BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

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Building Bridges: Technology-Enabled Mental Health and Well-being

Geraldine Fitz-Patrick\textsuperscript{1,3}, Petr Slovak\textsuperscript{2}, Franziska Tachtler\textsuperscript{1}, Toni Michel\textsuperscript{1}

\textsuperscript{1}HCI Group, TU Wien, Vienna, Austria, \textsuperscript{2}UCL Interaction Centre, University College London, London, United Kingdom, \textsuperscript{3}MAPPCP Programme, University of East London, London, United Kingdom

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Background: Along with Positive Psychology (PP), the Human Computer Interaction (HCI) field is also interested in promoting mental health and well-being [2]. However, there is no systematic understanding in either field of how to translate underlying mechanisms of PP interventions (PPIs) [1] into various technology design choices. Further, moving technology-enabled interventions from controlled studies into everyday life creates new evaluation challenges, e.g., the impact of individual design decisions and of context on effectiveness. We argue for stronger research bridges between our fields that can advance both technology and intervention design.

Aim: The broader aim is to open up a dialogue with PP researchers/practitioners and to ground this in two examples. One example illustrates a process for abstracting a conceptual framework that links to both theory and technology design. This is about social emotional skills learning (SEL) [4] and a bridging conceptual framework called the ‘reflective practicum’ [5]. The second example illustrates new possibilities for delivering PPIs. In a current project to support technology-enabled mental health for young people (TEAM), we explore a) how to exploit modalities beyond text/speech for PPIs, to reach youth regardless of language and b) how to create a technology toolkit of such PPIs with evidence-based components, to address challenges of engagement and hedonic adaptation [3].

Method: The case studies are undertaken within an HCI tradition as iterative reflective engagements with experts and users, going from design through formative evaluations.

Results: The results will reflect on the underlying psychological motivations, key design decisions, and lessons learnt to date including open questions.

Conclusions: Technology has the potential to make PPIs available at scale but it is a non-trivial matter to design good technology-enabled PPIs that are delivering to the underlying psychological mechanisms and fitting into people’s lives. Collaboration is key.

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References