

Sample Work Statement

Haven is a fictional product designed to help users manage the physical and mental symptoms experienced during an anxiety attack. It leads users through a series of grounding techniques that include breathing exercises, sensory engagement, and positive image associations. I have designed a welcome manual that describes the wearable device and how it works.

The idea behind the project arose from considering how technology and design might play a part in the future of mental health care. Online therapy is becoming more and more common, with 6% of all apps available in iTunes and Google Play centering around mental health (Kincaid). I wanted to explore a way for individuals to help themselves overcome mental obstacles. The idea for the device came about after speaking with a medical professional that deals with these issues in her patients. The steps she recommended during an interview are tried and true methods with a physiological basis. The design challenge this presented was how to walk the user through the process in a way that is discreet and easy to navigate.

A handheld or wearable device seemed to be a logical way to keep the service accessible and comfortable for the user. Drawing inspiration from product design legends such as Dieter Rams and Jony Ive, I wanted *Haven* to be unobtrusive and minimal. The design would need to be functional with no extraneous components, focusing only on the essential features. It also needed to be versatile, allowing the users a variety of ways to carry it. Rounded edges and a slim profile gave it a sleek and futuristic look. The product's screen guides the user through basic breathing exercises followed by prompts. It uses a simple, almost exclusively monochromatic, color scheme. I wanted to convey a sense of calm with the device and accompanying manual. This led to a palette of cool, subdued tones and a softer typeface. In forgoing superfluous components, I was able to achieve a minimal and contemporary design for the device and manual.

It is my hope that the concept behind *Haven* will add to the discussion of how the world of health and wellness can benefit from design. In addition, if it can offer help to those struggling with mental health issues or leads to further development of products that will, the project will have been a success.

Kincaid, Ellie. "Online Therapy Is Growing Incredibly Fast — Here's Why That Matters." *Business Insider*, <https://www.businessinsider.com/what-is-online-therapy-and-does-it-work-2015-8>.