Module 5: Research Report

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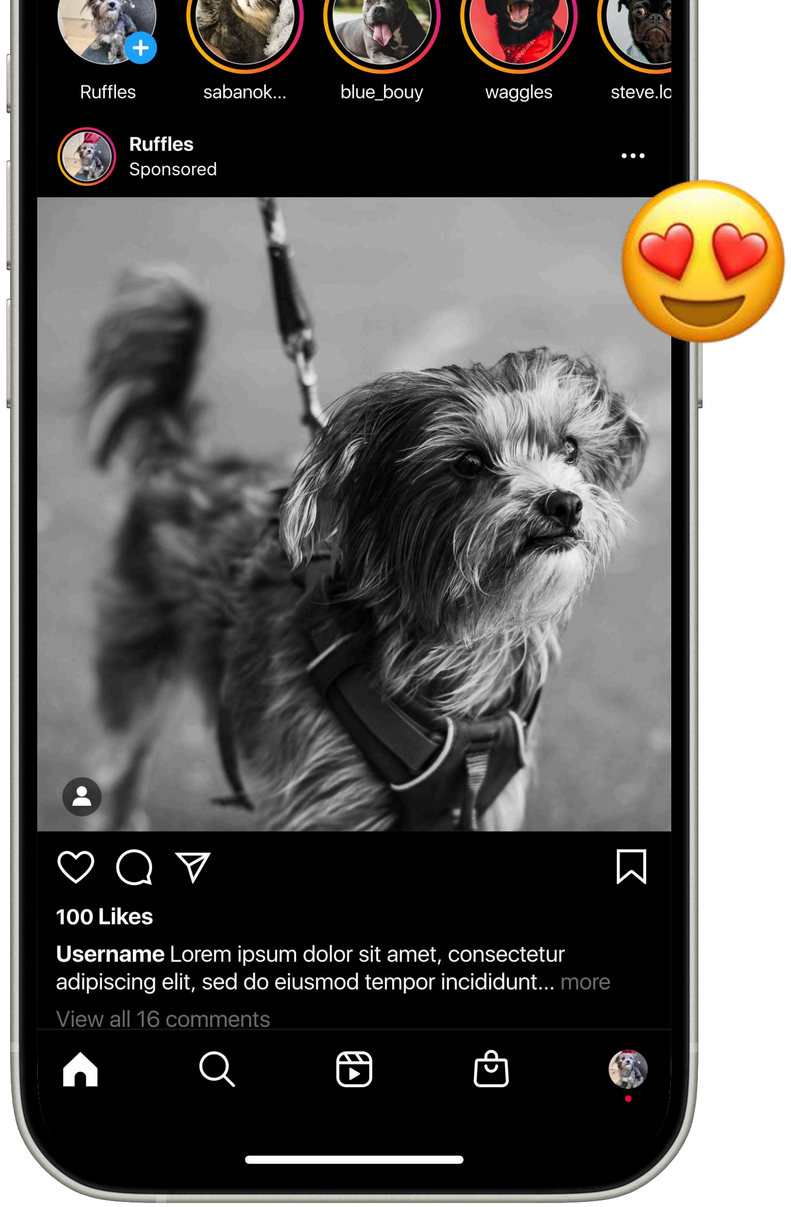
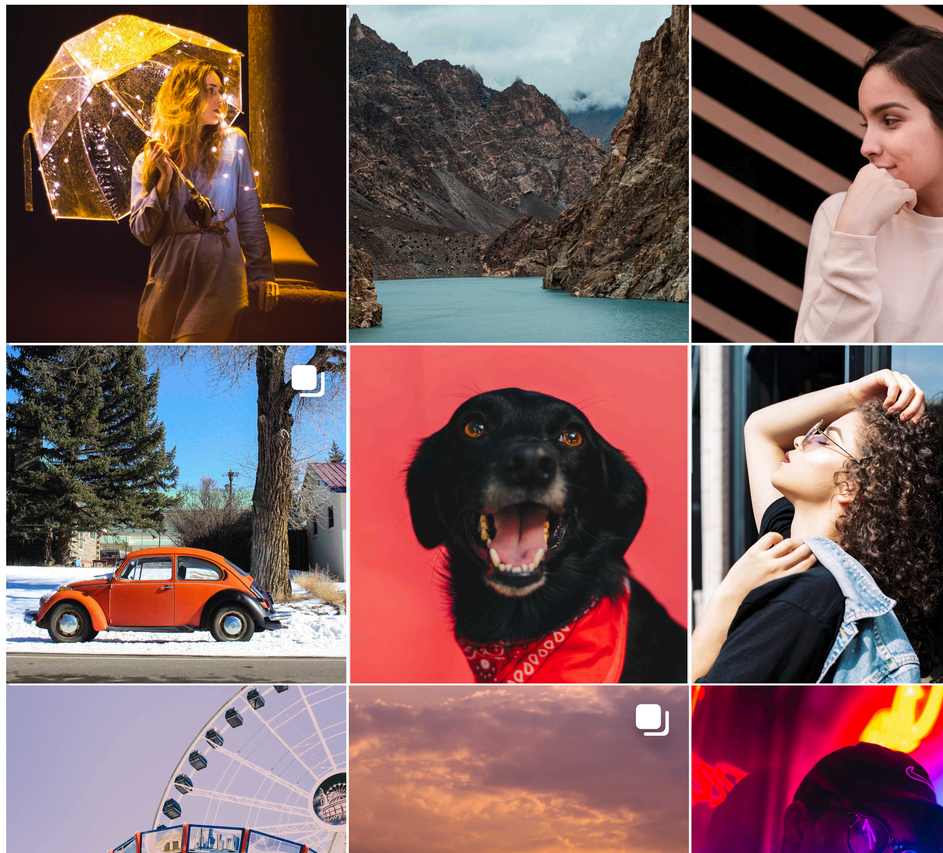


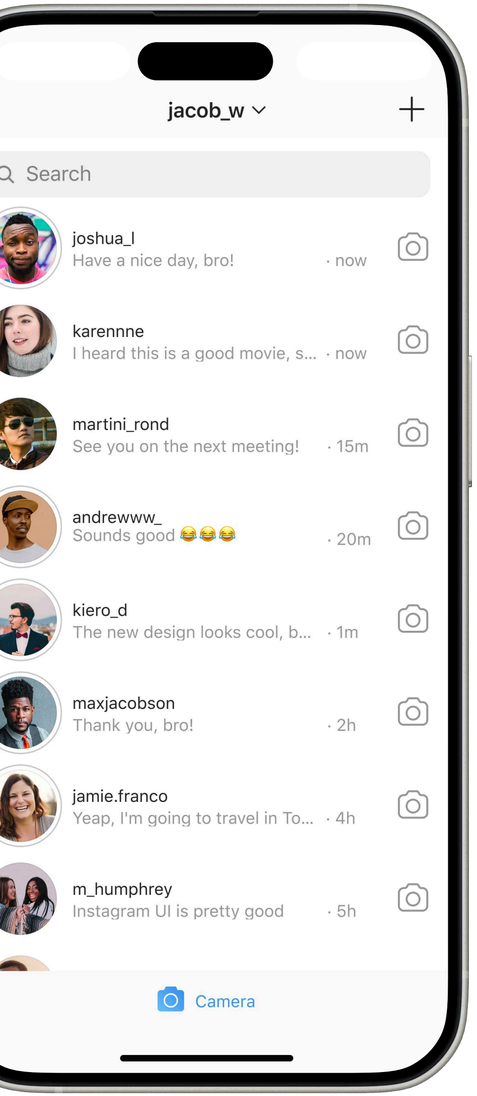
Executive Summary

I used **directed storytelling** to help me understand different **emotional situations** arising from Instagram use and understand users' **goals in using the app**. I learned that Instagram use usually arises out of habit or boredom. Use of the app tends to be unconscious with lack of intention. This kind of use can result in negative emotions such as apathy, annoyance, or even disgust. However, Instagram also has the potential to evoke positive emotions. Positive emotions tend to arise from Instagram as a method of connection with friends, heartwarming content, and humorous content. The next step in this project is to re-design Instagram in a way that can evoke more positive emotions and less negative emotions, or help users use the app more intentionally.

Research Method Review

Participants for this research project were recruited primarily from my friends and classmates. 5 participants were college students, and 2 participants were adults aged 25-35. 4 participants were female, and 3 participants were male. Most participants were interviewed in person, and 2 participants were interviewed virtually via Zoom. The guiding questions in conducting this research were (1) how can we prompt emotional insight and regulation in users to use Instagram in ways that are positive to their lives and (2) how can we adjust content users are seeing to evoke positive emotions.





Insight: Social connection on Instagram leads to positive emotions

Evidence:

- Shares when topics from real life reflected in Instagram feed
- Uses Instagram to remain connected within own circle
- Uses Instagram for connecting internationally
- Shares reels as a method to keep in touch with people
- Feels closer to friends through using the app

Implications

- Design for connection, not just interaction

Insight: Unintentional use leads to negative emotions

Evidence:

- Felt apathy from using Instagram
- Feels that Instagram is brainrot
- Automatically opens Instagram
- Uses Instagram within any periods of idle time
- Opens Instagram as a habit

Implications

- Support mindful engagement and intentional use
- Reduce habitual triggers

Insight: Digital emotions are brought into reality

Evidence:

- Feel differently about individuals as a result of seeing their political views on Instagram
- Felt negative emotions when found out blocked by ex
- Shares when topics from real life reflected in Instagram feed

Implications

- Support emotional boundaries
- Design for reflection

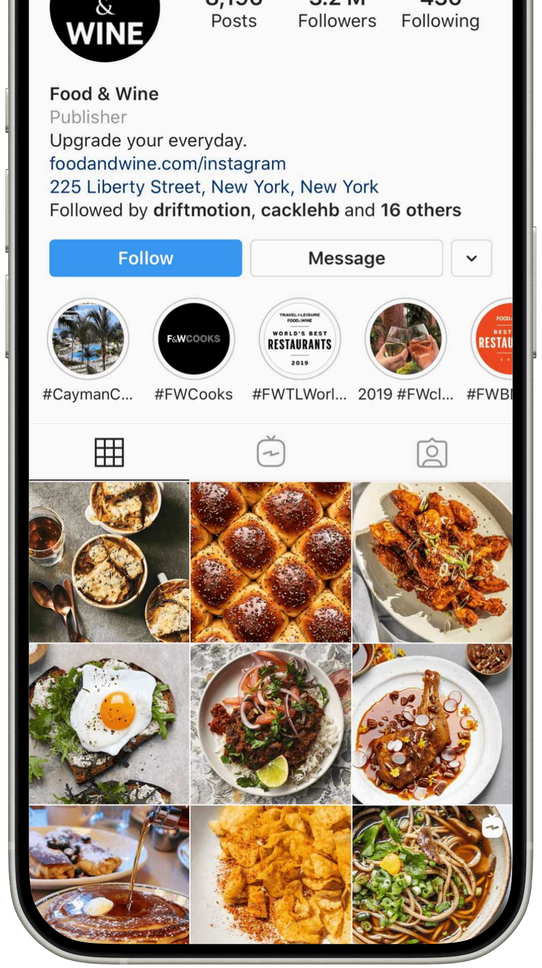
Insight: Food as a source of connection

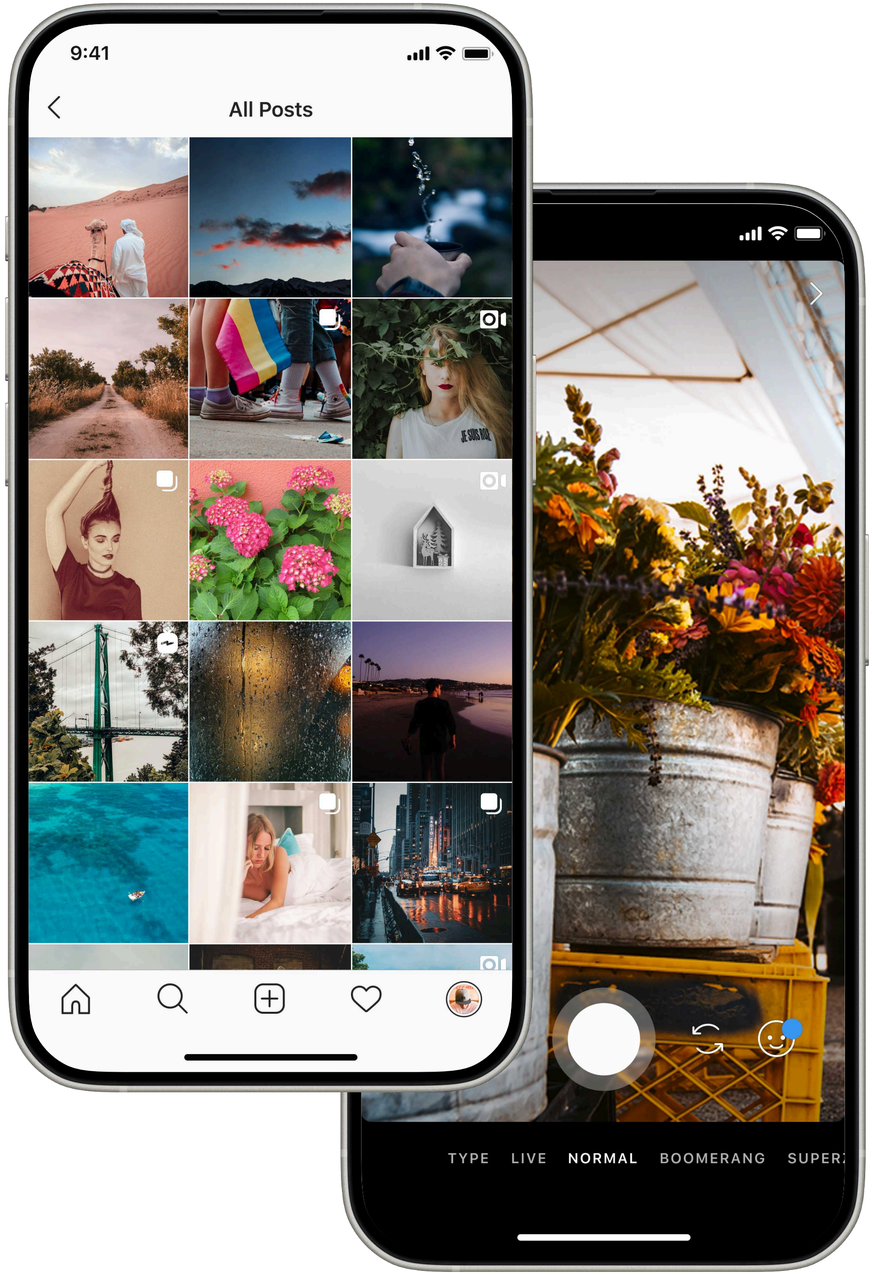
Evidence:

- Uses Instagram to recommend restaurants to friends
- Shares food on Instagram
- Shares opinions on food through Instagram

Implications

- Food for emotional connection
- Localized insights around food





Insight: Visual appeal as a source of positive emotions

Evidence:

- Likes cute animal videos, makes her feel warm and happy
- Enjoys aesthetic feeds on Instagram
- Close friends share videos of cute cats

Implications

- Aesthetic personalization for emotional support

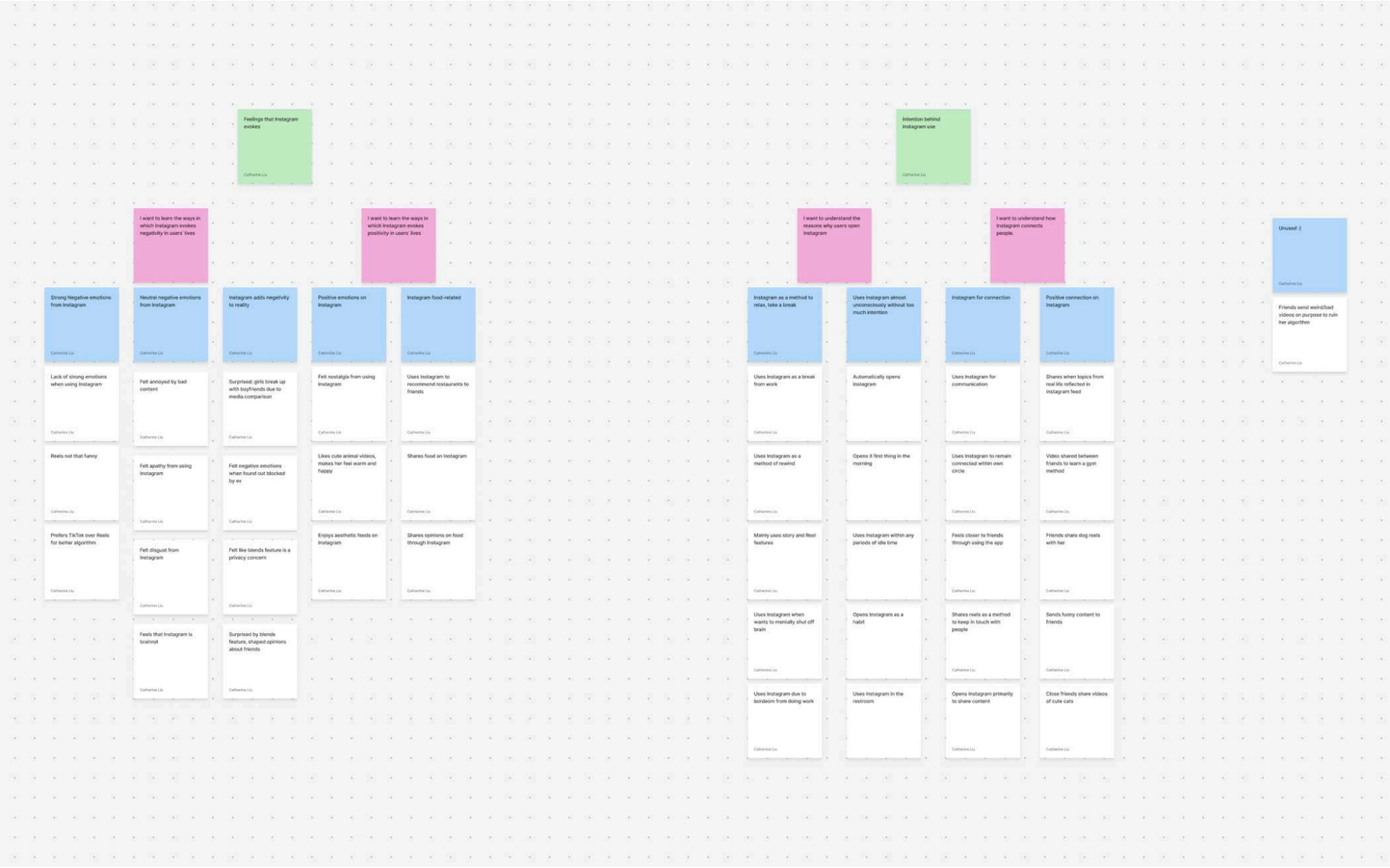
Interpretation Notes

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1W33_dpsOrjZsMilLGt109T-E2BP-g-EZchIvMv3jtzg/edit?usp=sharing

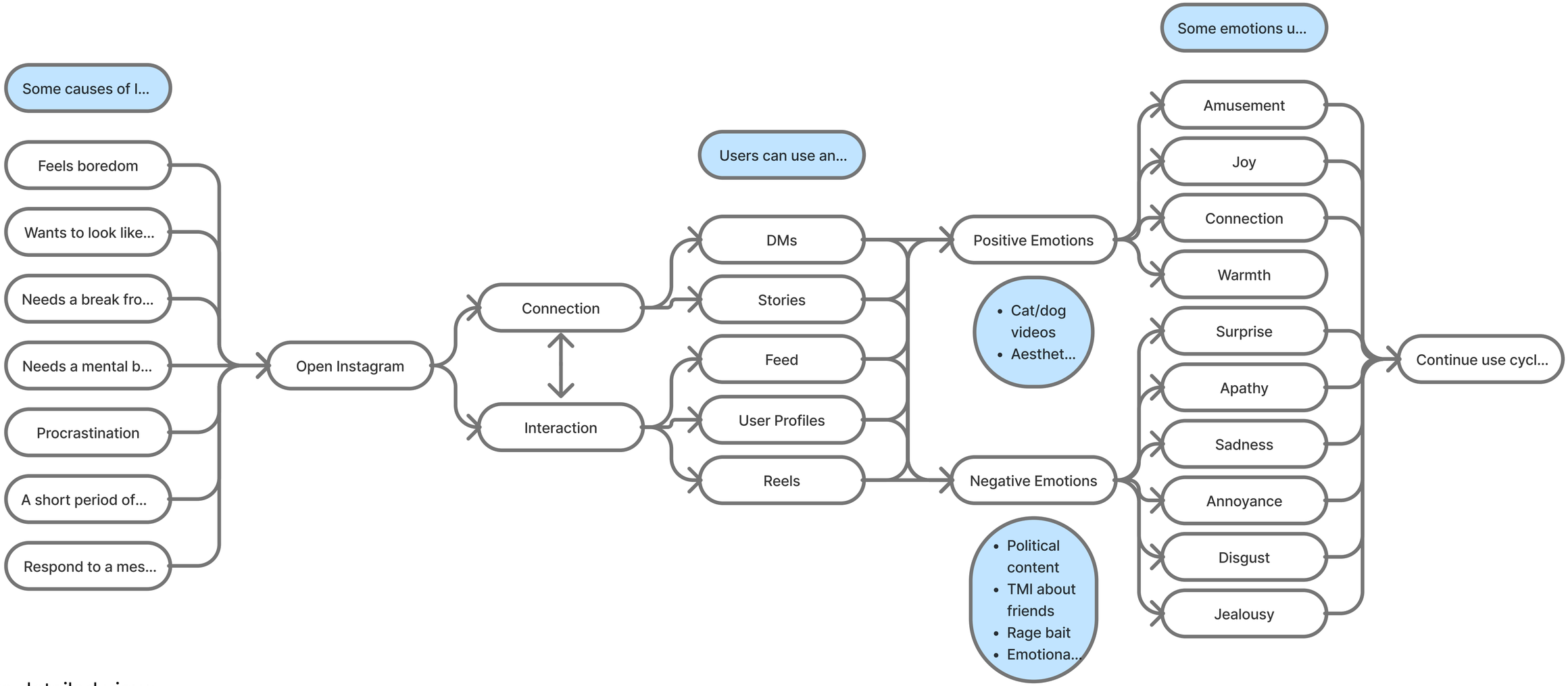
Note Number	Note	User Profile
N-1	Mainly uses story and Reel features	AL
N-2	Prefers TikTok over Reels for better algorithm	AL
N-3	Shares when topics from real life reflected in Instagram feed	AL
N-4	Uses Instagram as a method of rewind	AL
N-5	Reels not that funny	AL
N-6	Uses Instagram to remain connected within own circle	RC
N-7	Lack of strong emotions when using Instagram	RC

Affinity Diagram

https://www.figma.com/board/ArbPVli2ao4V4AJZ0kxuQ9/Affinity-Diagramming?node-id=0-1&t=ehWLnf7FwCyHGm10-1



User Flow Diagram



More detailed view:
https://www.figma.com/board/ArbPVli2ao4V4AJZ0kxuQ9/Affinity-Diagramming?node-id=0-1&t=ehWLnf7FwCyHGm10-1