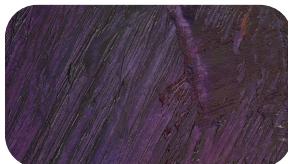


Healthier Social Media Needfinding Report



Meet the team (GR 19)



Wilson Lau

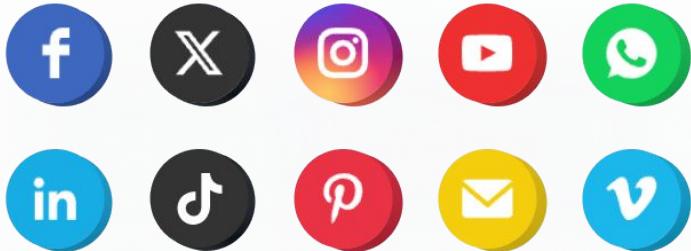


Pranav Gunhal



Karthik Jandhyala

Why social media?



-  **1** Social media is deeply embedded in our everyday lives
-  **2** Existing tools for “healthy” social media use tend to be controlling or moralizing
-  **3** Comparison on social media affects people in a variety of ways
-  **4** Social media is a major form of how we communicate and express ourselves

We Interviewed...



John
SB Zoo Operations Worker



Mary
College Student



Gordon
College Student



Gavin
Chick-fil-A Worker



Kai
College Student

Why were they chosen? Why are they appropriate?

As the first generation to grow up with smartphones right from our birth, our dependence on social media is much stronger than previous generations. We chose them primarily because we wanted to get views about social media from people in our generation and how they address common issues in regards to their relationship with it.

How were they recruited/compensated?

We reached out to distant contacts and referred them to our other group partners to interview them independently.

These are stock images and fake names of the people we interviewed

And asked them...



Which social media platforms do you use the most?

Does social media help you be more productive?

Has comparing yourself to someone ever felt helpful or motivating?

How do you feel about yourself before vs. after scrolling?

Have you tried to manage your social media use or how it makes you feel?

Why do you keep following accounts that don't make you feel great?

Do you ever feel like you're performing or curating a certain image of yourself?

What does your feed look like?

Interview 1: John

- **Occupation:** SB Zoo Operations Worker
- **Location:** Tehachapi, CA
- **Primary Platforms:**



- Thinks breaks from social media are necessary but not permanent solutions
- Views social media as entertainment, not as validation for self-worth

“TikTok ... it knows what you want to keep you addicted.”

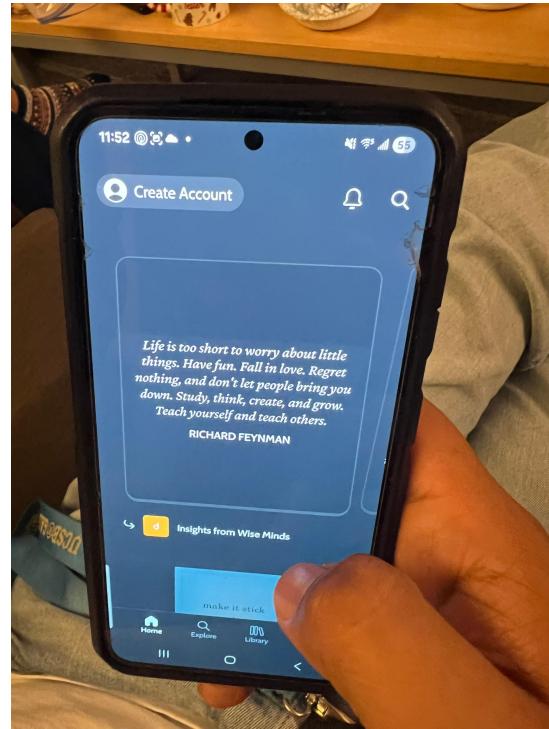
“I cannot quit Youtube.”

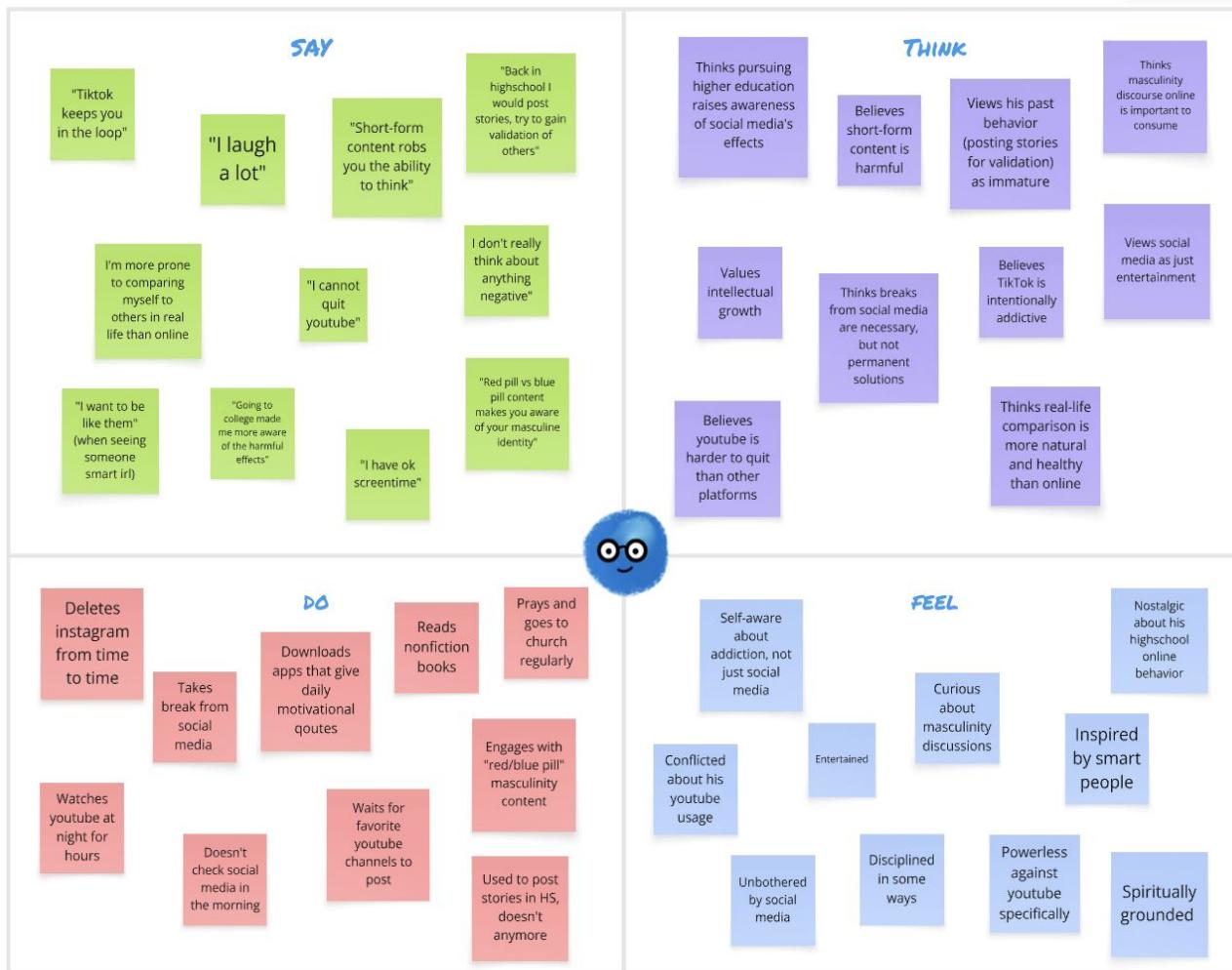
“I’m more prone to comparing in real life than online.”

“Going to college made me more aware.”

Details for Interview 1:

- **Interview Location:** Interviewee's Home in Goleta
- **Team Member Roles:** Karthik (Notetaker), Wilson (Interviewer)
- **Apparatus:** iPhone (questions)
Laptop (transcribing)
- **Surprises:** Interviewee has high screen time, but knows how to strike a balance + knows when to stop
- **Artifacts from interview:**





Interview 2: Mary (AI)

- **Occupation:** Student
- **Location:** Los Angeles, CA
- **Primary Platforms:**



- Uses Instagram primarily for scrolling and expressing herself to her followers.
- Heavily monitors how others react to her posts.

“If a post doesn’t hit 100 likes in an hour, I delete it.”

“I spent 30 minutes editing this photo and it only got 47 likes.”

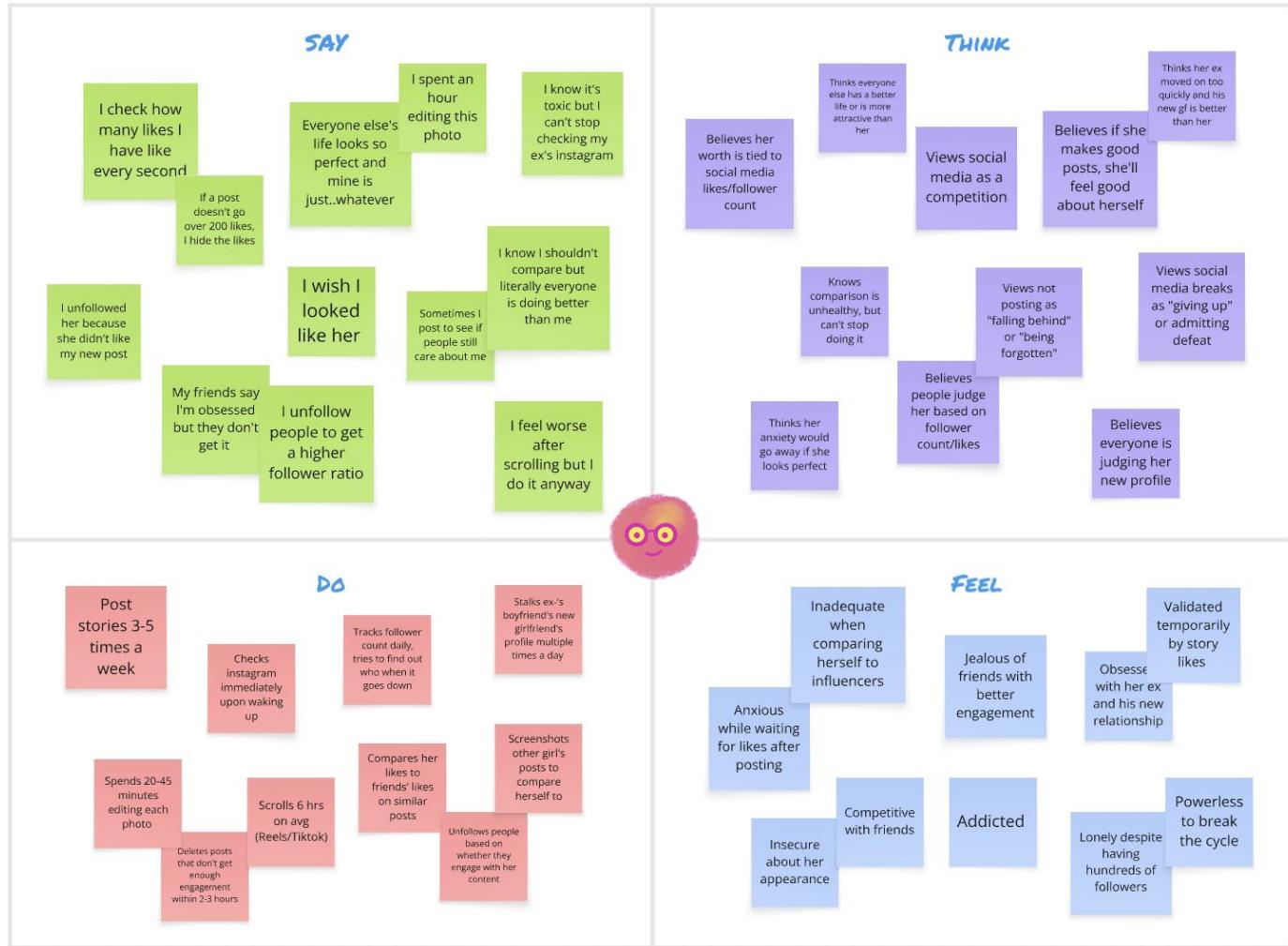
“My friends say I’m obsessed but they don’t get it.”

“I feel worse after scrolling but I do it anyway.”

Details for Interview 2:

- **Interview Location: AI Interview**
- **Team Member Roles: Wilson (Prompter)**
- **Apparatus: Laptop**
- **Surprises:** To some people, posting less feels like failure, not relief. Comparison is also more interpersonal, rather than people they do not know.





Interview 3: Gordon

- **Occupation:** Student
- **Location:** Santa Cruz, CA
- **Primary Platforms:**



- Uses YouTube daily for learning and entertainment
- Uses Instagram primarily for messaging

“Youtube is how I learn a lot of things.”

“Scrolling doesn’t really make me feel bad.”

“Comparison really hasn’t demotivated me.”

“I don’t feel the need to make my life public.”

Details for Interview 3:

- **Interview Location:** Campus Library at UC Santa Cruz
- **Team Member Roles:** Karthik (interviewer), Pranav (notetaker)
- **Apparatus:** Laptop (notes), iPhone (recording)
- **Surprises:** Sees certain social media as educational, and can segment productivity from entertainment
- **Artifacts from interview:**

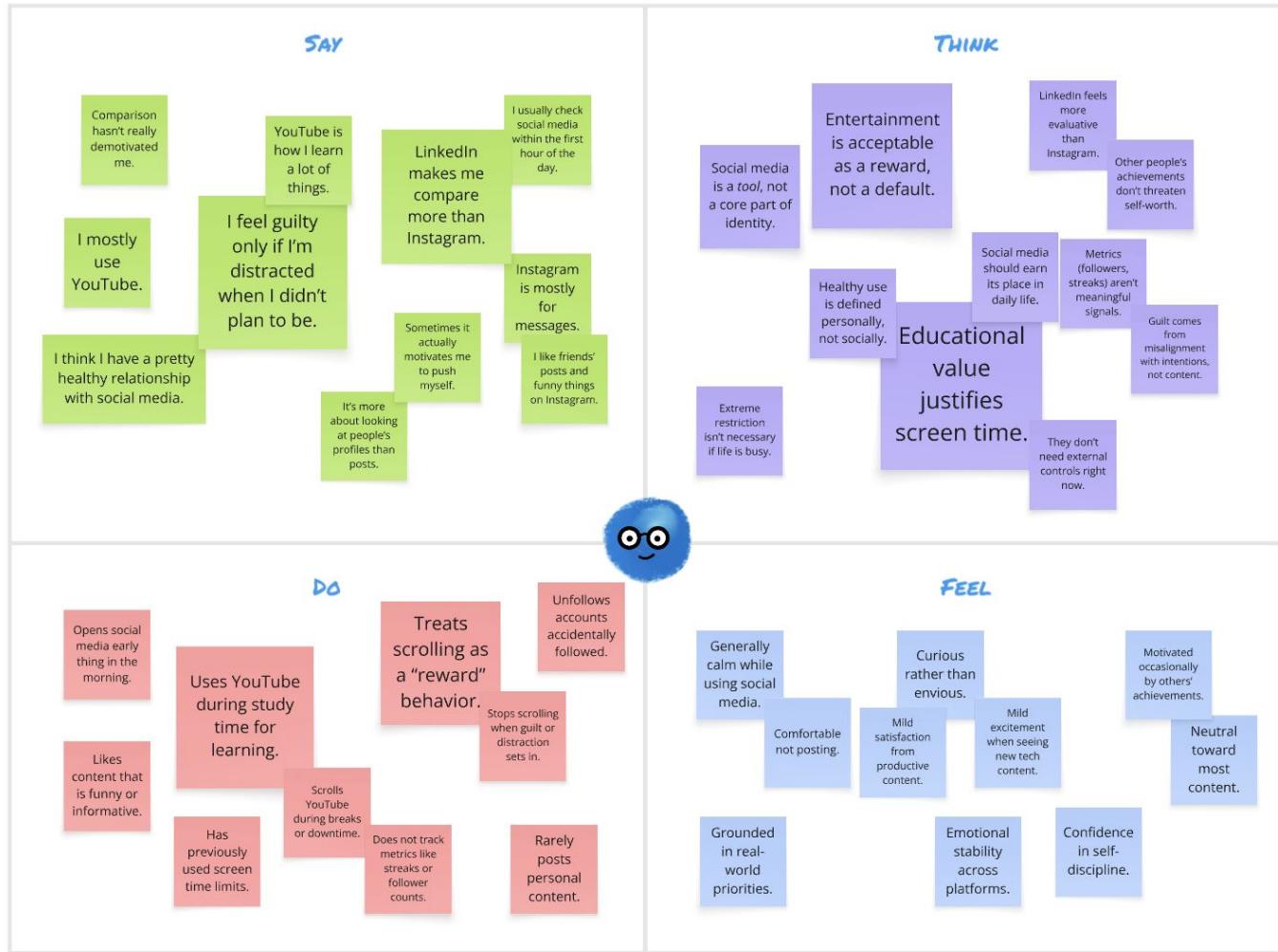
Ruhmit Sahu likes this

William Ridley-Smith · 1st
Founder @ Optii | Mechatronic Engineering wi...
2w

Studying abroad at UC Santa Cruz was easily one of the most transformative experiences I've had in a very long time.

...more

Home **My Network** **Post** **Notifications** **Jobs**



Interview 4: Gavin

- **Occupation:** Chick-fil-A worker
- **Location:** Santa Barbara, CA
- **Primary Platforms:**



- Sees social media as inspiration, but struggles with time control and avoidance
- Believes privacy is important, leading him to stop posting

"Society is sad, people don't value life"

"I don't want people to see stuff I like—for privacy reasons."

"It's motivating and aspirational."

"I felt FOMO when I deleted Instagram."

Details for Interview 4:

- **Interview Location:** Chick-fil-A, Santa Barbara
- **Team Member Roles:** Wilson (interviewer)
- **Apparatus:** iPhone (notes + recording), laptop (questions + notes)
- **Artifacts from interview:**



Interview 5: Kai

- **Occupation:** Student
- **Location:** Cupertino, CA
- **Primary Platforms:**



- Uses Instagram primarily for messaging friends or to relax.
- Pretty in control with how he manages his online presence and prioritizes to not doom scroll.

“I mainly use it (Instagram) for messaging or to relax.”

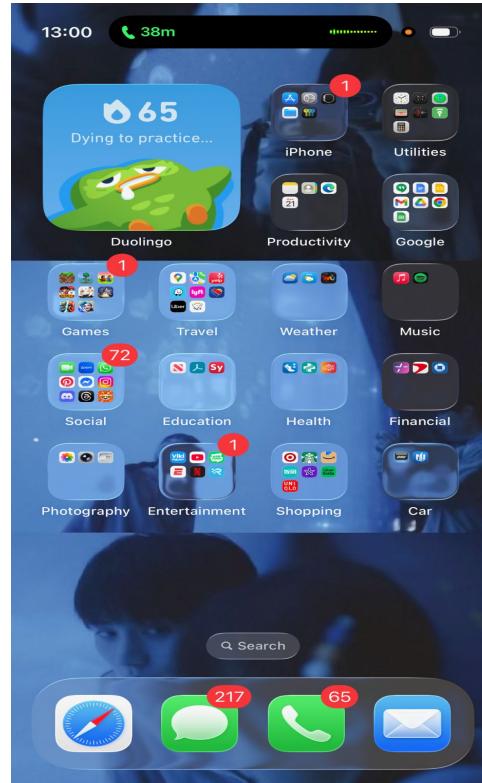
“Other apps like LinkedIn or Reddit are too toxic and not worth it for daily use.”

“I used IG a lot as a freshman because I didn’t have too many friends.”

“I usually don’t compare people online, but instead follow what interests me.”

Details for Interview 5:

- **Interview Location:** Crunch Fitness in Sunnyvale, CA
- **Team Member Roles:** Pranav (interviewer)
- **Apparatus:** iPhone (notes + recording)
- **Artifacts from interview:**



We discovered...



Social media comparison isn't always negative, as it motivates some people.

Engagement metrics are a driver of anxiety and compulsive behavior.

Intentional use reduces negative effects more effectively than strict time limits.

Screen time feels acceptable when it aligns with learning, growth, or personal values.

Awareness of the harmful effects of social media does not mean users will change behavior.

Emotional impact is shaped more by platform design cues than by content itself.

Comparison is intensified when users think others are constantly judging them.

There are healthy uses of social media, and people use these them for daily tasks.

What's next?

Find ways to reshape usage of
social media for healthier goals

Thank You!