



Playdate

An app that puts the **forever** in Best Friends Forever

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Introduction



Our Team



Sachin Allums (he/him)



Nicole Segaran (she/her)



Mena Hassan (she/her)



Kevin Tran (he/they)

I feel like I have no friends here



Hey, it's been a while ...

We NEED to hang it's been so long!



I really miss you...

How can we build a product that facilitates people's friendships?



How can we build a product that helps people maintain friendships that are important to them?



Needfinding



Who We Talked To



Akshay (he/him)
Software Engineer



Kaitlyn (she/her)
High School Senior

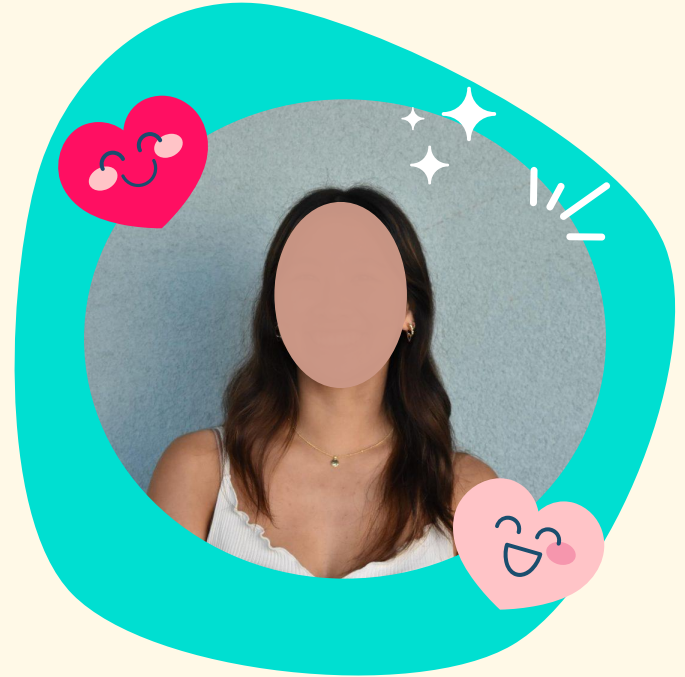
“Does our Life Intersect?”

1. Maintaining friendships (or not) is an **intentional** choice
2. Whether a friendship continues relies on the commitment of **both** individuals
3. When considering who his close friends were, Akshay **cared less about distance + frequency** of meet-ups and more about whether the **quality**
4. **Social media disincentivizes maintaining one-on-one connections** because “you already know everything about their life”



“I Send Pictures Everyday”

1. **Low commitment, one-on-one digital interactions** are a valuable way of staying connected even when you can't see each other
2. When planning in-person activities with long-distance friends, likes to make them **“elaborate”** and **“quality”**
3. Uses social media to generate ideas for hangouts



POVs +
HMWs



Audrey

We met...

Audrey, a recent college grad pursuing EdTech

We were surprised to notice...

she often made friends through common interests + proximity, but she wanted more friends who aligned with her values

We wonder if this means...

people need a method for connecting to people who have a similar outlook on life

It would be game changing...

to create social environments that connects people based on values over convenience



Nicole T.

We met...

Nicole T., a physics grad student at Stanford

We were surprised to notice...

she tends to make friends with people who shared experiences + interests even though she wants more diverse friendships

We wonder if this means...

people need help connecting to others with different backgrounds

It would be game changing...

provide an accessible way for people to build friendships with people from different experiences



We met...

Nicole T., a 3rd- yr grad student at Stanford

We were surprised to notice...

many of her friendships were anchored to one particular context, and she struggled to maintain those friendships across new contexts

We wonder if this means...

people need help scaffolding friendships that persist across situational changes

It would be game changing...

to help people introduce new experiences and contexts to their friendships, building more robust relationships overall

Nicole T.



From Nicole T.'s POV...

HMW introduce novelty into pre-existing friendships?



We met...

a 28-year-old SWE who moved 5 months ago

We were surprised to notice...

in spite of feeling as if he knew more about his friends because of social media, he felt less inclined to reach out to them

We wonder if this means...

people need incentivization to reach out even though they know everything about each other

It would be game changing...

to create a low stakes way for people to continue connecting and learning about each other, beyond the surface level knowledge that social media provides

Akshay



From Akshay's POV...

**HMW nudge people to be curious
about each other beyond the
information that social media
provides?**



We met...

An 18-yr old HS senior who loves social media

We were surprised to notice...

when communicating online, she prefers a low stakes interactions, but in-person she loves making elaborate plans

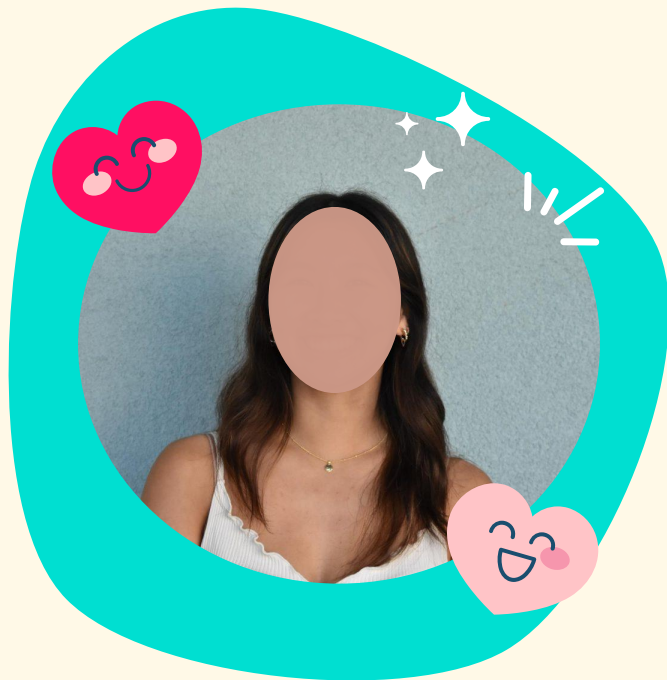
We wonder if this means...

people maintain friendships differently digitally vs in-person

It would be game changing...

leverage these differences to make translating friendships across digital and in-person interactions easier

Kaitlyn



From Kaitlyn's POV...

HMW foster interactions that can continue both digitally and in-person?



Solutions + Assumptions

**HMW
introduce
novelty into
pre-existing
friendships?**

**Create an app
that nudges
people to try
out new lowkey
“playdate” ideas
+ sets a
deadline!**



Assumption!

Does having a deadline make you more likely to follow through with a plan?



How might we nudge people to be curious about each other beyond the information that social media provides?



Create an app that sends a daily, meaningful question for a user to answer and share with their friends



Assumption!

Do people want a daily incentive to check in with their friends?



HMW foster interactions that can continue both digitally and in-person?

Create an app that helps you plan your own ELABORATE “playdates” using crowdsourced information



Assumption!

Do people value having insider information about what to do with friends?



Experience Prototypes



Participants

- Focused on Target Users
 - Age Range: 18 - 30
 - Expressed difficulty maintaining friendships
 - College-aged, recent grad
- Recruited via Convenient Sampling

Setup

Participants Recruited

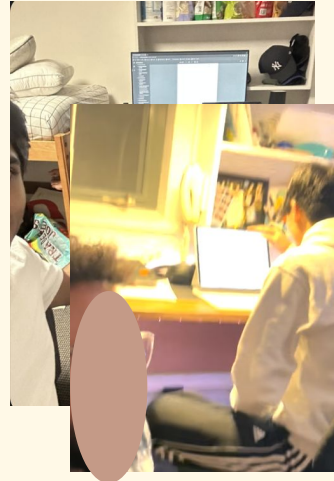
Successful Participants

Deadline

HELLO! I'm in a class and I've been tasked with challenging my friends to do a random act of kindness for one of their friends. You have 3 HOURS to do something kind for your friend and send me proof (a pic or video is fine). ARE YOU UP FOR IT??

3

2



No Deadline

HELLO! I'm in a class and I've been tasked with challenging my friends to do a random act of kindness for one of their friends. You have to do something kind for your friend and send me proof (a pic or video is fine). ARE YOU UP FOR IT??

2

0

Does having a deadline make you more likely to follow through with a plan?

Qualitative Assessment

How often do you text your friends on average?

We saw a wide range of text frequencies, ranging from daily to biweekly, with an average of one a week text.

It depends on the closeness of the friendship.

How do you usually start a conversation with your friends?

People do have topics in mind for talking to close friends, however, many people resort to generic conversation starters for friends they don't talk to often

How satisfied are you with the quality and depth of your conversations with friends?

Most people seem to learn less about their friends / be less satisfied with depth over text if they have known each other for a while but aren't close to each other.

However, sometimes people want to just vibe and not have super deep conversations

Do people want a daily incentive to check in with their friends?

Satisfaction after Daily Question

Out of the four subjects:

2 subjects' friends were too busy to respond or have a conversation with them.

One reported a very good conversation from the question "What is the most interesting or surprising thing that you learned recently?", talking about a fun class and sharing experiences in the lab.

Another had a short conversation about circuit design, however the conversation was cut short due to the asynchronous nature of texting.

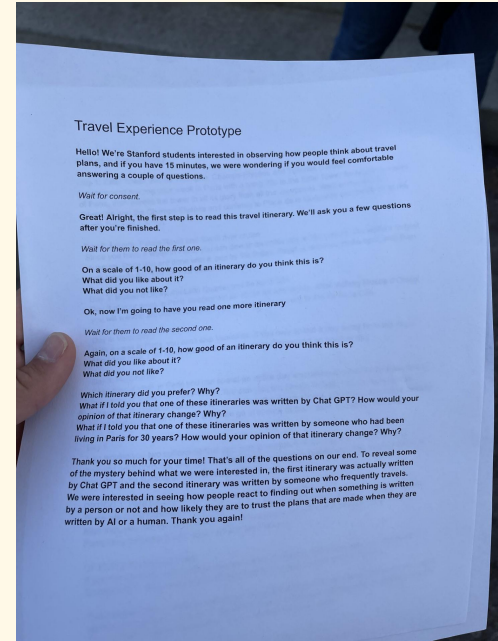
Do people want a daily incentive to check in with their friends?

Qualitative Assessment

On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate how effective this travel itinerary is?

What if I told you that one of these itineraries was written by Chat GPT? How would this affect your ratings?

What if I told you that one of these itineraries was written by someone who lived in Paris for 30 years?



Do people value having insider information about what to do with friends?

Evaluation of Prototypes

- 1) Deadlines DO make an impact on whether someone will follow up on a plan
- 2) Daily questions are an inconvenient + unsuccessful way to facilitate communication
- 3) People really value insider info when making plan itineraries

Takeaways



Next Steps + Ethics

- 1) Moving forward with **Solution 1 and 3**
- 2) Ethical Implications
 - a) Emphasis on in-person “playdates” make it difficult for long-distance friends to connect
 - b) Cost may still be a contributing factor against planning meaningful interactions
 - c) Dependence on crowdsourcing makes it more difficult for users from less populated areas to be benefitted

Our Users

- Current solutions serve people who...
 - Have disposable income
 - Live in densely populated locations
 - Have preexisting, local friend group
- Current solutions leave out people who...
 - Are low-income
 - Live in rural or less populated areas
 - Are far away from existing connections

Appendix



Links to documents

[Brainstorming for Solutions](#)

[Itinerary Experience Prototype](#)

[Folder of Interview Notes and other materials](#)

[Images of Brainstorming Process](#)