

Lush Well-being Toolkit: “Grow with the Flow” Research Process Book

**Researching self-esteem and
confidence in relation to
social relationships, and its
connection with self-care and
wellbeing,**

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1.0 Introduction

The main health concerns I focused on and addressed with my toolkit were self-esteem and confidence. According to the NHS, self-esteem is “the beliefs you have about yourself,” whereas confidence is “about trusting your own abilities and judgments and behaving accordingly” (NHS, 2024). Many believe these to be the same thing, however, they do differ, and my task was to improve both of them through my toolkit.

In my research, I looked at the links between self-esteem, confidence, self-care, and social relationships. I discovered that all of these elements have a high degree of impact on each other; self-esteem and confidence not only greatly influence social connections, but are also a direct result of self-care practices.

After assessment, I opted to utilize secondary and tertiary sources like online journals, articles, and studies. Additionally, I planned to conduct primary research by visiting Lush stores to support my key ideas and find out more about my initial hypothesis’ which I could then use to influence my design choices to produce a well-thought-out and thoroughly researched toolkit that would fulfill its purpose and create a positive lasting impact on the target audience.

The key ideas were: boosting self-confidence through self-care, encouraging the practice of self-care and fostering social connections by improving self-esteem and confidence, and vice versa.

All in all, this toolkit aimed to find a way to combine all the key ideas, in a way that they all achieve their purpose by improving the confidence of the individual, inspiring them to create social connections by promoting relaxation and incorporating self-care products into their daily routine, and also creating an engaging concept and design through extensive and complete research.

2.0 Lush Research

Lush Cosmetics, founded in 1995, is renowned for its handcrafted cosmetic and personal care items, spanning skincare, haircare, and bath products, including their infamous bath bombs.

Their focus on environmental sustainability and cruelty-free practices has led to a substantial vegan-friendly range, resonating with consumers interested in natural cosmetics, which has therefore continued their success.

On November 26, 2021, Lush discontinued its presence on most social media platforms, citing concerns over users’ mental well-being, particularly among teenagers. The company emphasized the need for “better platform guidelines” (Statista Research Department, 2024). Instead, Lush focuses on street marketing and “guerrilla marketing”, with storefront windows serving as key communication channels. “Lush concentrates its communication efforts on online channels and, here again, conveys its values around ethics and transparency”(Schwab, P.N, 2021 & 2023).

Lush’s brand identity is focused on spreading joy and positive energy to its customers. Accordingly, its products are vibrant and colorful to reflect this. In his analytical publication, Schwab, P.N. states that “the packaging is also a way to prove the commitment to nature” and “proves the artisanal and fresh character of the products.”

Lush’s successful collaborations include “Asteroid City” and “Barbie”. Their campaigns like “Climate Revolution Knot Wrap,” “Have A Heart,” and “Fighting Animal Testing” reflect the brand’s values across various causes.

Lush’s demographic, although not exclusive to any single group of people, is stated by Similarweb statistics (2024) to be mainly female, with a 73.79% and between the ages of 25 and 34.

In-store, they offer a sensory-rich experience, allowing customers to freely sample products, effectively communicating their values and creating a memorable customer journey.

3.0 Research Methods

I started my research journey by creating mind maps and taking advantage of the workshops to produce more ideas using the input and feedback of peers and tutors. These mind maps helped me create a visual collection of concepts, key ideas, and data relating to my specific well-being concerns and my festival of choice.

I then looked into defining my specific health concerns so that I knew exactly what each one entailed, what the causes and symptoms looked like, and how to tackle them effectively.

Firstly, I began my primary investigation by visiting Lush stores, in particular the first-ever shop in Poole, UK. I did this to see first-hand what consumer preferences and experiences were like. I also got a closer look at Lush's packaging, enabling me to evaluate what elements I liked and could draw inspiration from and what I could add to my designs to enhance them further. Additionally, as part of my primary research, I conducted a survey, asking people about their preferred Lush products or their opinions on their packaging.

Furthermore, I used secondary and tertiary research which informed me vastly on the specific mental health and wellbeing areas I wanted to tackle and improve. I used various sources such as scientific journals, medical publications, and official statistics, including the NHS, the Office of National Statistics, and various university publications. Through this I got more specific information, providing accuracy and trustworthiness to my ideas.

When it came to the concept for my designs, which was mainly inspired by the 60's and 70's and its most famous music festivals, I did in-depth research to justify my design choices. I read numerous articles and publications about the counterculture and civil rights movements throughout the 60's and 70's. During this time a bigger sense of community was created, and brought people together to fight for a larger cause and built many bridges. Creating connections with people was one of the main aims of my well-being toolkit, and I wanted this to be communicated through my designs.

When creating my card deck, I spoke to different people to get opinions and feedback on the first concept. Upon speaking to a Lush employee, I realised that I had to change the tone and purpose of the cards, as they could make someone feel pressured when that is the exact opposite of my intentions. I also had informal conversations with peers who struggle with shyness or talking to new people and asked them what tasks or activities they would be comfortable with engaging in. I used these as the final prompts for my cards.

I am satisfied with the research I conducted. I believe it was essential in every area of creating this toolkit and enabled me to make necessary changes that I wouldn't have been able to identify and determine a much-needed change for if not for extensive research. I have also justified my key ideas and creative concepts through certified research and real-life experiences, resulting in a functional and impactful well-being toolkit.

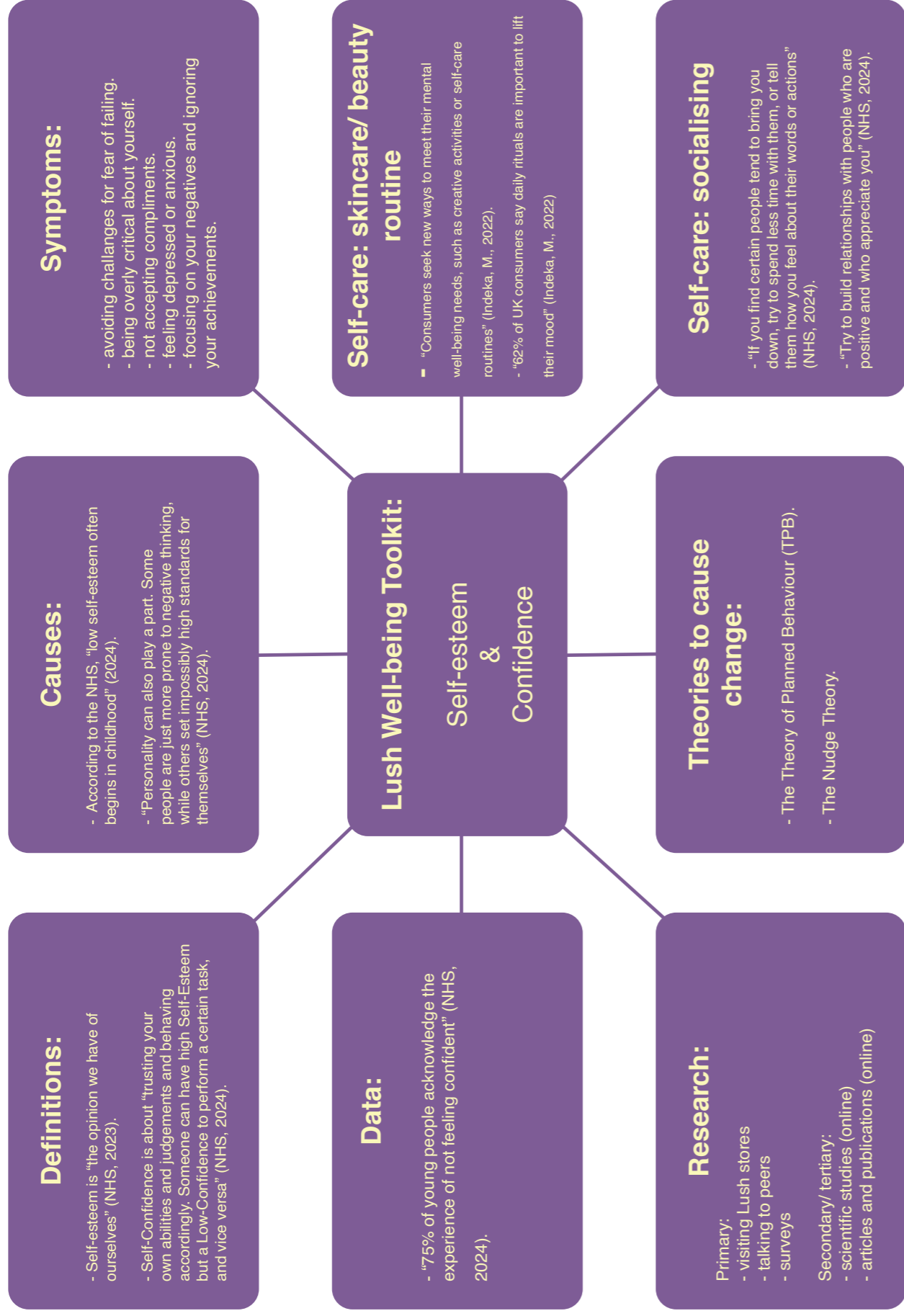


fig 1.

Which items would you be more happy to receive/most likely to use if given to you in a Lush wellbeing box?

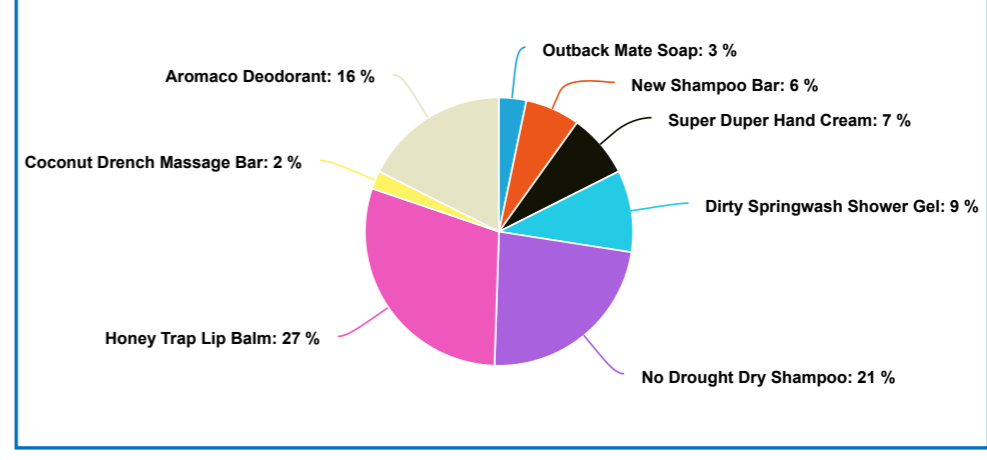


fig 2.



fig 3.



fig 4.



fig 5.



fig 6.



fig 7.



fig 8.

4.0 Wellbeing Research

The NHS defines self-esteem as “the opinion we have of ourselves” (2023) and suggests that “when we have healthy self-esteem, we tend to feel positive about ourselves and about life in general. It makes us better able to deal with life’s ups and downs” (2023).

While low self-esteem can result from experiences in early childhood, recent years have witnessed a significant rise in cases linked to social media’s negative impact, particularly among teenagers, notably young girls, who may feel “their worth is based on how they look or behave” (Healthdirect, 2021). Consequently, “the proportion of women (26.6%) reporting high levels of anxiety was significantly higher than for men (20.0%)” (Office of National Statistics, 2023).

The Office for National Statistics noted that “the proportion of people reporting poor well-being increased in the year ending March 2023,” with “average ratings of personal well-being in the UK significantly decreasing” (Office of National Statistics, 2023). Additionally, “across all UK countries, average ratings of personal well-being appeared to decline between YE March 2022 and YE March 2023” (Office of National Statistics, 2023).

“Consumers seek new ways to meet their mental well-being needs, such as creative activities or self-care routines,” with “62% of UK consumers say daily rituals are important to lift their mood” (Indeka, M., 2022), reflecting a growing concern about mental health and a desire to address it through various remedies. “21% of adults who perform a beauty routine are interested in beauty products with psychological effects” (Hennigan, C., 2020).

Hennigan, C. notes that “a larger focus on mental health has seen beauty and wellness become increasingly intertwined – introducing the concept of ‘self-care’ routines” (2020). Moreover, “54% of adults who perform a beauty routine agree they have fun using beauty products,” while “51% of women aged 18-24 say their typical makeup routine gives them joy” (Hennigan, C., 2020).

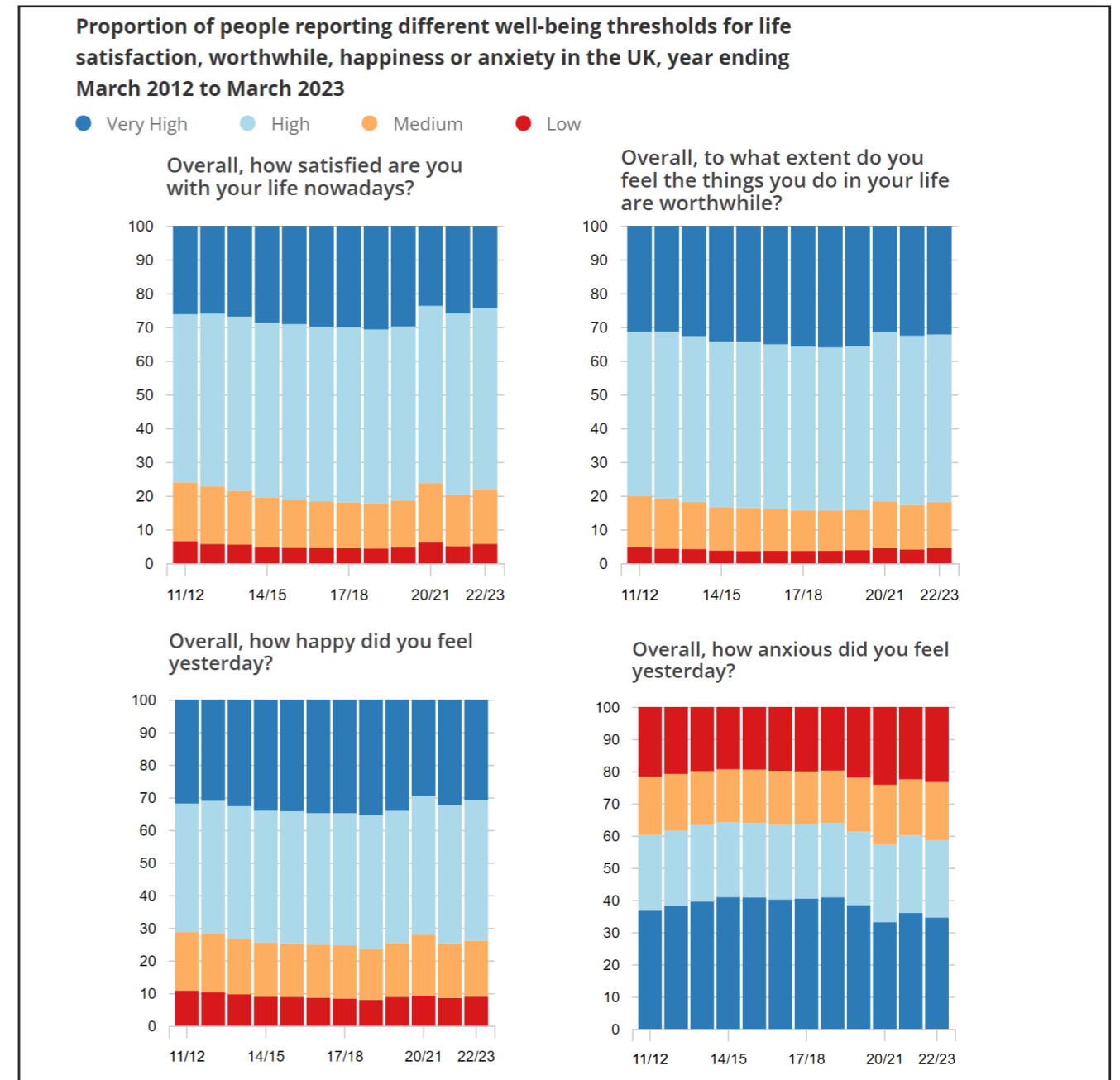


fig 9.

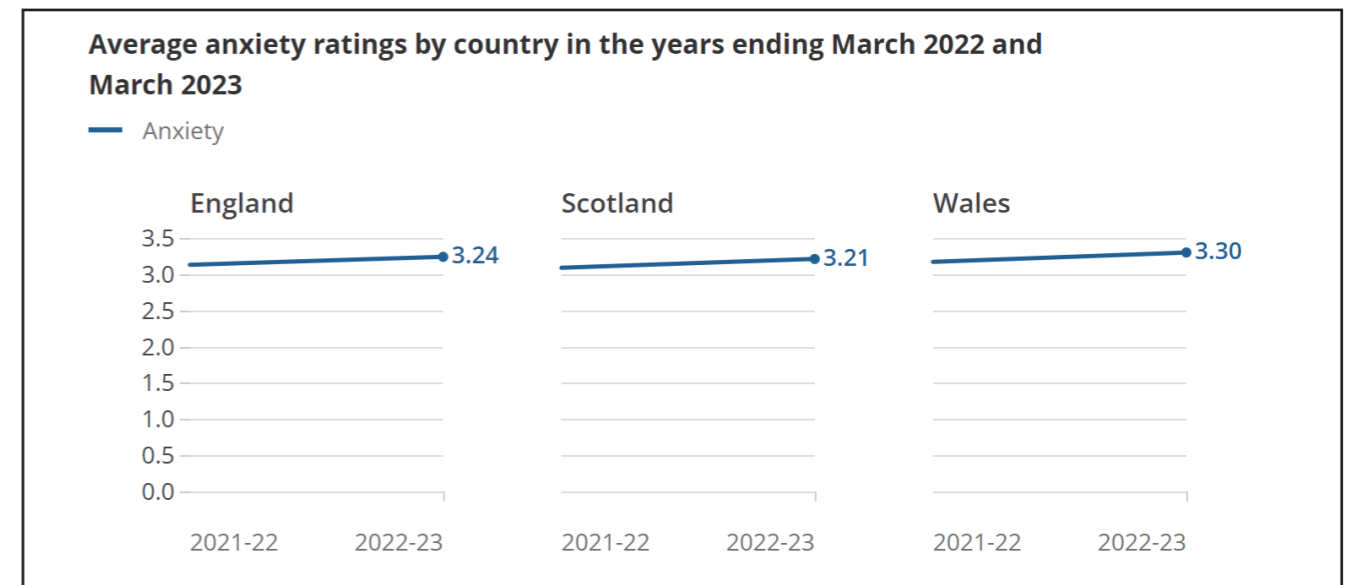


fig 10.

5.0 Trends + Forecasting Research

In developing the toolbox concept, I aimed for informed decisions aligned with future trends. Hennigan, C. suggests that “consumers will be attracted to beauty products and brands that offer added experimental elements beyond relaxation, such as tapping into consumer desire for playfulness and adventure” (2020).

Inspired by 60s and 70s music festivals and shows like “Austin Powers,” “Scooby-Doo,” and The Beatles’ “Yellow Submarine,” I believed this aesthetic would be successful as not only would the bold colours and playful designs appeal to a younger audience, but they would also appeal to an older generation as “consumers seek items that spark nostalgia and familiarity” (WGSN, 2021).

Considering the toolkit’s contents, I noted that “Gen Z favour more creative or gamified self-care activities to incorporate into their daily routines.” (Indeka, M., 2022). The goal was to create an experience with longevity and impact, going beyond routine.

To enhance the Lush experience, I aimed to create “sensual and stimulating products”, and “micro-moments of joy” (Raath, K., 2024), for the consumer. Raath, K. suggests that “layered aesthetics and textural materials will combine to create a multisensory tactility that consumers can’t help but reach out to touch” (2024). I would enhance this tactile approach in my design, with embossed elements and foil accents, reflecting Lush’s renowned sensory appeal.

Moreover, considering Lush’s eco-conscious consumer base and rising social awareness, there’s a high demand for sustainable options, meaning that “recycling of paper packaging will be more common” (Lefteri, C. & Raath, K., 2023), hence my decision to use G.F. Smith “Extract” paper, which is made of coffee cups. The paper’s production process ensures no waste, contributing to reduced landfill and incineration.



fig 11.



fig 12.



fig 13.



fig 14.

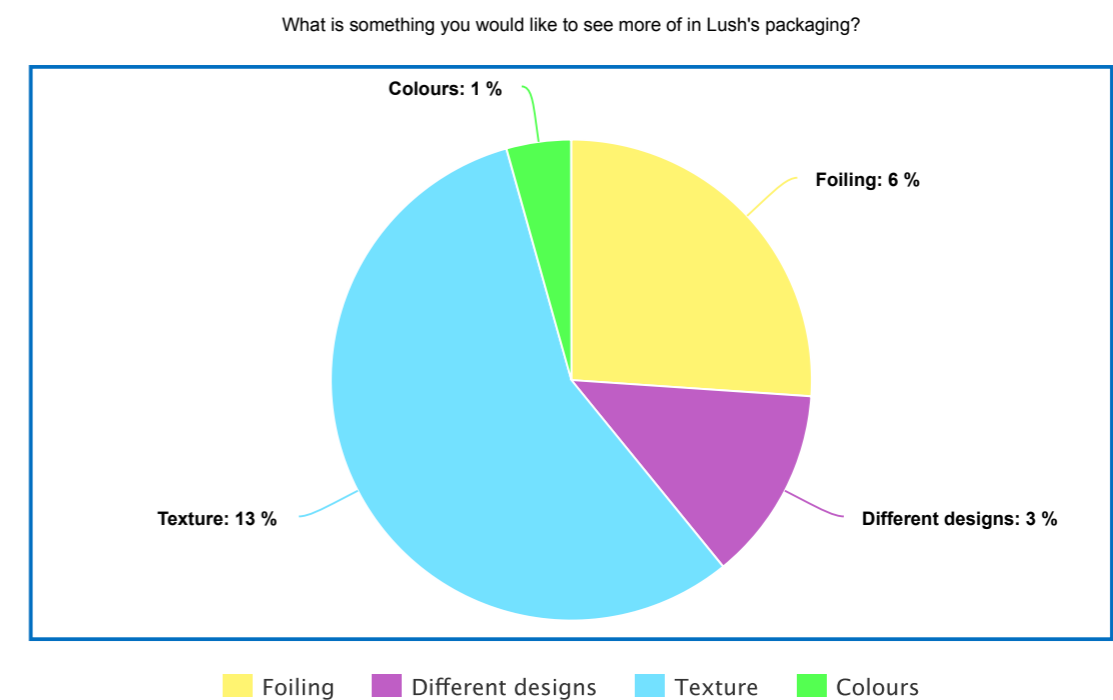


fig 15.

6.0 Festival Research

The Happy Place festival describes itself as “a creative space for self-love and happiness” and claims that it is “where difference is celebrated and the extraordinary is discovered” (2024).

Located in Tatton Park, Knutsford (and now expanded to Chiswick House & Gardens, London) and accommodating music and nature lovers, The Happy Place has “been described as the “Woodstock of Wellness” by Russell Brand” (The Millennial Runaway, 2019).

The festival was created to be a “fully immersive experience giving people the chance to go and escape anything that they are dealing with in real life and come away with some brilliant tools to help them” (The Millennial Runaway, 2019).

Based on my research, The Happy Place offers a diverse experience, welcoming individuals from all backgrounds and beliefs. It’s inclusive, not limited by gender or age, and appears family-friendly (The Happy Place, 2024).



fig 16.

6.0 Festival Research continued

Tickets sit at an average to lower end of the ticket pricing spectrum, with a full day admission ticket for an adult costing £42.35, a child's (from 5 to 16 years old) costs £19.80, and anyone under the age of five gets in for free. This makes The Happy Place more accessible to a much larger group of people.

Furthermore, in addition to the festival, The Happy Place offers a podcast and app. Festival-goers receive a free three-month app access upon ticket purchase, which is “designed as a straightforward and relatable approach to self-care” with “expert-led wellbeing practices such as meditation, yoga,

breathwork, sound healing, guided sleep and much more, providing a safe space where you can relax and restore” (The Happy Place, 2024).

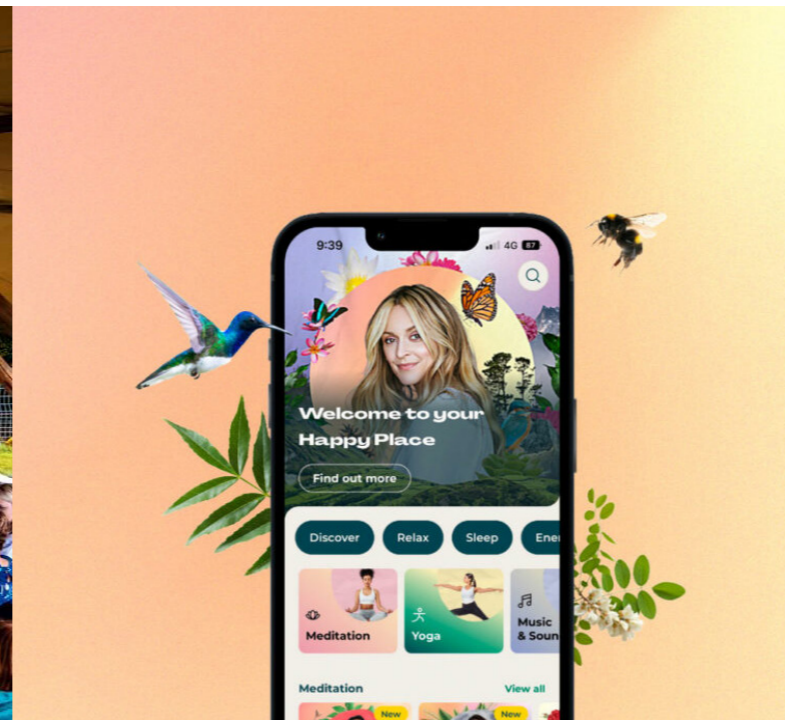


fig 17.

7.0 Object Review

The Lush “No Drought” dry shampoo is a product designed to cater to the needs of individuals seeking convenience, sustainability, and effective hair care solutions. Through analytical research I found out how and why this product aims to serve its particular user audience, drawing upon relevant theories and considering various aspects of its design, function, and impact on health and well-being.

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) provides help in understanding consumer behavior and how product design can influence decision-making. The Boston University states that “the theory was intended to explain all behaviors over which people have the ability to exert self-control” (2022). According to this theory, attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control can shape opinions, and ultimately determine behavior. In the case of the Lush “No Drought” Dry Shampoo, the design aligns with these factors to serve its intended user audience.

The design of the dry shampoo reflects an understanding of consumer preferences for natural ingredients and eco-friendly packaging. Lush, as a manufacturer known for its commitment to sustainability, incorporates natural ingredients such as cornflour in the dry shampoo formula. The packaging is designed to be compact, portable, and recyclable, appealing to environmentally conscious consumers.

Furthermore, the relationship with the intended user audience is strengthened through Lush’s brand identity and values. Lush is a company that prioritizes ethical sourcing, environmental sustainability, and transparency. This resonates with consumers who value authenticity and ethical practices in the products they purchase.

In terms of function, the dry shampoo absorbs excess oil and refreshes the hair between washes. Its aim is to provide a convenient and effective solution for individuals with busy lifestyles or those who want to reduce their use of water. The spectrum of users is very broad, appealing to a wide range of demographics including busy professionals, travelers, and environmentally conscious consumers.



fig 18.

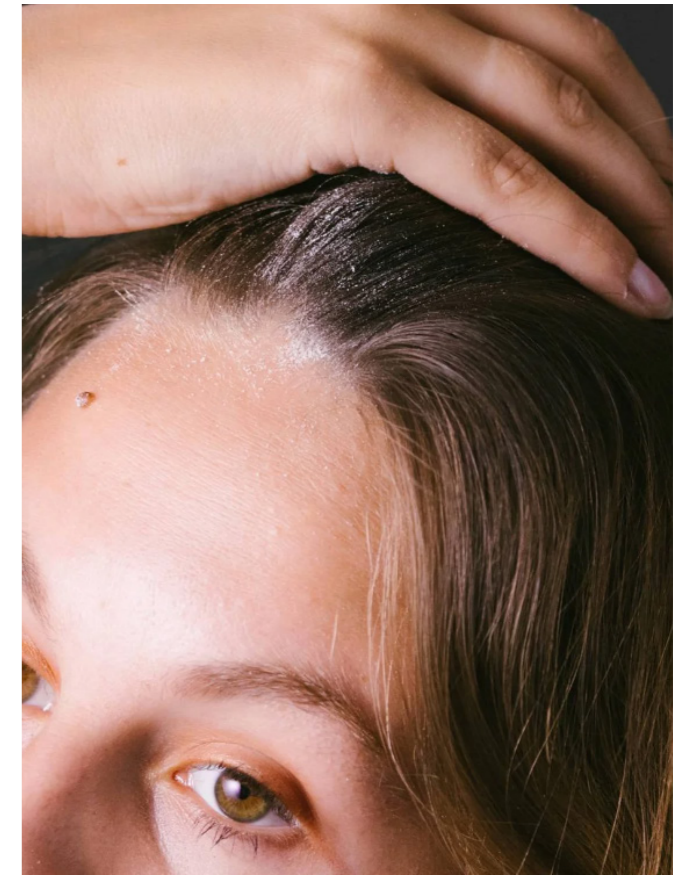


fig 19.



fig 20.

7.0 Object Review continued

The age, longevity, and durability of the product are important considerations in its design and production. Lush uses high-quality ingredients and ethical manufacturing practices to ensure product longevity and performance. The simplistic and sustainable design of the packaging enhances usability and portability, further enhancing the user experience.

Moreover, the materials used in the product are carefully selected to align with Lush's commitment to sustainability and environmental responsibility. The aesthetic appeal of the packaging and product design reflects Lush's brand image and reinforces its values of natural beauty and environmental consciousness. Additionally, the way that Lush creates its packaging, carries the idea that once the consumer has finished their product, they can reuse any and all of its packaging for different or similar purposes.

In terms of health and well-being, the "No Drought" dry shampoo supports the overall health of the hair and scalp by reducing the frequency of shampooing, which can strip the hair of its natural oils and lead to dryness or damage. By promoting water conservation and sustainable practices, the product contributes to the environmental well-being of its users and the planet as a whole, while still using natural ingredients such as "grapefruit and lime oil" (Lush, 2024).

To conclude, the "No Drought" dry shampoo serves its particular user audience by aligning with consumer preferences for convenience, sustainability, and effective hair care solutions. Through thoughtful design, ethical manufacturing practices, and a commitment to environmental responsibility, Lush delivers a product that not only meets the needs of its users but also supports their health and well-being.

8.0 Critical Evaluation

Overall, I am pleased with the outcome of my project. Doing thorough research into all areas of this project was extremely critical to the designing process for my toolkit. Through my investigation into low self-esteem and confidence, I found remedies to improve them which aligned perfectly with what I initially intended to do with this well-being toolkit.

What's more, upon further investigation into the causes of low self-esteem, I found information directly linking to Lush's values. E.g., in the last few years, self-esteem has been immensely impacted, especially that of young people, by social media, and Lush has decided to remove itself from most social media platforms due to its concerns over users' mental well-being, particularly among teenagers.

My primary investigation, visiting Lush stores and conducting surveys, enhanced my understanding of consumer preferences. Secondary and tertiary research, drawing from scientific journals and official statistics, informed me on mental health areas, providing accuracy and trustworthiness to my ideas.

If I had had more time for this project, I would've liked to have created specific goals for the user, which was one of my initial ideas. However, after discussing it with a Lush employee I decided against it, as they suggested it could make the user feel pressured. I opted to fully embrace the laid-back nature of my toolkit. I would like to explore the ways I could create long-term milestones for the user without making them feel stressed.

To conclude, I am happy with the progression of my designs throughout the project. I believe that my research and analytical skills have greatly improved, and helped refine and shape the outcome of my toolkit.

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Grow
Flow

The image features the words "Grow" and "Flow" in a highly stylized, cursive font. "Grow" is rendered in a purple color, while "Flow" is in a bright yellow-green. Both words have a thick black outline and a slight 3D effect. A small, white, five-petaled flower with a yellow center is positioned between the two words, slightly to the right of the "o" in "Grow". The entire graphic is set against a solid, light blue background.