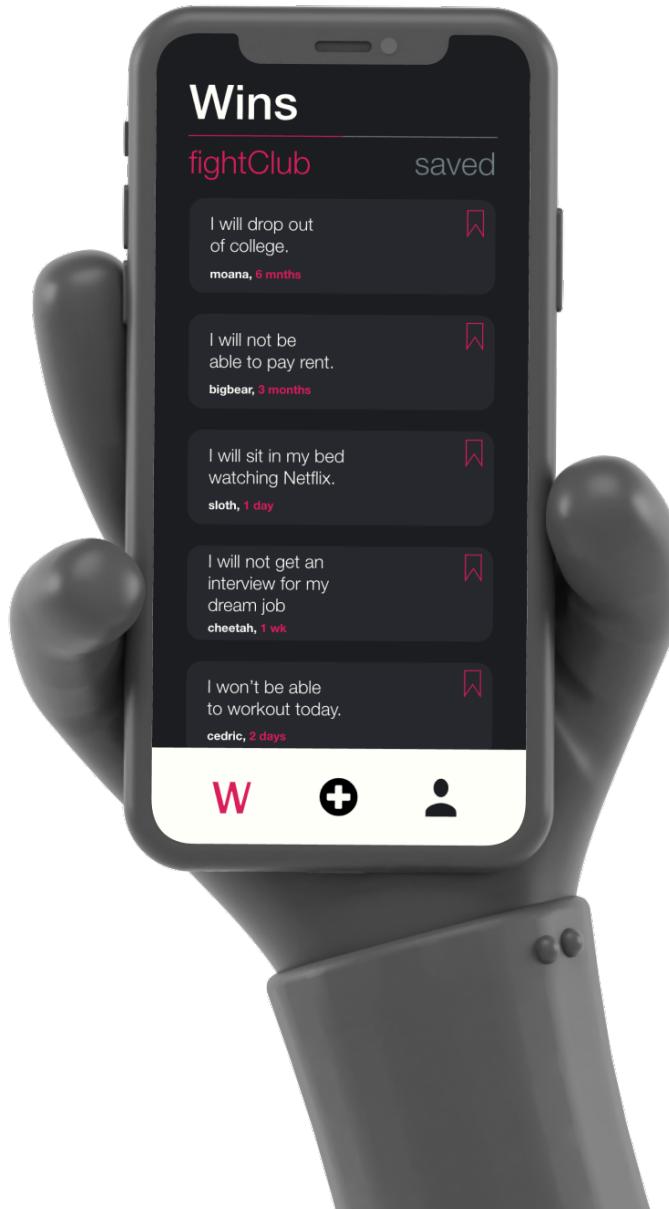


# SHADOW BOXING



# Process Deck

Rohan Barad | Personal Project | 2020



PRODUCTIVITY  
TURNED ON  
ITS NOSE VIA  
FEAR-SETTING

# My Process

Following an ephemeral design jam, Shadowboxing evolved through unique research opportunities.

01

## DESIGN JAM

### Pushing to Pixel

At my professional technology fraternity's design jam, I kickstarted this project into high fidelity.

02

## FOCUS GROUP

### Concept Testing

I took advantage of a 10-minute class presentation to host a focus group, walking through the 3 stages of fear-setting.

03

## USERTESTING.COM

### Remote Usability Testing

A professor granted me 3 free, online usability tests to dig deeper into the issues of my prototype's information architecture.

04

## NEXT STEPS

### Where I'm at today!

To start 2022, I look forward to re-spawning this project by following the actionable design insights extracted from the past.

## DESIGN JAM

Empathize Define Ideate Prototype Test

# Design Jam Prompt

In a mobile application, how might we empower individuals (in quarantine) to remain hopeful and build better online digital communities that promote mental health, provide people with daily structure, and give them hope for a better future?

March 2020



## DESIGN JAM

Empathize | **Define** | Ideate | Prototype | Test

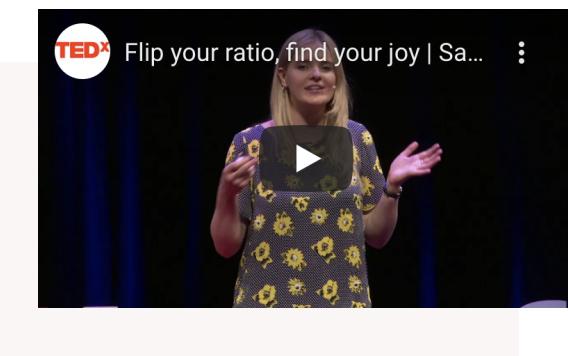
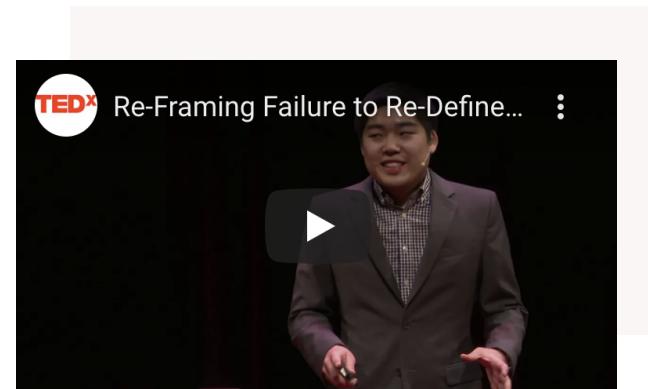


## Target Audience & Problem Statement

**College students** want a more realistic method to **structure** their personal progress, so that they can be more proactive and **hopeful** about the prospect of their **future**.

## DESIGN JAM

Empathize Define Ideate Prototype Test



Credit: TEDxUofM Conference | TEDx Youtube

## Inspiration

To start, my focus around creating a digital solution for structuring personal progress roots from my hobby of using [productivity apps](#). From my experience I have grown skeptical of how effective these goal-setting, task-measuring missions can be.

With this background, [Tim Ferris's TED talk about fear-setting](#) inspired me to adopt this framework as a solution to kickstarting personal growth. Supporting this notion, two other TED talks I've watched focus on darkness and failure in order to see the light.

Altogether, I branded fear setting for this platform through the symbol of a [shadow](#), to represent one's fears, which is inspired by Haruko Murakami's *Kafka on the Shore*.

## DESIGN JAM

Empathize Define Ideate Prototype Test

# Introducing Shadowboxing

A fear-setting platform consisting of **3 stages**, each of which prompt introspection to ultimately help college students process a fear, come to reality with its implications, and grow past it alongside a greater community of anonymous peers.

01

### WHAT IF I...

Define your worst-case scenarios, how you could prevent those from happening, and how you could repair the damage if they do happen

02

### BENEFITS?

List the benefits of attempting whatever you're considering, or trying something new.

03

### THE COST OF INACTION

Ask yourself what your life will look like, in the next few years, if you avoid this action or decision?

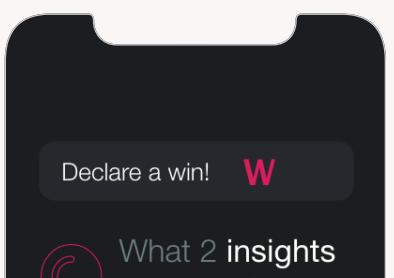
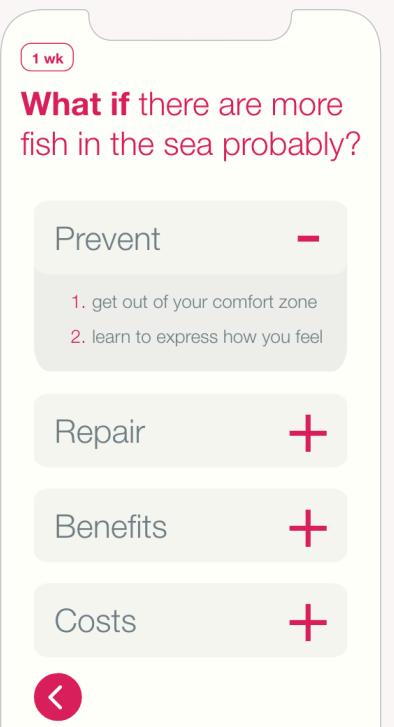
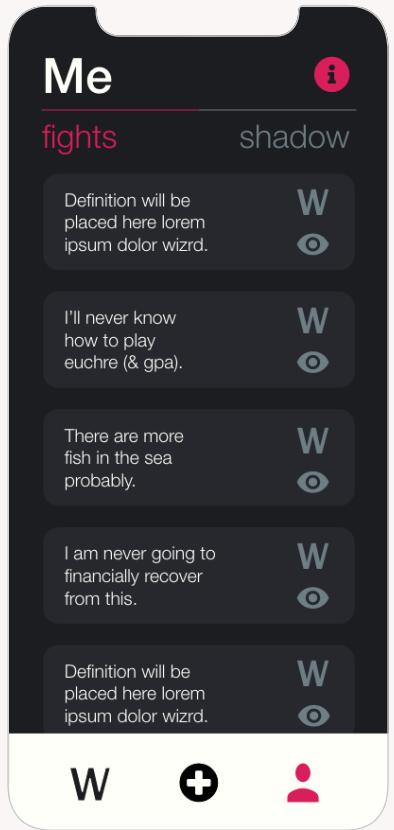
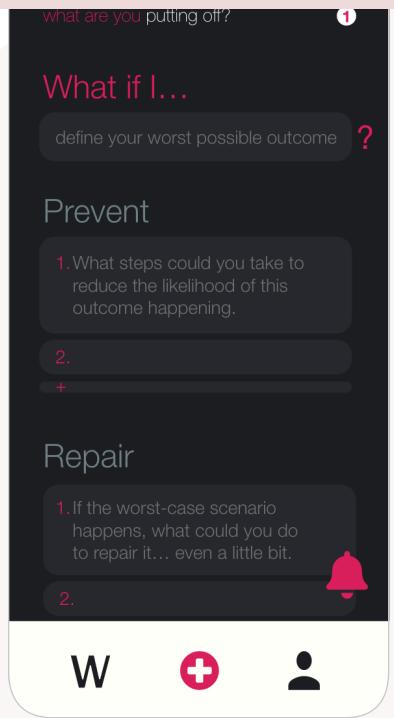
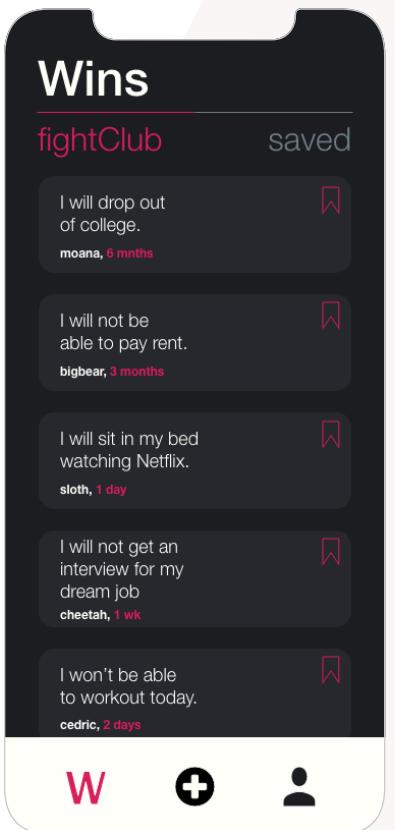
## DESIGN JAM

Empathize Define Ideate Prototype | Test

# Information Architecture

Shadowboxing has 3 main features centered around the fear-setting process.

1. **Fight** a new fear, following the 3 stages of fear-setting
2. **Profile** to view the fears you are fighting. Here, you can also declare that you have overcome a fear, which shares your insights with the community.
3. **Wins** to learn vicariously through the fights of other anonymous peers on campus



Go  
fig  
how  
it fo  
  
:) :)

## DESIGN JAM

Empathize Define Ideate **Prototype** Test

# Design System

## Typography

### Heading 1

48pt Helvetica Neue, Medium

### Heading 2

32pt Helvetica Neue, Light

### Body

18pt Helvetica Neue, Light

## Colors

#1C1D21

#C7365C

#6E7E85

#FFFFFFA

#EDEDEA

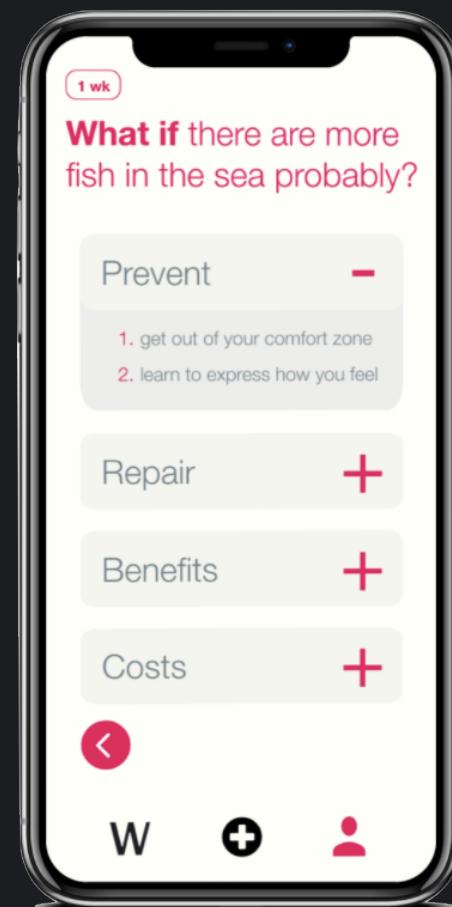
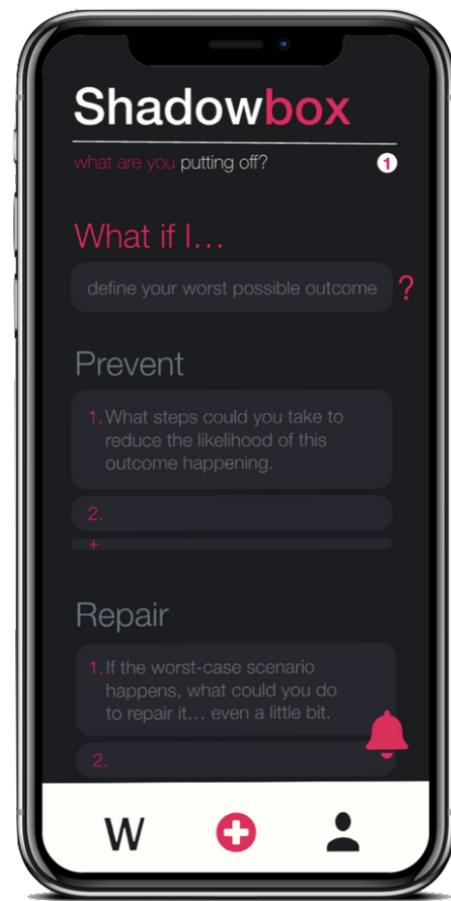




## Dark UI Facing Fears

Dark mode encompasses the pages on the app dedicated to breaking yourself down, or facing your fears. In order to build yourself up, you must first break yourself down.

Symbolically, embracing darkness implies that you have nothing to fall back on; in this state, you can face your shadow at last, and come to terms with the fear behind it.



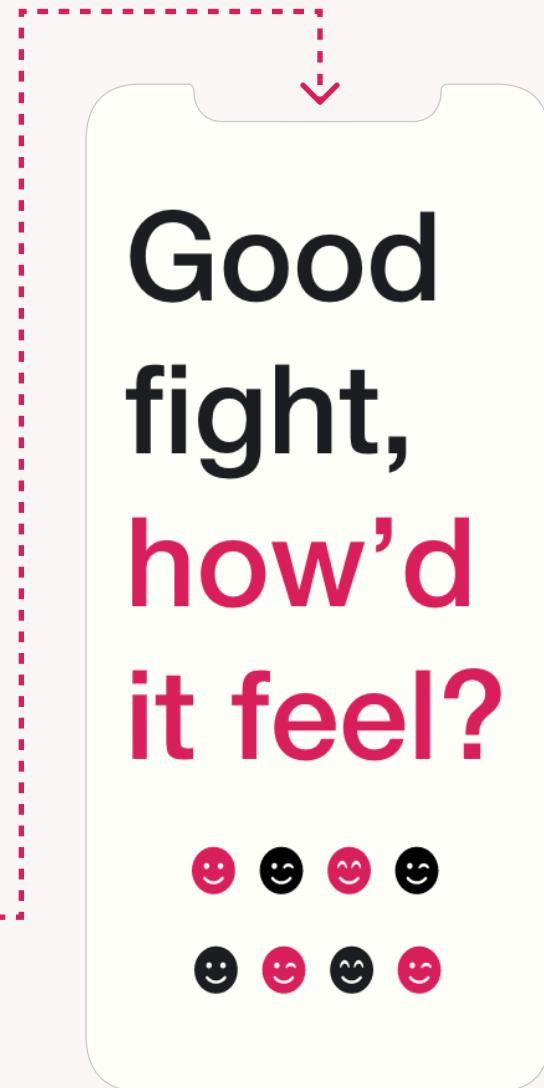
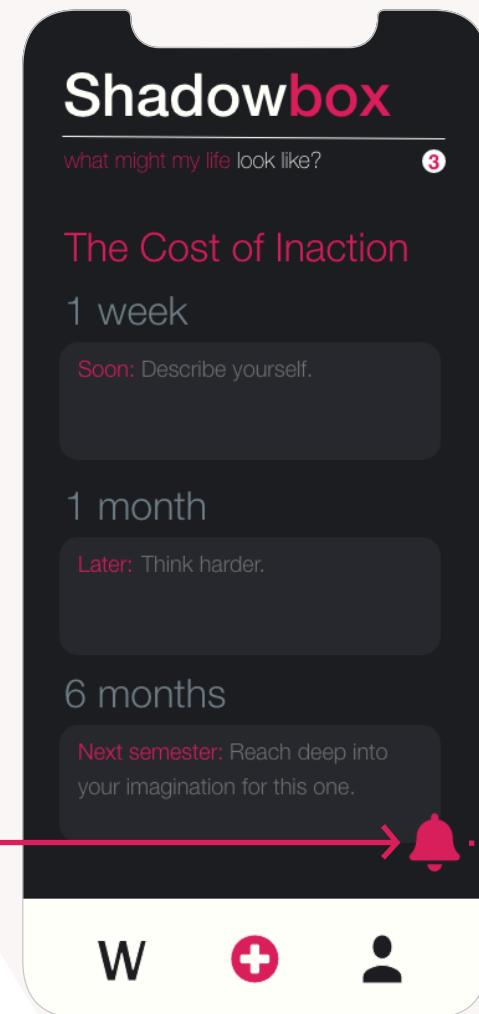
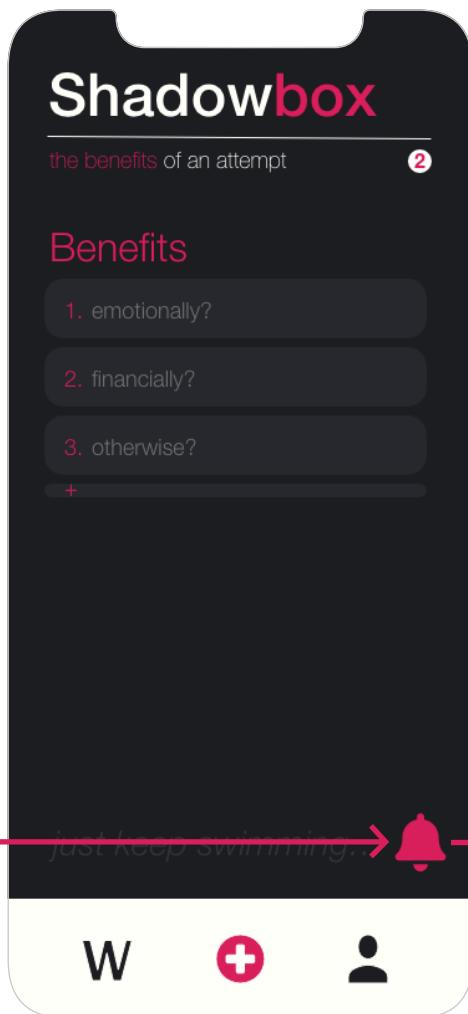
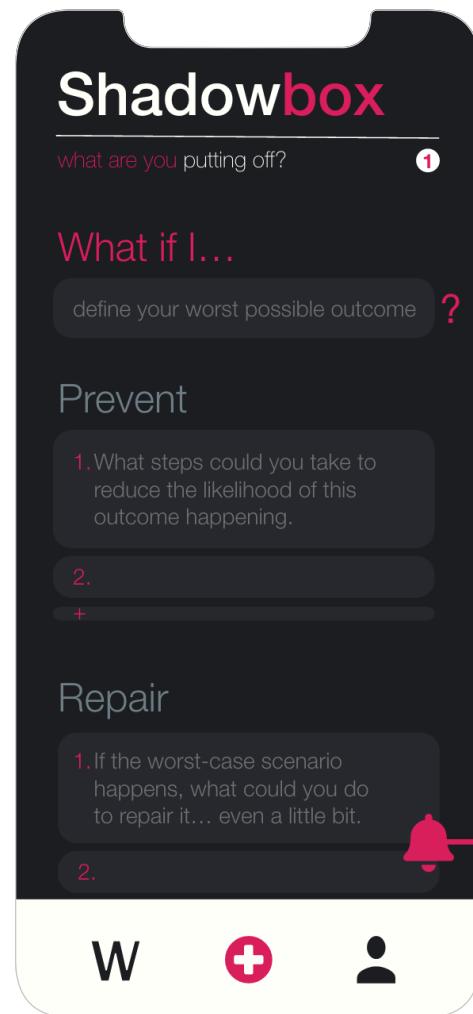
## Light UI Growing & Moving Forward

Light interfaces are peppered throughout the app, to indicate progress and growth. To mimic light at the end of the tunnel, users are conditioned to see these screens as a momentum of growth at last.



## DESIGN JAM

Empathize Define Ideate Prototype Test

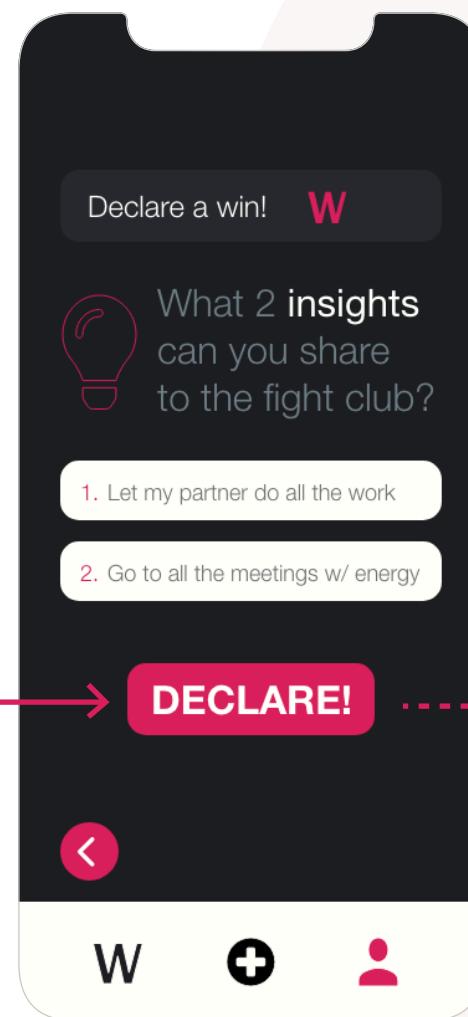
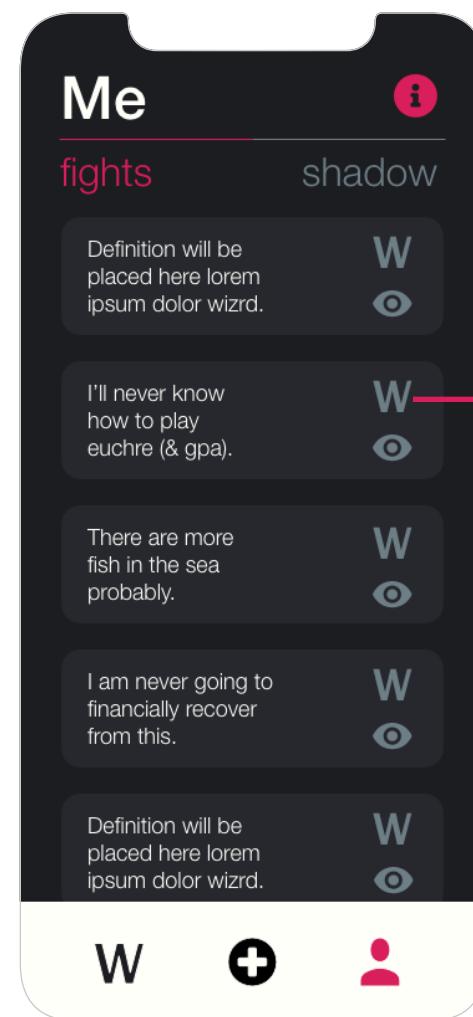


Fighting a fear

## DESIGN JAM

Share your insights

Empathize Define Ideate Prototype Test



## DESIGN JAM

## Learn from others

Empathize Define Ideate Prototype Test

The image shows two mobile phone prototypes side-by-side, connected by a red arrow pointing from the left phone to the right one.

**Left Phone Screen:**

- Section:** Wins
- Category:** fightClub
- Status:** saved
- Challenge:** I will drop out of college.  
moana, 6 mnths
- Challenge:** I will not be able to pay rent.  
bigbear, 3 months
- Challenge:** I will sit in my bed watching Netflix.  
sloth, 1 day
- Challenge:** I will not get an interview for my dream job  
cheetah, 1 wk
- Challenge:** I won't be able to workout today.  
cedric, 2 days

**Right Phone Screen:**

- Section:** What if
- Timeframe:** 1 day
- Challenge:** I will sit in my bed watching Netflix?
  - Solution:** If you get up and work, there's nothing to lose!
  - Solution:** Find a replacement, like a coloring book, to stay away from Netflix!
- Buttons:** Prevent +, Repair +, Benefits +, Posts +

## DESIGN JAM

Empathize Define Ideate **Prototype** Test

## Feedback from Friends

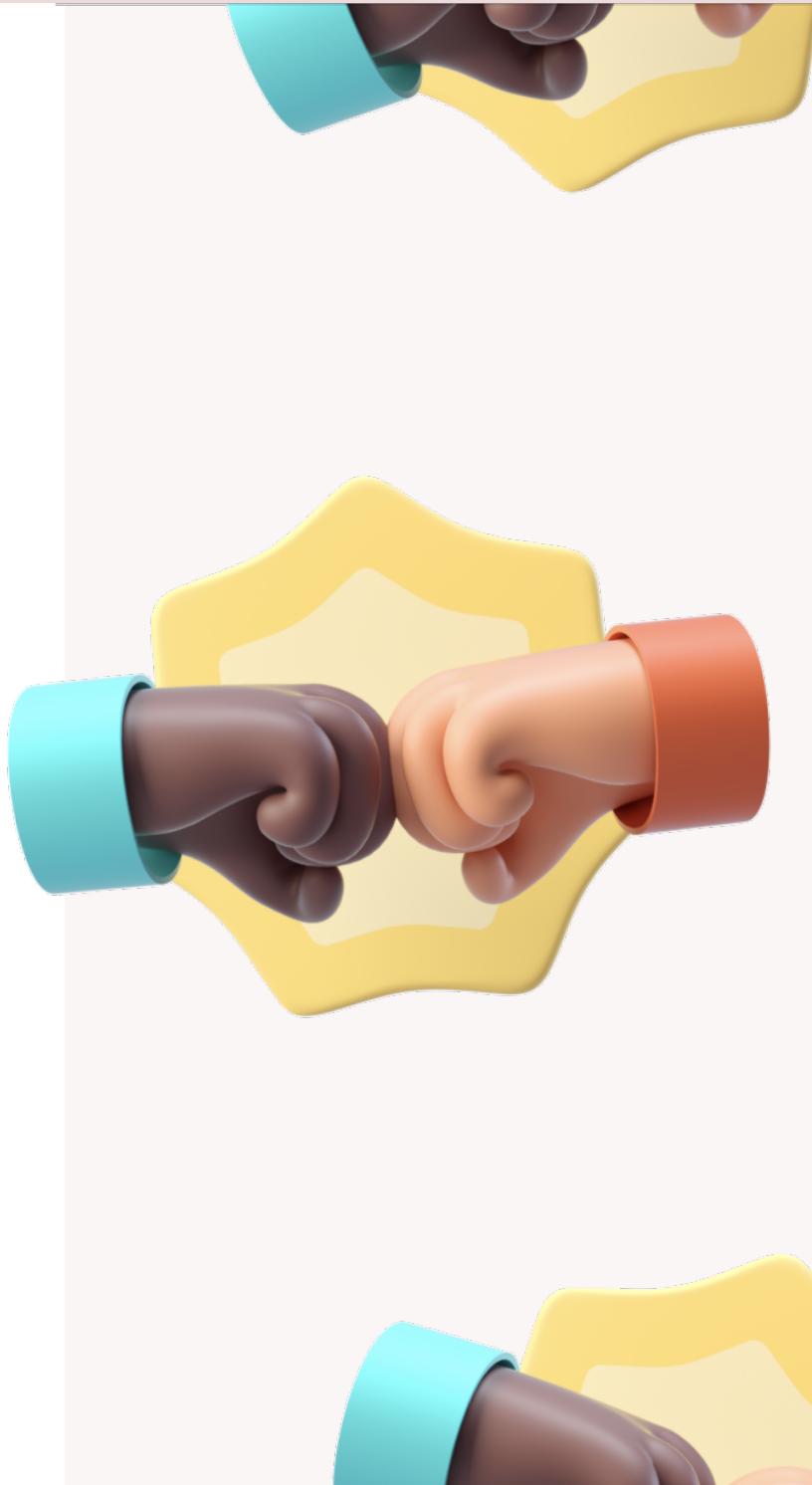
Being my first UI design experience, my friends had some actionable feedback for me after design jam presentations, which helped me pick up general design principles and envision my next iteration.

### Learnability

- A comprehensive onboarding experience can help users and stakeholders better understand the app's features at their first glace
- Designing a user flow helps with comprehension as it enables the prototype to walk the user through each interaction on the app

### Best Practices

- Incorporating visual consistency in design elements throughout the app complements the information architecture
- Center-aligned text is harder for users to read



# 2<sup>nd</sup> Iteration

01

DESIGN JAM

Pushing to Pixel

At my professional technology fraternity's design jam, I kickstarted this project into high fidelity.

02

FOCUS GROUP

Concept Testing

I took advantage of a 10-minute class presentation to host a focus group, walking through the 3 stages of fear-setting.

Come Fall '20, I tested the fear-setting practice in a class-led focus group, while also running remote, unmoderated usability testing.

03

USERTESTING.COM

Remote Usability Testing

A professor granted me 3 free, online usability tests to dig deeper into the issues of my prototype's information architecture.

04

NEXT STEPS

Where I'm at today!

To start 2022, I look forward to re-spawning this project by following the actionable design insights extracted from the past.

## FOCUS GROUP

Empathize Define Ideate Prototype **Test**

## Goal

# Do college students want to fear-set?

### Assumption

College students want to grow, yet they fear change. Currently, they measure growth by setting goals and tracking productivity, all the while suppressing their fears. Over time, this overwhelms them, as holding onto fears inevitably escalates anxiety. For this reason, college students will appreciate fear-setting, as they've come to realize that defining their fears is more important to growth than defining their goals.

## Context

My sophomore year, I took an Intergroup Relations course on Leadership and Facilitation. To wrap up the semester, each student was given 10 minutes to showcase their facilitation skills in a class presentation.

# FOCUS GROUP

Empathize Define Ideate Prototype **Test**



## Facing Your Shadow

Fear-Setting

### Define your fear

What's something you put off? Something you fear? Something you don't want to think about?

- Enter your answer here

### Fear-setting

**Stage 1**

**1A:** What steps could you take to reduce the likelihood of this happening?

- Enter your answer here
- Enter your answer here
- Enter your answer here
- Keep adding, if interested

**1B:** What steps could you take to reduce the likelihood of this happening?

- Enter your answer here
- Enter your answer here
- Enter your answer here
- Keep adding, if interested

**1C:** If the worst possible scenario happens, what could you do to repair the damage, if anything?

- Enter your answer here
- Enter your answer here
- Enter your answer here
- Keep adding, if interested

**Stage 2**

What are the benefits of an attempt? (emotionally, financially, etc)

- Emotionally?
- Financially?
- Any other thoughts
- Keep adding, if interested

**Stage 3**

What are the costs of doing *nothing* about it?

- In 1 Week?
- In 1 Month?
- In 6 Months?
- Other thoughts
- Keep adding, if interested

# Process

1. Building Rapport: Ask the class to share what they're currently procrastinating in the Zoom chat
  - a. React to some; have a laugh
2. Introduce what it means to "shadowbox"
3. Walk the class through the 3 steps of fear-setting
  - a. Send the Fear-Setting Worksheet link in the Zoom chat, if it interests anyone
4. Thank everyone for their time and unveil my intent of holding a focus group.
5. Every student is required to give feedback on the presentation in the Zoom chat for participation.

# Considerations

- Feedback is not anonymous, so it could be subject to participant bias
- Fear-setting practice is not being replicated on a mobile phone in this case

## FOCUS GROUP

Empathize Define Ideate Prototype **Test**

## Facilitation

💡 "Rohan, the very clear steps in your slides show planning and logistics skill. You used interactions in chat, which was a new way for the facilitators to interact today, so you kept class fresh. Very important shadow content helping us face our fears."

👉 "Rohan, I liked the way you started it off with a light, funny question and worked it into the deeper topic. I agree that fear is a universal barrier to success and the activity you shared is something I plan on using in the future!"

👉 Rohan - You always bring so much joy to conversations and this activity was a great way. You got my attention right away and held it the entire time! I like how you gave us steps to use in the future so we can utilize this outside of this meeting!

👉 "That was a super interesting presentation! It went really well with Manasvi's presentation and had some great advice for tackling big challenges. The slides were also designed super well!"

## Problem Validation

💡 "I feel like fears are often not talked about in academia/the workplace. I definitely will use some of these strategies next time I can sense that I am being fearful of something"

💡 "OMG - I am the grand master of putting things off! This topic is something we could apply in our personal and academic lives, super helpful!"

👉 "I often feel like I am being held back by fear, and I will definitely be addressing my thoughts and fears with the thought process you outlined. The advice you shared was amazing!"

👉 "Like some people have expressed, I am so nervous about applying to grad-school right now. I think I will definitely get started today; this was the sign I needed."

## Solution Validation

👉 "I really liked that you gave us a tangible resource to help us face our fears. I think it's something many people would find really helpful."

⭐ "such a great activity, especially following Manasvi's presentation, because this one gives things people can do to face their fears. Terrific."

🥊 "calling it *Shadowboxing* was a fun touch"

## USABILITY TESTING

Empathize Define Ideate Prototype **Test**

# Goals

1. In what ways can an onboarding tutorial improve learnability?
2. How effective is the app in exhibiting consistency?

### Past research

Focus groups gave me the validation that fear-setting is desirable to college students; with this motivation, I circled back to feedback from the design jam. With usability testing, I can identify painpoints around learnability, which can inform an intuitive onboarding user flow, as well as help build a consistent brand.

## Context

In SI 422, a course about user research, my teacher granted every student 3 free remote, unmoderated usability tests hosted on usertesting.com. I couldn't be more thankful for this opportunity, because it gave me more sampling and organization capabilities, which allowed me to conduct research in a more formalized manner.

## USABILITY TESTING

Empathize Define Ideate Prototype **Test**

# Research Design

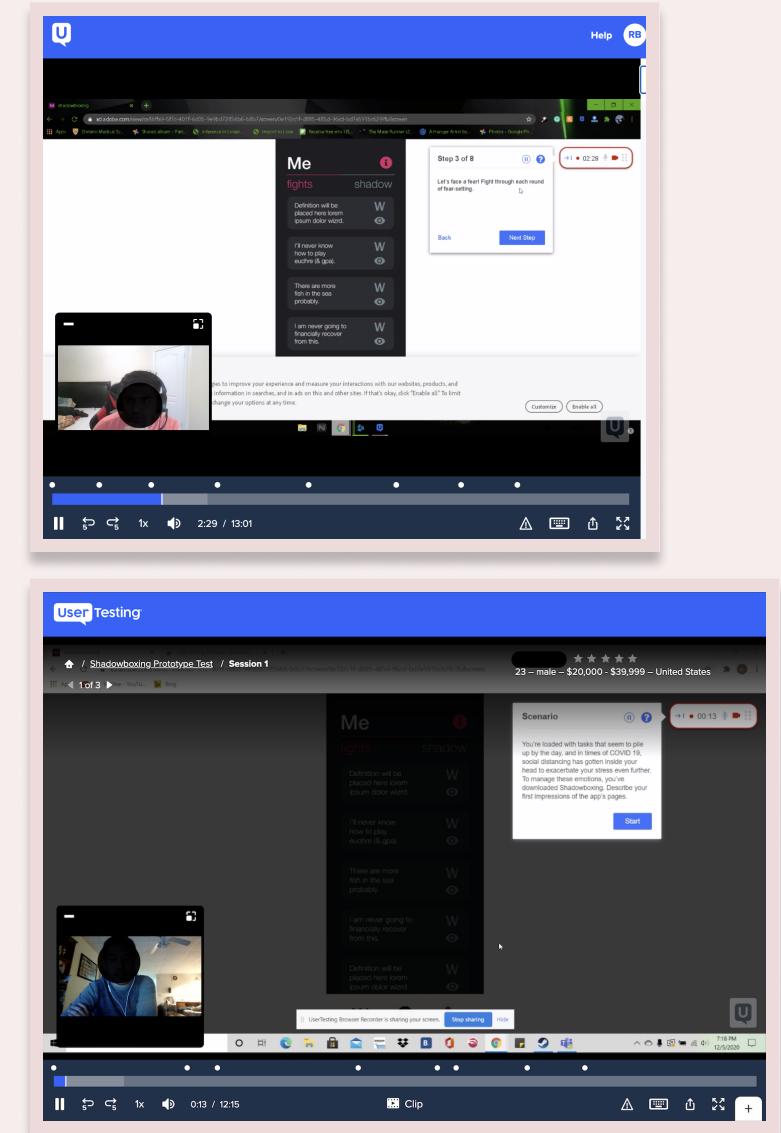
[usertesting.com](https://usertesting.com)

## Scope

- Identify user painpoints in learning how to use the app under the current sequence of tasks
- Understand what design elements influence the user's understanding of the app concept
- Optimize the desirability and ease of use during the three steps of fear-setting

## Test Specs

- 3 participants
  - Screener: Student currently attends a U.S. College or University
- Introduction
- 5 tasks: timed and screen-recorded (see right)
  - 3 verbal response questions peppered throughout the tasks
- 4 post-test questions (short answer survey)



## USABILITY TESTING

Empathize Define Ideate Prototype **Test**

# Process

### Introduction

*"You're loaded with tasks that seem to pile up by the day, and in times of COVID 19, social distancing has gotten inside your head to exacerbate your stress even further. To manage these emotions, you've downloaded Shadowboxing. Describe your first impressions of the app's 3 sections."*

### Tasks

1.

Now that you've perused the platform, find where you can read an actual description of the app.

2.

Let's face a fear! Fight through each round of fear-setting.

3.

You recently learned to play euchre. Share that you've overcome this fear of yours.

4.

Learn about the insights a fellow Shadowboxer discovered from their fight related to Netflix.

5.

There's a fight about rent that you want to reference later. Add the fight to your saved collection.

## USABILITY TESTING

Empathize Define Ideate Prototype **Test**

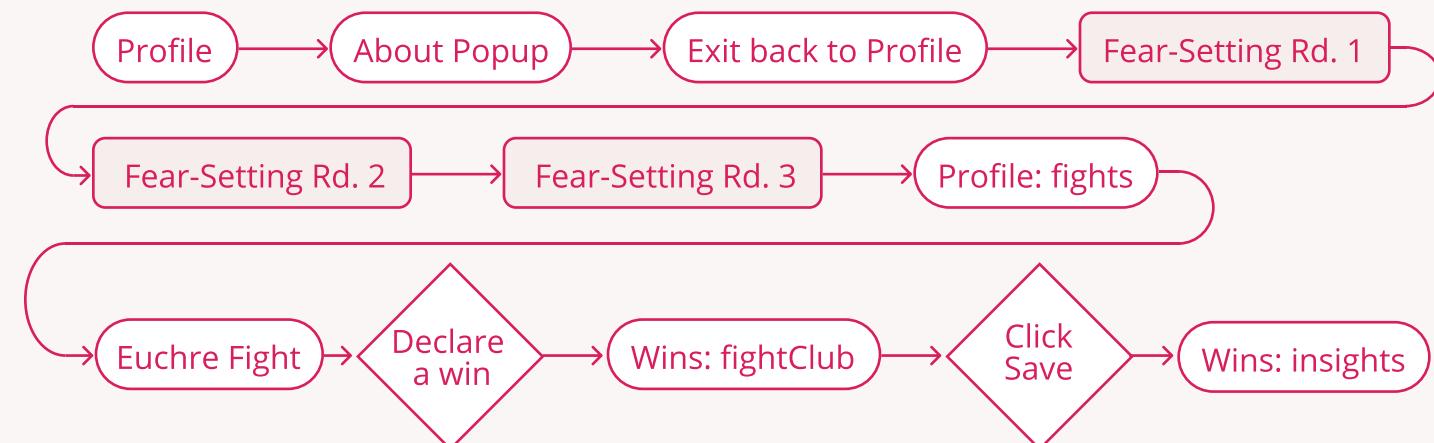
# Process (cont.)

### Post-Test Questions

1. Overall, what's your experience been with the app?
2. What frustrated you most about this prototype?
3. In what ways could the app clear up your frustrations?
4. What one thing are you most excited about with the app? Why?

## User Flow

Together, the sequence of tasks propose one potential onboarding flow, as it walks the subject through certain interactions upon their first experience with the app. Observing how the user grows familiar with the app as they progress from step to step is important to identifying which parts of the experience influence learnability.



## USABILITY TESTING

Empathize Define Ideate Prototype **Test**

To start, I noted qualitative and quantitative observations for each task and verbal response as I watched participant test recordings.

|           | Task 1  | Task 2   | ...         |              |  |
|-----------|---|--|-------------|--------------|--|
|           | Qualitative   | Quantitative   | Qualitative | Quantitative |  |
| Subject 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• “quotes”</li><li>• <i>think-aloud comments</i></li><li>• <i>facial expressions</i></li><li>• <i>context</i></li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>0:00 time it takes to complete task</i></li><li>• <i>number of click attempts</i></li><li>• <i># of times they repeat the instruction</i></li></ul> |             |              |  |
| ...       |   |  |             |              |  |

## USABILITY TESTING

Empathize Define Ideate Prototype **Test**

### Table #2: Drawing Patterns and Preparing Takeaways

After delving into the 3 test recordings, I approached a second table with all of the fresh findings in mind. On this table, each row prompted a general question to help shed light on key patterns.

As I referred to findings from the first table, I made sure to bold any substantial takeaways, while marking limitations from the study in red. By *substantial*, I mean common attitudinal or behavioral themes that pertain to problems or opportunities around my two research questions. Altogether, this process helped prepare valid insights.

| Task 1  | ...  |
|---|--|
| What did users like? or not like?   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>any patterns</i></li><li>• <i>substantial takeaways or interesting points</i></li><li>• <i>unexpected limitations</i></li></ul> |
| Did anything confuse them? Any task they had trouble completing?                            |  |
| How long did it take each user to complete each task, and is that longer than you expected? |  |
| Do you have similar data from multiple users about the same problem?                        |  |
| Do you have conflicting data across users? How do you interpret these differences?          |  |
| Any other insights?   |  |

## DESIGN JAM

Empathize Define Ideate Prototype Test

# App Description Findings

- Subjects found the description to be "motivating" and "catchy".

This should be incorporated into an immersive onboarding experience to ensure that the app concept is conveyed in the right manner.

- After reading the description, participants often re-used its branded terms during their think-aloud from subsequent tasks

With this catchy influence, onboarding instructions should keep terms consistent with the rest of the app to help participants build an accurate schema upon first impression.

- Subjects had their own unique ways of summarizing the app in response to a verbal response question (see right).

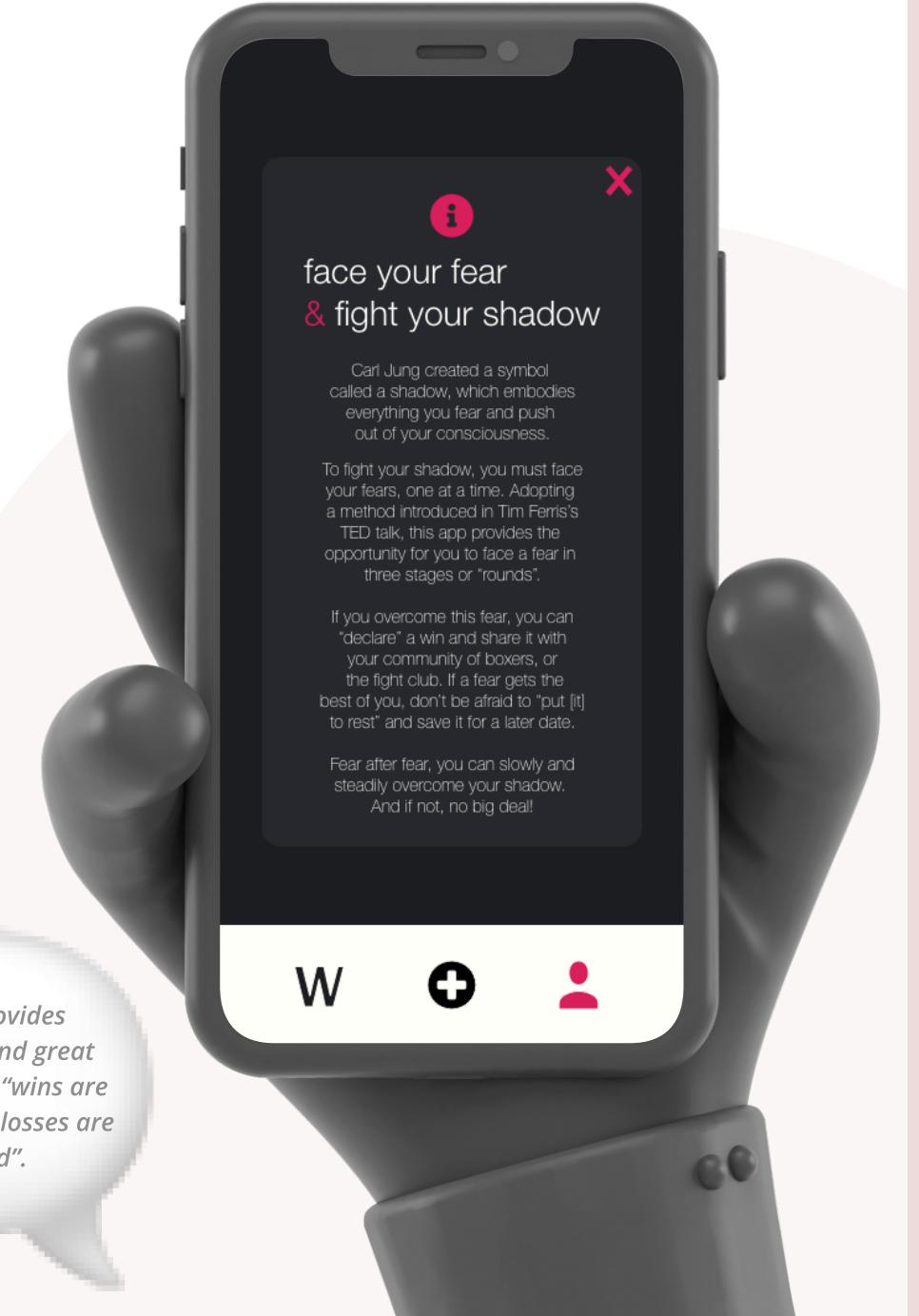
These quotes could be re-used during tutorials; nevertheless, it is imperative to drive home that this app's first priority is to promote self-growth at whatever pace is right.

*"A shadow is made up of the "worst case scenario(s) that you're trying to beat"."*

*Shadowboxing "helps you channel your feelings and frustrations into [the app] and make you feel lighter"*

*Shadowboxing is an "organization tool to cope with your stress"*

*The app provides "motivation and great advice", where "wins are celebrated and losses are accepted".*



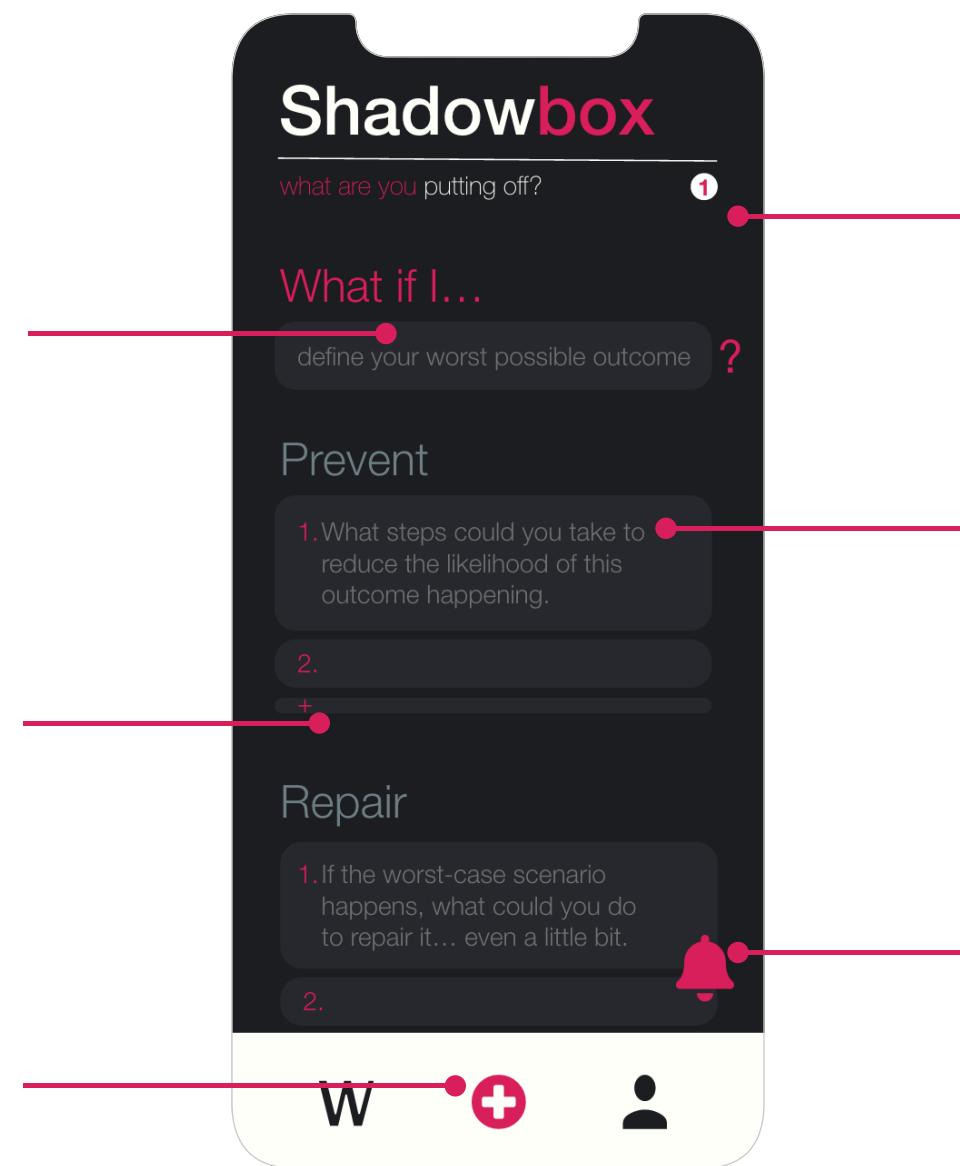
## DESIGN JAM

Empathize Define Ideate Prototype **Test**

All three participants appreciated the app's "minimalistic" look and color scheme

This touchpoint is too small; make sure that minimalism does not hinder the ability to input information

This icon was not intuitive for participants; find a better visual representation for fear-setting.



Place more emphasis on *Round 1* so that participants have better context of their progression through the fear-setting steps.

Participants understood the use of placeholder text to remind them of each step

Participants thought that this was a *Notifications* button. Change this icon to represent a button marking *Next Round*.

## USABILITY TESTING

Empathize Define Ideate | Prototype **Test**



# Takeaways

## Usability Test Insights

### 1. In what ways can an onboarding tutorial improve learnability?

- Incorporate the app description into a step-by-step walkthrough
- Introduce more intuitive icons that compliment each feature
- During the second half of the usability tests, subjects got the hang of the app's functionality; so, stick with the same user flow for the onboarding experience. However, add some more steps in order to include *all* of the features.

### 2. How effective is the app in exhibiting consistency?

- Partipants loved the app's color scheme, and they reacted accordingly to the light and dark modes
- Keep terms in the description consistent with the app's information hierarchy.
- Altogether, participants admired the idea of Shadowboxing, so tying together the app's functionality with the shadow metaphor in a tutorial will add consistency to ultimately drive home their understanding of the app.

# 3<sup>rd</sup> Iteration

You are here :)

01

**DESIGN JAM**

**Pushing to Pixel**

At my professional technology fraternity's design jam, I kickstarted this project into high fidelity.

02

**FOCUS GROUP**

**Concept Testing**

I took advantage of a 10-minute class presentation to host a focus group, walking through the 3 stages of fear-setting.

03

**USERTESTING.COM**

**Remote Usability Testing**

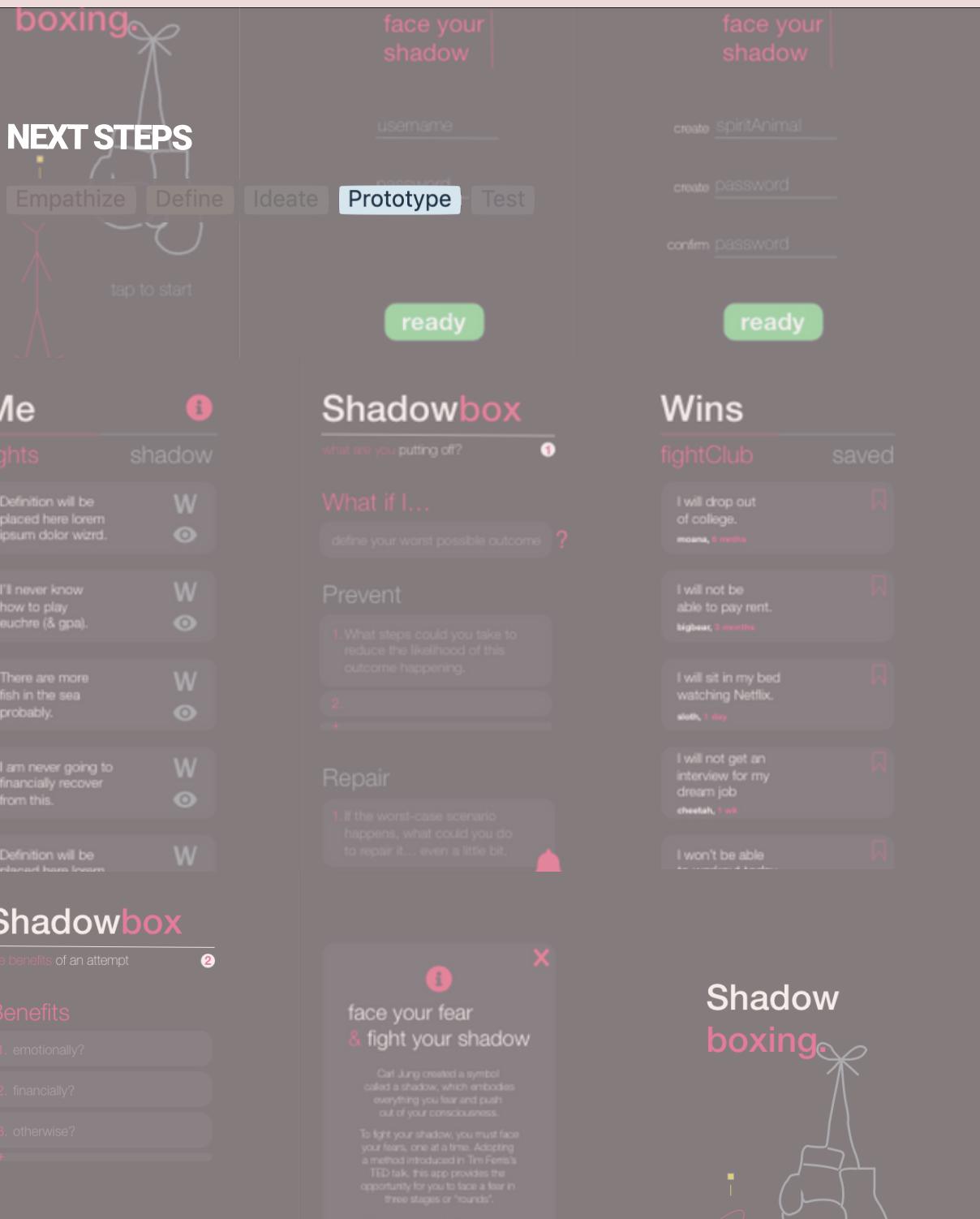
A professor granted me 3 free, online usability tests to dig deeper into the issues of my prototype's information architecture.

04

**NEXT STEPS**

**Where I'm at today!**

To start 2022, I look forward to re-spawning this project by following the actionable design insights extracted from the past.



# High Fidelity Design Changes

To compliment my research insights, I am excited to apply my newfound understanding of design principles to the app screens.

- Design and prototype an immersive onboarding experience
- Add more spacing and context to each round of fear-setting
- Clean up the information architecture of the Wins and Profile pages

## NEXT STEPS

Empathize Define Ideate Prototype **Test**

## Research Opportunities

Jan '22

Come January, I hope to test whether fear-setting can bring the same essence on a smartphone as it does with paper and pencil.

### Diary Study

This opportunity could test whether the fear-setting process is truly beneficial to college students, or if people just appreciate the creativity of the app.

### In-Person Focus Group

this time I could implement a mobile format to see how it fits first-hand, whether that be paper prototypes or a beta version of the app.

### A/B Testing

While redesigning the user experience for digital fear-setting, I could create two different designs and test how each version fairs with users.

### Competitive Analysis

To learn of more industry standards and design principles, I could assess the UX on niche competitors like Notes, Calm, and Wellness.

# Thank you!

*I really appreciate you taking the time to read through my work :) If you're interested, scroll down to check out some more!*

CREDITS: Layouts from this presentation were designed by Pitch, and image assets were downloaded from Unsplash