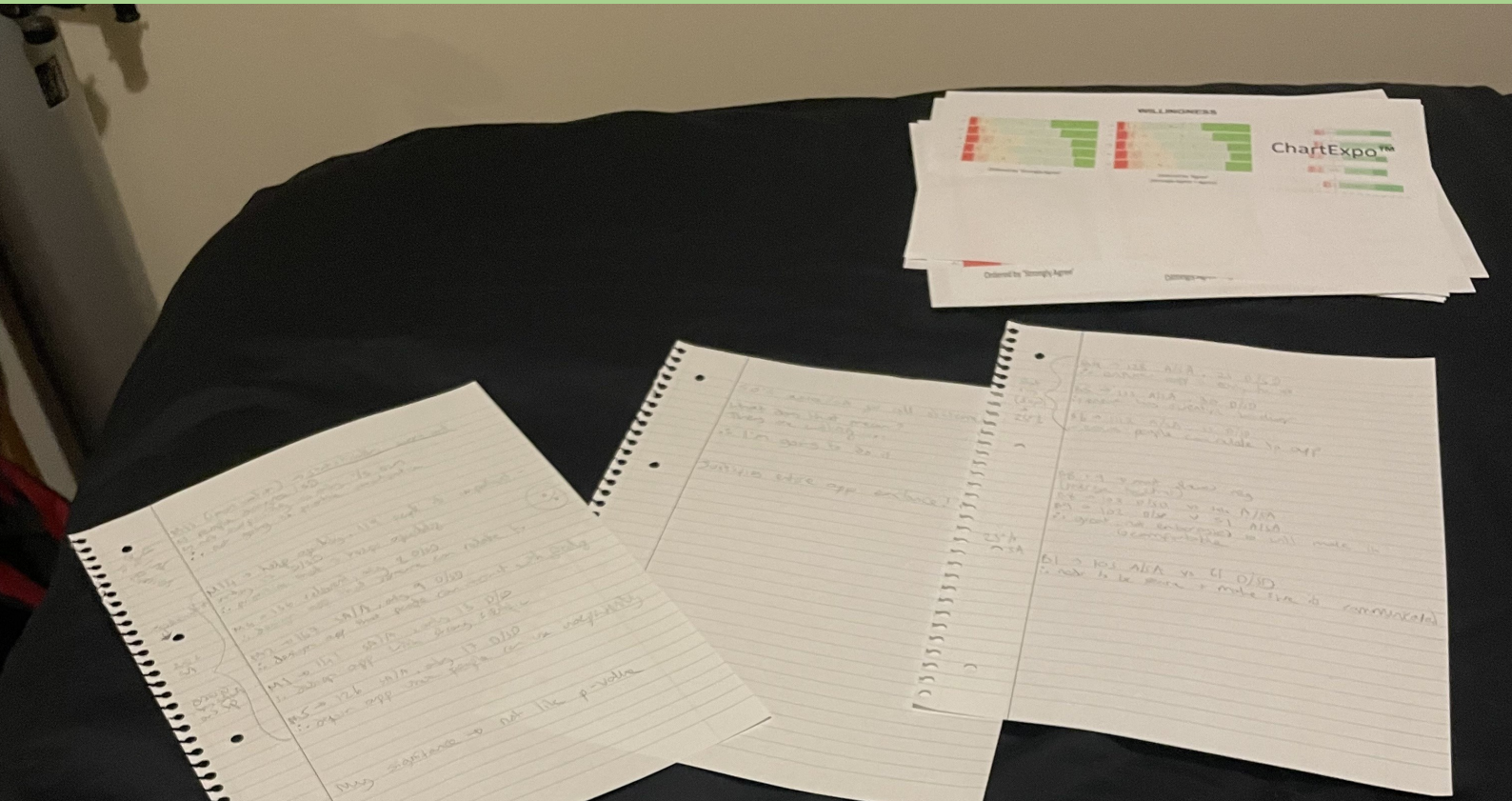




THE TAP

Technology, Anxiety, Pain

June 2022
Issue 11



HIGHER LEVEL OF SYNTHESIS

A couple of weeks after my viva I received the written feedback from the panel. One thing which was repeated in this feedback was that I needed a 'higher level of synthesis', to 'raise the level of discussion', and to write in a 'more concise way'. When I read this I had no idea what they meant and so I did the only logical thing - I stuck my head in the sand and ignored it. This worked really well for me for a few weeks as I had other things that I was focussing on, but there came a point when I could no longer ignore it.

I printed off and read through the feedback a couple of times, and read through my writing as well, and I still had no idea what I needed to do. So, like any good student, I googled it. I was reading all sorts of resources about good academic writing and how to synthesise data but I just didn't understand.

Luckily, it was then that I talked to my Mum about how I was feeling. She has some really good ideas of how to help, but sadly I had already tried them all. I felt so deflated. I was stuck in a rut and didn't know how to get out of it. And then Mum said, "Why don't you talk to Laura?".

Laura is my older sister and is an absolute genius when it comes to words. She understands how my brain works and can explain things to me in a way I understand. I sent Laura a text asking if she could help me, and she phoned me straight back and said to come over tonight.

When I arrived, I told her where I was and where I was stuck. She already knew all about my questionnaire study (she'd read through everything for me when I launched it) so had some knowledge of the questions asked. Within the first 20 minutes of arriving, it suddenly clicked!

Instead of looking at each question in isolation, I had to look across all of the questions and identify the themes that they showed. For example, instead of just looking at the motivator statement about strong scientific backing, I also needed to consider the barrier statement, the qualitative data, and the questions about an endorsement from a doctor, all of which were around the theme of scientific backing.

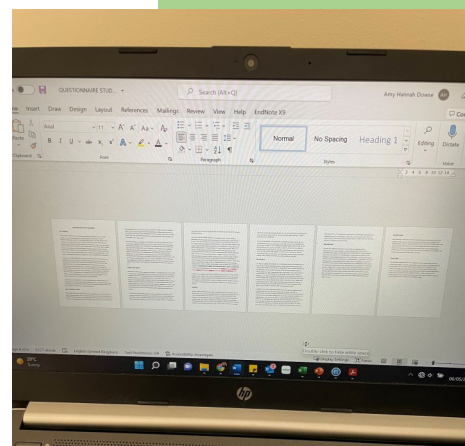
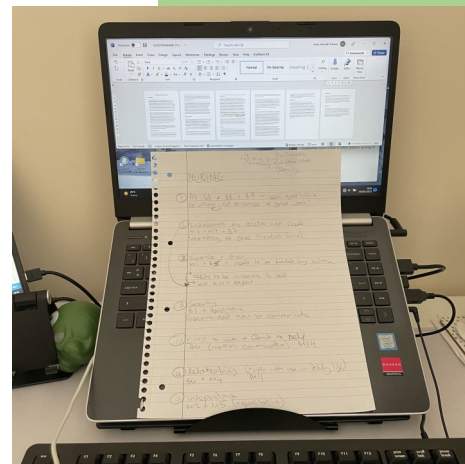
That evening we sat with all of my data and graphs and identified these themes and which parts were significant enough to discuss. Normally hours spent working crawl by but this flew by – suddenly it was 10pm!

Driving home I was buzzing with excitement about the prospect of writing the next day, and I can assure you I have NEVER been excited to write before. I felt like I suddenly had this new understanding of what I was meant to do.

The next day I had a great few hours writing up all of the things Laura and I had discussed the night before. I felt so relieved to finally understand what it was that I needed to do and I feel like my writing was so much better for that.

This has shown me how important it is to reach out for help when you are stuck. I couldn't see past the small details but Laura helped me to see the bigger picture and helped me understand what I needed to do.

Laura, I will forever be grateful for all the help you give me.



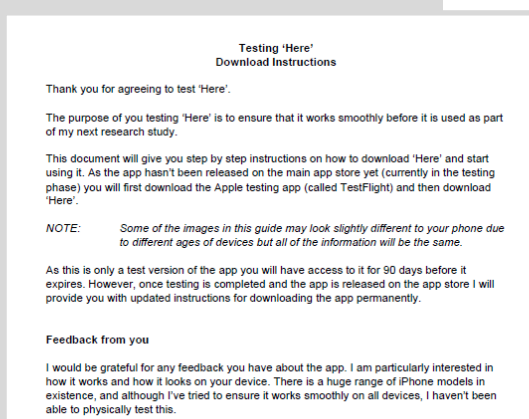
My amazing big sister, Laura



SUPERVISION

Once I had worked on my questionnaire chapter and implemented the ideas I had discussed with Laura, I organised a supervision meeting to discuss my progress.

My supervisor was very pleased with the work that I had done and said that it was certainly a higher level of synthesis. As with any piece of writing, there are still elements to work on but I am extremely happy with how my work is progressing and am delighted that my supervisor can see the improvement. I will continue to work on this chapter, as well as my writing in general.



TESTING 'HERE'

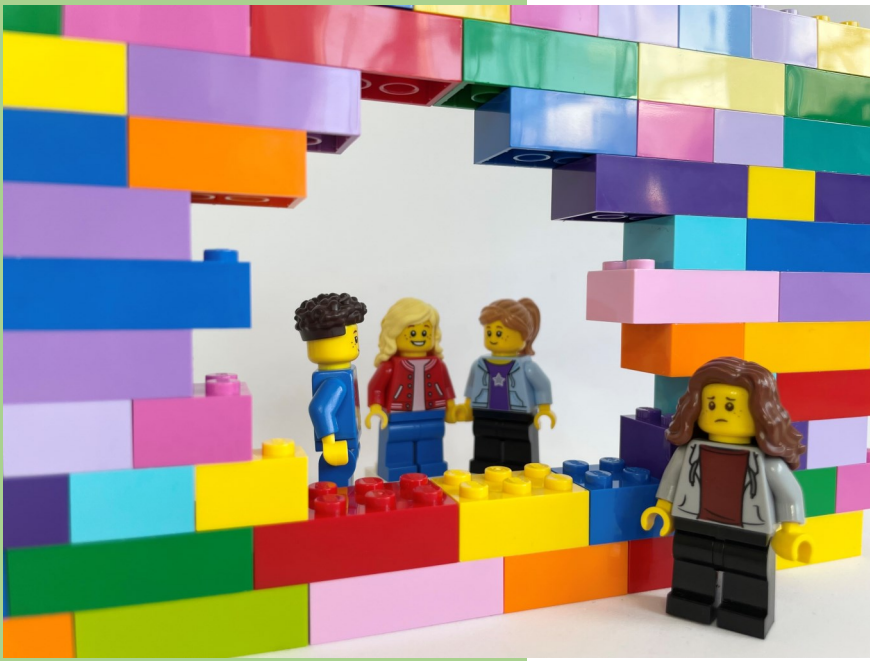
Before I release the 'Here' on the App Store I need to carry out testing to ensure it works correctly and there are no issues. I have carried out extensive testing myself, but I would like people who have not been involved in its development to also test it.

I have sent an email to all PPI group members asking if any of them, who own an iPhone, would be interested in testing 'Here' before its wider release.

I hope that 'Here' will be available on the app store very soon, and that I can start my next study in the very near future.

COMPETITION WINNER

As part of Mental Health Awareness Week, Queen Mary's Students Union ran a photo competition around the theme of 'isolation'. I submitted this photo titled 'Isolation by Anxiety' and was lucky enough to be chosen as the winner. I also submitted three other images alongside the winning image. Anxiety can be difficult to cope with and at times very isolating. However, anxiety does not have to define you, even the smallest of wins is still a win.



DOING WHAT I LOVE

This month involved quite a few days out in London. At the start of the month, I went to the 'Small is Beautiful' exhibition of miniature art which was fantastic - I would highly recommend going if you live near London. I also went to see '&Juliet' - an amazing musical! I have been listening to the soundtrack as I work ever since. Later in the month, I went to 'Floatworks' with my sister and we spent an hour floating in saltwater pods. It was such a relaxing experience and I felt so calm for the rest of the day. Finally, at the end of the month, I went to see 'Cinderella' again - I love this show and as it will be closing in June I wanted to see it one last time. I have thoroughly enjoyed spending time doing what I love; it is so important to strike a good balance between work and rest and I feel like I have got a pretty good balance at the moment.

