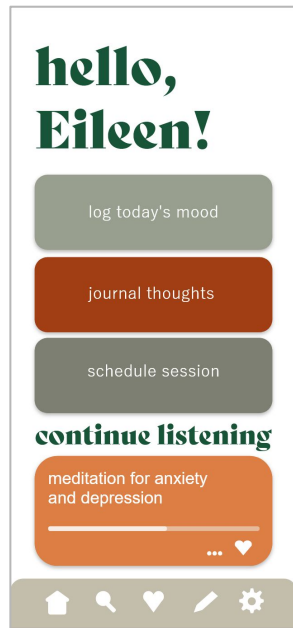
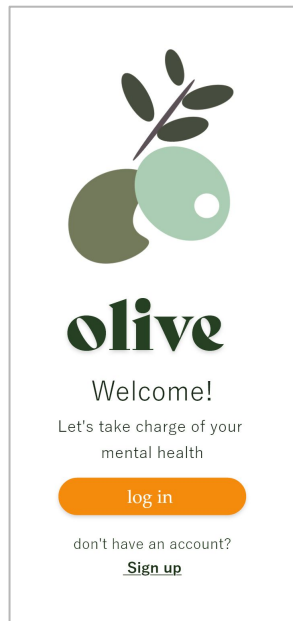
Here, I also discovered that there was an accessibility issue for those who don't speak English as their first language, as one of my testees didn't know the language well and he was confused as to what to do and how to do it with every single task.

This pointed out a huge glaring issue that I forgot to even think about: my design had some serious accessibility issues. It was important to make a change.

6. Iteration

Polished, accessible design

These findings really showed me all of the changes that I needed to make to make my app be everything that my users needed it to be. I then started to work on my mid-fidelity prototype, and made it into a high-fidelity prototype with the goal of having it be accessible to all kinds of users.



Conclusion

Olive turned out to be different than I had originally expected it to be. This is because of my own bias of what I envisioned the perfect mental health app to be compared to what potential users told me they needed from a mental health app. Also, I wasn't able to prototype every single function of the app due to time constraints as well as my course project only needed me to prototype 3 app functions.

This project was very challenging as I was the only designer working on all of this, but I'm thankful for every challenge because it was a growing opportunity. It forced me to learn new skills, really come to terms with my skill and where it's at, and it pushed me to learn and be better. Overall, Olive really put me on my feet as a designer, and now, as a designer, I now know who I am and what I'm capable of.

I hope that you enjoyed looking over my work as much as I enjoyed designing Olive, and always remember: you don't know what you're capable of until you try.