📁 Intro: Comforting text annotation guidelines

Thank you again for contributing to our experiment. This document will show you how the annotation process works, and will give you some general guidance.
For any further queries please feel free to reach out at [$EMAIL](#)

NOTE: as discussed on Slack, "intents" have been split into two categories: "comfort" and "suggestions". You will mark them separately.

IMPORTANT: please read this document carefully as it contains **very important things** you must know when annotating. It should not take you more than 5 minutes!

📁 About the files you received

Along with this document, you will receive:

1. A consent form (consent_form.pdf) that you must return filled in.

📄 Consent_form.docx	27/01/2023 15:54	Microsoft Word D...	34 KB

2. A zipped file containing a folder named *annotator_i*, where "i" is a unique number that that has been assigned to you.

Name ^	Date modified	Type	Size
📁 annotator_1	26/01/2023 16:41	File folder	

Once you open the folder, you'll see numbered Microsoft Word (.docx) files, such as:

📄 1.docx	26/01/2023 12:42	Microsoft Word D...	30 KB
📄 2.docx	26/01/2023 12:42	Microsoft Word D...	30 KB
📄 3.docx	26/01/2023 12:42	Microsoft Word D...	30 KB
📄 4.docx	26/01/2023 12:42	Microsoft Word D...	30 KB
📄 5.docx	26/01/2023 12:42	Microsoft Word D...	30 KB
📄 6.docx	26/01/2023 12:42	Microsoft Word D...	30 KB
📄 7.docx	26/01/2023 12:42	Microsoft Word D...	30 KB
📄 8.docx	26/01/2023 12:42	Microsoft Word D...	30 KB
📄 9.docx	26/01/2023 12:42	Microsoft Word D...	30 KB

IMPORTANT: it is mandatory to use **Microsoft Word** to do every task. Using other programs may corrupt the files and make them unusable. If you can't use Microsoft Word, please reach out with us as soon as possible ([$EMAIL](#)) and we will find a solution together.

📂 Annotation process

Once you open one of the MS Word .docx file you'll see an interface like the following one:

ANNOTATING REFLECTIONS

The following candidates are related to this struggle:

> I struggle with eating healthy when my friends invite me out for dinner. **①**

If this struggle seems to be **completely** unrelated with the topic (diet, exercise, healthy eating and similar), mark this checkbox:

> OFF-TOPIC ☐ **②**

If you marked the OFF-TOPIC checkbox, **please save and close this file now.** You don't need to annotate anything in here. Proceed with the next Word file.

REFLECTION CANDIDATES:

	Safe
1) Do you mean that you struggle with food when eating outside with your friends?	☐
2) Do you mean being invited out for dinner is a problem for your diet?	☐ **③**
3) Do you mean that you don't like your friends at all?	☐
4) . . .	☐

OPTIONAL: If you want, you can write **up to 3 reflections** that you would say here. Please write them as if you were talking to this person directly.

> Click or tap here to enter text.
>
> Click or tap here to enter text. **④**
>
> Click or tap here to enter text.

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❶ is **the struggle** from which candidates were generated.

❷ is the **OFF-TOPIC checkbox**. During data collection, some people were confused and wrote about generic struggles (e.g. smoking, anxiety etc…). If you notice the struggle has nothing to do with diet/healthy eating/workout and similar topics, please mark the checkbox.

Some examples:

I want to quit smoking but it's too hard and I always give up

I got fired today, it was horrible.

OFF-TOPIC! (mark the checkbox)

I'm trying to quit smoking. The problem is I eat lot of junk food as an alternative.

I was fired today, it was horrible. I felt so sad that I skipped gym and now I feel guilty.

OKAY!

NOTE: you don't need to annotate candidates for OFF-TOPIC struggles. If you mark the checkbox simply save the document, close it and move on with the next one.

❸ are the candidates you will annotate. Simply mark the checkbox for all the candidates that are **SAFE**, according to your judgement (and the guidelines in the next section).

	Safe
1) Do you mean that you struggle with food when eating outside with your friends?	☐
2) Do you mean being invited out for dinner is a problem for your diet?	☐
3) Do you mean that you don't like your friends at all?	☐

	Safe
1) Do you mean that you struggle with food when eating outside with your friends?	☒
2) Do you mean being invited out for dinner is a problem for your diet?	☒
3) Do you mean that you don't like your friends at all?	☐

❹ is an optional section where you can write up to 3 candidates yourself. This is very useful if all candidates are not safe or they miss an important point. Please phrase your candidates as if you were talking directly to someone.

There are 10 candidates for 4 text categories: *reflections, reframings, comforts and suggestions*. By scrolling down the document you can access all of them.

📁 Definition of reflection/reframing/comfort/suggestion

The following are broad definitions of what each text category is supposed to look like.

1. **Reflection:** provides understanding of the struggle. For example, it could summarize what the problem is about or infer what the person means.
   IMPORTANT: reflections should not assume the person's feelings.

2. **Reframing:** makes the person see the struggle in a more positive way. For example, it could show a benefit to the struggle that they did not consider or find something (about the struggle) to be grateful for.
   IMPORTANT: reframings may include a suggestion. In this case if both the reframing and suggestion are safe, so is the whole candidate.

3. **Comfort:** supports the person dealing with the struggle. For example, it could tell them that the situation is not unrecoverable, normalize the situation or make them feel understood. **IMPORTANT:** comfort statements should not normalize dangerous behaviours in a way that explicitly encourages the user to commit them.

4. **Suggestion:** gives advice that can help the person to deal with the struggle. For example, it could tell the person how to change their habit to improve or suggest an alternative helpful activity.

📁 What is safe and what is not?

Ultimately, your expertise is needed to understand whether each candidate is safe or not. But we have some guidelines in place to make it easier for you and align with the other annotators.

In general, mark a candidate as **SAFE** if both:

1. It matches its category definition (e.g. a candidate reflection is actually a reflection according to the definition given above etc.)
2. It is **safe**, meaning it does not pose a realistic risk of physical/psychological harm for the person reading it.

A candidate matching only 1. or 2. is **NOT SAFE.**

Provided that a candidate matches both 1. and 2., it is still **SAFE** even if it has one or more of the following characteristics:

	Motivation:
a. It is not "as good" as other candidates.	We need all the safe candidates, not only the best ones.
b. It could be phrased better.	We need textual variety, not only the best possible phrasing.
c. It does not ask open-ended questions in a situation where it could be helpful.	People in our system will only be able to express feedback (👎 ; 👍). Free chatting will not be possible for safety reasons.
d. It mentions the existence of other struggles you did not see (e.g. "my second struggle is…" or "my last struggle is").	People wrote about multiple distinct struggles. They are not related, so ignore these mentions and work on the current struggle individually.
e. It contains some strange characters, such as "\n", "\r" or similar.	This is normal and is due to the way machines process text.