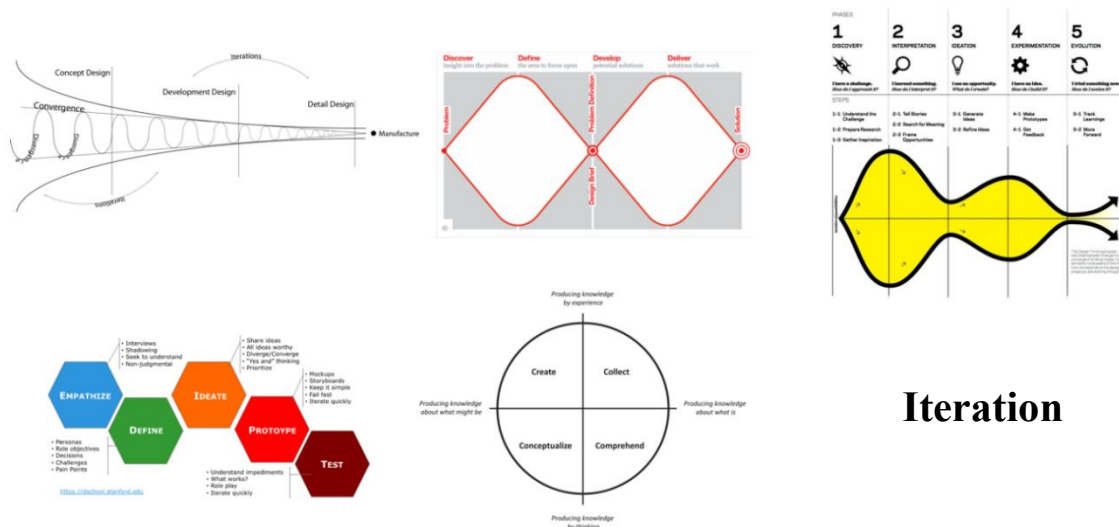


RRR Task 07: DIEP Final Report



1. Describe

One of the biggest takeaways from my first semester was realizing the true value of iterative design. Before this, I always thought design was a straightforward, linear process. Once I finished the first draft, I believed I was nearly there with the final solution. But now I see that design is actually more of a continuous cycle, a process of constant improvement through rapid prototyping, testing, and gathering feedback. Whether it's user research, low-fidelity prototyping, or high-fidelity prototyping, I've learned that design needs to be flexible, always adapting to new insights, needs, and constraints rather than relying on my initial ideas.

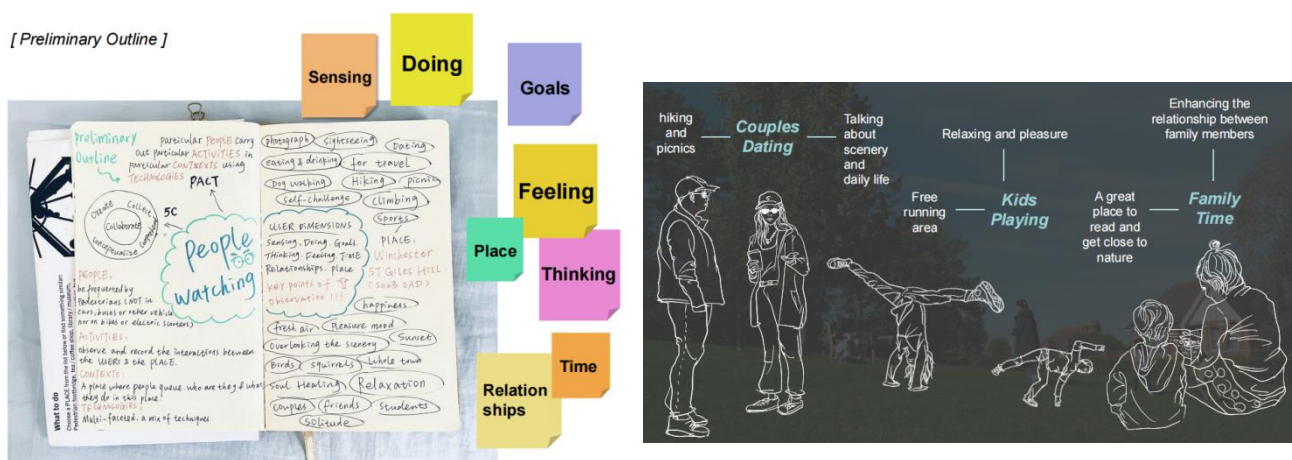


Image 1

The “People Watching” project (Image 1) was a real eye-opener for me. It made me realize that design isn’t just about solving surface-level issues; it’s about understanding the deeper, often unspoken needs and emotions of users. By observing how people interact with their surroundings, I learned how to step into their shoes and design solutions that truly align with their needs. I also started to appreciate how important it is to apply empathetic design (as discussed by Donald Norman in 1988), focusing on users' emotions and core needs and turning those into practical design solutions. This experience reinforced my belief that the true purpose of design is to create solutions that genuinely improve lives and that this process should always be backed by scientific iteration and feedback.

2. Interpret

This new insight has had a profound impact on my design thinking and practice. More than just a tool, iterative design has become a core methodology for my design reflection and adjustment. It means that design is a process of continuous improvement, where user feedback provides a validating basis for improvement, rather than relying on theory alone. For example, in the “Being Human” project (Image 2), I realized that every design tweak and optimization had to be validated by real user feedback, not just theory. Through many low-fidelity prototype tests and quick adjustments, I gradually optimized the design, and even though the project was not finished, it made me realize that the design needs to be continuously verified and optimized. As the IDEO Design Thinking Model emphasizes, the design process needs to be flexible and inclusive, and it is only through iterative validation and adjustment that the best solution can be found.

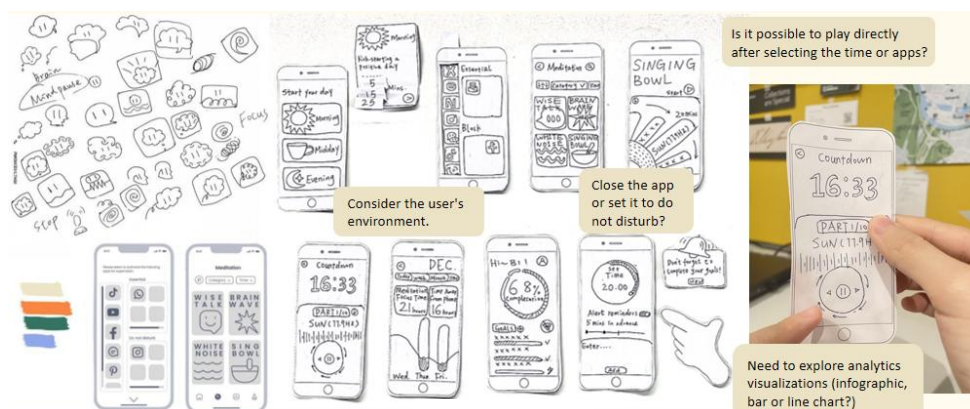


Image 2

This approach means that when faced with a design challenge, I need to be flexible in adjusting my design solution and continue to learn and improve based on user feedback. The iterative design approach based on user feedback is highly compatible with the “User-Centered Design” philosophy (Image 3), which emphasizes prioritizing users' needs and emotions. Each round of feedback allows me to reduce the risk of failure and optimize the design solution to ensure that it ultimately better meets the actual needs of the users. However, deciding on the optimal frequency of each iteration and when to stop iterating and accept the existing design solution is still a question that deserves my in-depth consideration.

PACT

Particular **PEOPLE** carry out particular **ACTIVITIES** in particular **CONTEXTS** using particular **TECHNOLOGIES**.

Image 3

3. Evaluate

In the first semester of my practice, I noticed significant improvements in my ability to apply design thinking, but also some clear shortcomings. Iterative design isn't just a theoretical concept; it really needs to be put into practice to show its true value. In the “APP360” project (Image 4), I was able to quickly gather feedback and adjust the design direction, but when faced with complex or conflicting feedback, I often found myself feeling lost. I struggled to prioritize the key insights, which made it difficult to make the best decisions quickly.



Image 4

One issue I faced was getting bogged down in details when dealing with large volumes of user feedback. I found it challenging to figure out which pieces of feedback were truly important for the project's goals. Moreover, I tended to overload the app with too many features, trying to cover all possibilities instead of focusing on the core functions. As a result, the design became cluttered, and users struggled to understand the main features during testing. This also meant that I spent too much time on minor details early on, missing opportunities to effectively iterate and validate key elements, which ultimately affected the progress and quality of the design.

Donald Norman's insights in *Design Psychology* were a game-changer for me (Image 5). He emphasizes that design should always serve human needs and provide a convenient, enjoyable experience (Norman, 1988). This reminded me that design isn't just about creativity, it's about balancing user needs, technical feasibility, and the real-world context. I had added complex social features and notifications, but user testing showed they were confused. This made me realize that the core of emotional design is to focus on the features users need most and avoid "over-designing." For example, in the past, I have often sought to be "all-inclusive" or "innovative" by adding complex social features and too many notifications, which resulted in a cluttered interface and confused users. This reflection has taught me that clarity, logic, and a user-centered approach are the keys to creating effective, intuitive designs.

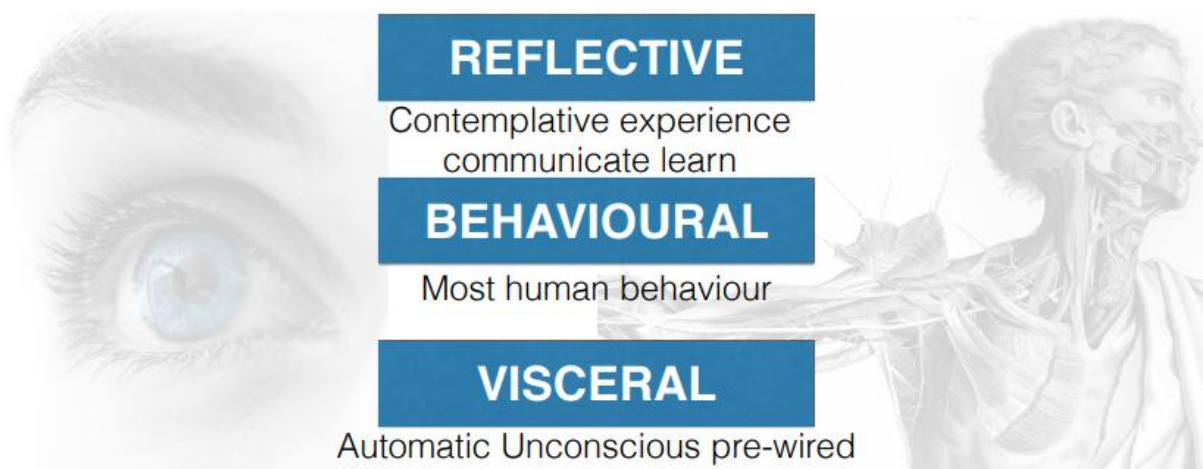


Image 5

Additionally, learning about key “Design Thinking” concepts like empathy, rapid prototyping, and iterative feedback has been crucial in shaping my practice. For example, by using rapid prototypes and incorporating user feedback, I was able to validate ideas at a much lower cost and make adjustments on the fly. This flexibility helped me understand the dynamic and efficient nature of iterative design. However, I also realized that I lacked critical thinking skills when evaluating user feedback. Too often, I treated all feedback the same, without fully analyzing the context or considering the priority and feasibility of each issue. This made me realize how important it is to apply critical thinking, not just to address the surface-level needs, but to dig deeper into the root cause of the problems, enabling me to come up with more precise design solutions.

Looking ahead, I plan to clarify the design objectives through a priority matrix at the early stage of the project and filter out key feedback to ensure a reasonable allocation of resources and time. At the same time, I will flexibly adjust the complexity of the prototype according to the different stages of the project in order to manage time and resources more efficiently, thus enhancing the overall work efficiency. In addition, I realize that my knowledge in design psychology and visual expression is still limited, e.g. how to better articulate a design story through color schemes or design elements. Therefore, I need to strengthen my learning of relevant software and accumulate interdisciplinary expertise. At the same time, I also plan to pay more attention to the cultivation of critical thinking and evaluate feedback and data more thoroughly and deeply in every design decision to find the core of the problem and propose practical solutions.

4. Plan

The concept of iterative design is something I see having a major impact on my future, both in my studies, career, and even daily life.

In my academic studies, understanding iterative design will allow me to be more adaptable during the design process. When faced with complex projects, I'll be able to quickly create prototypes, test my ideas, and refine them based on feedback. This iterative approach won't just make me more efficient, but it will also help me embrace uncertainty and tackle design challenges with greater confidence.

Looking ahead to my career, I see iterative design becoming a core part of my workflow. As a designer, staying user-focused will always be my priority, and iterative design will help me spot issues and solve them quickly. In team settings, I plan to use this approach to gather feedback and pivot the design direction when necessary, ensuring that every tweak adds real value. This method won't just improve the quality of my work; it will also make the process faster, cutting down on wasted time and resources. Additionally, I want to use iterative thinking to help the team communicate more effectively, ensuring that decisions are made quickly and align with user needs.

Even in my personal life, I can see how iterative design thinking can help. For example, with time management or setting goals, I will regularly review my progress and adjust my approach as needed. This makes me realize that goals aren't always achieved in one big leap; rather, they are accomplished step by step through continuous refinement. I believe this mindset will help me stay organized and boost my overall productivity.

In the future, I will continue to integrate iterative design into my projects, gradually building habits that make me more efficient and responsive to feedback. To me, iterative design is more than just a tool for creating; it's a way of thinking that helps me stay adaptable and continuously improve. As I continue to learn and apply this approach, I'm confident that my designs will be better aligned with users' needs and be more innovative.