



Beyond the share button:

Challenges for social features in health & wellness interventions

Sean A. Munson

A large, bold, white letter 'W' centered on a dark blue square background.The logo for Human Centered Design & Engineering (HCDE). It features the letters 'HCDE' in a bold, white, sans-serif font, stacked vertically. To the right of the letters, the words 'Human', 'Centered', 'Design &', and 'Engineering' are stacked vertically in a smaller, white, sans-serif font.The logo for 'dub', featuring the lowercase letters 'dub' in a white, rounded, sans-serif font on a dark blue square background.

slides and references at smunson.com/talks/tsinghua



Cookie Monster

I rowed 140,095 meters (87 miles) between 11/25 and 12/24, raising \$3.60 for charity through Concept 2's holiday challenge Exercise FTW!

11 minutes ago · [Unlike](#) · [Comment](#)



Cookie Monster

I spent 30 minutes on a stairmaster. 367 calories burned.

 15 hours ago via [Lose It!](#) · [Like](#) · [Comment](#)



Cookie Monster

Just completed a 22.13 km run with RunKeeper. Feeling good!



RunKeeper stats and mapped route of my run

Distance 22.13 km | Duration 2:04:39 | Calories Burned 1475

Average Pace 5:38 / km | Average Speed 10.65 km/h | Elevation climb 75 m.

 44 minutes ago via [RunKeeper](#) · [Like](#) · [Comment](#) · [Track your fitness](#)



Cookie Monster

I feel like giving up

I was feeling really good until a few months ago. I was walking just about every day and even began Couch to 5k. First I got shin splints really bad and had to stop running and most walking. They healed; I started up again with high hopes; then my knee swelled up and I have constant back and hip pain. I also have chronic shoulder pain. Great. It seems like all of my efforts to get fit have only hurt my physical condition more. The harder I try, the worse my health gets. It's very hard to continue wondering what my next injury will be. I want to make myself stronger, not weaker!

Pounds lost: 0



Cookie Monster

Worried, depressed, upset

Okay...I am pressing the panic button :)
I am about 150 lbs overweight. Last year I was diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes. Got that under control with Metformin and healthy eating most of the time. A1C was 6.5 last time. So, I go to the dr. last week to get a refill for my Meformin and he decides to check my blood pressure and it's 140/85!!! Too high! So, now I have to monitor it for 2 weeks and go back. I feel like crying...if it's not one thing it's another. I am worried, upset, and depressed about this.

Beyond the share button:

Challenges for social features in health & wellness interventions

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Challenges for social features in health & wellness interventions

How can social software best support **health & wellness**?

Using health & wellness applications as experiment sites, what can I learn about **theories of influence**?

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How can social software best support health & wellness?

Using health & wellness applications as experiment sites, what can I learn about theories of influence?

Outline



Background: How do people use different online social spaces to meet their health needs?

How can social software best support **health & wellness**?

Using health & wellness applications as experiment sites, what can I learn about **theories of influence**?

Outline



Exploratory work: When and how can sharing on *Facebook* be a nudge in health & wellness applications?

How can social software best support health & wellness?

Using health & wellness applications as experiment sites, what can I learn about theories of influence?

Outline



Current work: Moving beyond the share button.

- Improved sharing & efficacy evaluation
- Social goals & Commitments



Background exploration: *Social support in Online Health Communities & Facebook*

Newman MW, Lauterbach D, Munson SA, Resnick P, Morris ME. (2011). "It's not that I don't have problems, I'm just not putting them on Facebook": Challenges and Opportunities in Using Online Social Networks for Health, *CSCW 2011*.



online health communities

offer:

- Emotional Support
- Motivation and mutual accountability
- Experience-based information

Ability to connect with others anonymously and conveniently

Messaging, forums, profiles, tracking tools, produced content

Farnham et al 2002; Frost and Massagli 2009; Hwang et al 2010; Maloney-Krichmar and Preece 2005; Preece 2000; Skeels et al 2010.

Connections to existing social network, including strong and weak ties from a variety of social contexts

Real-world identity

Can connect with strangers in Facebook apps

Messaging, groups, profiles, apps

Facebook; boyd 2008; Ellison, Steinfield, and Lampe 2008; Joinson 2008.



study design

Participants who:

- were members of at least one OHC and Facebook
- had posted ≥ 5 messages in the past month
- Recruited from OHCs for weight loss and diabetes management

90 minute interview with screen sharing.

participants

n = 14 (3 male; 11 female)

primary communities:

- SparkPeople (n=8)
- DiabetesDaily (n=2)
- FatSecret (n=2)
- TuDiabetes (n=1)
- Personal blog (n=1)

primary health concerns:

- weight loss (n=7)
- weight maintenance (n=4)
- Type II diabetes (n=3)
- arthritis (n=1)

time in community: 1.78 years

median: 1.75 years

stdev: 1.14 years



findings

how participants met goals

emotional support

accountability & motivation

advice

impression management

emotional support

accountability & motivation

advice

impression management

emotional support

Online health communities valued over in-person:
support any time of the day or night.

*“[If] I am going through a rough patch, and I post it up, I can see **immediately** someone respond.”*

P3

emotional support

Connect with people who have been in the same situation – more likely to be understood and receive sympathy, less likely to be judged.

“... and just some of the people that I am friends with, they have not had that journey, so they don't quite understand”

P8

Trust that this can happen on OHCs vs. fear of “*sarcastic*” or “*negative*” or simply uninformed responses on Facebook.

emotional support

Strategies for what to put on Facebook vs. OHCs:

- don't post struggles to Facebook

“I didn't want everybody on Facebook knowing that my butt muscle hurt today.”

P6

- frame messages differently for each community
e.g., details about frustrations to OHCs, brief updates to Facebook.

emotional support
accountability & motivation
advice
impression management

accountability *preferences varied*

“[My SparkFriends] were **checking on me** to make sure everything’s okay. None of us wants each other to fall of the ladder. **They all want me to be successful and stay fit.**”

P7

“... **they’re strangers, and so you don’t know that you’re going to see them the next day...** so accountability doesn’t quite work because you don’t know the people.”

P8, who recruited friends to her blog.

motivation

Role models, mentors, competitions were easier to identify or create in OHCs.

Need to **avoid people who would bring them down**, but the sense that others were there and struggling too – so long as they continued trying – also offered motivation.

Posts to Facebook as “**nudging**” *others*.

emotional support
accountability & motivation
advice
impression management

advice

Particularly important early in the process – e.g., shortly after diagnosis.

Advice/information-seeking often brought people to the online health community, but rarely why they kept coming back.

Need to share (& join) in order to get better advice.

emotional support
accountability & motivation
advice
impression management

impression management | *Facebook as front stage*

“like a standup comedy routine”

P2

“I have had people send me a private message of ‘wow, your life is so great! You know you do this, this, and this and all these fun things happen’ And I tend to think **‘you know, you’re only seeing what I want you to see.’ ... It’s not that I don’t have problems, I’m just not putting them on Facebook.**”

P2

impression management | *Facebook as front stage*

“On Facebook, I am not afraid to post anything about my running... I kind of like to ‘out’ my running ability now... I really like to talk about my running on Facebook, because **I’m so darn proud of it...**

“They’re just so surprised I’m running and they’ll say like ‘fantastic’ and ‘when are you going to run?’ And so yeah, I’m getting the feedback I want. **I’m finally getting... some positive feelings from those people that I couldn’t get back in high school.**”

impression management | *Facebook as front stage*

“There are some people I wouldn’t care about if they saw [posts I might make about my health on Facebook] but I got people, you know, from my high school and that I am **friends with that I haven’t talked to in 25 years. And I have no desire for them to know about my weight issues or weight status.**”

impression management | *OHCs as back stage*

Can let guard down, share frustrations and struggles
(and need to in order to get support and advice on this)
without fear of judgment or boring others.



findings

building and shaping the network to help meet goals

building and shaping the network

Join OHCs to not feel alone, find people who can motivate and offer needed support.

... this requires sharing.

“My page was never private... to me, if I’m new, I’m not going to have friends – because I don’t know anybody. And if I’m new **and I’m private on top of that, my chances of having friends is low.**”

P5

building and shaping the network

Sometimes migrate OHC friends to Facebook.

- feel more connected
- increases accountability (they can reach you even if you stop visiting the OHC)

Also could stay connected to OHCs through Facebook pages.



How can existing social network sites help?

What are the opportunities associated with Facebook?

- Advice and support relevant to *your* context and personality
- People whose opinions matter
 - for accountability
 - for showing off successes & communicating and identity

How can software best support health & wellness?

Using health & wellness applications as experiment sites, what can I learn about theories of influence?

Outline



Exploratory work: When and how can sharing on *Facebook* be a nudge in health & wellness applications?

Intervention 1: Three Good Things

Three Good Things

①

②

③

Things:

Seligman, M; Steen, T; Park, N; Peterson, C.
(2005). "Positive Psychology Progress,"
American Psychologist 60(5), 410-421.



Intervention 1: Three Good Things

Adherence: Can integration with a social network site make it stickier?

Efficacy: Can social interaction around good things make it more effective?

[Invite People to Join](#)**Information**

Category:

Just for Fun – Totally Random

Description:

Shit happens – but good stuff happens too. If you think about it, at least three good things occurred in your day.

There's a book about this concept but it's pretty simple really. Focus on things to be thankful for and

Three Good Things

Wall

Info

Discussions

Photos

Write something...

Attach:



Share



1. I finally figured out a solution to a problem.
 2. I got to sleep in with the heater on
 3. I got a free cupcake at uni.

May 25 at 3:44am · [Comment](#) · [Like](#) · [Flag](#)

1. i got finish work early
 2. my husband cooked dinner without bugging it up
 3. best of all; my sons first parent teacher night... confirmed all the things we think (we're doing a good job as parents!) and we have nothing to be worrying about!

[Create an Ad](#)[Give a Gift](#)

The "Golden Goose" gift available now in the Gift Shop.

[More Ads](#)

Existing Facebook Groups

they need it.

Privacy Type:

Open: All content is public.

Admins

(creator)

Officers

Secretary of Happy

Members

2. watched my kids open their Xmas stockings.
 3. Visited Grandma who now lives across town instead of across the country.

December 26, 2009 at 5:04am · [Comment](#) · [Like](#) · [Flag](#)

For yesterday:

1. Had a super creamy pumpkin soup.. so good
 2. Had roast vegies
 3. Had a vegie burrito.
 Great food day!

...

[See More](#)May 16, 2009 at 2:29am · [Flag](#)

1. Love love love love love love!

the 3GT app

facebook

Home

Profile

Friends

Inbox

News Feed

Settings

Logout

Good Things

Good thing:

Why did this happen:

(Always private)

Privacy & publicity:

Post to your Facebook newsfeed & visible to friends

Post

Recent Good Things from You

refresh

September 08

1. managed to fit in a short walk through Mariposa Grove (Yosemite) in on Monday x
 x
2. sunset from glacier point in Yosemite on Saturday x
Why did this happen:
3. had a great hike up half dome on Sunday x
 x

good words

cold finally **finished** friends
great hanging **hike** making met new
progress **research** river **started** time
yesterday

reason words

cold decided didn't early finally
getting idea introduced make
organized **people** research river
suggested time

We are importing from your Twitter account @ [redacted]. Just use #3gt in your tweet. Your account must be public for this to work. [stop importing]

your friends using 3gt



the 3GT app

facebook

Home Profile Friends Inbox

Settings Logout

Good Things

Good thing:

Why did this happen:

(Always private)

Privacy & publicity:

- Post to your Facebook newsfeed & visible to friends
- Visible to Facebook friends who visit 3GT
- Private (visible only to you)

Post

good words

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I got up early, decided

Sean Munson

Wall

Info

Photos

Boxes

+

3 Good Things

X

Why did this happen:



Share

Options

the 3GT app

facebook

Home Profile Friends Inbox

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your friends using 3gt



3 Good Things: Paul Resnick

[Go to your 3 Good Things profile](#)

May 28

- 1. Joyojeet Pal joining Michigan School of Information f...
@sidisplay

#ict4d

May 27

- 1. Gettysburg battlefield tour on horseback, w/ Max's cl...
understanding the battle's tactical progression.

stage for

April 04

- 1. New draft of Motivating Contribs chapter of CLab Har...
won't have to read same version as last year.

February 21

- 1. Gluing Warhammer Tyranids with M, and reading Speaker for the Dead to him.
- 2. Giveaway/throwaway day. Generated 3giant bags of c...
all family members contributing.
- 3. Spinning. Starting to build up stamina.

February 20

- 1. Morning at Liberty: swim with J, tennis with C and M,

February 16

- 1. Two-a-day workout: spinning early am to recorded c...
evening.
- 2. Writing code for si182 programming exercises doesn...
of time, but it's fun.
- 3. Writing code for si182 programming exercises doesn...
of time, but it's fun.

February 15

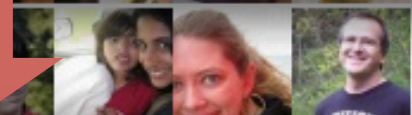
Paul has not posted any good things for 3 days. Would you like to nudge him?

day fun great i'm max morning
new paper pilates proposal sean
si182 social students time



noticed that you haven't posted to 3GT recently, and wanted to send you a reminder to keep posting!

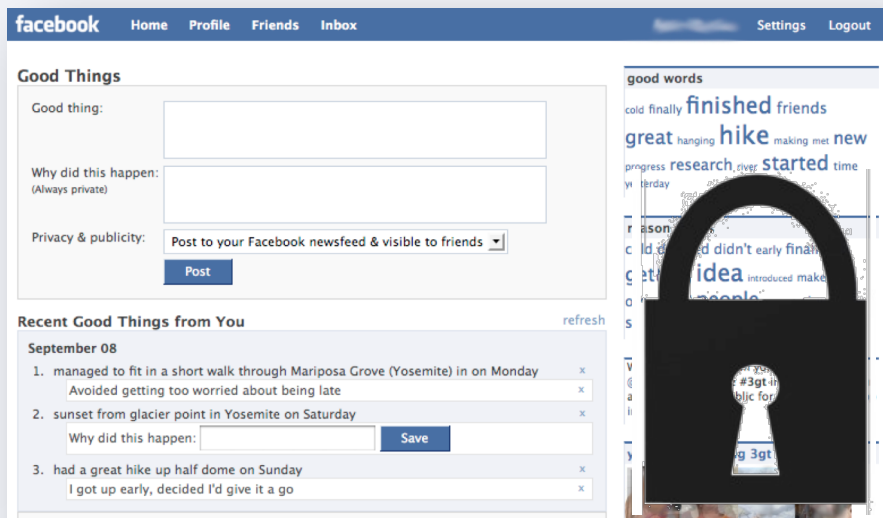
Chat (13)



Different sharing defaults



Share on newsfeed by default



Private by default

3GT App participants

Recruited through Facebook ads, Facebook application directory, posts elsewhere online, and invites from other 3GT users.

Signups 20 July 2009– 21 February 2010.

No compensation to participate; \$20 for interview.

Demographic questionnaire at signup.

PARTICIPANTS

n

Signed up: 190

Active: 55

posted at \geq twice, at least a week apart

Interviewed: 6

people who stopped participating lost to follow-up.

demographics

Age: 36.9 years

Gender: 7 men, 48 women



3GT

Positive psychology exercise around recording everyday good things.

Increase adherence & efficacy by sharing publicly & receiving feedback?

Field deployment, open enrollment.

Analysis of use logs and interviews with users.

The screenshot displays the Facebook interface with the 3GT application integrated. On the left, the 'Good Things' form is visible, featuring three input fields: 'Good thing:', 'Why did this happen: (Always private)', and 'Privacy & publicity:'. The 'Privacy & publicity' dropdown is set to 'Post to your Facebook newsfeed & visible to friends'. A blue 'Post' button is located below the form. To the right of the form, there are two sections: 'your friends using 3gt' and 'Recent Good Things from You'. The 'your friends using 3gt' section shows a grid of profile pictures of users who have used the application. The 'Recent Good Things from You' section displays a list of posts from April 18 and April 16, with the first post from April 18 mentioning 'another round of happy class nostalgia' and 'malcolm invited me, I moved my mee'.

threethings.net

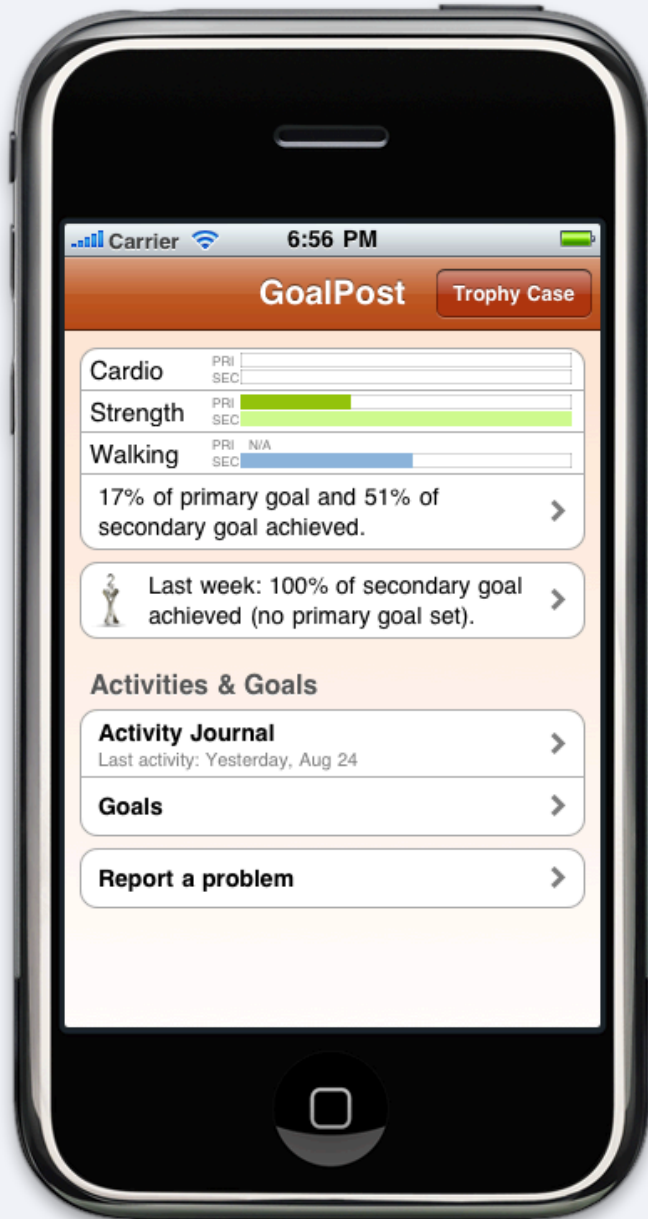
Munson SA, Lauterbach D, Newman MW, Resnick P. (2010). "Happier Together: Integrating a Wellness Application Into a Social Network Site," *Persuasive 2010*.

A high-angle photograph of a person running on a brick-paved path. The person is wearing a bright neon green long-sleeved shirt, black shorts, white socks, and grey athletic shoes. Their right arm is raised high in the air, and their left arm is bent at the elbow. The path is made of reddish-brown bricks, and there is a concrete curb and asphalt road in the background. A dark shadow is cast on the bricks to the right of the runner.

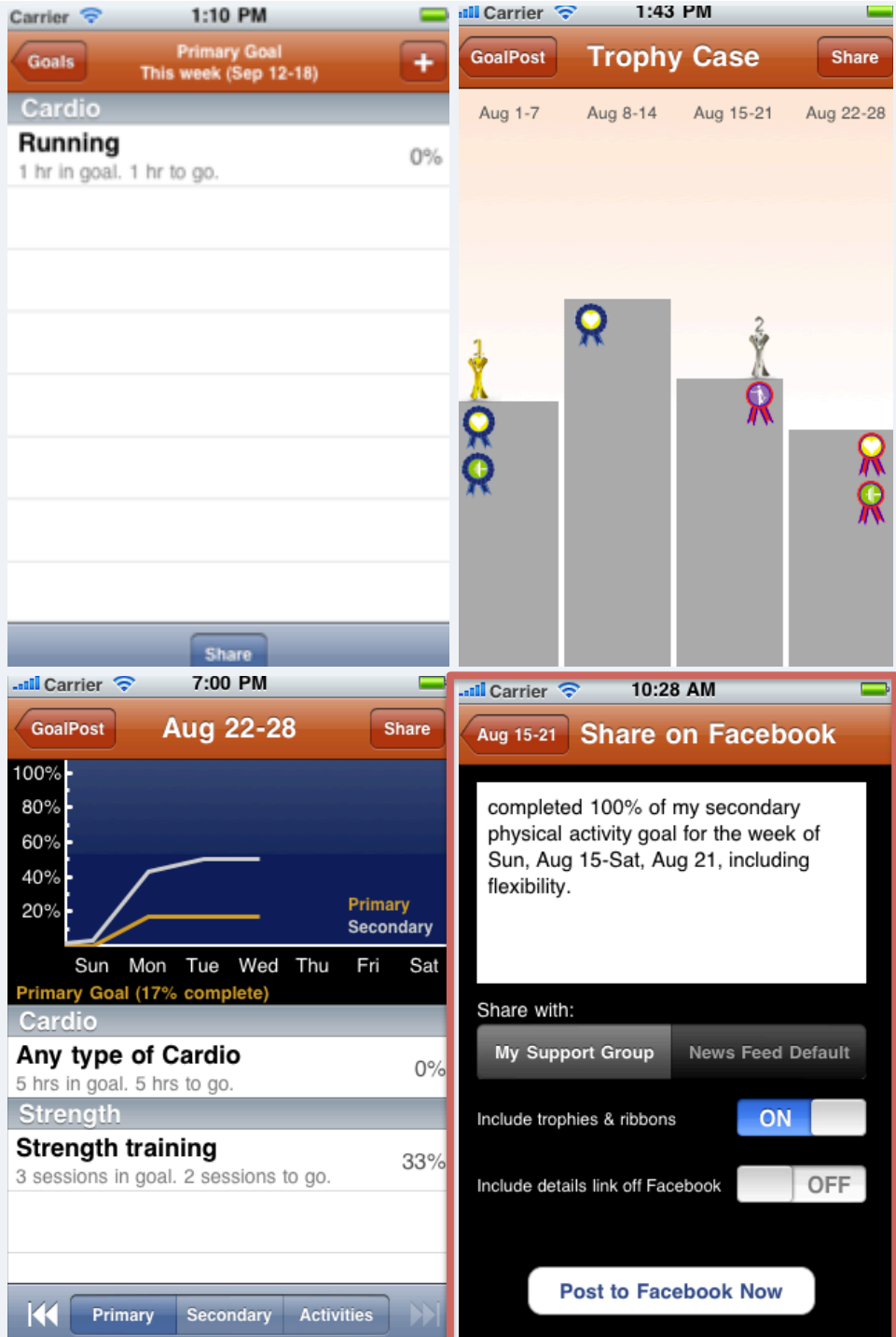
Intervention 2: Goal-setting & Self Monitoring for Physical Activity

Munson SA, Consolvo S. (2012). "Exploring Goal-setting, Rewards, Self-monitoring, and Sharing to Motivate Physical Activity," *Pervasive Health* 2012.

GoalPost



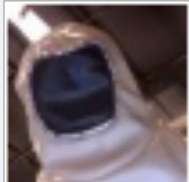
manual @ smunson.com/talks/mebi590



GoalPost | sharing

The image displays three sequential screenshots of an iPhone application interface for sharing a goal. The top status bar shows 'Carrier', signal strength, Wi-Fi, and battery icons, with the time changing from 10:21 AM to 10:28 AM.

- 10:21 AM:** The screen shows a 'Share on Facebook' button. Below it, a list of messages is presented under the heading 'Select a message to use or edit:'. Three identical messages are listed, each describing the completion of a secondary physical activity goal for the week of Sun, Aug 15-Sat, Aug 21, including flexibility. A '[Create my own]' button is at the bottom.
- 10:25 AM:** The user has selected the first message. The text 'completed 100% of my secondary physical activity goal for the week of Sun, Aug 15-Sat, Aug 21, including flexibility.' is shown in a text box. Below the text box is a 'Share with:' field and a QWERTY keyboard.
- 10:28 AM:** The sharing options are displayed. The 'Share with:' field is highlighted, showing two options: 'My Support Group' and 'News Feed Default'. Below this, there are two toggle switches: 'Include trophies & ribbons' (set to ON) and 'Include details link off Facebook' (set to OFF). A 'Post to Facebook Now' button is at the bottom.



Patricia Ticker completed 100% of my secondary physical activity goal for the week of Sun, Aug 15-Sat, Aug 21, including flexibility.



Posted using GoalPost



8 minutes ago via GoalPost · Comment · Like

GoalPost study

23 subjects, Seattle metro area, gender balanced
contemplation, prep, action stages of TTM

12 with sharing, **11** without

21-49 years old

4⁺ week field trial

Office visit at beginning to install & introduce app

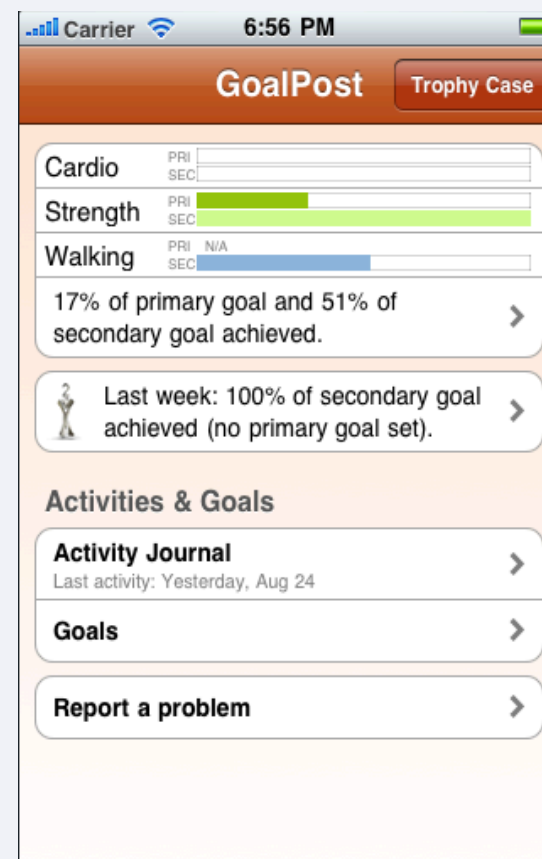
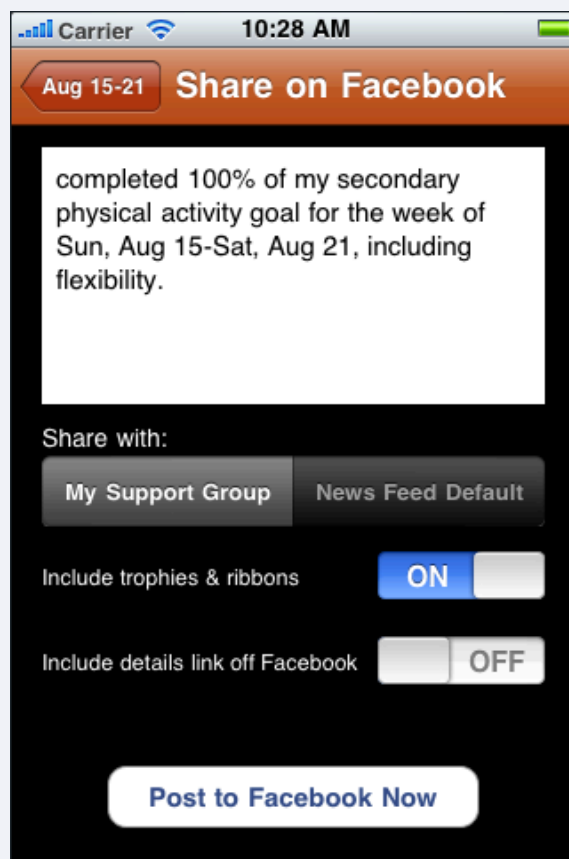
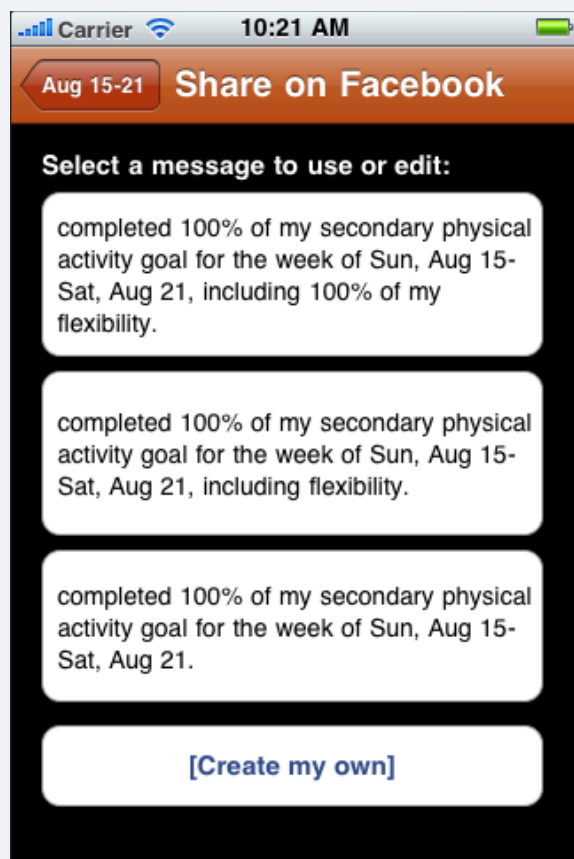
5 intra-study surveys

Semi-structured interviews after study



GoalPost

4-week field deployment, 23 professionally recruited participants
12 with sharing features, 11 without



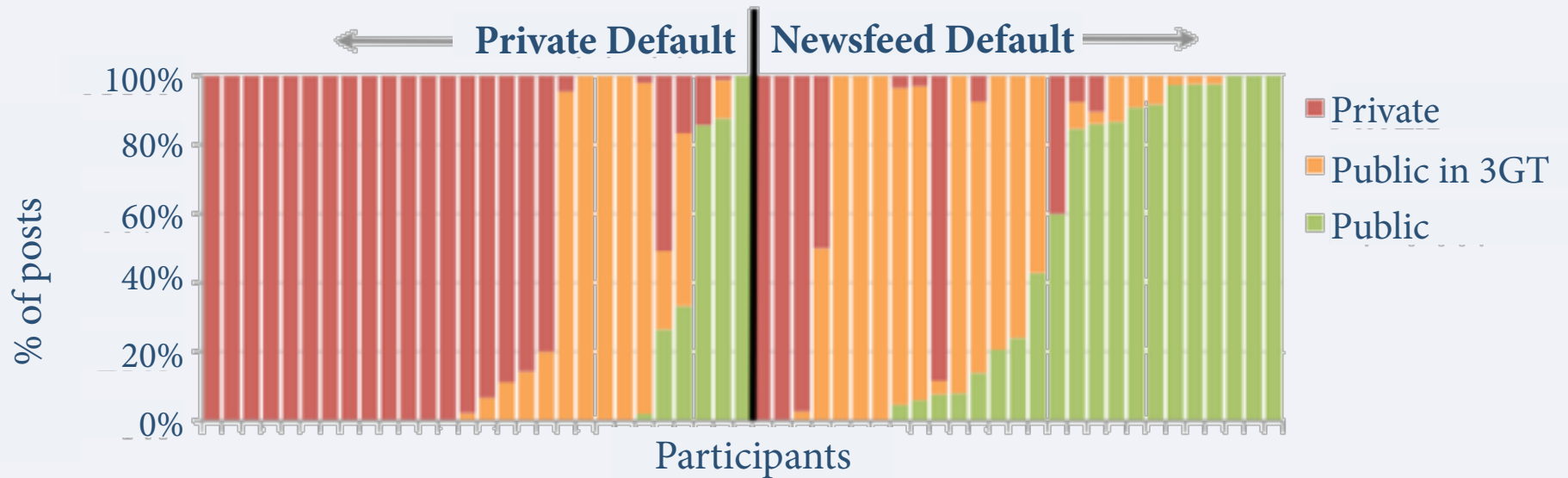
Munson SA, Consolvo S. (2012). "Exploring Goal-setting, Rewards, Self-monitoring, and Sharing to Motivate Physical Activity," *Pervasive Health* 2012.



Results



3GT | *by the numbers*



posted to newsfeed

21%

40%

visible to friends in 3GT

23%

45%

private

56%

14%

NO IMPACT on
post frequency or
retention.



GoalPost | *by the numbers*

10 out of 12 shared at least once, but...

4 shared with only an empty support group

still limited by fears of violating norms, revealing weaknesses, or appearing boring or boastful.

3 configured a support group



Adapt an intervention (or design a new one)
to leverage the Internet's affordances

Controlled field trial

Causal inferences

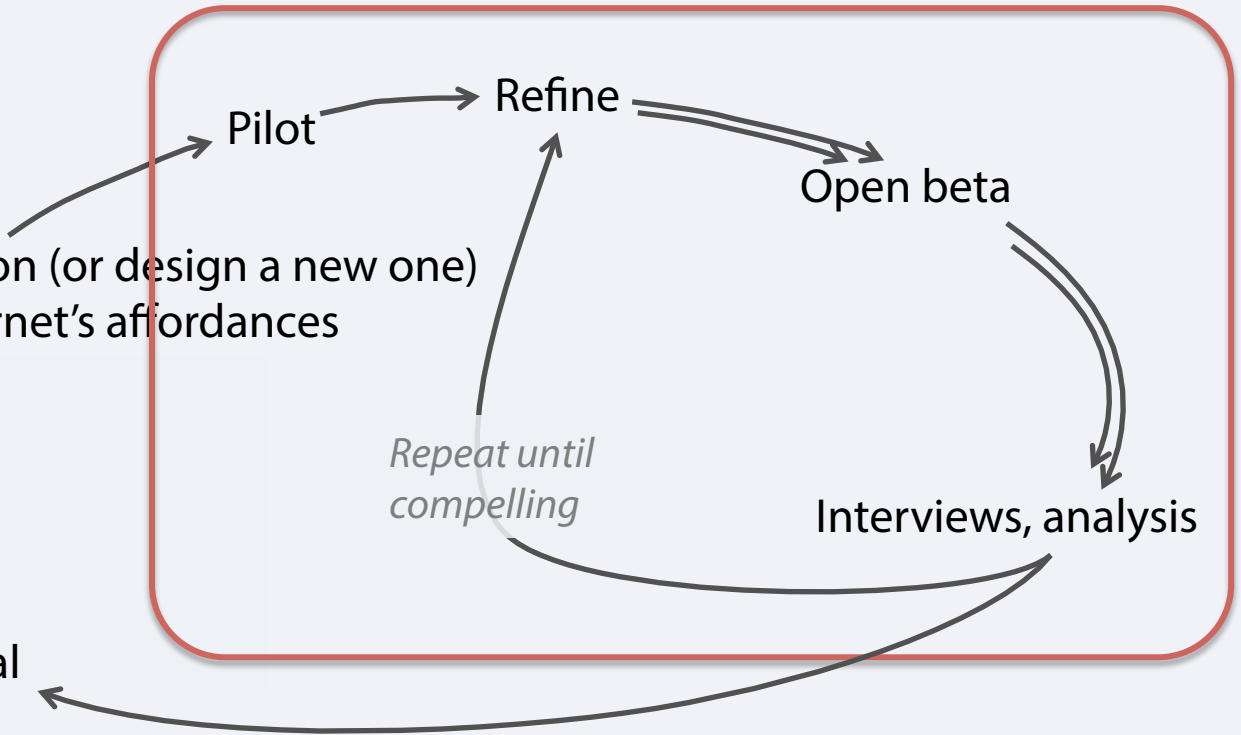
Pilot

Refine

Open beta

*Repeat until
compelling*

Interviews, analysis



SHARING AS A NUDGE

Receive:

- emotional support
- accountability & motivation
- advice
- impression management

But face challenges with:

- building, shaping, and selectively accessing one's network
- risk of violating norms
- managing impression while meeting health needs

LIMITED SHARING...



Just completed a 8.12 mi run with RunKeeper

Duration 1:10:46 | Calories Burned 1281

Average Pace 8:43 / mi | Average Speed 6.88 mph | Elevation Climb 544 ft



Like · Comment · Track your fitness · 38 minutes ago via RunKeeper · 

LIMITED SHARING...

for fear of violating norms, revealing weaknesses, or appearing boring or boastful.

LIMITED SHARING...

for fear of violating norms, revealing weaknesses, or appearing boring or boastful.

“Mostly when I make things private, it’s more because I think they’d be boring or insignificant to my friends, not because they’re actually things I wouldn’t want my friends to know about. I just don’t want to clog up their Facebook with it.... A lot of the people I’m friends with wince about having games and other non-status update things all over their pages. **And so I don’t want to get winced about.**”

– 3GT participant

LIMITED SHARING...

for fear of violating norms, revealing weaknesses, or appearing boring or boastful.

“It's just kind of embarrassing to me... I jogged for 20 minutes today, let me tell 200 people, many of which I haven't talked to in years ... **Who cares?...** I don't want to share with someone that I, you know, they comment on it, oh yeah I ran a marathon, good to go 20 minute runner guy.”

– *GoalPost participant 12*

GOALPOST USER: I'm really depressed. If Facebook can't save me, I don't know what will help me lose weight.

RESEARCHER: Did you think Facebook was going to help?

GOALPOST USER: I thought it was going to save me, yeah.

RESEARCHER: Did it?

GOALPOST USER: No. And I'm so discouraged.

BUT WANTING SOMETHING SOCIAL

of the 55 active 3GT participants... **24** invited friends

25 looked at friend profiles

of 4188 3GT pageviews... **660** were of a friends' Good Things

1 of 12 GoalPost users found a new exercise partner & started going to the gym more.

BUT WANTING SOMETHING SOCIAL

“I got a TON of comments.... Lots of people said they liked that, and they responded to that and congratulated me... so yeah, people do definitely comment on them when they are created from Facebook and publicized [in newsfeeds].”

– 3GT participant

BUT WANTING SOMETHING SOCIAL

“It would have been cool to have somebody reacting to, like you said, the sort of social interaction over the content of the posts that I’ve done... To have some of these things – “oh, I see you posted something”, or just some reaction. Because sometimes it feels like you’re out there, putting stuff out in the world and you’re not getting any feedback, you know?”

- 3GT Participant



GoalPost | *sharing: support group*

Because she's **accepting** and she wouldn't get sick of my posts. When we were talking about this and choosing a support group, all I could think of was that *Farmville* thing where I'm always seeing that someone has a cow. **That is so annoying. I didn't want to annoy another person.**

– GP7



GoalPost | sharing: support group

... my friend liked my post, my *GoalPost*, and that **made me feel good that she was at least looking at it.**

She was **the only one** out of my whole support group that looked at it.... I only got responses from my one friend that was here locally, even though I told [my support group] about it.

So I was kind of bummed. I was disappointed in my friends... it'd be really awesome if you could, you know, support me or help me do that when I post things. Nobody cared.

– GP11

How can social software best support health & wellness?

Using health & wellness applications as experiment sites, what can I learn about theories of influence?

Outline

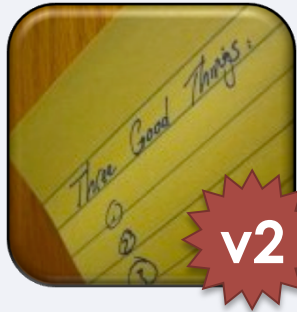


Current work: Moving beyond the share button.

- Improved sharing & efficacy evaluation
- Social goals & Commitments



appropriate
“selfcasting” >> **privacy**



3GT

Social variation of positive psychology exercise around recording everyday good things.

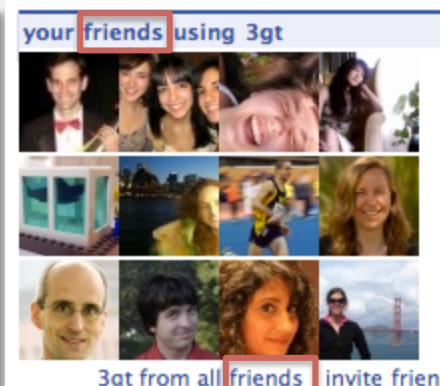
facebook

Good Things

Good thing:

Why did this happen:
(Always private)

Privacy & publicity:



- ### Recent Good Things from You
- April 18
- another round of happy class nostalgia v malcolm invited me, I moved my mee
 - 4.5hr of #si182 office hours makes me v the course has come. Nice job @presnic Eytan invited me; I had invited him w
- April 16
- 1 somewhat successfully sort of died pa

Sean Munson
logout

769 GOOD THINGS **0.8** PER DAY

YOUR TOP GOOD THING WORDS
3gt alex aston day delicious dinner
finally fun **good** great hike last
made more new night out run time up

YOUR TOP REASON WORDS

Post a Good Thing

Good thing:

Why it happened:

Public:

Post to Facebook wall:

Good Things

You · Everyone

Nancy Munson 0 cheers (Cheer) comments 10 hrs
Got a very cool pair of running shoes that should be my Boston shoes!



Commitments

Social variations of commitment contracts

(Giné, Karlan, Zinman 2008; Bryan, Karlan, Nelson 2010)

Where does my money go if I don't succeed?

Recipient of Stakes:

Anti-Charity Charity Friend or Foe

stickK

What will be the consequences?

Select your consequence type

-
- I will post an embarrassing story.
- I will reward myself.
- I will owe someone (e.g., doing the chores or buying them a coffee).
- I will write my own consequences.

Who will see it?

Visible to all of my Facebook friends

Select referee >>

You will be billed \$10.00 for any reporting period

- Gun Control: NRA Foundation
- Political: George W. Bush Presidential Library
- Political: William Jefferson Clinton Presidential Library

- 1) You report that you were unsuccessful; or
- 2) Your Referee reports that you were unsuccessful; or
- 3) You fail to make a required report by the end of the second day (11:59 P.M.) following a required reporting day.



Commit to Steps

A test of public commitments.

with Paul Resnick, Caroline Richardson, Erin Krupka, & Michelle Draska



1. Make your commitment.

I will walk at least on or more days this week.

2. Share.

[Change sharing settings](#)

Email & post this to my timeline when my commitment begins:



{{Name}} made a Steps commitment.

Please encourage me, or better yet, walk with me!

After one week, email and post this...

... if I succeed:



{{Name}} kept a Steps commitment.

Whew, made it!

I met my Steps goal by walking at least steps this week.

... if I succeed:



{{Name}} didn't keep a Steps commitment.

:(Push me to do better next week!

I walked more than only this week, than my commitment.

Make my commitment

How can social software best support health & wellness?

Using health & wellness applications as experiment sites, what can I learn about theories of influence?



Existing social network sites can relevant support, accountability, a chance to communicate a healthy identity, and a way to connect with activity partners.

Barriers to effectively using them for health goals include not violating norms, getting the right kind of support, and connecting with the right people.

Current work:

- Improved sharing & efficacy evaluation
- Social goals & commitments

thanks!

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more at smunson.com/talks/tsinghua

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