# The Five Whys Social App

## Overview

The 5 Whys, as documented in the excellent [Wikipedia article](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/5_Whys), is an inquisitive process for getting to root cause or meaning of an issue or question. The idea is simple in nature: start with a question you want more information about and formulate a question in the form of a “why?”. Repeat this process 4 more times for a total of 5 times and you will be about as near as you can get to the answer you’re looking for.

The 5 Whys process works well when you are seeking more information on your own, but I began to wonder how much more interesting it would be as a form of social discourse, that is, asking a person 5 Whys to get to a deeper understanding of how they feel about a subject you are curious about.

## Technical Summary

The 5 Whys Social App will be initially implemented as a mobile-friendly web application that will present a minimal barrier to entry and make it as easy as possible for two people to go through the 5 Whys process. It will be made freely available and require no sign-up or payment of any kind. The primary goal of this application will be to get as many people to use it as often as possible. Usage stats will be gathered to see what people do with it and hopefully how they like using it.

## Usage Scenarios

1. I have a friend with whom I would like to initiate a 5 Whys process. There are 3 primary steps: 1. Enter the first Why question; 2. create an identity (skipped if the user has a cookie identify already saved); and 3. Specify the recipient of my Why question (email address or a URL I can send them).
   1. I begin by navigating to the 5 Whys home page:
      1. The home page provides a short summary of the 5 Whys process, a link to the Wikipedia page (that will open in a new window) and an “Ask Why Now” call-to-action button.
      2. After pressing the call-to-action button the short summary is replaced with an input area for entering my first Why question. The Wikipedia link remains in case I want to learn more about it at this point. The “Ask Why Now” button title is changed to “Continue”.
   2. Clicking on the “Continue” button takes me to a new page:
      1. The page briefly explains that I need to create an identity so my Why questions can be associated with me. There is a text field where I can enter a unique username. The application suggests that I use my email address because it is unique and can also be used to reset my password should I choose to use one. Using my email address is completely optional. The home page also explains that I can associate an email address with this account later if I’d like. If the user abandons at this point I still have the Why question they entered which can be used for future analytics purposes.
      2. After choosing a unique username, I am asked if I want to protect my questions with a password. Again, this is an optional step but the app suggests that it would be a good idea to do this. Initially there will be no restrictions on password strength.
      3. The “Continue” button remains unchanged.
   3. Clicking on the “Continue” button takes me to the final page:
      1. The page explains that I have two options for sending my first Why question to the person I want to answer it. I can enter their email address on this page and the app will send an email to them inviting them to answer the question; or I can click on another button that will display a URL that I can copy and paste into my email application for inviting my recipient the “old-fashioned way”.
      2. The “Continue” button titled is changed to “Finish”. Clicking on that button will display a message that is dependent on the send strategy I selected. If the user entered the recipient’s email address then the app will display a message that it has sent an email message to the recipient. The URL for accessing the Why question will be shown as well in case the user wants to save it for future reference. They can always return later to access it via their account.
2. Completing a 5 Whys process
3. Accessing in-progress and already completed 5 Whys processes
4. Reminding a recipient to answer a Why question
5. Commenting on a Why response
6. Initiating a new 5 Why process as part of answering a Why question