A **user-centered design (UCD) approach** is a process that prioritizes the needs, preferences, and experiences of the user at every stage of development. The goal is to create products, such as apps, that are intuitive, accessible, and effective by focusing on how real users will interact with them. In this approach, users are involved throughout the design process to ensure that their feedback directly influences the final product.

Key aspects of user-centered design include:

1. **Understanding User Needs**: Researching and understanding the specific needs, challenges, and preferences of the target users (in your case, students with mental health concerns).
2. **Iterative Design**: Continuously designing, testing, and refining the app based on user feedback.
3. **Prototyping and Testing**: Developing prototypes and conducting usability tests to see how users interact with the app and make necessary improvements.
4. **Focus on Accessibility**: Ensuring that the design is inclusive and usable for all users, including those with different mental health conditions or disabilities.
5. **Continuous Feedback**: Gathering ongoing input from users to improve the product even after its launch