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| START AUDIO |  |
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| Interviewer: I must remember to get some new batteries for this. So, screens, there are actually four team members. And the remaining three really drew upon the experience of the fourth one, Paul, who left quite early on. So Paul was great. He was very open about his experiences of depression and anxiety and he had attempted suicide a few times and he self-harmed regularly. But his way of dealing with it was practicing mindfulness and breathing techniques. So that’s what they were kind of playing on and Janice and Angelica are both very intimate, very into DIY and making things. They were thinking very much about art therapy. |  |
| So what they came up with was kind of coined ‘an e-stress ball’. So what they did was they actually created a prototype out of yarn and then they had it connected to a raspberry pie and they had LED lights. And the idea would be that you would hold this squeeze ball and you would breathe and practice mindfulness. And whilst you were doing this you’d get light and sound feedback from the ball or from the e-squeeze ball. And they were also thinking about potentially incorporating other items or objects in your house with it. So it could be like that the squeeze ball talked to your lamp and whilst you were breathing or practicing the mindfulness the lamp might flash at the same time. |  |
| But what they were quite keen on, and I don’t know whether this would work necessarily, is this idea of people actually creating the stress balls or squeeze balls themselves. So it might be that you would have a physical toolkit of these are the things you need to create it. Or it might be that you had an online repository because obviously there’s quite a technical angle to this. So it could be quite exclusionary in nature. So I’ll show you them talking briefly. |  |
| “Rohan just called it an e-stress ball. E-squeeze ball. |  |
| E-squeeze ball. So the idea is that when you have a moment of anxiety this was something to distract you from that.” |  |
| Sorry it’s \_\_\_[0:02:28]. |  |
| “Something to make you a bit more mindful about what you’re doing and your breathing particularly. So we said instead of a lot of mindful activities it’s just trying to get you to breathe in a certain way. But instead of going at it from that angle we kind of going from a personal angle. So with this you can control your own breathing so the kind of thing that you want to do. The idea is that you press it and then when you press it, it lights up and there’s sound coming out of it as well.” |  |
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| So what we were talking about, that’s a prototype later on. They broke it a couple of times. |  |
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| Respondent: Is it crocheted? |  |
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| Interviewer: Yes, and there’s the little raspberry pie. So the clinical psychologists were quite interested in this idea of biofeedback and they kind of suggested potentially you could have a bracelet that was potentially attached to it. And that could maybe feel your pulse and that would then inform the biofeedback. So it might be like, has your pulse slowed down? You would get a different feedback from the squeeze ball. |  |
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| Respondent: I believe somebody did digital \_\_\_[0:03:41] something similar for their project? |  |
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| Interviewer: Arabella? |  |
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| Respondent: Was it with women with personality disorders? |  |
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| Interviewer: BPD. It’s Arabella |  |
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| Respondent: Yes. |  |
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| Interviewer: She funnily enough. |  |
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| Respondent: There was jewellery with that as well wasn’t there? |  |
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| Interviewer: Yes, she also worked with someone called Janice who was fantastic. She’s brilliant, she’s over at Northumbria and she’s a digital jewellery maker. But she really heavily… She works collaboratively with her participants so she’ll find out very much about their lives and what makes them tick. Then she’ll create the jewellery with them. So she was I believe on Arabella’s supervision team. But yes, Arabella it was the spheres of wellbeing. |  |
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| Respondent: Yes. |  |
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| Interviewer: And Arabella was the girl that ran the dementia hackathon the year before me. So this was very much influenced by Arabella’s work. |  |
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| Respondent: I can see. |  |
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| Interviewer: Good knowledge. |  |
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| Respondent: Got my old knowledge. So I think when I read through, I think I read the, I don’t know what I read, it was quite lengthy. Maybe it was just like a brief paper about it all. So obviously this is very similar and I think it’s good. I like the idea of the mindfulness and the feedback. Because I think if you were having a moment. I suppose it’s a bit like the distraction box in terms of physically doing something when you feel like you want to self-harm? So I can see theoretically how really useful it would be just in terms of that sort of, what’s the word? |  |
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| Interviewer: Tactility? |  |
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| Respondent: Tactility. I did my undergraduate dissertation on tactile perception so really I should know that word. Oh dear. So yes, no I think having that and getting that feedback, that time to reflect I think it’s all really positive. Like you mentioned I think in terms of the technology. I like the idea of building it. I think the jewellery especially if it was a jewellery kind of thing. Creating this and getting that. You know what would be really good if you had almost like a workshop, like a group of people working together building their own. Because I think if you gave someone a box of parts and went, “There you go.” |  |
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| Interviewer: And I said I would find that, and it depends on the person, I would find that anxiety inducing. Because if someone says to you, “Be creative” I mean I’d just shut down. |  |
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| Respondent: Yes, it’s a lot to ask but I think maybe if you made a thing out of it. Then if they’ve gone through building it then they’ve invested. They’ve invested in it and they’ve got that ownership of it. They’re already inclined for it to help, for it to work because they’ve invested in it. |  |
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| Interviewer: That’s true. |  |
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| Respondent: Almost like as an effect of its own, the fact that they’ve created this. So it would be quite interesting to look at people who’d created them versus people who’d just been given them and the outcomes that way. Probably would be quite interesting. |  |
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| Interviewer: I like that yes. |  |
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| Respondent: I think that would be a huge component of how successful it would be, is the fact if they created it themselves. So I think I like the idea a lot. I don’t think it’s something you’re ever going to see like on the shelf in like Asda like, “Oh I’ll just buy my thing and put it in the…” It’s not going to happen. But in the kind of a very specialist I suppose like in a healthcare setting it being something that’s offered. Or like I said probably like, I think it’s something that would probably come from a charity. |  |
| I can’t imagine the NHS being like handing these out to people. But say there’s a charity that wins some funding and holds workshops where service users can come in, build them together, take them away, come back. I think that would work quite well. |  |
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| Interviewer: So it was interesting because the psychologist team were saying that, in the eating disorders clinic the women they work with use things like this, but they’re just sort of stress balls from the Pound Shop. So it would be quite interesting to see how they were appropriate. And I like what you say about thinking about the difference between people that had made them and like an off the shelf version. |  |
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| Respondent: I think that would be interesting. I suppose if you’ve got, if even just stress balls are helping people. You’ve got so many more like layers within this that providing different levels of intervention. |  |
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| Interviewer: Do you think it’s quite female orientated? |  |
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| Respondent: I would say yes. |  |
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| Interviewer: Because I know some of my colleagues they go to knitting groups, they’re into yarn bombing. They’re all female and I think the groups that they attend are all female. |  |
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| Respondent: I think it’s quite difficult to engage men especially young men in anything. In anything. That’s why I think something like this would be very helpful, probably more so for women. And then I would say, for something like, especially mental health, possibly obviously within that self-harm sporty things. I know it’s really stereotypical, it wouldn’t have appealed to me. But that’s a good way of I think interventions for young men who are maybe already engaged in sport. Because there is that kind of, “Is a man going to crochet a bauble?” |  |
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| Interviewer: I know Rohan would but he’s not stereotypical of a man. |  |
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| Respondent: I mean I would yes. So yes I think it’s probably quite, whatever that word is, androcentric or is that woman, I can’t remember? |  |
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| Interviewer: Female centric? |  |
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| Respondent: Jenna? We’ll just say female centric |  |
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| Interviewer: This person’s like, “Yes.” |  |
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| Respondent: Sorry. No I’m going to go with androcentric. |  |
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| Interviewer: Andro is men right? No is that androgynous? |  |
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| Respondent: Well I think probably it would appeal to women more. Are these eyes or are these the lights? |  |
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| Interviewer: These are the LED lights. |  |
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| Respondent: From this picture it does look like a smile. Not that this sperm has eyes. But you know a cartoon one. |  |
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| (Laughing) |  |
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| Respondent: It just said ta da. Put it in a blue box with like cartoon thumbs up. They don’t have thumbs. No, so yes I think in terms of the whole tactility and the feedback I like it. I just think practically maybe. I hadn’t, it would be really interesting actually to like get people together and get them to make them if there was some money and see the outcomes. Even not necessarily for self-harm but mental health in general. Different. |  |
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| Interviewer: Yes, again this isn’t specific to self-harm but… |  |
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| Respondent: But it’s got that kind of distraction I suppose as well. |  |
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| Interviewer: So I was quite concerned at the end of the event because I was like, “We’ve spent all this money on it.” And actually really only one of the concepts I would say is specific to self-harm. And all the way through the judges were saying to each of the teams, “Is this specific to self-harm?” And then Rohan pointed something out and I thought, “You were completely right.” Co-mobility and that was something that heavily came up. It’s self-harm isn’t necessarily, it could be a problem in itself. But it’s indicative of other things that are going on, depression, anxiety all of these different things. And these concepts are promoting positive wellbeing but hopefully have the potential to help people with mental health issues. |  |
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| Respondent: Exactly. If you’ve got someone who self-harms because they’re hugely anxious, they’re being bullied or something. Usually self-harmers are consequence of something else. So if you’ve got an intervention like this that’s going to help them generally with their mental health. Then if that improves their mental health then it makes them less likely to self-harm. Then it is also a self-harming intervention isn’t it. |  |
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| Interviewer: Yes, cool. |  |
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| Respondent: I think it would be difficult to design an intervention for self-harm specifically. Because it’s like, “Oh it’s got to come”. People don’t self-harm for the crap do they? It’s because they’re feeling dreadful, and why they’re feeling dreadful? |  |
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| Interviewer: Yes. Shall we leave it there? |  |
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| Respondent: Cool. |  |
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| Interviewer: Thank you so much. |  |
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| Respondent: You’re welcome. |  |
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| END AUDIO |  |
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