Heuristic Evaluation of [==CareShare==]

1. Problem/Prototype Description

We evaluated CareShare, which is a goal-achieving app that allows users to create and join challenges in groups in order to help each other achieve their goals.

2. Violations Found

1. H1: Visibility of system status / 1 / C
upload
- There's no indication on the updates feed that an upload is in progress or that an update has been recently posted by the user. Users might be unsure if their update was posted properly or not.
  Fix: Add a progress bar indicating upload status

2. H1: Visibility of system status / 4 / C, A
pending invitation
- On the individual challenge page, users are given the option to invite friends to join the challenge, but there is no indication anywhere of "pending" invitations. If user A invites user B to join their challenge, how will user B know and/or accept the invitation?
  Fix: Maybe add a little notification on the dropdown menu in the top left hand corner (since that's where the friends functionality is accessed), and in the dropdown menu add a label for "pending invitations"

3. H1: Visibility of system status / 3 / C, A
accept friend request
- Additionally, there's no indication anywhere for users to accept/decline friend requests (If user A clicks "add friend" and inputs user B, how will user B know and/or accept?)
  Fix: Wherever the information for friends is relocated, include an option to view and accept/decline friend requests

4. H1 Visibility of System Status/ 1 / B
- On the Grind Don't Stop page, the progress bars have different colors, but it is not necessarily intuitive what the different colors mean, making it difficult to accurately know what your status is on the progress.
  Fix: Make the black into a color more obvious that it means that they did not complete the goal.

5. H1: Visibility of System Status / 2 / C
- The organization of the search features is confusing. If after returning to a previous page from a search (such as #fitness), users can be confused if this previous page doesn't show the last tab they were on.

- Fix: Maintain the tab state user is on regardless of where they are in the search process rather than always restarting back at "Trending Challenges".

6. H1: Visibility of System Status / 0 / A
- Plus button is ambiguous and makes it unclear what exactly will be added to the page. This is more relevant for the update of a specific goal page since there exists various components that could be added with the plus sign (e.g. a message in the thread, the date circle, or increasing the percentage).
- Suggested Fix: place plus sign right above the thread below the grey line separating the progresses and thread, and maybe indicate in some way that a post will be added (gray dotted outline around the plus sign the size of a generic post)

7. H2: Match between system and the real world / 1 / C, D
- The "find inspiration" icon on the home page is inconsistent with the actual function- users may be confused and click on the icon with the purpose of searching through their goals and/or check-in posts.
  Fix: Change the magnifying glass icon to something else, or better yet switch it out for a navigation bar at the bottom of the screen

8. H2: Match between system and the real world / 1 / C
- The labels of "Ongoing", "Finished", and "Friends" at the top of the home screen could be confusing without context, especially because they're related to different topics (challenges/friends).
  Fix: Add a label that designates "goals"/"challenges"/etc

9. H2: Match between system and the real world/ 1 / C, B

down carrot
- The down carrot icon on the home screen has an unclear function: Users might expect it to expand the title but it instead offers profile options.
  Fix: Change the icon

10. H2 Match between system and real world / 3 / D
- Search page it's not clear to me exactly what I can search for, only hashtags? Can I search for groups as well? How about friends? (related: complex).
  Fix: Maybe a help icon or a design rearrange.

11. H2 Match between system and real world / 3 / D, A
- If I wouldn't have read your README or seen your slides, I would have no idea what "goal count" and "checkpoint" stand for when creating a challenge.
- Fix: Find a more visual way of communicating this or just add some help icons that explain what they do. I would also consider renaming these and perhaps even rethinking how a challenge is structured. Specifically, why do progress updates need to be binary? If you have a workout goal, shouldn't you be able to say, for example, that you worked out for X minutes on a given day instead of saying that you worked out at all? Giving users this flexibility would be game changing.

12. H3: User control and freedom / 2 / C
- The labels of "Ongoing", "Finished", and "Friends" on the home screen fall under different categories: I would expect to be able to click on "Friends" to see a list of friends but wouldn't necessarily expect to click on "Ongoing" or "Finished."
Fix: Relocate the "Friends" tab to be separated from the "Ongoing" and "Finished" labels

13. H3: User control and freedom / 3 / C, D
- The locations of all the information on friends is in different locations: friend count is plainly displayed on the home page, but your own personal friend code and the button to "add friends" is under the drop down menu in the top left hand corner.
Fix: Consolidate all the friends functions and information under one menu/page.

14. H3: User control and freedom / 4 / C

trending groups
- The functionality of the "Trending Groups" might be confusing. For these large-scale public groups (like the "100 Day Gym with Kim K"), is there any distinction given to the leaders (like Kim K), or will the feed of "Updates" for that challenge be an endless stream of updates from all 5000 members?
Fix: Elaborate on how large-scale groups will work- perhaps by having a designated "Challenge leader" and/or only showing a feed of updates from the leader, the user, and any friends that are also in the group.

15. H3: User control and freedom / 4 / C, D

privacy indication
- On the "New Challenge" page, users are given the option of making their challenge public, private, or friends only, but these types don't appear anywhere else.
Fix: Consider using icons next to each challenge to indicate its type, allowing users to filter challenges by type, or otherwise making that data more available.

16. H3: User control and freedom / 3 / C, A

how to delete updates/challenges?
- There's no immediately obvious way for users to delete updates and/or challenges. While I might assume an ability to swipe left on a challenge to delete it, the feed of updates from a variety of people means that functionality might not work as well there.
Fix: Consider adding a dropdown carrot on every update that allows a user to delete it, and ensure that functionality is implemented on the challenges page.

17. H3: User control and freedom / 2 / C
- There's no indication of how the challenges are ordered on the home screen- is it chronological? Is it based on where I've updated most recently? On unread updates? On where I've checked in today? On frequency of check-ins?
Fix: Add an option to filter challenges on the home screen

18. H4: Consistency and standards / 2 / C, D, A

pie chart

- The pie chart representing progress is slightly confusing when paired with the circles representing daily achievements- Users may be confused about if the pie chart is also related to daily achievement or if it's separate.
  Fix: Use a progress bar instead of a pie chart, or add a datepicker to keep track of progress that shows who did what on a given day (can click on a date and see which of the friends participated, and can also make it color coded).

19. H4: Consistency and standards / 3 / C

- The down carrot icon performs different functions on different pages: sometimes it opens a dropdown menu and sometimes it expands out a given section.
  Fix: Use a different icon on the homepage (maybe a small person to represent profile/friends or a hamburger menu)

20. H4: Consistency and standards / 2 / A, C, B

add button

- The "Add" button is in a different location and has a different effect on the different pages. On the home page, it is centered and has a white gradient behind it to differentiate from the background, but on the "Grind Don't Stop" page it's on the bottom left and has a drop shadow.
  Fix: Use consistent styling for both buttons

21. H4: Consistency and standards / 3 / C, B

- The rocket icon at the bottom of the "New Challenge" page is confusing and inconsistent as it doesn't appear anywhere else. In comparison with the "Update" page, the icons are different and appear in different places on the screen (bottom tab vs top right corner)
  Fix: Using the same "send" icon on both the "New Challenge" and "Update" pages or incorporate the rocket icon in more places as a symbol to represent challenges everywhere (for example on the home screen alongside "Ongoing" and "Finished."

22. H4: Consistency and standards / 4 / C, A

terminology

- The terminology of "Update" and "Check-In" is inconsistent: On the "New Challenge" page you set the frequency of "Checkpoints", the home screen labels read "Check in today" and "Checked in", but on the individual challenge screen you're instructed to post an "Update." Users might find this confusing.
  Fix: Use consistent terminology (I prefer "Check-in")

23. H4: Consistency and standards / 4 / C, D

- On the "Trending" page, the heart icons are unclear. If "liking" the challenge means that you've joined it, then it should appear on the homescreen. Alternatively, if "liking" the challenge means simply marking your interest, then users should be able to search through their "liked" challenges somewhere in the app. Either way, the functionality of "liking" a challenge is unclear given the heart shape (especially given that the heart-icon "likes" appear on the updates feed as well). Additionally, who gets notified when you "like" the different options?
  Fix: Use different icons to indicate functionality (maybe a bookmark or a star for the challenges/groups)

24. H4: Consistency and standards / 4 / C, B, D

terminology

- The different terminology on the "Trending" page is unclear: the "Trending Challenges" and "Trending Groups" look exactly the same. Additionally, tapping on one of the posts on the "Trending Groups" page allows users to "Join the Challenge," which is again confusing as the user should be looking at groups, not challenges.
  Fix: Display a different type of data on the "Trending Groups" page.
  Alternatively: Don't create a separate tab for trending groups in the explore page, instead, let users click into challenges and see what sort of activity is trending based on a given challenge, and when they see an activity, they see under what group it was posted, and they can click into it. I think this is a more natural way of discovering things to do if you're taking the "discovery by challenge" approach, the idea of just seeing some random person's group chat is a little strange, and the notion of it being trending is too. It could work, I just think that it can be unclear to the user what "groups" can trend. Consider making the actual posts trend and showing people a feed of those! Seems like they are the actual content and what people would most enjoy discovering.

25. H4: Consistency and standards / 3 / C

group sizes

- There's no indication on any of the pages of group sizes. This would be particularly helpful for the "Trending Groups" page: Is the user joining a community of 5000 others or a small group of 5?
  Fix: Add a small icon for each group indicating the group size

26. H4 Consistency and Standards / 1 / B

- Everywhere uses green hearts on this app. This violates app standards from social media to use red or at least reddish hearts.
- **Fix:** change the hearts to red.

27. H4 Consistency and Standards / 1 / B

- Whenever you create your own challenge, there is a tab for "Goal Count" and whenever you try the meditation challenge it instead says "Reach 30" for the Goal Count of 30. This creates an inconsistency in terminology for the same meaning.
- Fix: switch it to say "Goal Count: 30" after a goal count has been set.

28. H4 Consistency and Standards / 0 / B

- When creating a new challenge, the "challenge name" text field is capitalized while the "challenge details" field is not capitalized.
- Fix: capitalize the "c" in "challenge details".

29. H4 Consistency and Standards / 0 / B

- In the menu tab of the Grind Don't Stop page, not all of the options are the same font size.
  Fix: make a conventional font size for all of the menu options.

30. H4 Consistency and standards / 1 / D
- The for you page is a little hidden and I'm not sure what it is meant to do. Is this a feed of all the updates posted by any of my friends? Is this a curated list of groups based on my previous experiences/goals? Was a little disappointed that this was not clickable, mentioned in the slides, or mentioned in the readme. The biggest problem, however, is that I wouldn't know without clicking what sort of content I would be able to consume there. (Related task: complex).
- Fix: remove this page, or if your intent is to make this a very social app, make it a little more "feed" centric and make it easier to get to this point.

31. H5: Error prevention / 1 / C
- The rocket icon for "post" at the bottom of the "New Challenge" page is green and seemingly clickable even when there is no information inputted, meaning users could start a new challenge that is completely empty.
  Fix: Grey out the post button when the input fields are empty

32. H5: Error prevention / 1 / C
- The send button for "post" at the top right of the "Update" page is also green even when the input fields are empty.
  Fix: Grey out the post button when the input fields are empty

33. H5 Error Prevention / 1 / D
- Even though you haven't mapped out the "edit challenge" event, there are a lot of error possibilities I can think of. One, for example, is if you give users the option to change the "goal count" of a goal, then there are edge cases in which other people in the group goal have already gone past through a certain amount of counts, which would mean they already finish the task. Also, what happens to the groups that have "sub-classed" from this group and created a copy? Is their challenge also modified? (Related task: simple).
- Fix: Be very cognizant about what you let users edit about a challenge and why! I also suggest you make it clearer to the user what happens when one member of a group completes a task and another one doesn't.

34. H6: Recognition rather than recall / 4 / C
- The "Update" page doesn't contain any indication of which challenge you're posting an update to, or any indication of who would see that update if it was accidentally posted (friends, private, etc).
  Fix: Include a label for the challenge on the add an update page

35. H6: Recognition not Recall / 0 / A
- On the "Update" page, the question of "Completed a goal?" isn't specific enough. After choosing an activity on the home page they want to post an update on, it becomes confusing if it asks if you completed "a" goal because that could refer to the other goals on the home page.
- Fix: change to "Completed [the] goal?" or "Completed [this] goal?" or include the actual goal in the question

36. H7: Flexibility and efficiency of use / 2 / C, A
- The "Add" button on the "Grind Don't Stop" page is on the bottom left. Right handed users using the app with only one hand might find it frustrating or difficult to quickly add an update.
  Fix: Move the button to the right side or to the middle

37. H7 Flexibility and Efficiency of Use / 2 / B
- There is no quick way for someone who is in a lot of groups/challenges to check in. They must always enter that group/challenge and then check in, which could require a lot of clicks for someone in a lot of challenges.
  Fix: add a check-in button next to each challenge on the Home screen.

38. H7 Flexibility and efficiency of use / 4 / D
- One of the things that I think would most be improved upon is that the meaty content in the app (posts with pictures) is pretty hidden away! I would like to be able to more easily see people's posts about them actually engaging in productive tasks.
- Fix: make there be a feed of what your friends are posting, regardless of whether you're in the same group. I think serendipity like this is what keeps people coming back to social apps, under your current setup, people have to be very intentional about going into different groups and seeing posts, whereas if you were "post first" (i.e: show the posts and let users click into groups, you could make the content more appealing to your users).

39. H7 Flexibility and efficiency of use / 3 / D
- Cannot easily see information related to the challenges made by a specific user
- Fix: Make user profiles clickable and others be able to see your challenges.

40. H8: Aesthetic and minimalist design / 0 / C
- The CareShare logo at the top of the screen has a slight gradient which is unnecessary and distracting at such a small scale.
  Fix: Remove the gradient and make it a flat logo instead

41. H8: Aesthetic and minimalist design / 0 / C
- The "Add" button also has a slight gradient and the plus sign in the middle is uncomfortably large, making it look crowded.
  Fix: Make the plus sign smaller and removed the gradient

42. H8: Aesthetic and minimalist design / 2 / C
- The information at the top of the home feed about ongoing and finished challenges seems slightly redundant- it takes up a lot of space on the page but provides little information and no functionality to the user.
  Fix: Remove and/or relocate the ongoing/finished/friends information

43 H8: Aesthetic and minimalist design / 2 / C
green dot update
- The green dots next to challenges on the home screen seem to represent unread updates, but I think more valuable information to the user would be whether they've checked in or not. While this information is displayed under the title, the hierarchy of importance of the green dot in comparison with the greyed out text could be misleading for the user.

Fix: Reconsider the use of color/type/location to ensure that the most important information is portrayed accordingly.

44. H8: Aesthetic and minimalist design / 3 / C
- The "Grind Don't Stop" page has two separate locations for users to see which friends have joined the challenge (on both the progress dropdown and the title dropdown), which is redundant.
   Fix: Eliminate the title dropdown and instead always show the description under the title

45. H8: Aesthetic and Minimalist Design / 1 / B
- When searching, there is an icon in the top right corner that currently does nothing. For the sake of simplicity, if it does nothing it should be removed, especially since there are already other ways on the page to change how you search.
   Fix: remove the icon.

46. H8 Aesthetic and Minimalist Design / 1 /B
- When creating the challenge, the rocket ship at the bottom feels too minimalist. It is not entirely obvious that this is clickable or that it is the necessary button to actually finish creating the challenge.
   Fix: Put some text next to the Rocket, for example "Launch Challenge" could work well.

47. H8 Aesthetic and Minimalist Design / 3 / B
- The pop-out menu is very small everywhere that one is used, this can make it seem very insignificant. Additionally, this can make it difficult to read when there is so much else still going on in the page.
   Fix: Make it larger like a full DrawerNavigation tab.

48. H10: Help and documentation / 1 / C, B
- There's no high level help page that includes frequent questions, offers a repeated onboarding introduction, or offers introduction to the rationale behind the app and/or where to get more resources.
   Fix: Add a high level help page

3. Summary of Violations

Category	# Viol. (sev 0)	# Viol. (sev 1)	# Viol. (sev 2)	# Viol. (sev 3)	# Viol. (sev 4)	# Viol. (total)
H1: Visibility of Status	1	2	1	1	1	**6**
H2: Match Sys & World	0	3	0	2	0	**5**
H3: User Control	0	0	2	2	2	**6**
H4: Consistency & Standards	2	3	3	2	3	**13**
H5: Error Prevention	0	3	0	0	0	**3**
H6: Recognition not Recall	1	0	0	0	1	**2**
H7: Efficiency of Use	0	0	2	1	1	**4**
H8: Minimalist Design	2	2	2	2	0	**8**

H9: Help Users with Errors	0	0	0	0	0	**0**
H10: Help & Documentation	0	1	0	0	0	**1**
Total Violations by Severity	**6**	**14**	**10**	**10**	**8**	**48**

Note: **check your answer for the green box by making sure the sum of the last column is equal to the sum of the last row (not including the green box)**

4. Evaluation Statistics

Severity / Evaluator	Evaluator A	Evaluator B	Evaluator C	Evaluator D
Sev. 0	*33.33%*	*33.33%*	*33.33%*	*0%*
Sev. 1	*0%*	*50%*	*50%*	*21.4%*
Sev. 2	*11.11%*	*22.22%*	*88.88%*	*11.11%*
Sev. 3	*20%*	*20%*	*70%*	*40%*
Sev. 4	*0%*	*16.67%*	*100%*	*50%*
Total (sevs. 3 & 4)	11.11%	16.67%	77.78%	44.44%
Total (all severity levels)	10.41%	29.17%	64.58%	25%

****Note that the bottom rows are *not* calculated by adding the numbers above it.**

5. Summary Recommendations

One of the biggest categories of violations is that of consistency and standards. While most of the violations are simple cosmetic changes, making these fixes will make the app significantly more user-friendly. More specifically, we noted a lack of consistency with the "+" button, the rocketship vs paper airplane icons for posting an update/challenge, the differing functionalities of the down carrot icon across the app, the differing or questionable functionalities of the heart icon (and its color), the "Search" icon, the "Update" vs "Check-in" terminology, the "Checkpoints" vs "Goal Count" terminology, the use and implementation of the private/public/friends only tags, and the different text sizes across the app. The majority of the high-severity violations in this section, however, are related to the search/inspiration/trending section.

The search page(s) of the application can be very confusing/overwhelming. If the entire intention is to only find inspiration, the search magnifying glass icon could be slightly misleading to the user, so changing the icon could be an option. Additionally, there doesn't seem to be a clear difference between trending groups and trending challenges. The trending groups page has the same functionality as challenges and only adds in a few extra pieces of functionality. We feel that these two tabs could probably be consolidated into a single trending tab with the same functionality of the current trending groups tab so as to keep that functionality. Additionally, you have a filter icon in the top right corner of this page that currently has no functionality. We were pretty unsure what criteria one would filter by that was not covered by the search bar itself or the tabs, so this might be an icon that can just be removed entirely. If you were to keep the magnifying glass icon to access the search page, we feel that there is a lot of extra functionality that could be added to this search area of the app; for example, one could search for friends by username here.

Since this app is group/friend-oriented there were many features that involved users interacting with friends, however, there wasn't a consistent way of viewing these types of information. For instance, the meat of the app which is interacting with your friends in a challenge is hidden away in the various challenges/groups. However, having a way to see general information across the groups/challenges you're involved in may help with more easily accessing the information presented in various places of the app (this could be done with some form of an activity feed). There is another issue of friend organization appearing within the challenge page.

Heuristics

H1: Visibility of System Status
- Keep users informed about what is going on

H2: Match Between System & Real World
- Speak the users' language
- Follow real world conventions

H3: User Control & Freedom
- "Exits" for mistaken choices, undo, redo
- Don't force down fixed paths

H4: Consistency & Standards
- Words, actions, and UI elements should be consistent across the entire platform
- Follow platform and industry conventions

H5: Error Prevention
- Minimize error-prone conditions
- Remove memory burdens, support undoing, and warn your users when necessary

H6: Recognition Rather Than Recall
- Make objects, actions, options, & directions visible or easily retrievable

H7: Flexibility & Efficiency of Use
- Accelerators for experts (e.g., gestures, keyboard shortcuts)
- Allow users to tailor frequent actions (e.g., macros)

H8: Aesthetic & Minimalist Design
- No irrelevant information. Focus on the essentials.

H9: Help Users Recognize, Diagnose, & Recover from Errors
- Error messages in plain language
- Precisely indicate the problem
- Constructively suggest a solution

H10: Help & Documentation
- Easy to search
- Focused on the user's task
- List concrete steps to carry out
- Not too large