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Introduction

This report contains notes and images from the *Happy & healthy interiors; building empathy through design thinking* workshop.

The report has been organized into four main sections, based on the workshop outputs. These break down as follows:

- Activity #1: Exploring current successes, challenges and opportunities for interior design practice
- Activity #2: Identifying successes, challenges and opportunities for specific interior design realms
- Activity #3: Exploring design actions that can boost wellbeing
- Activity #4: Prototyping design actions

During each activity, we looked at each section through the lenses of four wellbeing principles. We reflect this process in the report, by breaking down each activity as follows:

- Sociability: Promote positive relationships and facilitate trust-building encounters among residents, tenants, customers and other visitors.
- **Equity**: Offer access and opportunity across the spectrum of human diversity.
- Health: Enable and encourage healthy choices, active mobility and access to nature while providing healthy environments for residents.
- Meaning and belonging: Support community efforts to build lives of collective and higher purpose. Instill people with a greater sense of attachment, ownership and pride of place.

Activities 2, 3 and 4 required participants to consider one wellbeing principle in three specific interior design realms: office space, residential space and retail space. Information has been organized accordingly.

We transcribed participants' input directly from the materials produced during the workshop. While we have strived to maintain the integrity of their feedback, we have made small adjustments to the transcripts for the sake of clarity. This is particularly notable for Activity #2.

Representative images have been included throughout this document. To find primary photographs, please see the Appendices.





Exploring successes, challenges and opportunities

Design thinking tool: Brainstorming

The process: In the first activity, workshop participants were invited to explore the current successes, challenges and opportunities that the interior design industry is facing when it comes to wellbeing. Participants were asked to reflect on how interior design practices impact the different wellbeing principles presented: equity, health, sociability, and meaning and belonging.

Each table was divided into two groups and each participant brainstormed on post-its, coming up with as many ideas as they could in 4 minutes. One half of each table brainstormed to answer the successes question: How is interior design successfully promoting "X" principle? The other half brainstormed to identify challenges: What challenges and opportunities does the interior design field face in addressing "X" principle? The following pages summarize the most impactful ideas that were produced.

Sociability

Office space

Successes

- Working closely with clients and end users to fully understand needs and desires—sociability is different for each organization
- Designers program for interactions among people
- Lunch/coffee areas are becoming social places for more than lunch: meetings, private talks, etc.
- Increase of ancillary spaces in work environments

Challenges and opportunities

- Social stigmas, bias, difference, social construct
- Building security or work protocols limit how spaces can be more social
- Opportunity: shared values
- Designing office space into predetermined space or walls. Many cases in the two entities do not match and that results in compromises.

Residential

Successes

- Designers are focusing more on inclusive spaces/utilizing spaces (multi-use). For example, hotel lobby becomes a bar, café, retail plus check-in
- Designers can create spaces/space planning to have more social (bracket collision points)
- Multi-generational living in residential homes

Challenges and opportunities

- Combining cultural perspectives for a common solution that isn't watered down
- Access to information on different topics in relation to disabilities and requirements
- Not part of planning prior to budgeting and approvals
- All user needs are not known by the planning team

Retail

Successes

- Choice of environment
- We are building in seating hubs in community spaces in shared areas
- We are able to create things that are transient/movable to allow organizations to change something if it doesn't work

Challenges and opportunities

- Acoustics and lighting can be problematic for ageing population
- How to be social within the community. Loneliness opportunity to engage with grandparents and youth to share wisdom with next generations and to care for elderly
- Lack of understanding of the profession and impact that designers have on space
- Flexibility: how do we provide inclusivity based on social politics

Equity

Office space

Successes

- Open work spaces and inclusive design are becoming more and more popular
- Adding end-of-trip facilities in design are allowing accessible use and universal use (universal washrooms and showers)
- Designing diverse open and social areas that allow people opportunities to meet

Challenges and opportunities

- Hierarchy in certain firms and industries informs design in a non-equitable way
- Getting involved in projects early enough to implement opportunities to create equity in the built environment
- Lack of funding for daycare, yoga room, etc. within office facilities

Residential

Successes

- Light-filled spaces
- Designing spaces to be universally accessible
- Designers create or specify furniture for all ages and bodies to be used and enjoyed

Challenges and opportunities

- How can design be equal to all users
- The needs always shift and it's impossible to capture all needs in the current design
- Grandfathered in— no opportunity to create change to architecture
- By designing for the majority of a project's users, you may be alienating those users on the margins, with the greatest need.

Retail

Successes

- Exceed accessibility requirements rather than simply meeting the minimum
- Proper signage:
 - o braille
 - o sound
 - language
- Building up on the urban context to develop a sense of place and belonging to the retail audience and the surrounding community
- Interior designers successfully design with accessibility in mind

Challenges and opportunities

- Cultural inclusivity or exclusivity challenges
- Client standards which limit opportunities so everyone gets the same vs designing for individuals
- Opportunity to propose a new solution

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Health

Office space

Successes

- Supporting movement
- Biophilia plays a big role
- Access to natural light and fresh air

Challenges and opportunities

- Existing building and size conditions limiting access or extent of modification
- Living in the age of distraction + designing spaces to consider distractions
- Cost often prevents larger, pleasant stairwells, corridors, etc. to promote activity within an office or other building

Residential

Successes

- Lots of windows in Vancouver for natural light plus views of nature
- Good lighting that can contribute to wellbeing
- Designers can space plan plus design for more community interaction

Challenges and opportunities

- End users may not have the information available to use the space as intended
- Lighting does not promote healthy living or circadian rhythm
- Lack of square footage to meet universal design needs
- Being too busy: how to give the opportunity to de-stress/move

Retail

Successes

- Designers evaluate user experience and design for the betterment of people's lives
- Biomimicry plus green walls

Challenges and opportunities

- Process too data-driven, not human-centric
- No views of nature
- Small budgets/organizations might not be able to implement health solutions in their buildings
- Concepts of biophilia in design may seem unnecessary

Office space

Successes

- Focus on client engagement in design process
- Freedom of mobility to work
- Creating spaces/common areas that can be used by everyone, accessible by all (i.e. gathering spaces, collaboration areas, cafés)

Challenges and opportunities

- Different generations and their needs
- Technology not allowing for movement
- Office culture
- Not enough different casual work stations in workspace
- Not many places to interact

Residential

Successes

- Understanding the necessity of inclusive design with diversity
- Creating opportunities for impromptu socializing
- Spaces that encourage collaboration
- Designers create spaces for inclusivity (accessibility)
- Promote culture through aesthetics

Challenges and opportunities

- Creatively using space to have multiple purposes (connecting points)
- Square footage restrictions
- Social inequity & culture challenges or barriers
- Clients' opinions sometimes make it hard to fully integrate (hierarchy mindset)

Retail

Successes

- Connecting internal spaces with the external space in the surrounding community
- Interior design—bridge between different stakeholders
- Wellbeing: greater sense of connection
- Design for a wide range of users
- Branding opportunities

Challenges and opportunities

- Cultural and language differences/diversity. Language can isolate people. People avoid unfamiliarity.
- Opportunity: designers using sustainable or responsive materials to bring competitive edge to spaces



Identifying successes, challenges and opportunities in specific interior design realms

Design thinking tools: Dotmocracy + World café

The process: In the first activity, participants explored successes and challenges for the four wellbeing principles overall. In Activity #2, they were asked to identify the most impactful success and the most pressing challenge in the specific realm (retail, residential and office space) to which their table was assigned.

Looking at the ideas they had previously brainstormed individually, participants selected the post-it note with the most impactful idea and placed it into either the successes or challenges column on a provided chart. Afterwards, the whole table engaged in a discussion to collectively decide on the idea that has produced most positive impact in their specific wellbeing principle and realm (the top "success" post-it note), and to select the most pressing challenge that still needs to be addressed (the top "challenge or opportunity" post-it note). These conversations allowed participants to share perspectives and explore different points of view.

Sociability,Office space

Most important success

Participants identified that interior designers are successfully bringing sociability to the office space by understanding the specific needs of the client as well as their organizational goals and objectives.

Some of the actions that can be implemented to foster sociability at the office space are:

- Designing collaborative flexible spaces
- Designing office spaces that include open and accessible communication tools

Most important challenge (or opportunity)

The most common barriers to sociability in the office realm are social stigmas, biases and social constructs that separate people.

In order to address this challenge, the sociability team suggests that designers:

- Provide communal spaces that allow people to gather
- Include open kitchens where employees can share moments of connection and learn about each other's cultures

Sociability, Residential

Most important success

According to the Sociability-Residential group, interior designers are successfully creating spaces that promote sociability and welcome cultural and generational diversity (including indigenous groups).

Participants mentioned that in the past, interior designers have carried on different actions, such as:

- Soliciting input about communal areas from residents in early stages of the process
- Talking to users about their needs and expectations
- Understanding the differences in needs and arriving to a common understanding

Most important challenge (or opportunity)

This group mentioned that, while attempting to meet the needs of all users, designers face a dilemma as this approach leads to a watered down, generalized environment.

To overcome this issue, participants suggest:

- Incorporating inclusivity at the planning stage
- Working with clients and residents to design spaces that reflect various communities in multi-family buildings, rather than creating a standard environment
- Creating awareness among stakeholders: moving away from the "watered down" environment requires a mind shift on the part of developers, architects and designers

Sociability

Retail

Most important success

Participants highlighted interior design success in focusing on human-centric spaces. This successful idea emerged from new research on understanding people and how they use space.

By focusing on human-centric spaces, interior designers promote diversity and foster social ties in the community. For example, in the retail context, farmers' market vendors engage with the local community.

Most important challenge (or opportunity)

The main issue preventing sociability in commercial spaces is online retail and its inherent lack of face-to-face interaction.

Participants proposed the following tactics to address the challenge:

- Bring people together in the physical space fully inclusive, rather than online retailing
- Marry digital and physical interactions through a variety of tech possibilities

Equity,Office space

Most important success

According to participants, interior designers are succeeding in bringing equity into the office space by creating areas for individuals to come together in a space to collaborate.

This action is being implemented through the following design interventions and ideas:

- Challenging the boardroom paradigm
- Incorporating theatre-type seating and embracing collaborative spaces philosophy
- Creating planned collision areas for space users to interact
- Adding informal soft seating for spontaneous meetings

Most important challenge (or opportunity)

The most common challenge for interior designers has been the presence of hierarchy in certain firms/industries that informs design in a non-equitable way.

Participants reflected that certain clients insist on maintaining the standard office layout where higher-ranking employees work in perimeter offices while the rest of the employees work in the centre of the space, far away from natural light.

Participants suggested the following design tactics to tackle this issue:

- Getting involved earlier in the planning process
- Educating clients on equity and the importance of collaborative spaces
- Avoiding enclosed offices and corner offices
- Providing access to light for everyone

Equity,Residential

Most important success

Designers agreed that light-filled spaces are the most successful interior design action in the residential realm.

According to participants, providing access to daylight in community amenity space was especially important since daylight promotes wellbeing.

Examples of providing daylight in housing included the following:

- Incorporating shared spaces with light
- Connecting amenity spaces to outdoor areas

Most important challenge (or opportunity)

Challenges and opportunities that resonated the most with participants consisted of the following two ideas:

- 1. How can design be equitable for all?
- 2. Understanding who will use the space to plan for various opportunities

To overcome these challenges, the Equity-Residential workshop group recommended to:

- Carry out an analysis to determine who will be using the space
- Understand what are the main challenges that users face

Equity,Retail

Most important success

The Equity-Retail workshop group recognized exceeding accessibility requirements rather than simply meeting the minimum as the most powerful action in bringing equity to retail context.

To support this idea, participants pointed to the following examples and actions:

- The Montreal-based department store "Simon's" as a successful case study for equity
- According to participants, Simon's provides:
 - Accessible circulation
 - Visual clarity
 - Gender-neutral design approach

Most important challenge (or opportunity)

The most challenging aspect in incorporating equity in the retail realm are the client standards and brand identity as they limit design opportunities.

Participants also mentioned the possible clash between brand identity and the local community identity as a challenge. Finally, they discussed how requiring employees to wear uniforms can impact equity in retail: "everyone gets the same vs designing for individuals".

The participants suggested the following actions to address equity obstacles:

- Localise brand identity
- Work with clients to understand how their physical standards can affect people using the space

Health,Office space

Most important success

According to participants, interior designers are successfully implementing design actions that promote the movement of users in an office setting.

The following actions and strategies are allowing designers to incorporate movement and improve users' health in office buildings:

- Strategically planning vertical connections
- Adding a variety of spaces laid out to force movement
- Encouraging spontaneous interaction as well as physical movement

Most important challenge (or opportunity)

The most resonating issue for interior designers in planning healthy interiors is the client schedule.

Specifically, clients are likely to have other priorities. Their own timeline and schedule do not allow for health to be a priority during the design and implementation process.

Participants recommended the following actions to improve health while designing office spaces:

- Collecting and presenting quantitative examples/metrics to demonstrate the value of health-focused design in an office setting
- Including these examples in several meetings to inspire and persuade clients

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Health,

Residential

Most important success

The Health-Residential group highlighted that interior designers are successful at planning and designing spaces for community interaction.

According to participants, the two most important actions that follow this idea are:

- Have well-designed amenities that can promote being social
- Avoid isolated spaces that foster isolation

Most important challenge (or opportunity)

The most resonating challenge in achieving healthy interiors is the lack of knowledge about the space, specifically when end users may not have access to the information required to use the space as intended.

Participants from this team suggested that in order to tackle this barrier, it is important to:

- Work with diverse focus groups to develop an intuitive space where residents understand where and how to access amenities
- Include users in the early stages of the design process to understand their needs
- Invite users to program activities and explain to them how the space can provide different options

Health,

Retail

Most important success

Participants celebrated interior designers' success in evaluating the user experience and designing for the betterment of people's lives.

Most important challenge (or opportunity)

The greatest challenge they found is in implementing a human-centric design process. According to the participants, current processes are often too data-driven rather than human-centric.

Participants suggest that to overcome this barrier, there are some actions that can be implemented:

- Create awareness of the importance of human-centric design
- Require industry to assign budget to human-centric activities as part of the design process

Office space

Most important success

Participants agreed that focusing on client and user engagement during the design process is a successful approach to ensuring that the principle of meaning and belonging principle is designed into an office space setting.

The meaning and belonging-office space team mentioned some examples where users and designers successfully come together:

- When interior designers conduct tours and present options to clients and stakeholders
- When people experience the place in advance, they gain a sense of ownership
- During positive engagement activities throughout the design process

Most important challenge (or opportunity)

The most common challenge faced by interior designers is designing for the different generations and their different needs.

What may appeal to younger generations may not be ideal for older office workers.

In order to address this challenge, participants recommended to:

- Bring different generations together in communal spaces to foster informal connections
- Enable different generations to meet to foster mentorship

Residential

Most important success

According to participants, interior designers have been successful in understanding the needs of inclusive and diverse design.

Participants highlighted examples of how this has been carried out:

- Decision-makers are encouraging socio-economic inclusion by establishing that 30% of development is dedicated to low-income residents
- Designers are creating opportunities to socialize where different age groups and interests can meet

Most important challenge (or opportunity)

However, according to the meaning and belonging team, social inequality continues to be a challenge that needs to be addressed through different design and policy actions.

Participants suggested the following approaches to solving this challenge:

- Building out collision points like the mailroom to promote interaction and socialization
- Finding commonalities & bringing together people
- Identifying in early stages possible cultural barriers that can pose a challenge to promoting meaning and belonging

Activity #2

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Retail

Most important success

According to participants, interior design has been successful at bridging the gap between different stakeholders.

This achievement has been instrumental in connecting interior spaces with the exterior and the surrounding community.

Participants highlighted shopping malls as an example:

- Often shopping malls are more than retail spaces, they bring a community together by featuring community events
- Retail spaces can be transformed into places where people express themselves

Most important challenge (or opportunity)

The most promising opportunity for interior designers in bringing the meaning and belonging principle to the retail space is sourcing suitable and responsive materials.

These materials could bring a competitive edge to retail spaces and also reflect the local community aesthetic.

Participants recommended the following two actions to act on this opportunity:

- Educating designers, clients, users about new materials
- Discussing and implementing material choices in the early stages of design



Exploring design actions that can boost wellbeing

Design thinking tools: Swift and sort + dotmocracy

The process: Participants were handed a set of example design actions that can be carried out to boost their assigned principle within their table's realm. During the first few minutes, participants were asked to pass the cards around so everyone could review and start identifying actions that resonated with them.

After reading all the cards, participants were asked to select the three top actions: the actions that they believed would have the biggest (positive) impact on boosting their principle within their realm. Participants talked about each opportunity, and came up with three priority actions per table by the end of the activity.

Sociability

Numbers in brackets indicate the number of votes per action. Each participant could vote twice.

Office space

Most popular actions

- Co-locate amenities with informal uses (lounges, community dashboards) to encourage serendipitous interactions (5)
- Use furniture and design features to create clusters, reducing the feeling of overexposure in open layouts (5)
- Design green spaces where people can interact and work together (4)
- Create features & activities in shared hallways that create opportunities for people to engage in casual ways (3)
- Create ground floor spaces that mix public and private realms to connect employees to the broader community
 (1)
- Include stadium or tiered seating in a shared space to create an informal space for employees to meet or socialize (1)

Residential

Most popular actions

- Create shared rooftop spaces (6)
- In multi-unit buildings, create features and activities in shared hallways that offer opportunities for people to engage in casual ways (3)
- Create semi-public amenities that draw pet owners and other users together (e.g. an outdoor bike repair station and dog wash) (3)
- Offer facilities and systems that enable shared dinners to bring residents together (2)
- Create shared garden (1)
- Include stadium or tiered seating in shared spaces to encourage people to observe or engage with their surroundings (1)

Retail

Most popular actions

- Subdivide larger commercial spaces into smaller spaces to create variety and encourage activity along the street (5)
- In a commercial development, create features and activities along walkways that create opportunities for people to engage in a casual way (5)
- Create public amenities that draw pet owners and other users together (e.g. an outdoor bike repair station and dog wash) (4)
- Design spaces to host casual and temporary events that support the store's marketing goals (3)
- Add benches, tables and other features along a street mall to provide opportunities for people to engage in casual ways (2)
- Design green spaces in retail stores that enable people to interact with each other (1)

Equity

Office space

Most popular actions

- Diversity of choice ABW (9)
- In co-working spaces, ensure all working stations have access to natural light (5)
- Incorporate flexibility into furniture (e.g. adjustable countertop height in kitchens) and environmental controls to accommodate a variety of users (4)
- Design spaces to include childcare facilities, boosting equity in the workplace (3)

Residential

Most popular actions

- Design shared terraces that are accessible at each level of the multi-story building (10)
- Avoid producing dark spaces, particularly in basements and bike parking facilities (7)
- Design community gardens that can be used by all residents, including children, seniors, and people with physical disabilities (4)
- Locate and design playground spaces that allow guardians to monitor children from their apartments (2)

Health

Office space

Most popular actions

- Ensure all employees can see and touch nature in work and social spaces (6)
- Ensure access to natural light for all employees and provide adaptive artificial light (e.g. cool daylight to warm evening light) (5)
- Provide healthy food and drink options for staff (2)
- Create designs that enable passive air flow and fresh air circulation (1)
- In shared working environments use materials, features and configurations that reduce noise (1)
- Quiet/loud/fun rooms (let people express/meet their human needs (1)

Office space

Most popular actions

- In co-working spaces, leave space for people to personalize their workspaces (5)
- Incorporate cultural elements and preferences into design to reflect local context (e.g. light, colours, patterns)
 (5)
- Provide inclusivity through gender neutrality, cultural inclusivity and human (and other species) accessibility. "Neither are me but I still have to pee". (5)
- Design features in shared spaces or hallways where people can share projects, personal information, meditation techniques or cooking recipes (2)
- Ensure the design of the space translates the core values of a company (I.e. a company that values transparency might implement low partitions, separating work stations and meeting rooms with only glass windows) (1)

Residential

Most popular actions

- Design amenity rooms that are flexible and can cater to different activities according to the residents' interests (6)
- Establish a process where designers and residents can co-create; provide tools that residents can easily use (5)
- Include art that is interactive and allows for resident participation (5)
- Ensure the interior design of communal areas includes spaces for residents to co-create (3)
- Include little libraries in strategic locations around the building (1)
- In multi-unit buildings, design features in shared spaces or corridors where residents can share news, pictures
 of family vacations and services they provide (1)



Prototyping design actions

Design thinking tool: Prototyping + Constraints toggle

The process: This final activity challenged participants to translate the text from their top three action cards into powerful images. During the first few minutes, participants worked individually or in couples to come up with a sketch or diagram of what their selected action could look like. Afterwards, participants at each table came together to create a poster that showcased the most powerful image - or set of images - addressing their principle and realm.

While those with a talent for illustration were preparing the poster, other participants started developing a sales pitch. Finally, each team had the opportunity to present their action to the room, talk about the positive impact on their specific principle and realm, and impress the audience with a powerful sales pitch.

Sociability,

Office space

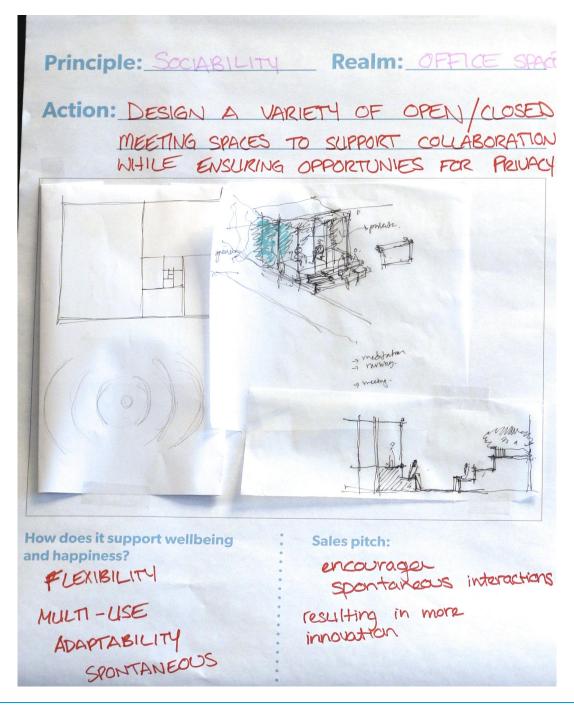
Action: Design a variety of open/closed meeting spaces to support collaboration while ensuring opportunities for privacy

How does it support wellbeing and happiness?

- Flexibility, multi-use
- Adaptability
- Spontaneous

Sales pitch:

 Encourages spontaneous interaction resulting in more innovation



Sociability, Residential

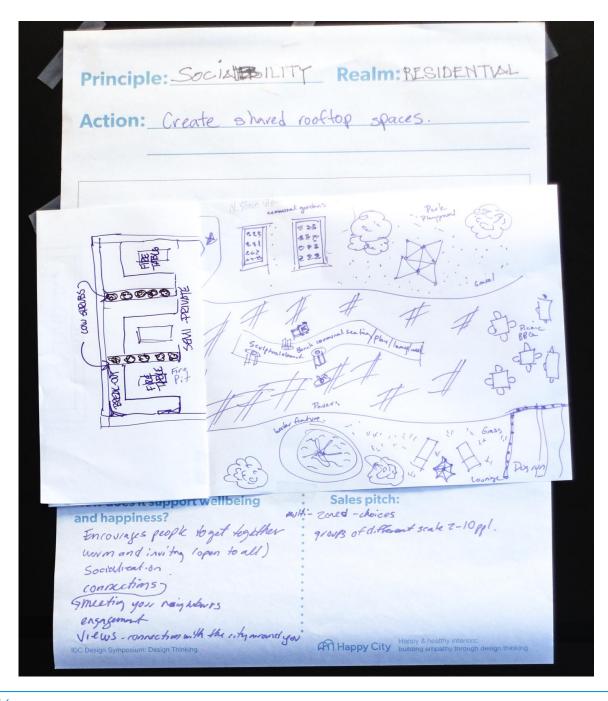
Action: Create shared rooftop spaces

How does it support wellbeing and happiness?

- Encouraging people to get together
- Offering warm and inviting space (open to all)
- Fostering connections among neighbours
- Offering views connections with the city around the resident

Sales pitch:

- Offering multi-zoned choices
- Providing space to groups of different scale (2-10 people)



Sociability,

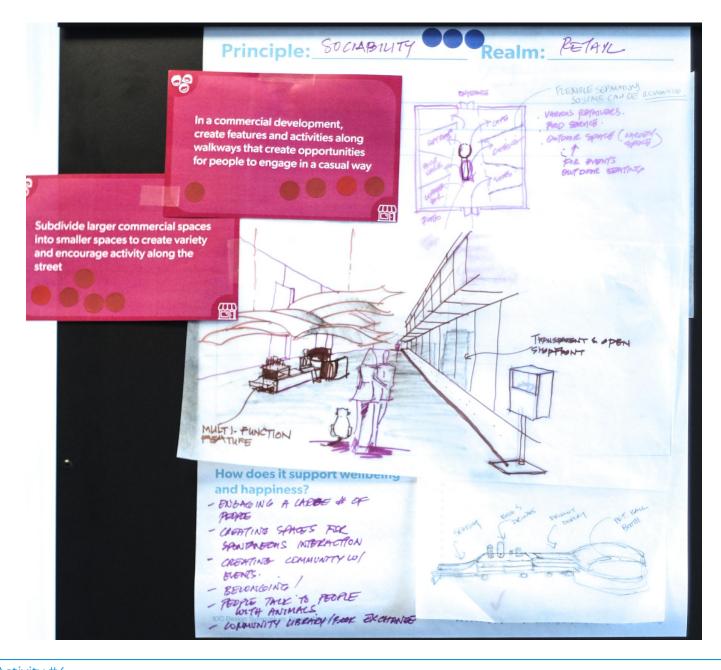
Retail

Action: In a commercial development, create features and activities along walkways that create opportunities for people to engage in a casual way. Subdivide larger commercial spaces into smaller spaces to create variety and encourage activity along the street.

How does it support wellbeing and happiness?

- Engaging in a larger # of people
- Creating spaces for spontaneous interaction
- Creating community with events

- People talk to people with animals
- Community library/book exchange
- Belonging



Equity,Office space

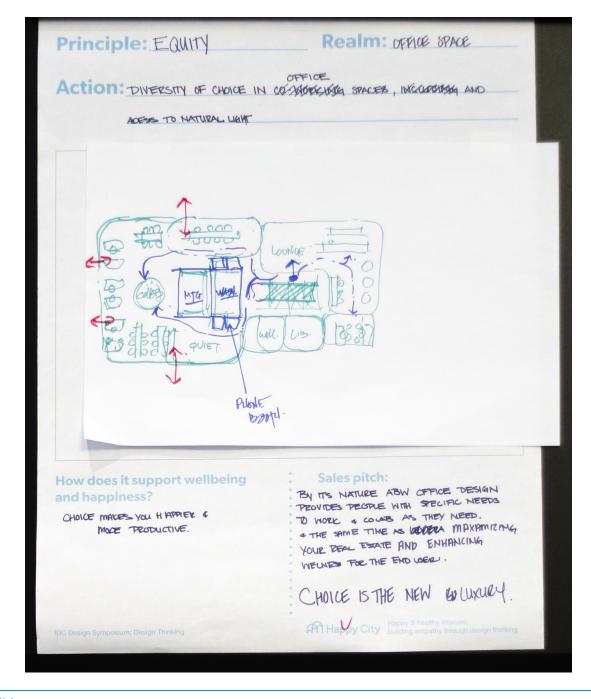
Action: Diversity of choice in office space and access to natural light

How does it support wellbeing and happiness?

Choice makes you happier and more productive

Sales pitch:

 By its nature ABW office design provides people with specific needs to work and collaborate as they need, they maximize functional space and enhance wellness for the end users.



Equity,

Residential

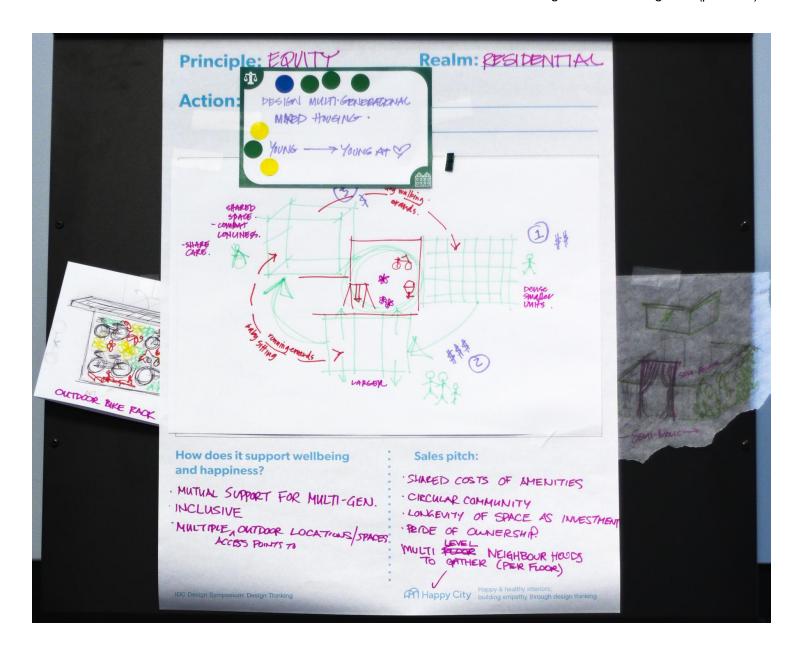
Action: Design multi-generational mixed housing. Young → young at heart

How does it support wellbeing and happiness?

- Mutual support for multi-generational community
- Inclusive
- Multiple access points to outdoor location/spaces

Sales pitch:

- Shared costs of amenities
- Circular community
- Longevity of space as investment
- Pride of ownership
- Multi-level neighbourhoods to gather (per floor)



Health,Office space

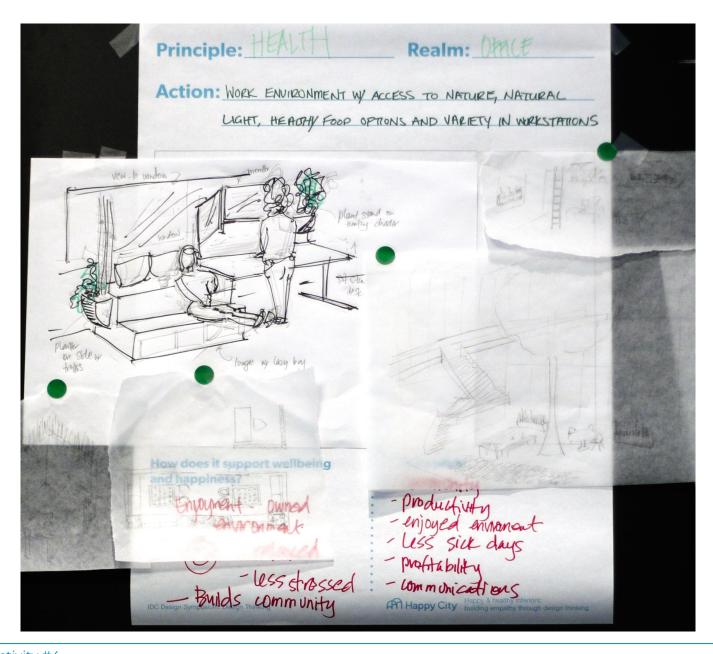
Action: Work environment with access to nature, natural light, healthy food options and variety in workstations

How does it support wellbeing and happiness?

- Enjoyment owned environment
- Relaxed
- Less stressed
- Builds community

Sales pitch:

- Productivity
- Enjoyed environment
- Less sick days
- Profitability
- Communications



Office space

Action: "Neither are me, but I still have to pee"

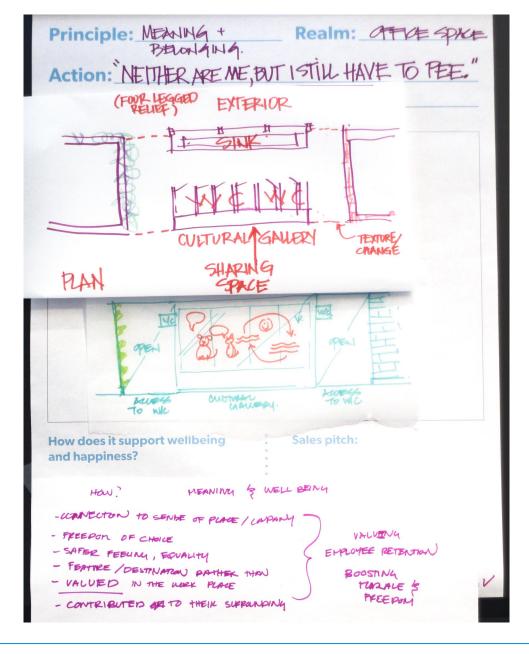
How does it support wellbeing and happiness?

Employees' experience:

- Connection to sense of place/company
- Freedom of choice
- Feeling safer, more equal
- Feeling valued in the workplace
- Opportunity to contribute to their surroundings

Sales pitch:

- Valuing employee retention
- Boosting morale and freedom



Residential

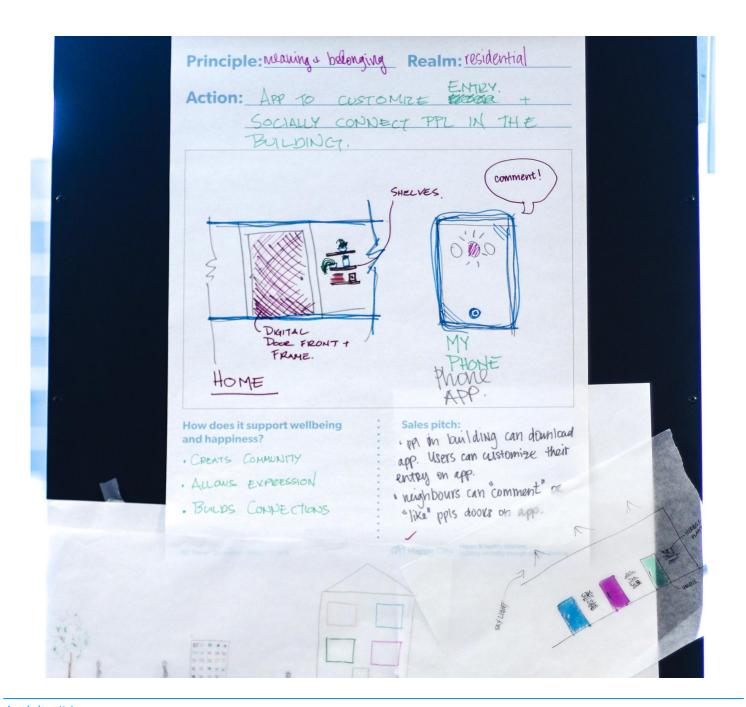
Action: App to customize entry + socially connect people in the building

How does it support wellbeing and happiness?

- Creates community
- Allows expression
- Builds connections

Sales pitch:

- Users can download and customize their entry on app
- Neighbours can "comment" or "like" people's doors on app



Key takeaways

After completing the four design thinking activities, we have identified key takeaways around the ways in which interior designers perceive and experience their practice and its connection to wellbeing. The key takeaways highlight participants' perceptions of the successes and the opportunities in this area, as well as priorities for moving forward.

Embracing flexibility

During workshop activities participants noted that designers are moving from environments as structured and rigid toward viewing them as open and flexible. Designers understand the need to evolve and address users' needs in today's fast changing world. What might be a good space for a clothing store and a cafe in the daytime might be a perfect venue for a bar at night. A sports retail store could have a small playspace designed to host physical activities for local kids.

Space is becoming a precious commodity in our cities. Interior designers can aid city planners, architects and landscape architects to understand the fine grain actions that can promote inclusion and create opportunities for human connection.

Welcoming everyone

Besides ensuring the functionality and aesthetic success of a space, interior designers are also working on addressing different users' needs.

Spaces need to have the capacity to invite and host diversity: from seniors and large families to people from different cultural backgrounds and with different abilities. Accommodating true diversity can add complexity to a project, but also, according to participants, can create an opportunity to conduct meaningful engagement and design for unique challenges.

Participants mentioned the importance of understanding the different ways users interact with different design realms, including housing, retail or office. While inclusion might be seen as an item that would increase a client's budget, we need to create awareness to ensure all guidelines and policies promote equity.

Boosting social interactions

The workshop results show that one of interior designers' top priorities is creating spaces that boost social interactions and help people connect. Participants shared examples of how retail and office space designers are acknowledging the importance of designing with opportunities to meet and casually interact in mind. Spaces such as lobbies, creative rooms, corridors, and coffee or snack stations for instance, can offer opportunities for people to connect. Ensuring they include seating spaces, vegetation options and plenty of sunlight is a good start to creating environments that are comfortable and invite people to linger. Participants also noted the importance of ensuring available technology options connect people instead of driving them apart.

Acknowledging culture and values

In several activities, participants mentioned the importance of creating spaces where people feel welcomed and connected. Participants embraced the idea of co-creation as a way to connect and bring residents and office workers together. Our research shows that when people work together to achieve a common goal, they feel inspired to be part of something bigger than themselves. For example, in the office and housing realm, participants recommended allowing employees and residents to decorate their spaces and participate in the decision-making process. Interior designers can also boost meaning and belonging by reflecting company values in the office realm as well as cultural background and interests in the housing realm. These actions can be small and easily implementable. like providing residents with space for gardening or working on a common art piece.

Key takeaways 36

Confronting the status quo

Workshop participants are keen to explore new ways in which design can address users' needs and expectations. The different design actions that were created during the prototyping activity suggest that interior designers are already questioning and finding innovative, holistic ways to address users' needs. They are questioning the status quo in designing spaces. For instance, a multi-unit housing project should no longer be targeted for one level of income or to one type of family structure; an office space should no longer be devoid of soul or embedded values; people's work and play spaces may no longer be separate.

However, interior designers do face barriers to implementing innovative solutions: ranging from existing building conditions, regulations and guidelines, client priorities and values to budget constraints. While some of these standard barriers take time and advocacy to evolve, it is possible to inspire clients and create awareness about the importance of priority actions to ensure inclusive and healthy environments.

Challenging hierarchical design

During both days of the workshop, participants consistently highlighted hierarchy, especially in the office realm, as a barrier to integrating wellbeing into interior design. Participants felt that the pronounced hierarchical structure in certain companies informed the interior design of the companies' space. The participants noted that despite their efforts, the traditional office design with individual executive offices on the perimeter and lower-ranking employees in the middle continues to be a desired option, as it separates employees and their superiors. Interior designers agreed that this layout weakened senses of equality, health and connectedness in the workplace. The main recommendation that emerged during the workshop was to continue educating clients and promoting a more equitable and wellbeing-oriented design in order to achieve a paradigm shift in the office realm.

Prioritizing human-centred design

Participants indicated that while data-driven decisions are important in the design process, we also need to consult and involve users. People's perspectives are rarely captured through data. In order to understand people's priorities and challenges, it is important to engage them in a more direct way. Interior designers believe that we need to design spaces that foster collaboration, but also processes that enable people to be part of the creative process. This will ensure values, interests and cultural perspectives are embedded into the final design of the space. People who participate throughout the design process are more likely to take care of spaces and participate as active members of the community.



Key takeaways 37

One final takeaway... How we believe participants embraced design thinking

Throughout the workshop, our team was able to witness participants' incredible willingness to listen to each other and collaborate. Participants were truly engaged in discussions and respectfully explored diverse possibilities. While some tables decided one participant would take a leadership role, others created shared understandings and posed multiple solutions together. We applaud participants' eagerness to design spaces that are creative and fun for users. Sometimes design disciplines struggle to find new ways to spark joy: this was not the case with this group of talented people. They produced new experiences and spontaneous interactions in each prototyped design action.

We also discovered that interior designers are deeply interested in addressing pressing issues through their work, from climate change to housing affordability and social disconnection. We believe that these aspirations can be used as a tool to leverage their position in the industry. Interior designers should be part of and hold important positions at decision-making tables, especially on large and impactful projects.

Finally, participants showed that they have the ability to turn the desire for wellbeing and social connectedness into action. Participants noted that getting clients to buy in to high-level wellbeing values can be a challenge. However, during the final presentations they demonstrated that they have the skills to translate high-level values into structured and rational design actions that are likely to speak to clients and stakeholders and achieve their wellbeing goals.



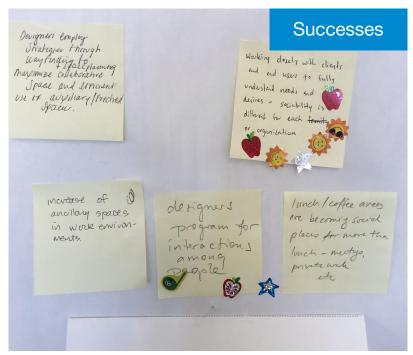
Key takeaways 38

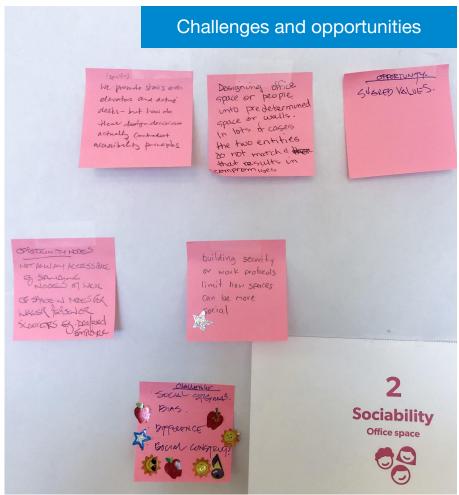
Appendix 1

Images from Activity #2 organized by principle and subdivided by realm

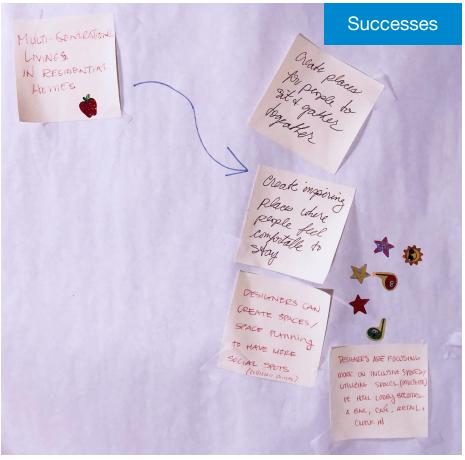
Sociability,

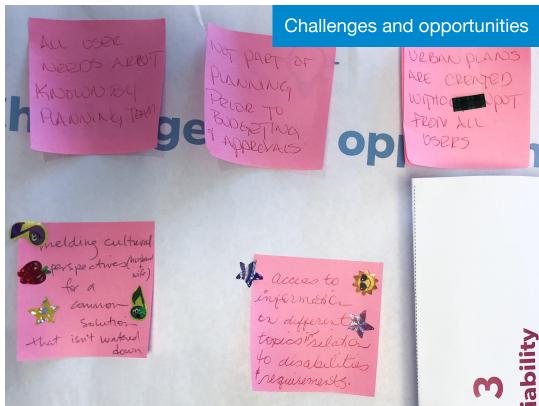
Office space





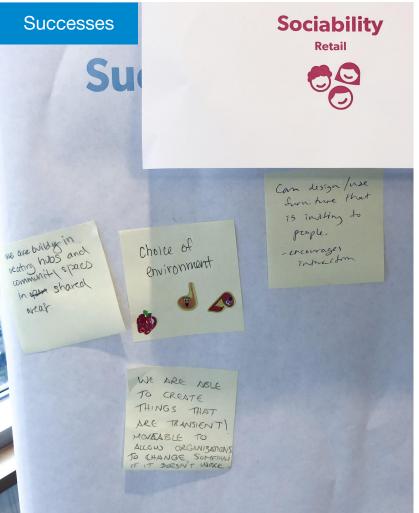
Sociability, Residential

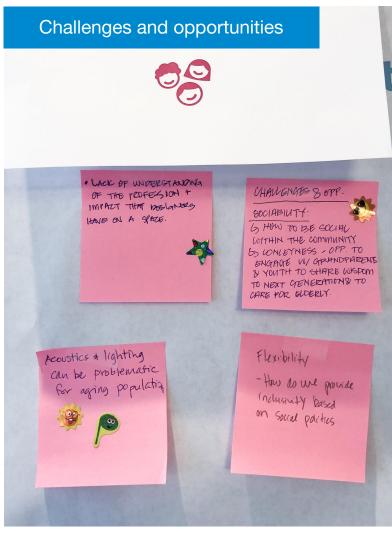




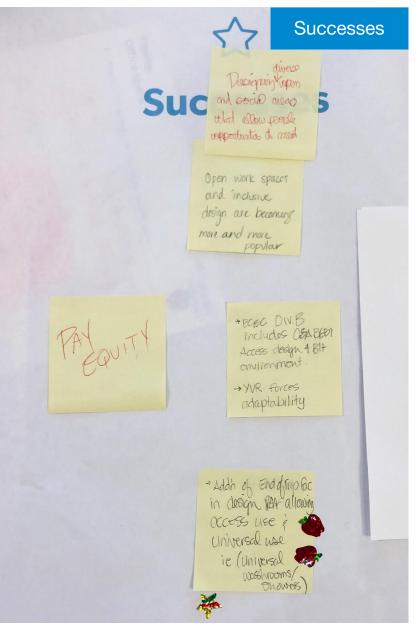
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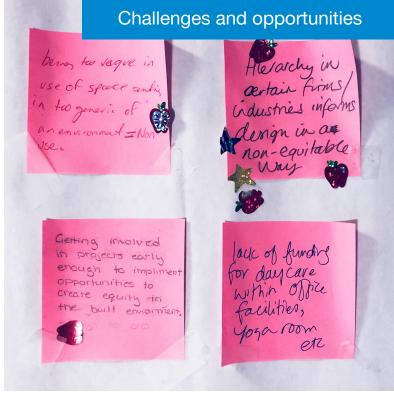
Retail





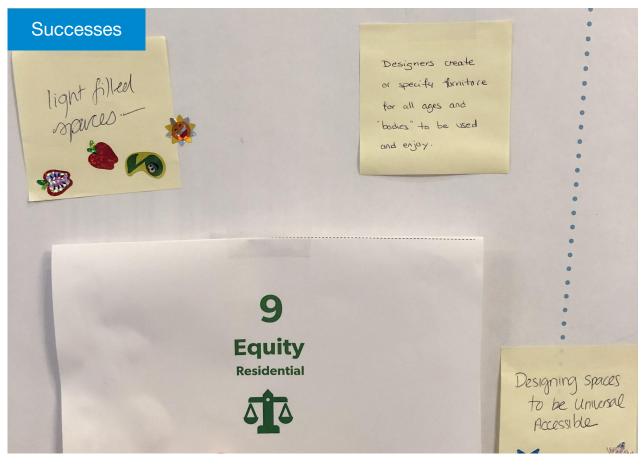
Equity,Office space

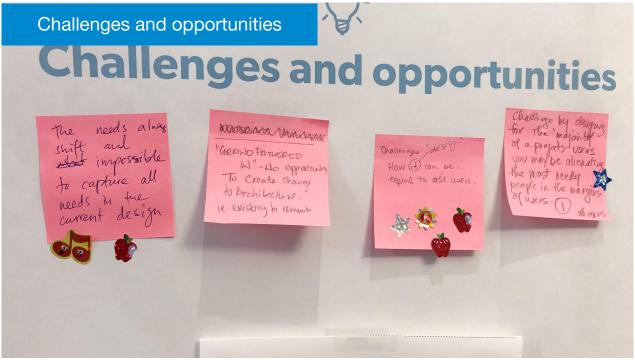




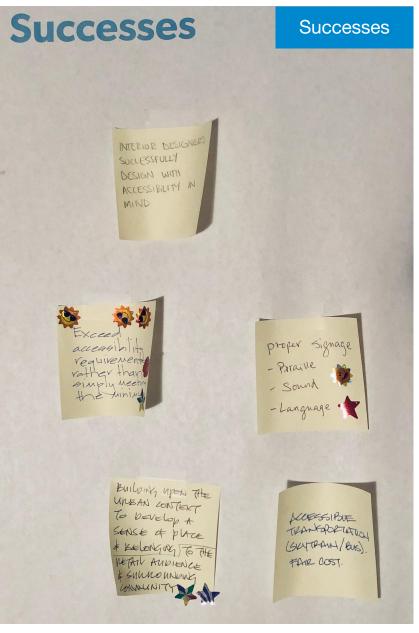
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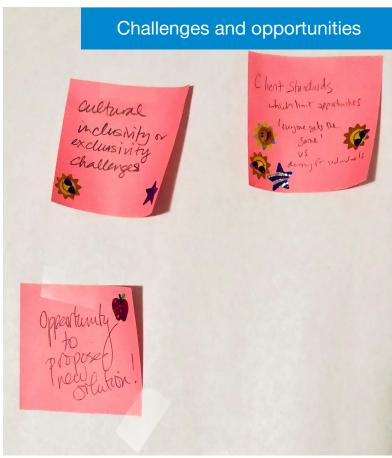
Residential





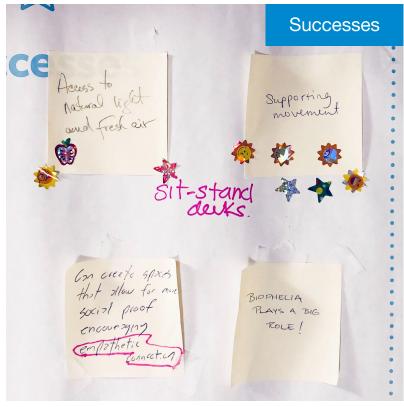
Equity,Retail

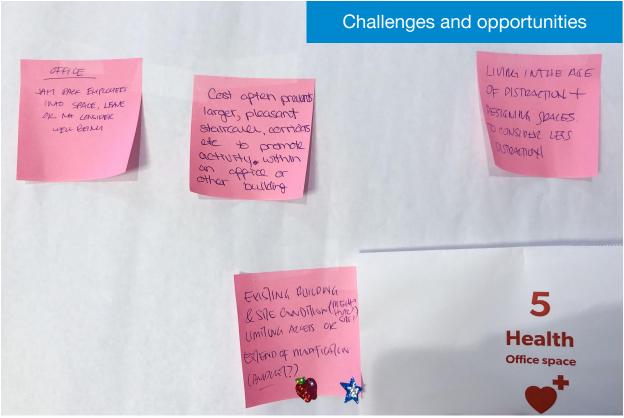




Health,

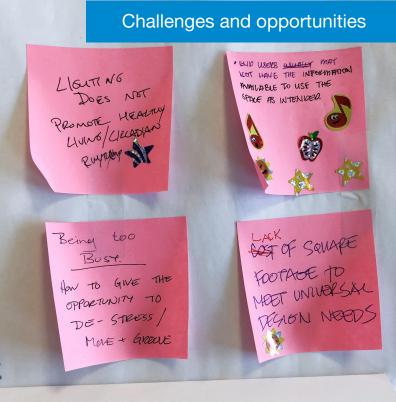
Office space



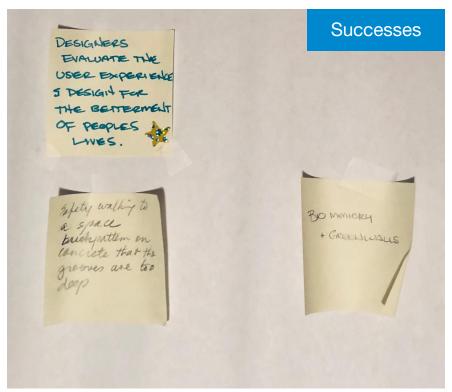


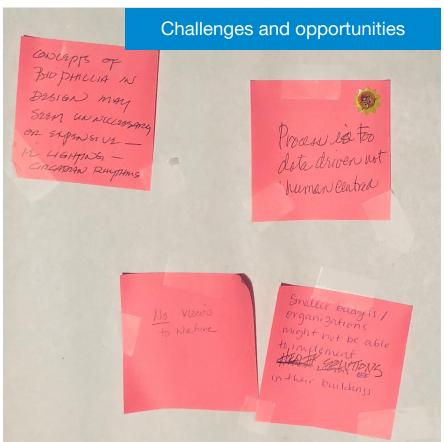
Health,Residential





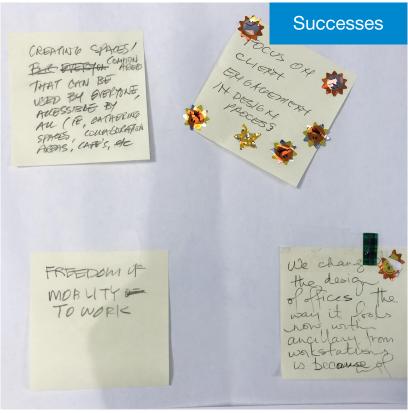
Health,Retail





Meaning and belonging,

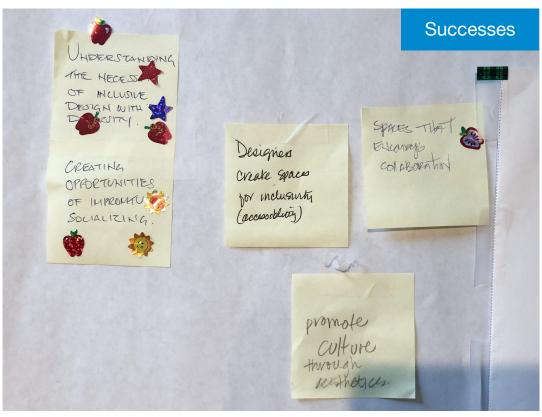
Office space

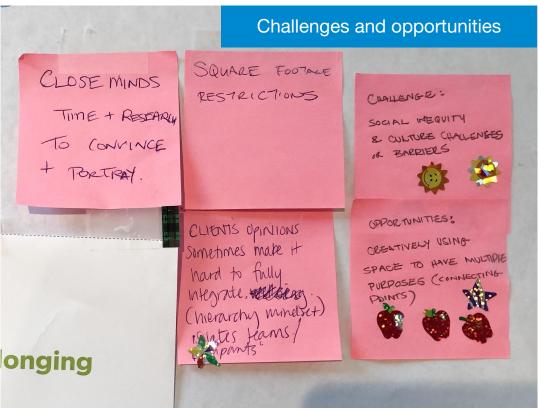




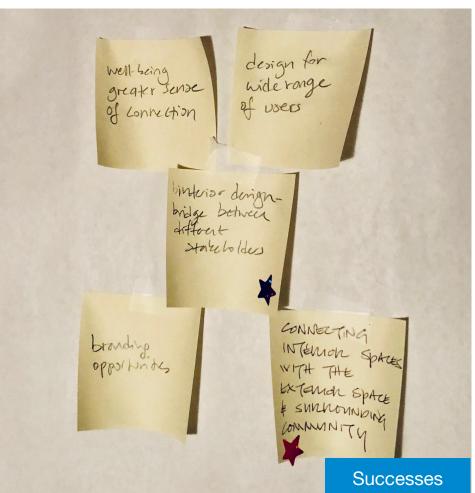
Meaning and belonging,

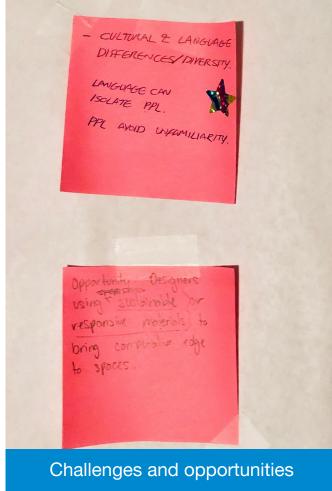
Residential





Meaning and belonging, Retail





Appendix 2

Scanned worksheets* from Activity #2

Sociability, Office space



1. Write down the message on the most popular "success" post-it:

SOCIAMILITY - UNDERSTAND SPECIFIC NEEDS OF CLIENT +
THERE PEOPLE / ORGANIZATIONS MEANS
GOALS + ORGENIZATIONS MEANS

How has this idea, action or insight been implemented in an office space? How does it promote wellbeing?

allow / Flex apact for people to connect, open sciessimile with tools to communicate. What istas . REINFIELE culture

2. Write down the message on the most popular "challenges and opportunities" post-it:

What actions or solutions would you suggest to tackle this current challenge and promote wellbeing in an office space?

COMMUNAL SPACE. OPEN CYCHEN TO SHAPLE CULTURE! THE CONHECTION

Sociability, Residential



Lown Lowette Johnna Worksheet 1



Write down the message on the most popular "success" post-it:

CREATE SPACES THAT ENCOURAGE SOCIABILITY THAT WELLOMES & ENCORAGES GENERATION LL & CULTURAL DIVERITY (muti) (RECVENITION OF FIRST NATIONS

How has this idea, action or insight been implemented in an office space? How does it residential promote wellbeing?

> COMMUN IL AREAS THAT LAVE HAD INDUT FIRTH NEEDS

Write down the message on the most popular "challenges and opportunities" post-it: 2.

> TRYING TO MEET THE NEEDS OF MOTORS LAS CREATE A WITERED DOWN ENVIRONMENT

What actions or solutions would you suggest to tackle this current challenge and promote wellbeing in an office space?

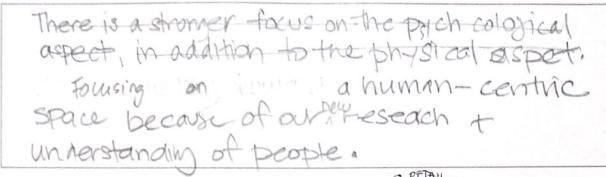
INCLUSINITY AT THE PLANSING A MIND SHIET WITH DEVERPORS,

Happy & healthy interiors; building empathy through design thinking

Sociability, Retail



1. Write down the message on the most popular "success" post-it:



How has this idea, action or insight been implemented in an office space? How does it promote wellbeing?

Diversity + bringing the local community
together.

**- retailers to to engage more ul customers and comfort
ex. farmers markets engaging of the local community.

2. Write down the message on the most popular "challenges and opportunities" post-it:

Online rotal and lack of interactions face - to - face

What actions or solutions would you suggest to tackle this current challenge and promote wellbeing in an office space?

Dring people together in the physical space - fully includive, rather than ohline rotailing & mairying digital and physical interactions though options of tech possibilities

Equity, Office space



Arterochy in actions design in actions

Whis

Write down the message on the most popular "success" post-it:

allowing areas for undividuals to some together allaborate in a space the collaborate

How has this idea, action or insight been implemented in an office space? How does it promote wellbeing?

o Directive stairs | collaborative spaces parody - Planned collision areas; water coller purosopy · 2 aformal, cost sealing over you truck -down

Write down the message on the most popular "challenges and opportunities" post-it:

What actions or solutions would you suggest to tackle this current challenge and promote wellbeing in an office space?

Getting involved earlier toucation on tourity / collaborative spaces. no enclosed offices / hos access to light. No corner offices.

Happy & healthy interiors; building empathy through design thinking

Equity,

Residential - Much Unit residential.



1. Write down the message on the most popular "success" post-it:

UGHT-FILLED SPACES

How has this idea, action or insight been implemented in an effice space? How does it promote wellbeing?

SHAREDHSPACES -> LIGHT.

ACCESS to WINDOW + LIGHT

AMENITY SPACES -> EXTERIOR

WELLBEING -> FEELING LESS ISOLATED.

2. Write down the message on the most popular "challenges and opportunities" post-it:

HOW DESIGN CAN BE EQUAL FOR

What actions or solutions would you suggest to tackle this current challenge and promote wellbeing in an effice space?

FIND DUTY WHO WILL BE USING SPACE
ALL OF THE USERS.
TO UNDORSTAND HAT WHAT CHARLOLIGES TIND

Equity,

Residential - Much Unit Widertal.



1. Write down the message on the most popular "success" post-it:

How has this idea, action or insight been implement promote wellbeing?

SHAREDH SPACES

ACCESS TO WINDOW + UGHTI

AMENITY SPACES - EXTERIOR

WELLBEING -> FEELING USS ISOLATED.

2. Write down the message on the most popular "challenges and opportunities" post-it:

HOW DESIGN CAN BE Providing Access to daylight in Community amenity space.

What actions or solutions would you suggest to to wellbeing in an office space?

FIND DUT WHO WILL

AN OF THE US

TO UNDERSTAND WHY WHAT CHARLES TO SPACE.

Equity, Retail



Write down the message on the most popular "success" post-it:

"EXCERD ACCESSIBILITY REDUIREMENTS PATHER THAN SIMPLY MEETING THE MINIMUM"

How has this idea, action or insight been implemented in an office space? How does it promote wellbeing?

SIMONS - GENER NEUTUAL (NOT OLOGHENTIAMY MEY INSMENS A AUCH)
- ACCOMBLE (WOTHS) CLREVEATION
- VISUAL CLARITY - UMENSTAND SPACE.

SIGNTINES

2. Write down the message on the most popular "challenges and opportunities" post-it:

"EXERYCHE GETS THE SAME (S) TEGINHING

FOR INDIVIDUALS"

BRAND DENTITY US LOCALIDENTITY

What actions or solutions would you suggest to tackle this current challenge and promote wellbeing in an office space?

- LOCALIZING BRAND IDENTITY MALE IT ENEXCINE TO GRANING IT
- WOLLING WI CLIENTS TO UNDENTAND HOW DIETE STANDARDS

Health,Office space



1. Write down the message on the most popular "success" post-it:

SUPPORTING MOVEMENT

How has this idea, action or insight been implemented in an office space? How does it promote wellbeing?

STRATEGIL PLANNING OF VERTICAL CONNECTONS
NAXIETY OF SPACES LAID OUT TO ALL MOVEHENT
SPONTANEOUS INTERACTION AS WELL AS PHYSICAL
HOVEHENT

2. Write down the message on the most popular "challenges and opportunities" post-it:

SCHEDUEL POESNT ALKOU FOR HEALTH TO BE A PRIORITY

What actions or solutions would you suggest to tackle this current challenge and promote wellbeing in an office space?

- More quantitative examples (metrics) to demonstrate the importance + value.

· Employee retention

Health,



Residential

Write down the message on the most popular "success" post-it:

Designers can space Plan + design for more community interaction.

How has this idea, action or insight been implemented in an office space? How does it promote wellbeing?

Amenty buildings promote being social and prevent isolation.

Amenity buildings promote being social and prevent isolation.

Well designed

2. Write down the message on the most popular "challenges and opportunities" post-it:

End users may not have the information available to use the space as intended.

What actions or solutions would you suggest to tackle this current challenge and promote wellbeing in an effice space? Pesidential.

-> None with diverse focus groups to develop an intuitive space.

Meaning and belonging, Office space



Write down the message on the most popular "success" post-it:

How has this idea, action or insight been implemented in an office space? How does it promote wellbeing?

2. Write down the message on the most popular "challenges and opportunities" post-it:

What actions or solutions would you suggest to tackle this current challenge and promote wellbeing in an office space?

Meaning and belonging, Residential



1. Write down the message on the most popular "success" post-it:

UNDERSTANDING THE NEBESSHY OF INCLUSIVE DESIGN WI DIVERSHY
CREATING OPPORTUNITIES OF IMPORTANT SOCIALING

How has this idea, action or insight been implemented in an office space? How does it promote wellbeing?

MANDATED TO HAVE 3007, of DENGLOPMENT HAS TO BE DEDICATED TO LOW INCOME -

2. Write down the message on the most popular "challenges and opportunities" post-it:

SOCIAL EN NEQUITY & CULTURAL CHALLENGES OF BARRIERS

What actions or solutions would you suggest to tackle this current challenge and promote wellbeing in an office space?

BUILD OUT COLUSION POINTS - MAILFOOM FOR INSTANCE TO PROMOTE INTERACTION, SOCIALIZATION

- BONDING OVER COMMON - FINDING COMMONANTIEG 8 BRINGING DEEM TOGETHER PEOPLE

THROUGH & DONOBLED DESIGNING

Happy & healthy interiors; building empathy through design timking the

Meaning and belonging, Retail



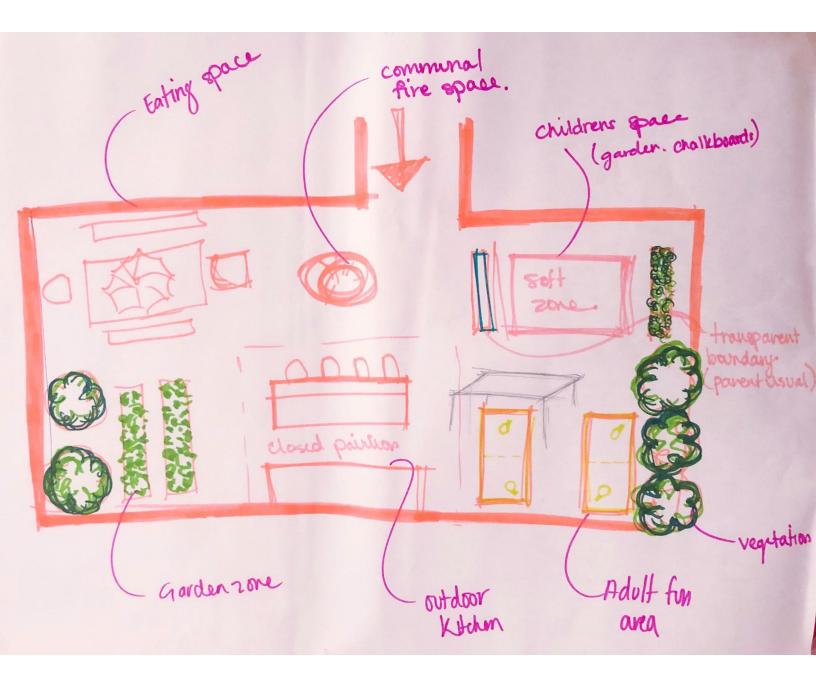
How has this idea, a promote wellbeing?	ection or insight been implemented in an eff	이 가득하다 보다 한 때 없다.
	alls are more than retail space agether. For example, restaurant but hade of users - cultural,	
	Specify Used Designers having	the knowledge + specific sponsine materials to edge to retail specific edge to retail specific specifi
	sustainable of the brig competetion	sponsive materials to e edge to retail spe
What actions or solu wellbeing in an office	utions would you suggest to tackle this curre	ent challenge and prome
	1 1 10	
Educate de	nepersmantatives.	

Appendix 3

Additional images from Activity #4

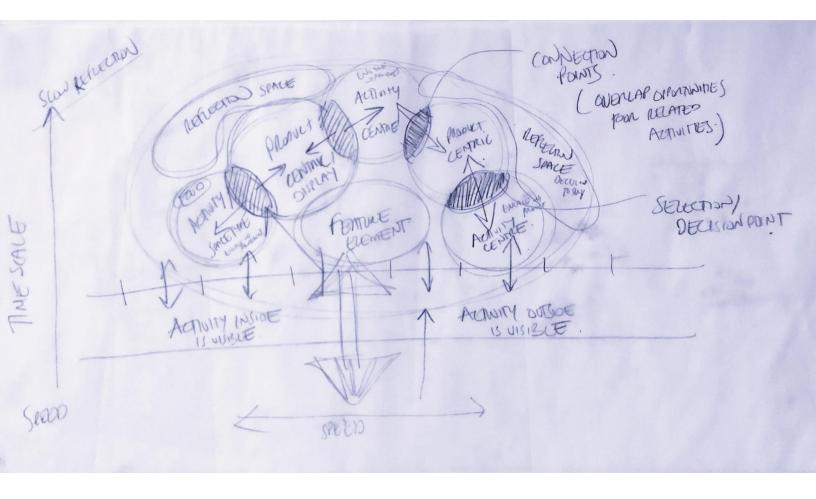
Sociability,

Residential Properties



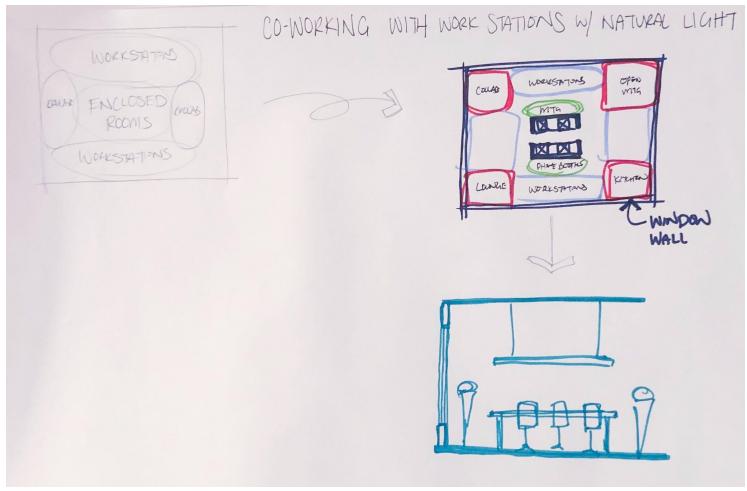
Sociability,

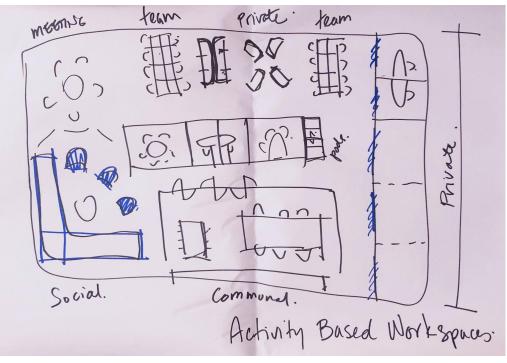
Retail



Equity,

Office space



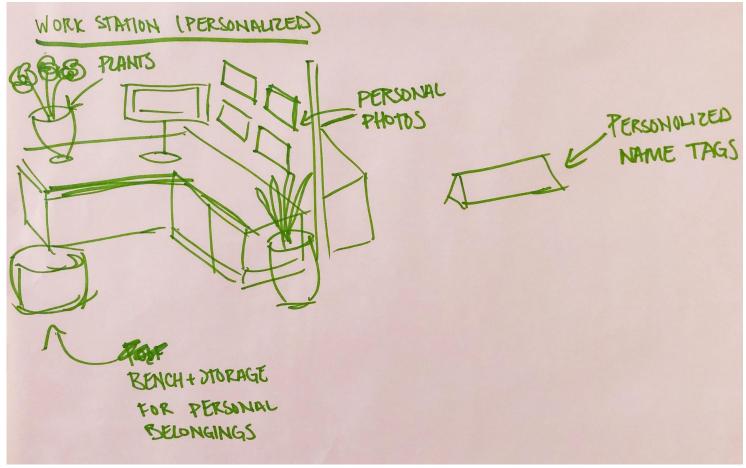


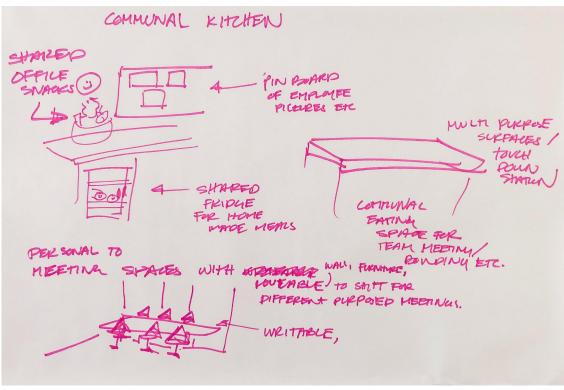
Health,Office space



Meaning and belonging,

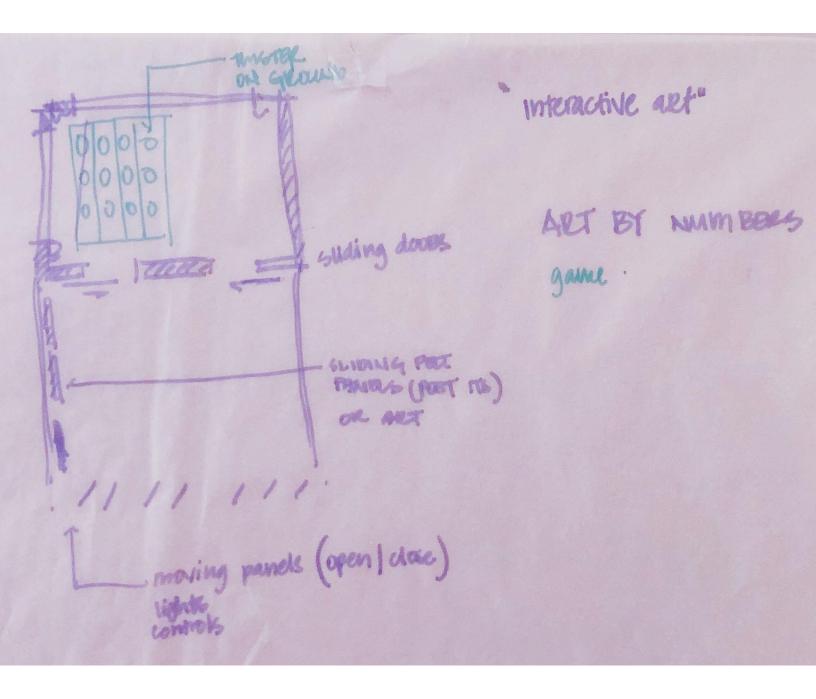
Office space





Meaning and belonging,

Residential





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