Needfinding for New Grads

CS147 Winter 2021

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01 Meet the Team

Amy

Senior
Computer Science
Boston, MA

Tara

Senior
Symbolic Systems
Oakland, CA

Anooshree

Senior
Computer Science
San Jose, CA

Platon

Junior
Symbolic Systems
NYC, NY

02 **Domain**

New Grad

Loneliness

Housing

Intentionality

Dating

03

Participants

Participant Selection

WHO
- ❏ 9 total participants
- ❏ 21–26 years old
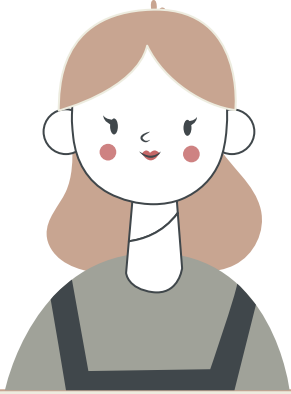- ❏ Mostly college educated and U.S.–based

HOW
- ❏ We texted older acquaintances
- ❏ Set up 20 minute Zoom calls

WHY
- ❏ Reached outside of Stanford bubble
- ❏ Diversity of professions
- ❏ Sample biased by our social connections

Our Participants

Anastasia
1 year out
Professional ballet dancer
Atlanta
Completed college while working
Cares about intentionality and self-care

Hadley:
2 years out
Cybersecurity startup
NY
Former college athlete
Cares about community & activeness
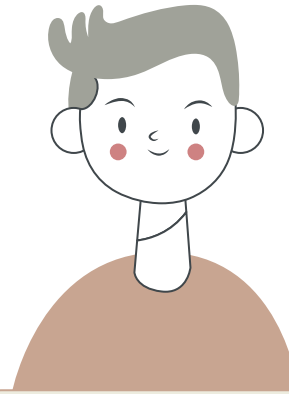
Will:
2 years out
Consulting @ Bain in SF
Used to work in NY but recently moved
Cares about socializing and creating routines for better lifestyles

Joe:
2 years out
Investment Banking
NY
From Canada
Passionate about food and wine

What we asked: Our Guiding Questions

Can you walk me through a day in your life as a post grad? What do you spend the most time doing? The most energy?

What was the first thing on your mind after graduating college?

What was the most surprising thing you faced after leaving college?

Can you tell me about a time you struggled with loneliness in your early 20s?

Have you dated as a new grad? How has the experience been different from dating in school?
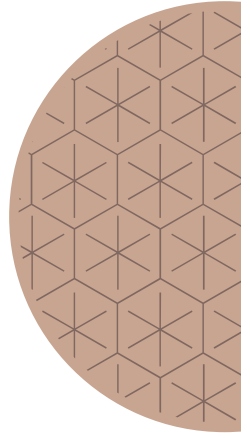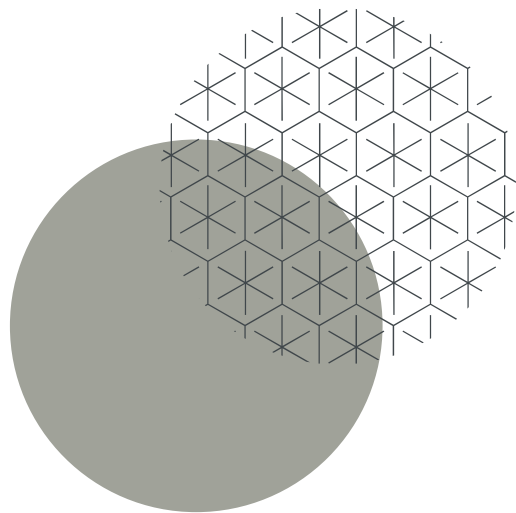
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Results
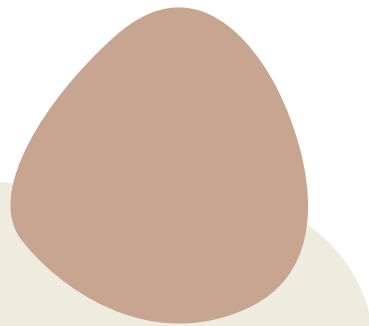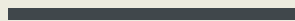
Hadley Irwin
24, NYC
Tech startup

"You wanna know where your friends are gonna be. That's so noticeable when you graduate: *your friends are gone*, your community is gone. There's a sense that *you're waiting to see what other people do*."

Anastasia Cheplyansky
22, Atlanta
Ballet Dancer

" I was dating because I was afraid of being lonely. Outside of a school setting, you don't make as many friends. When you're young, there's a lot of uncertainty and that makes finding a partner harder."

Will Kenney
23, SFO
Consultant @ Bain & Company

"Divide the week between **2-3 events you want** to do throughout the week. Pick 2-3 people you want to talk to. Go **have fun.** Simple and easy things to **look forward to** throughout the week."
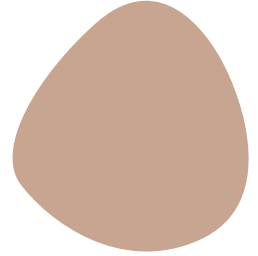
**Joe
24, NYC
Investment Banking**

"I now focus on how much can I **sneak away from work** to do what I want to do (cooking, hanging out, shopping, etc.). I **bring my laptop everywhere** now and just sometimes **do work in cafes.** "

Empathy Map Key Takeaways

SAY

- "That's so noticeable when you graduate: your friends are gone, your community is gone. There's a sense that you're waiting to see what other people do."
- "Long-term relationships are really important, rather moving from one shiny new object to another."
- "Moving through the transition with friends is important to me. How do I pursue growth but keep roots?"
- "For me, I don't love the focus on the photos on Hinge."
- "It's about finding out what you wanna do and what other people are gonna do."
- "I had a hard time sitting at the desk to work - I used to walk around campus so while working I often get antsy."
- "Recognizing when I need to make a change with my work-life habits is helpful."
- "I find that I have an addictive personality. Hinge will fill up my brain so much and deplete my energy."
- "In NY if you're single people always ask 'oh, are you on the apps?'"

THINK

- Long-term friendships are more important than new friendships
- Living in the same city as college peers will create community
- Work-life balance is critical and a job should not be consuming
- Dating apps are addictive
- New grad loneliness comes from not being around your friends and communities
- It's important to grow as a person during this life stage
- Doing what your peers are doing keeps you on the right track
- Dating apps are materialistic and a worse way to meet people

SAY

- " Figuring out how to make dinner was a weird transition."
- " It caused more stress to have a routine because not being flexible causes more harm than good."
- "The biggest thing for me was struggling to find community. You no longer have school-organized events."
- " I was dating because I was afraid of being lonely."
- "Every time I set an expectation, I've been wrong."
- "When I was in school, I would get help and support from parents and faculty who would constrain what you can do."

THINK

- Finding people to date is easier than making friends
- School felt familiar and structured
- Working an unconventional job makes it harder to relate to her peers
- Choosing who to spend your time with is difficult
- Making expectations is dangerous
- Adult life has more opportunities, but they are scary

DO

- Goes to dinner with friends after work.
- Sets a boundary to finish all of her work by 6 PM.
- Uses Hinge for periods of 1 week and then deletes it.
- When she has Instagram and Hinge downloaded, spends hours a day on them.
- Looks for events on the weekends to go to with her friends.
- Starts her morning with a solo run and takes break throughout the day to walk around.
- Goes to bed earlier than she used to in college.

FEEL

- Fears missing out on social scene where friends are
- Apathetic towards work and prioritizes non-work time
- Pressure to stay on the same career and social path as friends
- Embarrassment for seeking a real relationship
- Belonging with long-term friends
- Distaste for making new friends

DO

- Call home frequently for advice and familiarity
- Listen to podcasts in the morning to continue learning
- Learn to cook sustainably and regularly
- Prioritizes friendships formed in school and frequently reaches out

FEEL

- Craving for new friendship outside of work
- Exhausted with only meeting new people by dating
- Independent but occasionally lonely
- Governed by career and sacrifices necessary to succeed
- Proud of her apartment and self-care
- Excited but apprehensive about the future

SAY

- "more structure during pre covid post grad life"
- "rinse and repeat"
- "COVID changed a lot about my work habits"
- "COVID allowed me to really reflect on what I wanna do and how I wanna get there"
- "hardest part has been the uncertainty and opaqueness of where you are going to be in a few years"
- "When you are working, your free time is so important that you learn to fill it with things you really like"

THINK

- Most of my coworkers like to maximize their time
- a p... les... without having to worry about tomorrow
- terms of your work life in post grad life
- how can I sneak away during the day as much as possible
- oscillates between hyper-corporate and hedonism

DO

- "If you are not moving at the same time with other people that is a big problem"
- "Struggled to adapt to new city"
- "Chose my job because it pays well which I need to live in the city"
- "Most social events are fueled by alcohol"
- "People stop reaching out when they are not together"
- strangers institution
- "Had to repeatedly ask everyone where they were going. Hard to keep track"
- "Lived alone because I thought it would be cool but it sucks, lonely"
- "Its hard for people to commit when moving in together"
- "Difference between being on campus and off campus socializing is big"

THINK

- Thinks only working and sleeping leads to a negative life cycle
- Thinks that college socialization is much different than real world
- Thinks meeting new people is hard because its tough to meet strangers without connections
- Thinks its hard to know where people are after leaving college
- Thinks getting into a relationship in the real world is really hard
- Thinks its hard to stay in touch with people after leaving college
- Thinks its very important to have a solid routine

DO

- 95% of the time I was working at the office
- I never started getting into the things I'm really passionate about until I graduated
- wakes up every morning and has to present as very put together for work
- I do more with my free time now
- moved to nyc during the pandemic from another country

FEEL

- scared by the uncertainty - doesn't know if he will even be in this country
- endless possibilities, can pivot in any direction once you graduate
- you have the capital and maturity to take much more agency over your life
- I miss how there was less pressure in college
- Post grad life is daunting
- obsessive about planning free time

DO

- Brings extra pair of clothes to work to mentally force himself to do something after work
- Adds 2-3 events per week to hang out with friends
- Has a good routine that he likes to follow
- Has a dinner every Sunday with friends to never lose touch
- Asked parents for financial advice
- Loves to spontaneously walk around the city with friends and do random activities
- Switch outfits throughout the day to get into different moods
- Work, netflix, sleep, repeat
- HAVE FUN!

FEEL

- Feels nervous that people don't reach out post college
- Nervous that its hard to get people to commit to living together
- After moving to a new city not at the same time he feels lonely
- Feels excited when doing new activities with friends he loves.
- Sad that it is so hard to get into a relationship when not in college
- Lonely and upset that sometimes he succumbs to the work Netflix sleep cycle
- Loves looking forward to 2-3 events throughout the week with 2-3 friends
- Feels uncertain for how to meet people more spontaneously + effectively
- Feels ashamed when scammed by apartment owners

SAY

"That's so noticeable when you graduate: your friends are gone, your community is gone. There's a sense that you're waiting to see what other people do."

"Long-term relationships are really important, rather moving from one shiny new object to another." ⭐

"Moving through the transition with friends is important to me. How do I pursue growth but keep roots?"

"For me, I don't love the focus on the photos on Hinge."

"It's about finding out what you wanna do and what other people are gonna do." ⭐

"I had a hard time sitting at the desk to work - I used to walk around campus so while working I often get antsy."

"Recognizing when I need to make a change with my work-life habits is helpful."

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Living in the same city as college peers will create community

Work-life balance is critical and a job should not be consuming

Dating apps are addictive ⭐

New grad loneliness comes from not being around your friends and communities ⭐

It's important to grow as a person during this life stage

Doing what your peers are doing keeps you on the right track ⭐

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Hadley

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Goes to dinner with friends after work.

Sets a boundary to finish all of her work by 6 PM.

Uses Hinge for periods of 1 week and then deletes it. ⭐

When she has Instagram and Hinge downloaded, spends hours a day on them. ⭐

Looks for events on the weekends to go to with her friends.

Starts her morning with a solo run and takes break throughout the day to walk around.

Goes to bed earlier than she used to in college.

FEEL

Fears missing out on social scene where friends are ⭐

Apathetic towards work and prioritizes non-work time

Pressure to stay on the same career and social path as friends

Embarrassment for seeking a real relationship

Belonging with long-term friends

Distaste for making new friends

Proud of her consistently healthy daily routine

Desire for a intimate partner ⭐

SAY

" Figuring out how to make dinner was a weird transition."

" It caused more stress to have a routine because not being flexible causes more harm than good."

"The biggest thing for me was struggling to find community. You no longer have school-organized events."

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Working an unconventional job makes it harder to relate to her peers

School felt familiar and structured

Choosing who to spend your time with is difficult

Making expectations is dangerous

Adult life has more opportunities, but they are scary

Anastasia

DO

Call home frequently for advice and familiarity

Learn to cook sustainably and regularly

Listen to podcasts in the morning to continue learning

Prioritizes friendships formed in school and frequently reaches out

Meet people off of dating apps

Live life "day-by-day" instead of setting long-term goals

FEEL

Craving for new friendship outside of work

Independent but occasionally lonely

Exhausted with only meeting new people by dating

Excited but apprehensive about the future

Governed by career and sacrifices necessary to succeed

Proud of her apartment and self-care

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When you are working, your free time is so important that you learn to fill it with things you really like ⭐

THINK

Most of my coworkers like to maximize their free time

structure is a positive thing as it lets me think further down the road without having to worry about tomorrow

there is less agency in terms of your work life in post grad life

how can I sneak away during the day as much as possible ⭐

oscillates between hyper-corporate and hedonism

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95% of the time I was working at the office

I never started getting into the things I'm really passionate about until I graduated

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moved to nyc during the pandemic from another country

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scared by the uncertainty -- doesn't know if he will even be in this country

endless possibilities, can pivot in any direction once you graduate

you have the capital and maturity to take much more agency over your life

I miss how there was less pressure in college

Post grad life is daunting

obsessive about planning free time

SAY

"Time is the most important asset"

"Hard to meet new people without having certain connections"

"Wouldn't want to meet strangers, only pre-vetted strangers: institution"

"If you are not moving at the same time with other people that is a big problem" ⭐

"Struggled to adapt to new city"

"Chose my job because it pays well which I need to live in the city"

"Most social events are fueled by alcohol"

"Lived alone because I thought it would be cool but it sucks, lonely"

"Had to repeatedly ask everyone where they were going. Hard to keep track" ⭐

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DO

Brings extra pair of clothes to work to mentally force himself to do something after work

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Switch outfits throughout the day to get into different moods

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Sad that it is so hard to get into a relationship when not in college

Lonely and upset that sometimes he succumbs to the work Netflix sleep cycle

Loves looking forward to 2-3 events throughout the week with 2-3 friends ⭐

Feels uncertain for how to meet people more spontaneously + effectively

Feels ashamed when scammed by apartment owners

Will

05

Analysis

___

Tensions, Contradictions, Surprises

Tensions

Friends move to different places after graduation, disrupting community

Keeping an authentic perspective in the corporate lifestyle

Staying on track compared to peers conflicts with finding your own passions

Staying close with family as career takes you further away

Wanting to do the things he wants to do without slacking on work

Maintaining routine when work schedule constantly changes

Work is exhausting and can lead to not socializing post work which creates loneliness

Its hard to keep record of where everyone is after college

Contradictions

Seeking a long-term partner but deletes Hinge after starting conversations

Need for strong community but aversion to making new friends

Says he feels owned by his job but finds ways to sneak away during the day and works in cafes

likes that there are alot of directions to pivot yet feels possibilities are daunting

Wants to make new friends but prioritizes alone time when free

Tired of dating but afraid of being single in Atlanta

Wants to socialize more but sometimes just watches netflix and sleeps after work

Wants to meet new people but doesnt want to actually go out and meet new people

Surprises

New grads dislike Hinge because of its psychological effects but continue to use it

Where friends will be has strong impact on where someone wants to live

brings laptop out during the day and works in cafes in between activities

interplay with feeling pressure vs. lack of agency

felt like he discovered his passions post grad

Fondness and nostalgia for school despite mixed experiences

Lack of control in seemingly controlled careers

Routine to bring extra pair of clothes to work to convince himself to do other activities

Its hard to find relationships because friends don't want to introduce their friends in that context

POVs

WE MET	WE WERE AMAZED TO REALIZE	IT WOULD BE GAME CHANGING TO
Hadley, a 24 year old college grad working in tech in NY	She makes major life choices (e.g. where to move) based on what her broad social network is doing	Give people a way to comprehensively see what their friends are doing, where they are living, and what their future plans are.
Joe, a 24 year old college grad working in IB in NYC	How truly intentional you have to be in order to balance work and your personal interests	Give people more opportunities (however large or small) to exercise the muscle of being intentional in their daily lives
Anastasia, a 22 year old professional ballet dancer in Atlanta	She still relies on old networks for structure and will not completely settle in a new city	Give people opportunities to build small but lasting routines and connections to make places feel like home
Will Kenney, a 23 year old college grad working in consulting in SF	He creates routines and tactics to push himself to do more social activities w/ friends around city	Give people the perfect plan to socialize more and not fall into the work, Netflix, sleep, repeat lull.

Questions/Next Steps
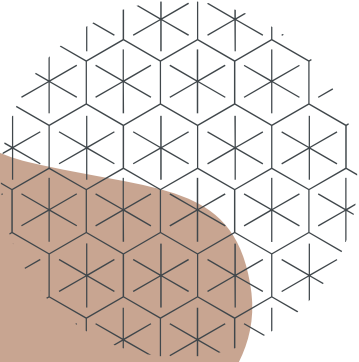
Investigate more extreme users

Solidify "How Might We" statements

Seek out more interviewees

Visualize our data in different ways

Brainstorming and experience prototyping