

## **Interview Protocol:**

[Q] Hi, I am Dev and what is your name?

[Q] The Corona pandemic has been a tough time for everyone. Were you more excited or less to start the day every morning?

[Q] Did you experience any sort of change in your physical and mental health?

[Q] What issues did you face in your physical abilities?

[Q] Is there anything specific that you would like to attribute these issues to?

[Q] Did you experience any sort of mental issues too?

[Q] Is there anything specific that you would like to attribute these issues to?

[Q] Have these changes impaired the way you lead your daily life?

[Q] Were you able to meet new people during the pandemic?

[Q] Did you take any help from someone or some medium, regarding these issues?

[Q] Was the help convenient to get and accessible?

[Q] What did you like about the medium?

[Q] What did you not like about the medium?

Thank you

## **Target Population: Individuals who had to bear the burden of the Covid Pandemic.**

### **Participants:**

#### **1. Angana Syamroy**

Graduate Student (Master of Architecture), Age: 26, Female

Angana is currently pursuing her degree in Architecture at University of Michigan. At the peak of the pandemic, she was located in India and was working as an Architect in Mumbai. A lot of her work was done remotely, however she did have to commute to work often as architecture often requires visual inspection and other in-person activities. According to her she was greatly affected by the Covid pandemic.

#### **2. Mayank Dhawan**

Graduate Student (Master of Science), Age: 21, Male

Mayank hails from India and was in India during the time of the pandemic. He was a student at the Delhi Technological University, where he was pursuing his Bachelor of Technology. All of his classes were migrated to an online format and, hence, he didn't need to attend any in-person classes. His family members contacted corona during the peak of the covid pandemic, which he describes as being stressful for him.

### **Interview Analysis:**

Both the participants fall into the category of youth and were working or studying during the pandemic. Through the interviews we find that both the participants, to a certain degree, experienced both physical and mental issues. A majority of these issues can be directly associated with the rules and regulations that were put in place to tackle the pandemic.

With respect to **physical issues** both mentioned feeling lazy and tired even though they had their respective daily chores. Angana said, "I saw a sudden increase in my weight" and attributed this change to "spending most of her time inside her house". According to her, she spent most of the time "Watching movies, browsing social media and binge eating because of boredom" which she would have otherwise spent on physical

activities which she mentions as “running, walking and even going out with friends for hikes”. Along the same lines, Mayank, who is a fitness enthusiast, says he experienced physical changes too. Mayank said, “I was losing a lot of my muscle mass quicker than before”. He said, “I had no access to the gym and wasn't able to properly workout at home because of unavailability of equipment”. We see here that physical activities are very essential to maintaining one's health. Although equipment is almost never available at home, a simple interactive workout should be good enough to keep people in shape. A simple routine of activities, that isn't as mechanical as a set of exercises, and involves going outside the house would keep the entire process fun to follow. Features can be added to maintain a scoreboard amongst friends making it all the more interesting.

Additionally for **mental issues**, Anagana said, “My in-person social interaction had gone down a lot and I took a lot of time to get used to online mediums to communicate”. She said “These factors contributed to making me feel lonely”. Mayank had a slightly different take and said “It was frustrating not being able to meet my partner because I had to be completely isolated because my family had contracted the virus”. He also said, “I experienced loneliness because I was confined to a limited space, which was exacerbated by the gloomy winters”. A simple solution for this could be creating a platform to connect to people both known and unknown through chats and calls. Another feature could be adding in a group session to create support groups for individual issues. Integrating a direct communication channel with industry professionals to deal with more serious matters will help people who have faced serious deterioration in mental health.

Through the interview we also found that **socializing** with new people had almost become non-existent. Agana said, “ I practically met no new people. After the lockdown was lifted and I experienced social anxiety during interactions whenever I met someone new”. Along the same lines Mayank said, “I experienced mental fatigue post the interactions and I felt unsafe to meet new people”. An answer to this problem could be matching people on the basis of interest and likings and establishing direct contact.

This application in no way is supposed to get rid of gyms, mental health experts and in-person social meets. Instead this tool is meant to be an addition to the aforementioned facilities (gyms, mental health experts and in-person social meets), where one is able to maintain their mental and physical health to a certain level with comfort. The application must be fun to use so that we can keep the users engaged. These activities should be implemented through a mobile based interface so that users can stay mobile during the activities.