they're moving from where they *are* to where they *want* to be

the user isn't presented with the skill right away – and that's intentional. → walking through the recommendation gives the user agency to use the skill on their own in the future.

This is a really unique design context I'm interested in exploring further; how might we develop digital tools that help us get through tough moments if those moments are inherently uncomfortable? Where's the line between designing an experience to be pleasant vs. designing an experience to be real?

Journey Steps Which step of the experience are you describing?	**Emotional Activation** Why would a user even consider acting?	**Current Emotion + Desired Emotion ID** User tells us where they are so we can meet them with the tools they need	**Skill Recommendation**	**Skill Workthrough**
Actions What does a user do? What is their context?	"My emotions are all over the place... a skill might be helpful to keep me grounded right now" Open BetterBrain Selects "Skill Match Quiz"	Acknowledges how theyre currently feeling Selects how they want to be feeling	Receives a single matched skill Reads a brief explanation of the recommended skill and why it's recommended chooses whether or not to engage/progress to the next screen	Presented with aforementioned skill with the option to practice in the app Tries the skill (fully or partially)
Thoughts + Emotions What is the user feeling?	Overwhelm: all DBT skills are helpful, but what's helpful for me right now?	Uncertainty about labels, but confident they're at least in the right place Sense of empowerment; *"maybe it is possible to feel something other than the spiral I'm in"*	**Cautious Optimism:** *"Okay... this looks doable."*	Let's do this!
Pain Points What obstacles can we anticipate ahead of time?	Emotional disregulation = limited window for intervention	Difficulty naming emotions Overthinking May default to avoidance *I don't even think I know what I'm truly feeling right now*	Low tolerance for long instructions Questioning why it's the recommended skill	Attention drift Emotional discomfort mid-skill It's important to anticipate emotional discomfort as a given here; of course we want to design a positive experience, but discomfort is also an important thing to allow.
Touchpoint What part of the service do they interact with?	Log-In Screen Skill Match Quiz -- Login Bypass (!!)	Emotional State UI: select how you're doing and how you're feeling (one page)	Results Explanation Page	Skill Results and workpage; this is where the user practices the skill
Backstage				
Design Response + Opportunities How can I address user pain points?	1. Using non-clinical, casual language; should feel like asking a friend for the time, not sifting through a dictionary to find the right word 2. Login Bypass -- make the skills match quiz accessible from the landing screen	1. Allow approximation – no precision or minimum selections required (other than 1 for each in order to complete the sequence obviously) 2. Keeping it conversational -- "choose what fits best" over "select your current state"; this task should feel like asking a friend "what's that word..." not pouring over a dictionary.	1. Present one skill, not a list 2. Recognize immediacy as a peer to simplicity 3. Frame the skill as an opportunity, not a test	1. Make skill interruptible 2. Normalize partial completion 3. Keep progress lightweight and visual
Metrics How are we measuring success and failure in this stage?	1. Amount of time before being presented with a skill 2. Abandonment rate at entry screen 3. Entry CTR from landing screen	1. Emotion selection completion rate 2. Average number of emotions selected 3. Time spent on emotion input screen	1. Skill acceptance rate 2. Time spent on recommendation screen 3. "Try now" vs "save for later" ratio	1. Skill start rate 2. Completion vs partial completion 3. Average engagement duration

This is the journey of a

Game Changer

Game changers aren't logging or looking to learn more information; they know they have the tools to get support in the moment, they're just not sure ***which*** tool would work best.

They don't want to revert back to unhealthy ways of coping. They're chosing to use their DBT skills but need translation and direction – their task isn't using a skill, it's ***knowing which one to use in their situation.***

What are their key goals and needs?

- **Immediate Relief:** when emotions spike, skills should be easy to find
- **Clear Instruction:** it shouldn't feel like doing homework; it should feel like getting advice
- **Low Effort Action:** minimal clicks and screens that get them to a place where they can do the work

What do they struggle with most?

- **Decision Paralysis:** if multiple skills could be helpful, which would be the *most* helpful?
- **Avoidance:** skills feel inaccessible when they feel tucked away in a workbook. Why try when that feels impossible?

What tasks do they have?

- Identifying how they're feeling
- Identifying how they want to feel
- Accessing the most helpful skill for the situation

What changes for them?

Empowerment

Game Changers aren't just identifying how they're feeling, how they want to feel, and handed a solution.

That would reinforce the idea that solutions come from input; but solutions come from informed practice. Longterm skill building isn't possible by creating a reliance on the app; it's empowering the user by educating them on the context of their situation and goals, and empowering them to take those lessons with them.

What are they able to do now?

- Access the **right** skill when they need it the most
- **Practice** from the comfort and convenience of their phone
- Learn more about what skills are most helpful in a circumstance, even if they haven't tried them yet.

What can they finally avoid doing?

- **Guessing** which skill is best in the moment
- Pulling out a pdf or workbook when they are in emotional distress; they have what they need in the app.

What changed in the environment?

- Help feels more personal and on-the-go
- Help feels less clinical