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Get Relief

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Students at Texas State University need an outlet that can aid them in coping and handling the stressors in their daily routine.

MARKET ANALYSIS

Growing up, the stressors that affect individuals that lack stress management skills begin to overwhelm which can lead to physical and mental illness. The sooner you are exposed to information that can help aid in managing your daily stress, the more likely you can utilize coping mechanisms and subdue any long-lasting damages. A group greatly affected by poor stress management knowledge are college students, “[their] stressors can come from the new environment, academic pressure, social demands, and so forth,” (Shi 437) exposed to them.

As students adjust from the exit of high school into life as young adults in college, they experience multiple stressors that may or may not be new and that they haven’t had to deal with previously all at once. Students require resources that can help them develop skills to cope. If Texas State University can provide “recommendations on how to cope with stress and how easy these are to undertake, [students] may feel empowered and be willing to seek out more information” (Shi 438). Some most beneficial aspects of a successful stress management resource “include seeking help from clinicians, staying connected with friends and family,

exercising, and so forth” (Shi 437). Students need a community that is familiar with the circumstance, so creating a forum that is directly related to the campus and its environment will allow users to connect with one another who are experiencing their exact stressors.

To help students at Texas State University cope with their stress, an app that will connect them easily to stress management information is the most suitable solution. Students need easy access to information since many are involved in clubs, sports, and jobs that prevent them from making time to attend lengthy stress management classes, etc. By providing on-the-go information, students who use the application can have immediate access to stress support that meets their specified needs versus broad stress management skills from a seminar. According to research, “more information about stress management should be provided to help [students] cope” (Shi 444-445).

FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS

The financial road-map for our application is quite simple, really. To start off, our application would gain revenue by setting a monthly subscription plan five dollars after a 30-day free trial for premium features such as guided meditation, customized workout plans, daily affirmations, brain games, and a day-streak system with rewards such as themes and backgrounds. Alternatively, users can opt for a yearly subscription plan of 50 dollars or a lifetime subscription for 300 dollars.

Expenses would be low for employees as the estimated amount of employees needed for our application is ten to fifteen, to start off. Additional expenses would be application development, hosting, administrative expenses, marketing, and advertising. Although the expenses would range somewhere around five-hundred thousand, the profit margin would be

quite large. Essentially, our total net income would be approximately as much as our total expenses, give or take.

GLOBAL IMPLICATIONS

Stress is something all of us have to deal with every single day. It is a completely natural human response that reminds us to address challenges and threats that arise in our everyday lives. We all go through different experiences daily and in this, brings distinct levels of stress to endure. According to The American Institute of Stress, the global average of the number of stressed people out of 143 countries is 35 percent. Overall, America is considered one of the most stressed out countries in the world with 55 percent of Americans being stressed during the day (Daily Life). That is roughly 170 million people who are stressed out!

Being exposed to stress for too long however, can cause detrimental affects for physical and mental health. Chronic stress, which is associated with how we live our lives day-to-day, is the stress we try to mitigate and relieve most. Left uncontrolled, this stress can lead to irritability, anxiety, depression, headaches, insomnia, and can trigger many health issues. Due to the overall increases in stress over the years heightened with the pandemic and economic turmoils, more and more people have looked for outlets and solutions to help reduce and limit their stress levels.

DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

Naturally, stressors vary between different cultures, genders, ethnicities, sexualities, age groups, disabilities, etc. Therefore, our application must include various accessibility setting adjustments, inclusion tactics, and inclusive diversity features. It is imperative that diversity and inclusion considerations are implemented in the development, marketing, and interface of our

application to ensure that every one of our users have an equal experience that is relevant to their specific needs.

Our application should be designed to be accessible to individuals with different levels of physical and cognitive abilities. This includes setting features to assist users with vision, hearing, reading, communication, and motor skills. On the other hand, different cultural, ethnic, and age groups, along with people of different sexualities, disabilities, and geographic locations should be able to find and connect with people that share the same stressors. Likewise, users should be able to find and connect with people that can provide guidance and support with those stressors.

Stress and anxiety is very often derived from the process of certain cultural practices and the principles in which are followed within those cultural practices. “Where it comes to stress, an individual’s culture could affect their experience in a number of ways including: The types of stressor to which they are likely to be exposed, the way these stressors are perceived and understood, the extent of the physiological stress response produced, the coping mechanisms available to deal with the stressor.” (Sammons 1). Essentially, each group stated has their own unique stressors and sources of anxiety that need to be catered to while avoiding marketing language and design choices that reinforce any stereotypes and biases.

COMPETITION

As a result of increased stress levels world-wide, more companies have been forming to try and help aid people in relaxation and stress relief. The market for stress relief apps is very broad, with competitors offering services like calming audio requeencies, guided meditation, daily affirmations and more.

One app that appears to be one of the most popular stress relief apps is Calm. Calm, is an app that aids with stress relief by including guided meditations, calming music and sounds, and Sleep Stories on its subscription-based app. Calm offers only a 7-Day free trial and after, bills \$69.99 annually with the ability to cancel anytime, as well as a lifetime subscription of \$399.99 (Experience Calm).

Another app that is very popular with stress-relief is Happify. This app focuses on Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and positive psychology. It strives to help the user focus on their sense of happiness and mental wellness by establishing the right “track” for a user to focus on by answering a short questionnaire. These “Tracks” are groups of activities and games which help the user achieve their goals and ultimately relieve stress. Happify charges \$14.99 per month or \$139.99 per year (Overcome). This steep price is triple the price compared to other apps out there, making it financially out of reach for some consumers.

All of these apps mentioned above are great at trying to help calm the user down and relief stress, but they are missing one crucial aspect being interconnectedness. It is crucial that people who are experiencing stress stay connected with others. Thinking you are alone or the only one going through tough times merely just adds to stress, so our app including anonymous chat rooms for people to connect and express their struggles is really what makes our app stand out from the rest.

POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

College students are prime subjects for stress. From exams, financial issues, rent, balancing social and school life, as well as jobs outside of school, there is a large amount of pressure and stress put on students. Overall, 88 percent of college students reported their school

life to be stressful, 45 percent of them reported having high levels of stress (School Stress). Although there may be many competitors trying to help reduce stress, none are specifically tailored towards students.

Our solution is to develop an app that not only educates students on different types of stress and how to mitigate it, but it will connect students together to create an anonymous environment where they can build support and interconnectedness. The main goal is to make students feel less isolated about their problems and inform them on new ways to approach and tackle their stress more efficiently.

To achieve such a solution, we would have to establish an app that incorporates resources backed by health care professionals as well as a chat room for students to connect with each other anonymously. This can be done by hiring a web developer to work in house. To create revenue streams that would ultimately help our app become feasible and promote future growth, our app would come with a 30-day free trial and after expiring, cost 5 dollars a month. There would also be a lifetime package available for 300 dollars, which is more affordable than some of the biggest competitors such as the Calm app. In the end, we would like to educate students on ways to help mitigate their stress, while providing a way for them to feel less isolated along their stress-relief journey.

MARKETING STRATEGIES

To market to the current and future students at Texas State University, we will collaborate with the university's marketing team to implement promotion on their social media accounts. We will ask the university marketing team to share that we will be on the quad giving out free water bottles and showcasing the new stress management app. Prioritizing exposure to the students will

allow for a bigger in-app community that gives students who join the app the opportunity to search for forums that they most relate to.

To further entice students to download the app we will also have an incentive for the first 100 students who download the app and share it. If they meet the sign-up requirements, they will earn points that can be used to receive a gift card of their choice. Since the app is specific to Texas State students, we will also set up a tent on the square once a month on a Friday night to gather sign-ups in exchange for a slice of pizza.

LIMITATIONS

Our limitations are mainly based on funding to start-up our business/application. This is due to the high cost of developing and hosting applications. After getting started, we believe this would no longer be a limitation. On the other hand, since the service of our application is based online, the only other limitation is not being able to provide service to those without network connection.

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