Part One: Personal Statement

BI WU is a designer who continues to explore the field of communication design. Her work not only focuses on form and aesthetics but also examines how design can act as a cultural force for social reflection and change. As a critical practitioner, BI believes that design is not only a tool for conveying information but also an important way to understand and shape the world. Through narrative design, she explores themes such as contemporary social phenomena, human-environment interaction, and information overload, seeking to reflect on these complex issues through a combination of images, typography, and other elements that express a deeper story.

In presenting her work, BI is committed to portraying herself as a socially responsible designer. Her creations are inspired by her observations of technology and consumer culture in daily life, with a particular focus on the profound impact these phenomena have on individuals and society. Scenes from streets to public spaces not only inspire her design but also stimulate her thoughts on technological advancements.

In her recent projects, she has innovated in both visual language and ideology, attempting to reveal through design the profound impact of technological advancement on individual life and human behavior. In particular, audiences concerned with how design responds to social issues and human-computer interaction will resonate with BI 's work.

BI 's latest project, Mind Pause, is a meditation-meets-time management app designed to help users control the amount of time they spend on electronics and find inner peace in the age of information overload. However, through this design, she also critiques modern society's neglect of mental health and life balance in the pursuit of efficiency and productivity. Using simple icons and warm typography, BI creates a distraction-free space that helps users focus and enter a meditative state, encouraging them to re-examine their relationship with the world of information. This design language not only reflects on technological interference but also questions the overconsumption of attention in the digital age.

BI 's vision is to bring about positive change in society through design and to inspire viewers to rethink contemporary social phenomena. She wants people to understand that design should address deeper issues such as society and globalization. Her creations emphasize the social responsibility of design by simplifying and abstracting social phenomena, transforming neglected or under-discussed issues into understandable visual symbols in an attempt to provoke viewers to pay attention to and reflect on current social issues.

To expand her influence, BI plans to promote her brand through design journals, international exhibitions, and interdisciplinary collaborations. Not only does she hope

to promote social thinking on issues such as technology, information overload, and mental health through her work, but she will also share the creative process through social media and design blogs to shape the image of a critical designer. Through these methods, she hopes to break from traditional design thinking and push design from simple aesthetic expression to deeper social discussion.

Part Two: App Design Work Images and Discussions

1. Project Title, Rationale, and Key Terms

The 'Mind Pause' app was created to offer a mindful space in today's fast-paced world, helping people take a break from the constant flow of information, meditate, and relax. The name 'Mind Pause' conveys the idea of pausing and reflecting, encouraging users to question whether they truly need to be constantly surrounded by digital information.

The project is inspired by the rapid growth of modern technology. While it has connected people, constant updates and notifications from social media, email, and news have increased anxiety and stress. Research shows that information overload is a common cause of anxiety, hindering people's connection with their inner selves and raising questions about whether technology truly serves human needs (Turkle, 2017).

Key Terms:
● Information overload: Excessive data causing stress and decision fatigue.
● Meditation: A practice for calming the mind and reducing stress.
● Digital detox: Reducing screen time to improve mental health.

The design elements of this project include time and activity icons, warm colors, and a minimalist layout. The aim is to create a calming and focused environment that helps users of all ages ease into a meditative state and effectively manage their time on electronic devices.

Image 1 shows the project's initial concept. I drew inspiration from symbols and elements related to meditation. The clouds represent the flow of thoughts while the vertical lines symbolize a 'pause' state.

Image 1: Initial Concept

To help users meditate easily, I designed a 'Focus Mode' that blocks out distractions with a no-disturb setting. Users can also choose from different meditation audio options, like chanting or white noise, and select icons to represent various activities, enhancing immersion. The design emphasizes simplicity and calmness, creating a peaceful space that guides users into a meditative state.

2. Aims, Objectives, and Survey Topics

The main goal of the app is to help users reduce stress through meditation and manage their phone use, helping them find inner peace. By focusing on digital wellness, meditation, and time management, I want to guide users toward a more balanced and focused digital lifestyle.

The goals of this project are to:
● Create a simple meditation app to manage stress caused by information overload.
● Provide tools for mindful device usage and screen time management.
● Design a calming space with warm colors and a clean layout, making it accessible for users of all ages.

Image 2 shows the app's prototype interface, featuring a minimalist design and the use of warm tones such as soft orange and beige to create a relaxing atmosphere. The app's core features include meditation, time management, and progress tracking, helping users monitor meditation time and manage device usage. In addition, I designed a vibration reminder to remind users to continue when they haven't completed their goals, thus helping them to develop good meditation habits.

Image 2: Prototype Interface

During the design process, I focused not only on the practicality but also on whether the app could help users relieve stress and stay focused, rather than simply managing time through restrictions. As designer Don Norman said, 'Design is not just what it looks like and feels like. Design is how it works.' (Norman, 2013, p. 78)

3. Background and Research Methods

This project addresses the overuse of digital devices and their impact on mental health. In today's world, many people rely on devices nearly 24/7 for work and personal life, leading to anxiety, distractions, and mental exhaustion. My design aims to show how

meditation and a digital detox can improve mental well-being in our fast-paced, information-heavy society.

To support my design, I collected primary data through interviews with people over 21 to understand their device usage habits, activities, and experiences with meditation apps. I also conducted user testing to gather feedback on the app and learn how users felt about the overall experience.

Additionally, I reviewed literature on digital health, meditation, and user experience design. One key text was The Miracle of Mindfulness by Jon Kabat-Zinn (2016), which explores how mindfulness meditation can reduce stress, enhance self-awareness, and improve mental well-being. These insights informed my design approach.

Image 3 shows the user testing feedback I gathered. Most appreciated the simplicity and ease of the design, though some suggested improvements. A few wanted the meditation feature to start more quickly, while others requested offline audio downloads. Based on this, I plan to add voice guidance and offline downloads in future updates.
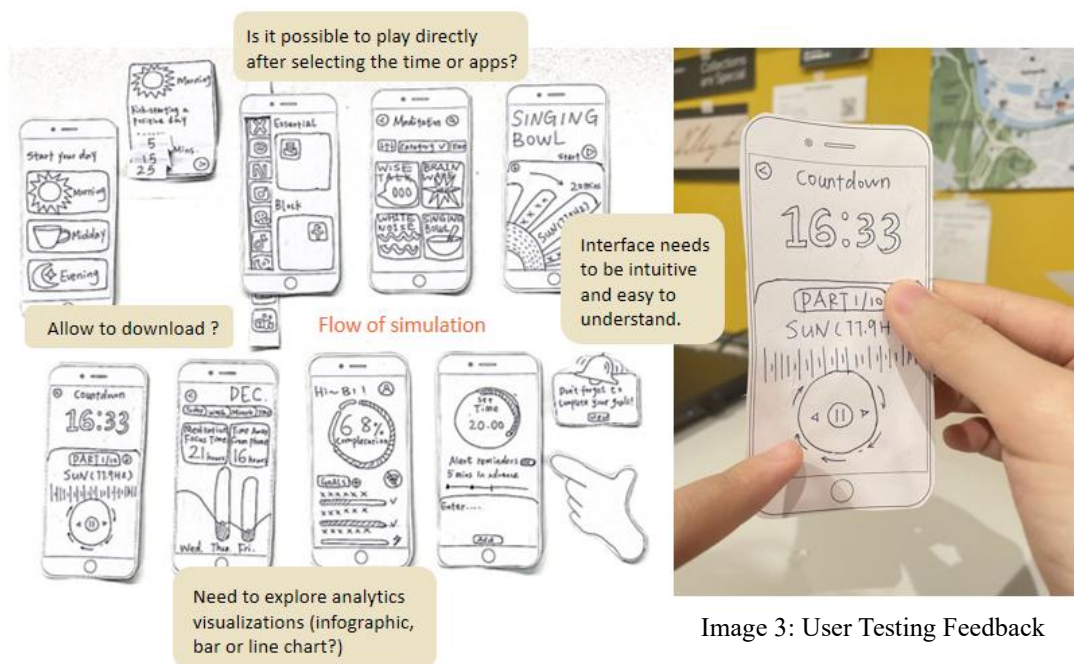

Image 3: User Testing Feedback

4. Research Methodology

During my research, I used both qualitative and quantitative methods.I surveyed users to understand their habits and needs around device usage and meditation. Additionally, I conducted experiments to explore how different colors and typography affect the meditation experience. I also carried out user tests to gather feedback on the app and made design adjustments accordingly.

I based the framework on emotional design (Norman, 2013) and cognitive load theory (Sweller, 1988). Emotional design engages users, while cognitive load theory reduces mental strain and simplifies tasks, creating a smoother, more focused experience.

5. Results and Reflection

The main goal of this project was to design an app that helps users unplug from the digital world. According to user feedback and test results, Mind Pause has largely achieved this goal. Most users reported feeling more focused and relaxed, despite the constant influx of information.

Looking back , I realized that balancing simplicity with functionality was crucial. While the minimalist design effectively creates a calm atmosphere, some users have requested additional interactive features, such as voice-guided meditation and offline downloading. With this in mind, I plan to incorporate these in future updates to improve the experience.

Overall, the Mind Pause project has deepened my understanding of how design can promote mental health and address information overload. It has reinforced my belief that design is not just about aesthetics; it can be a powerful tool to improve quality of life.

Reference list

Kabat-Zinn, J., 2016. *Wherever you go, there you are : mindfulness meditation for everyday life*. London: Piatkus.

Norman, D.A., 2013. *The design of everyday things*. 2nd ed. New York: Basic Books.

Sweller, J., 1988. *Cognitive load during problem solving: Effects on learning. Cognitive Science*, 12(2), pp. 257-285.

Turkle, S., 2017. *Alone together : Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other*. Basic Books.