

INNOVATE inSIDE

[A collaborative design project from the Makeright Design Academy
at HMP Thameside]

Introduction

For the past 6 weeks, the Design Academy at HMP Thameside has enabled some Inmates and staff to go through a collaborative design process to generate new ideas aimed at improving everyday life in prison. We have drawn on design methodologies first introduced to inmates via the Makeright Design course because we were inspired by the latent creativity we saw.

Evidently common to those in prisons, but not often celebrated.

We focused this project on figuring out how to address a wide range of every day challenges experienced by inmates. From how to deal with emotional crisis, to how to improve hygiene via design.

In this presentation we hope to show not just some of the designs developed over the course of six weeks but also an overview of the design stages we followed and the research uncovered.

We hope this positive presentation, which is aimed at our new Governor of HMP Thameside, is accepted as a gift of welcome.

We hope Craig Thomson can help us find new ways to enable the development of some of these useful ideas, as we are willing, not just to solve internal problems by design but also to use our energies to perceive the beauty of creativity that resides in staff and inmates at HMP Thameside.

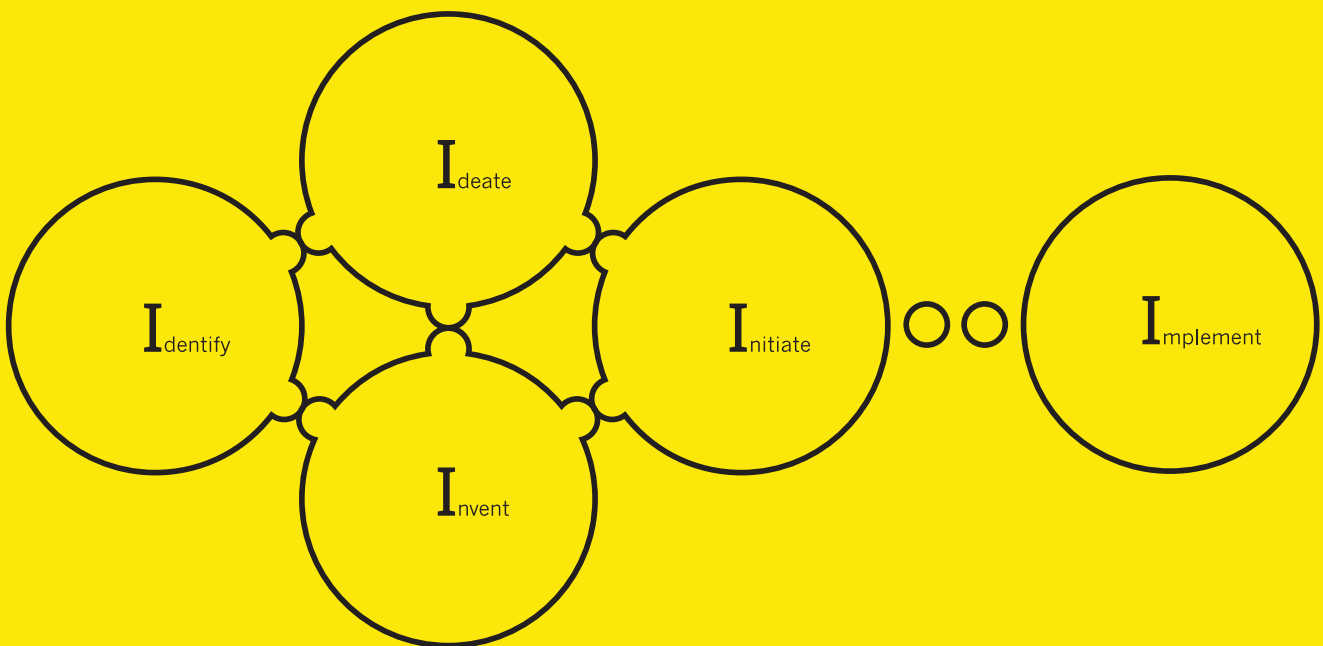
Erika Renedo Illarregi & Pras Gunasekera.



Process

There are many different ways to represent the design process and different companies and practitioners apply varying methods and processes.

In the Anti-theft bag design project at HMP Thameside we use the Double Diamond process (developed by the Design Council¹) and on this project we have used a research oriented version developed by the social enterprise Bidean, which is as follows:



// IDENTIFY:

Methods from metaphors to interviewing prisoners and officers, observation on wings, in cells and understanding lived experience is the foundation for identifying issues.

// IDEATE & INVENT:

We have used brainstorming and storyboarding techniques to come up with many ideas and invent new solutions.

// INITIATE:

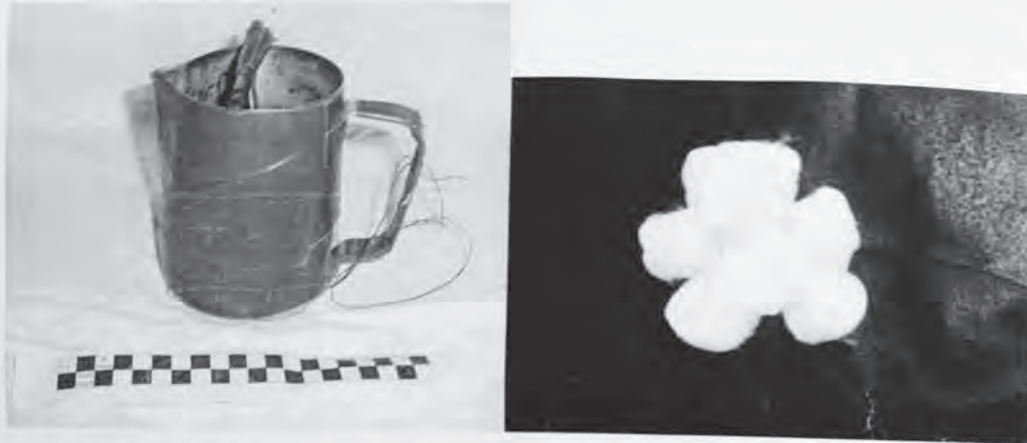
We have made some prototypes of products we invented, and drew a images of why we believe these could help tackle identified issues.

// IMPLEMENT:

In order to implement these ideas, we need your feedback. Please let us know what you think of our products and help us get them to the next stage...

¹[http://www.designcouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/asset/document/ElevenLessons_Design_Council%20\(2\).pdf](http://www.designcouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/asset/document/ElevenLessons_Design_Council%20(2).pdf)

Sample of workshop exercise:



Ad hoc Kettle (before kettles were used in prison) / Ad hoc earplugs

DRAW OR BRING TO CLASS (if possible) YOURS or ANY YOU FOUND , YOU CAN USE THE BACK OF THIS PAPER TO DRAW>

Definition of AD HOC in Wikipedia:

Ad hoc is a Latin phrase meaning "for this". In English, it generally signifies a solution designed for a specific problem or task, non-generalizable, and not intended to be able to be adapted to other purposes (compare with a priori).

Common examples are ad hoc organizations, committees, and commissions created at the national or international level for a specific task. In other fields, the term could refer, for example, to a military unit created under special circumstances, a tailor-made suit, a handcrafted network protocol, or a purpose-specific equation.

Ad hoc can also mean **makeshift solutions, shifting contexts to create new meanings, inadequate planning, or improvised events.**

Fig 1. Initial introduction to design for inmates not already familiar included quick exercises to explore design as sense making and problem solving and to look for design activity in prison.

Stages:

A] DESIGN AS SENSE MAKING:

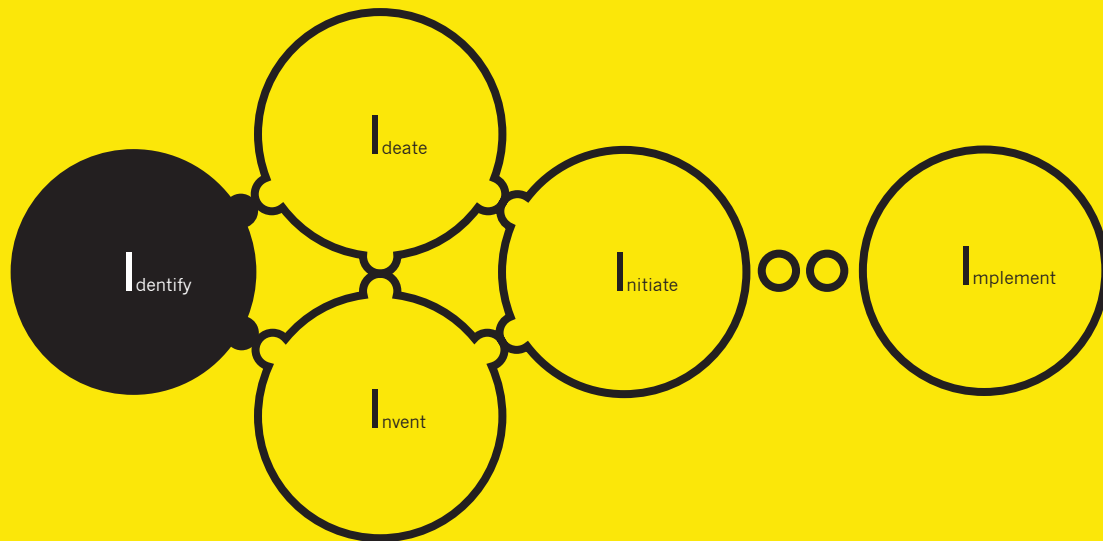
Inmates gathered objects around us and place them in the maze, relating them to different subject areas; family, world, work etc. depending on individual interpretation.

This helped us realise how we can understand our lives and create meaning through objects, and the need to relate to those we design for.

B] DESIGN AS PROBLEM SOLVING:

Inmates explored design as problem solving by inventing something that would protect an egg from breaking when hitting the ground.

Most inventions failed, but we used the insights of our failure to think about how we could improve the designs. Each iteration became part of the process.



IDENTIFY

We used metaphors to explore the problems, challenges and opportunities within prison.

We went on to find and understand positive ad-hoc products made by prisoners.

The tree metaphor helped us to understand how problems are related to one another, and how we could impact everyday life via design.

Through this process, participants identified a particular design challenge, and articulated questions to guide their research:

- How to improve comfort?
- How to tackle boredom?
- How to cope with stress?
- How to deal with crises?
- How to feel closer to loved ones?
- How to make the most of basic?
- How to improve hygiene?....



Air freshener using cologne purchased from the canteen.



Cup and string communication device.



Toothbrush holder using an empty juice carton affixed to the wall using toothpaste..

// POSITIVE AD-HOCISM:

Ad-hoc means 'for this', and is used to describe something improvised to serve a purpose. This concept has always inspired designers, as it shows the innate creativity in all of us.

More often than not, public attention lies in weapons and objects that prisoners make to hurt one another, which are often portrayed in movies and exhibited in museums.

We were interested in looking at the bright side. All the things that have been created to improve life in prison, such as playing dice made from bread!

Other things were made to make the cell smell nicer, improve comfort, personalise space, improve hygiene...

We have photographed some of these improvisations to showcase here.



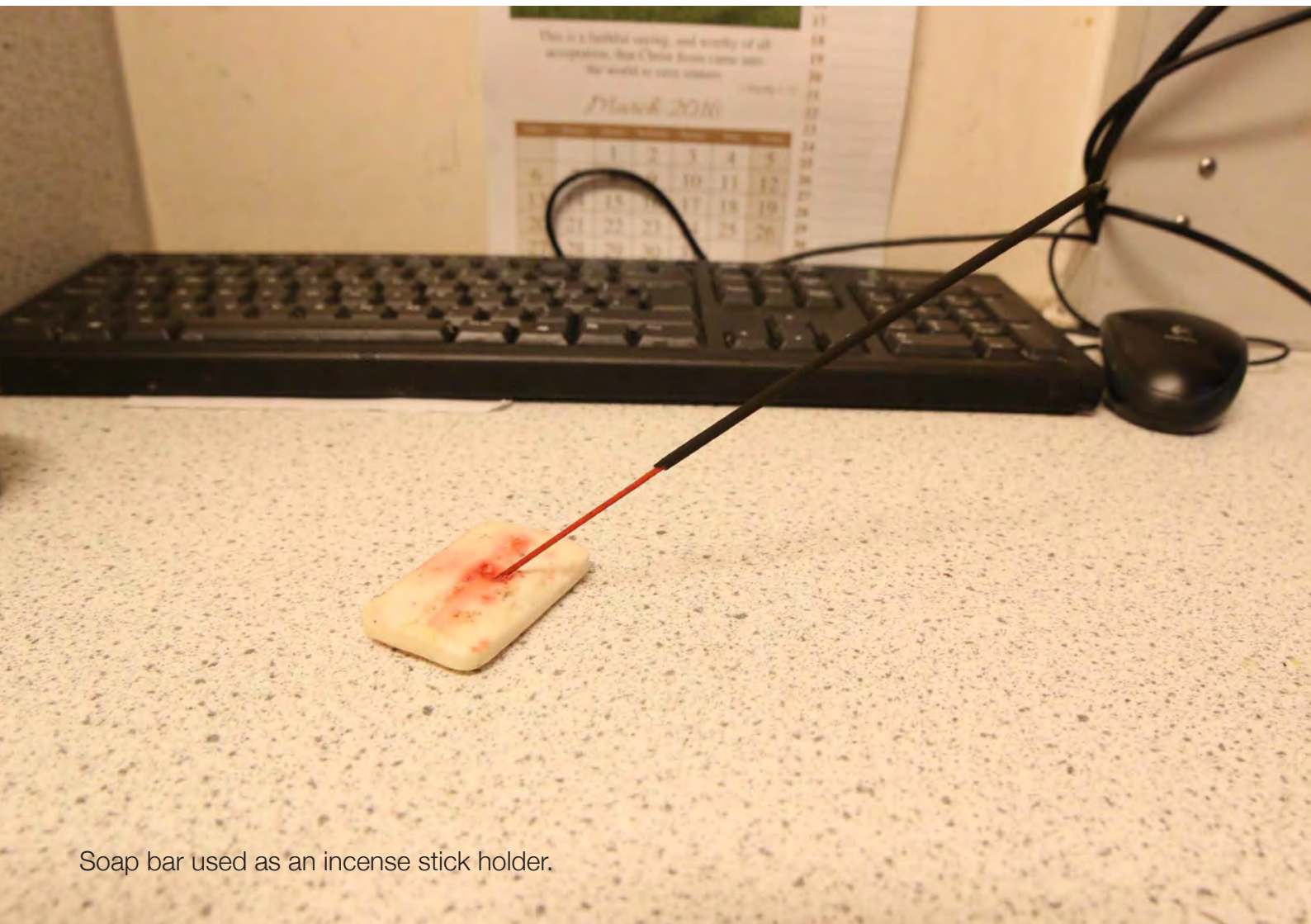
Empty juice boxes used to separate and store inmates food.



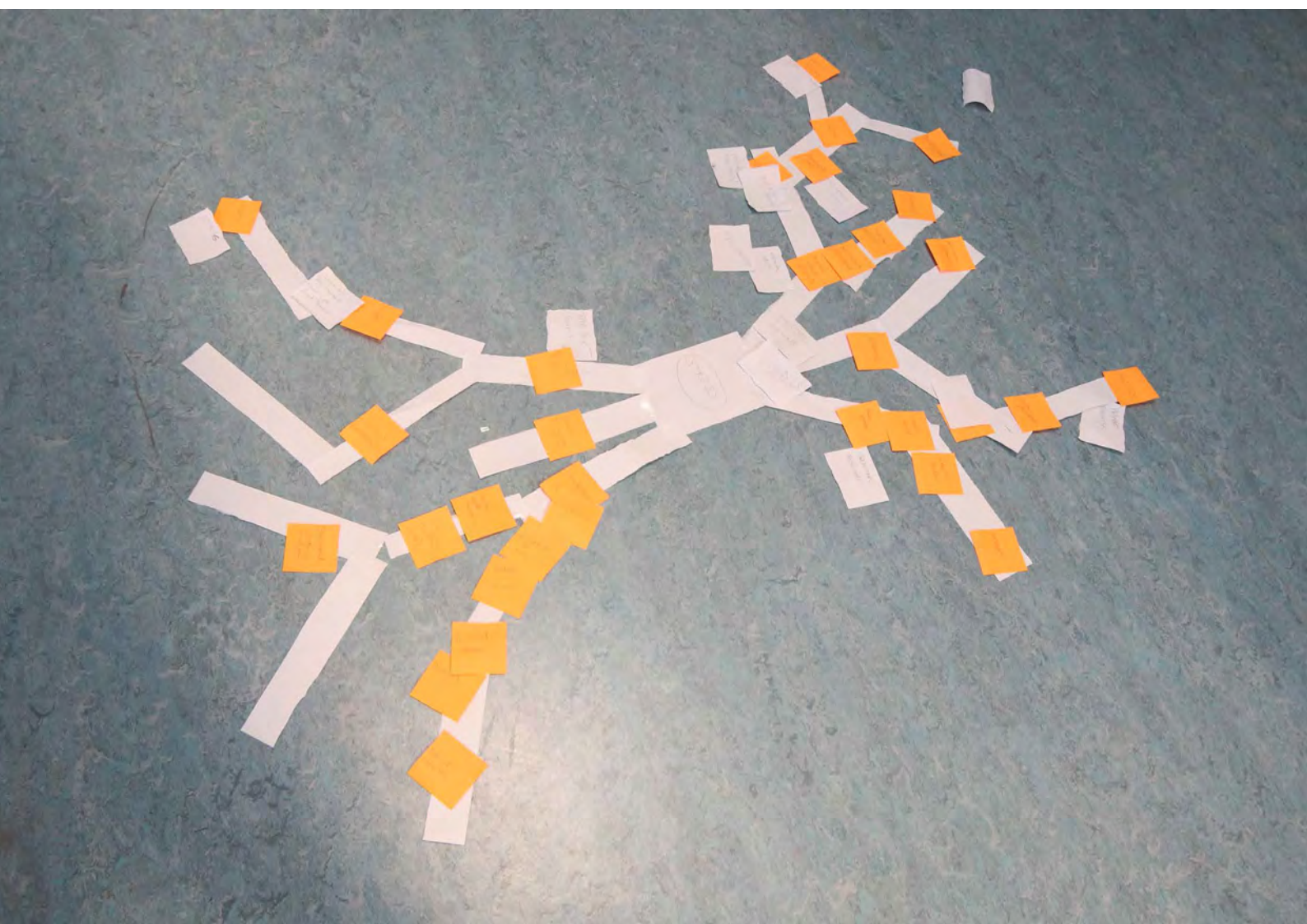
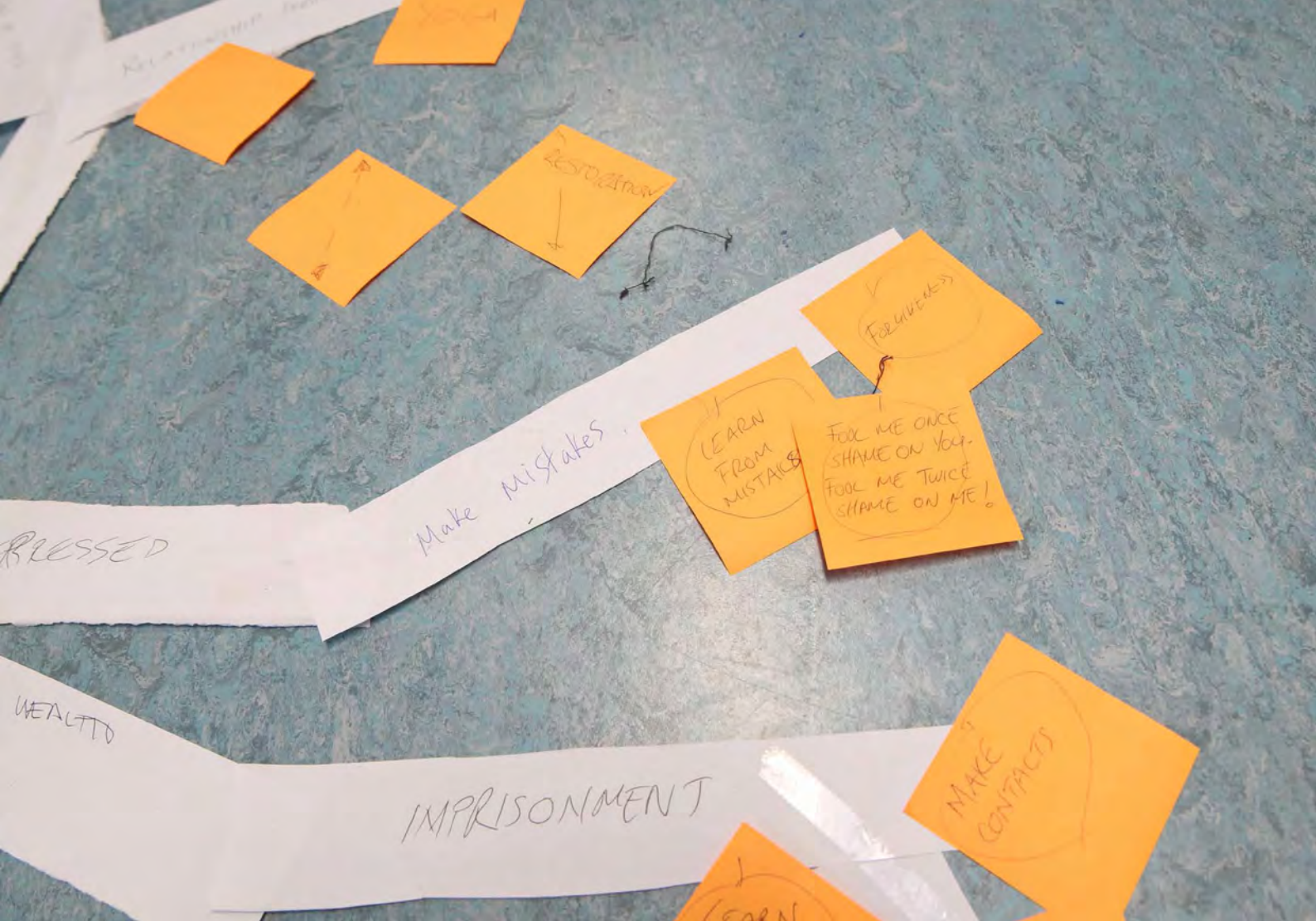
Pillow used over chair back to provide comfort and support.



A tool made from offcut material and a mop head to clear thread and dust from the overlockers

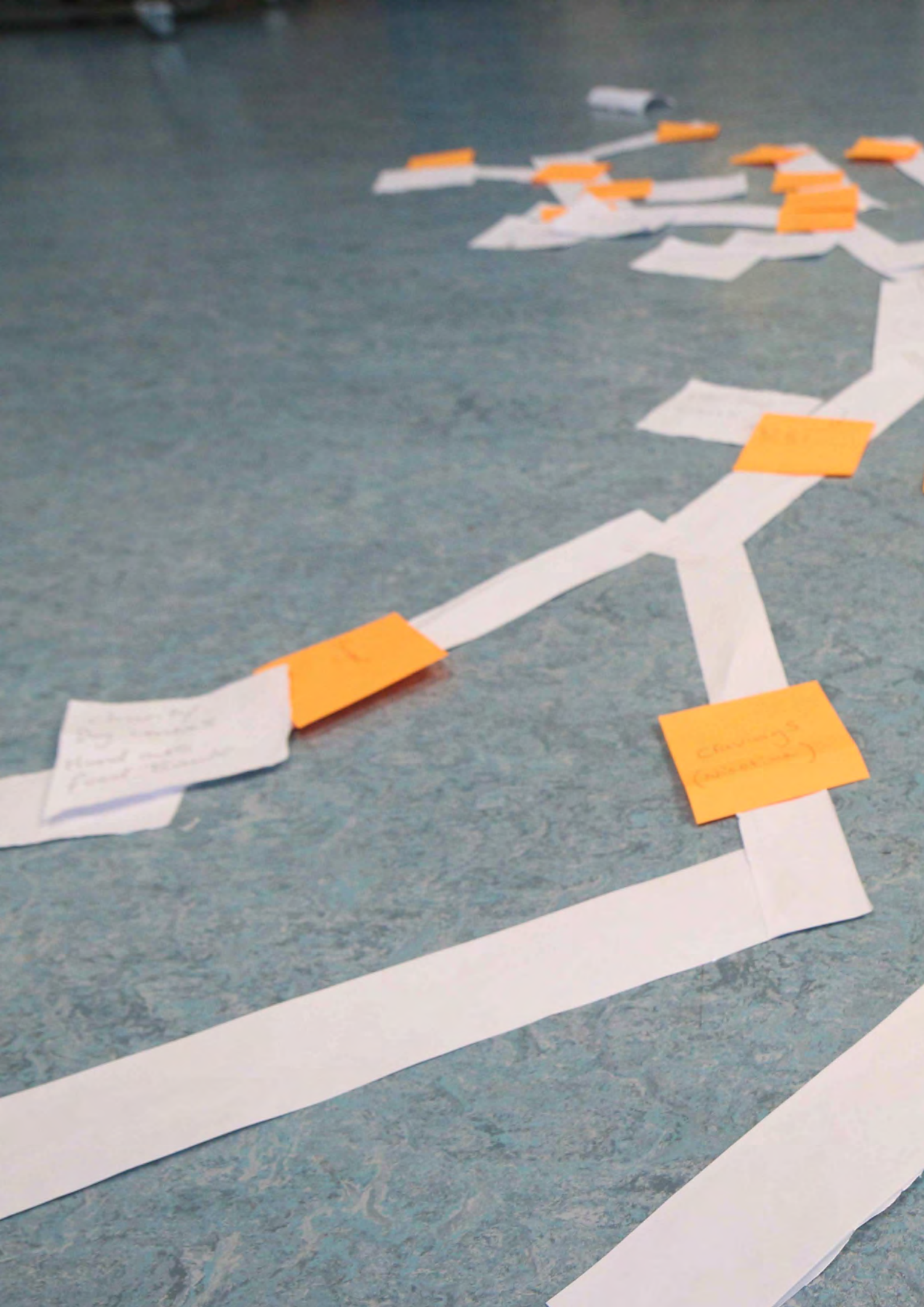


Soap bar used as an incense stick holder.



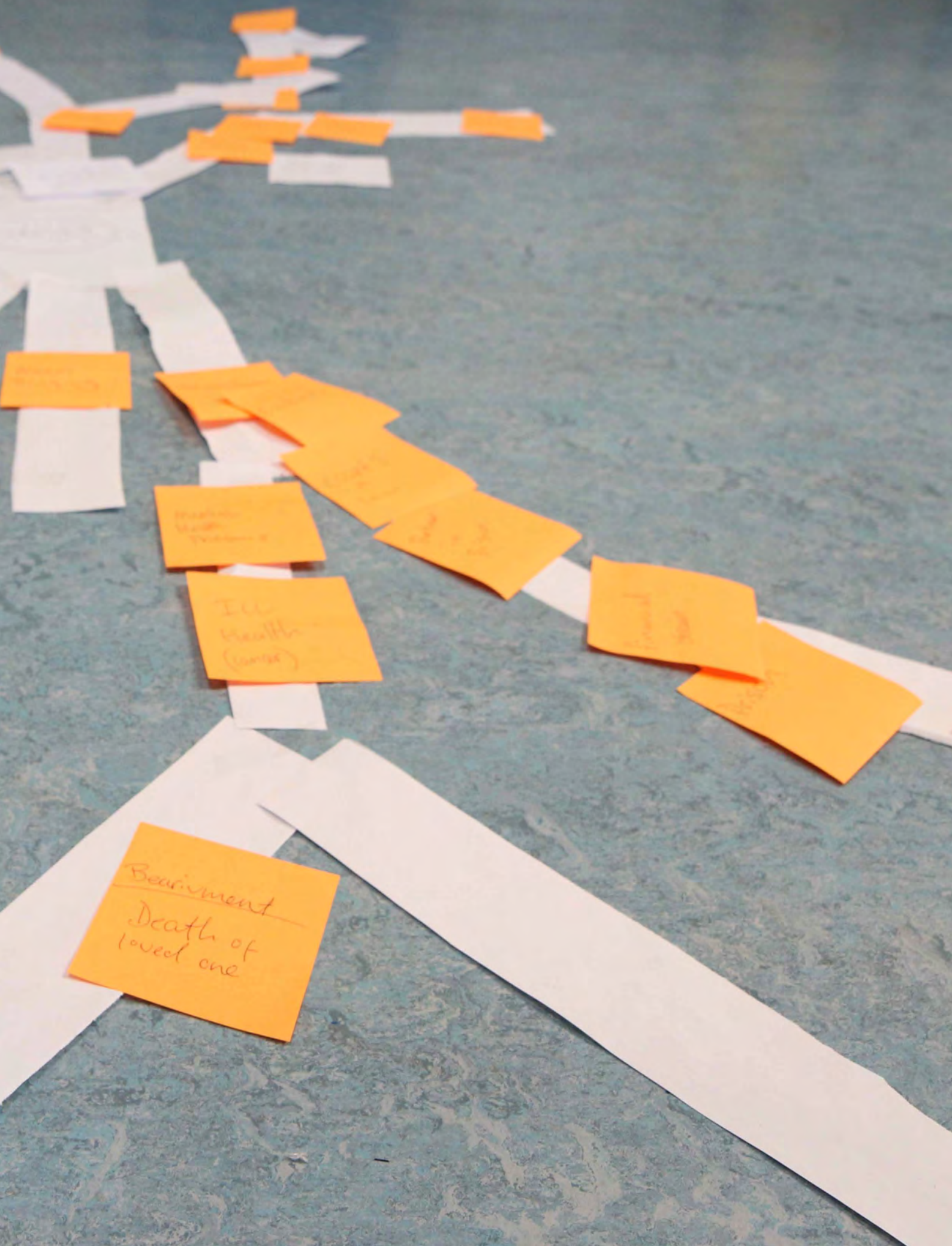
// THE TREES:

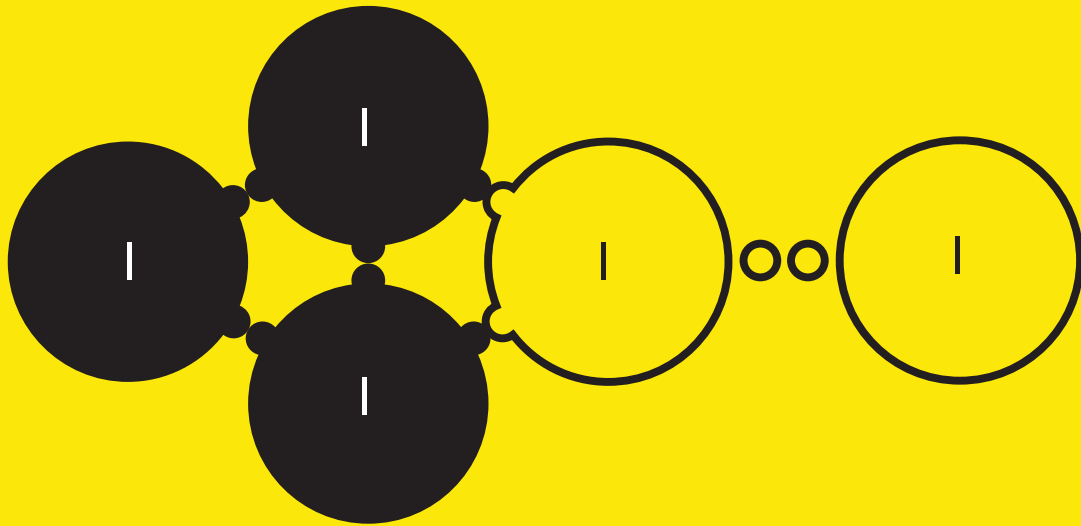
We used metaphors to analyse our initial thoughts of everyday life in prison. We placed core problems in the trunks, and then used branches and roots to draw a picture of how problems relate to one another in order to start focusing on a particular research challenge.



Change of Day
Hand with
Front

Coping's
(2000)

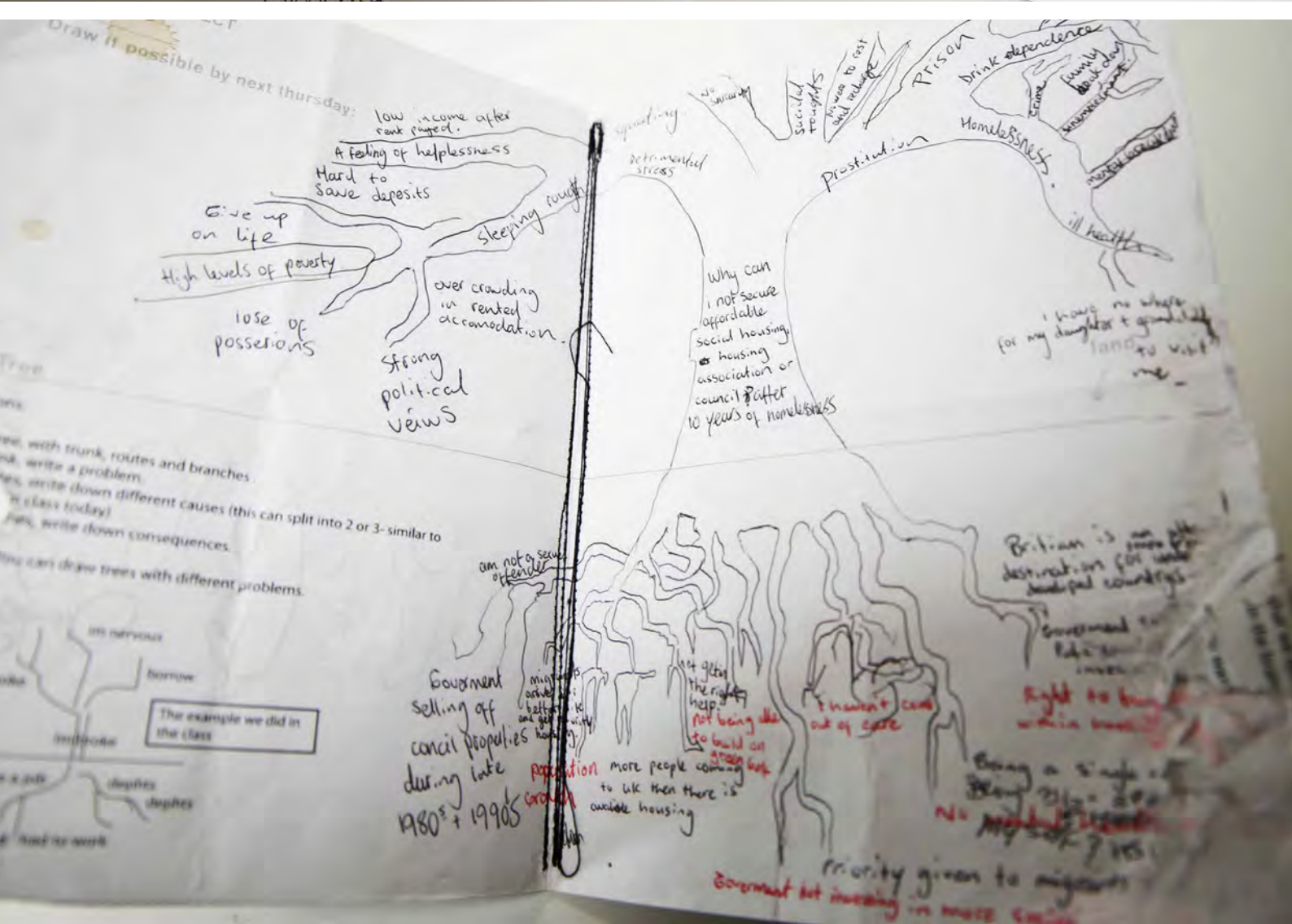
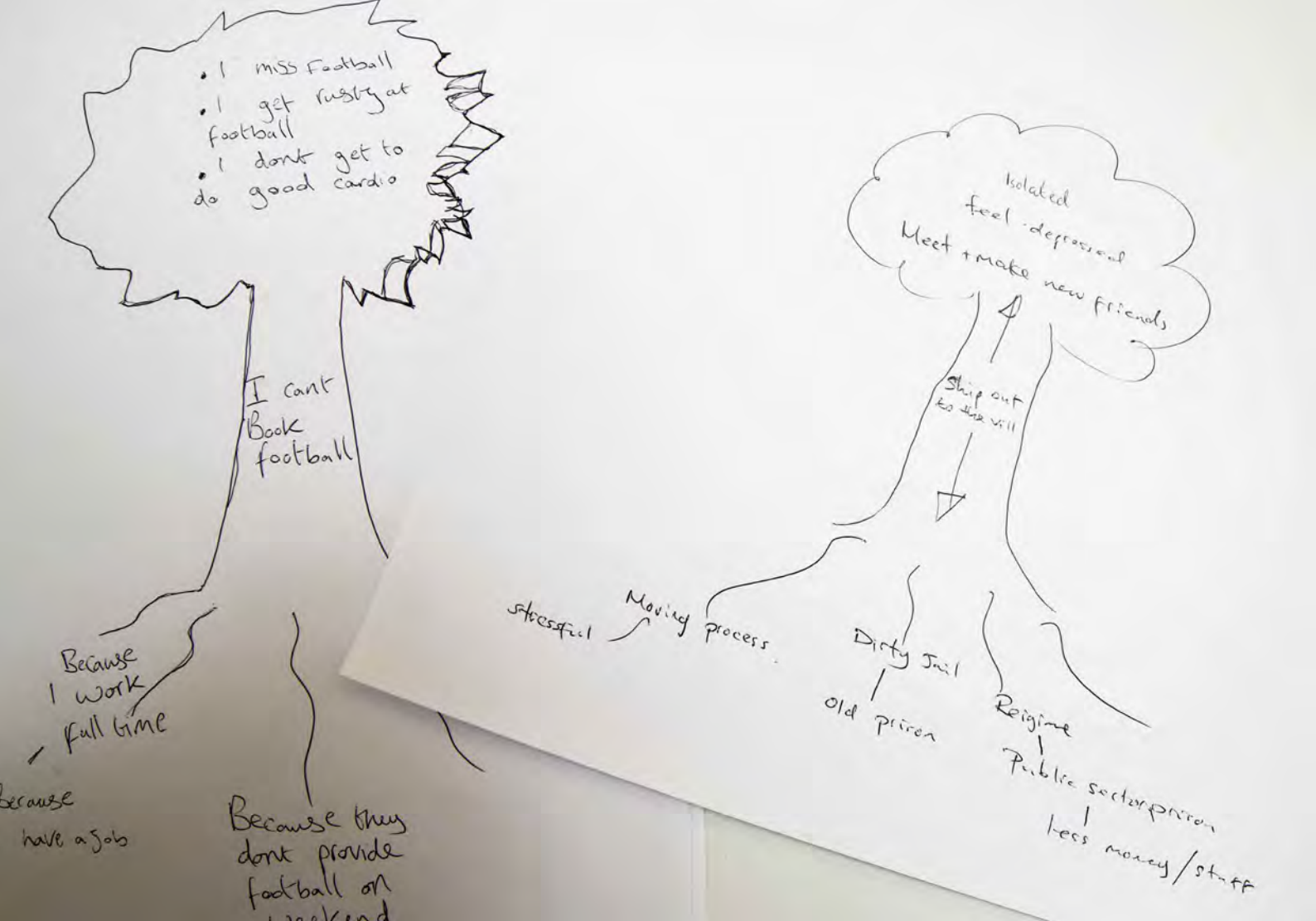




IDENTIFY, IDEATE AND INVENT [RESEARCH PROCESS]

In response to our initial group analysis of everyday issues within the prison, participants begin specific research into the challenges identified. Participants used different methods and came up with innovative ideas to tackle these issues;

How to improve comfort?
How to tackle boredom?
How to cope with stress?
How to deal with crises?
How to feel closer to loved ones?
How to make the most of basic?
How to improve hygiene?....



PRODUCT TITLE:

// CARD HOLDER

By Samuel

Research method// Immersion

“Research started when a mentally ill inmate made a governor aware that he had misplaced his ID Card. I then thought of a cardholder that would keep his card visible at all times. I also created different versions, which you can take to the gym or stick to your cell wall. I asked other inmates about the idea and they agreed that it would be something that they would use...” Samuel

Why?

“Everytime you loose your card you need to pay £5 pounds to replace it. Many people lose their cards. Some people may have mental health problems which makes it even more difficult to keep it with you at all times. This product helps, and can also look good. It can help inmates save money that can be better spent”

Next steps?

Simplify design to allow for faster production.



PRISION HELP LINE



PRODUCT TITLE:

// HELP LINE

By Rokas

Research method// Own experience and self assessment

"I believe it is beneficial, sometimes I have felt uncomfortable to talk face to face but I would have been happy to talk to someone on the phone. There is a possibility for it because there are phones in every cell, and it could be set to link to listeners or psychology students" Rokas

Why?

To help people in crisis, to prevent from behavioural negative consequences.

Next steps?

Consult the Samaritans and security.



>> VISIT FROM UNNOM DESIGN

In the middle of our project, we had a visit from Unnom, a Spanish company that specialises in designing and producing rubbish bins. It was a particularly relevant presentation and discussion, as the designers of these products face the comfort/aesthetic/security challenge as they often design bins for airports which has specific requirements.

They explained some of their projects as well as their design process, and some inmates came up with some new innovative ideas!

PRODUCT TITLE:

// CHAIR COMFORT

By Mr. T.

Research method// Own experience and interviews.

"I sit on the chair with the cushion and slide down. Sit again, slide down again. If I had a system to keep it in place..." Mr.T

Mr.T interviewed his cell mate who was using the cushion system and a wing officer, who gave feedback such as prison property couldn't be damaged and had to be easy to search.

The project was developed by Mohammed and K, who created a comfort cover that fits both chair models (Houseblock 1 and 2 chairs are very different).

Why?

This may help people with back problems and improve comfort.

Next steps?

Consult security to understand feasibility and if any design modifications are needed.





PRODUCT TITLE:

// BORED GAMES

By George

Research method// Observation.

"I observed the wings at tea time, when prisoners come back from their activities. I developed a metaphor, and analysed prison spaces as boxes, differentiating the activity boxes (workshops, gym etc.) from holding boxes (wings), where most boredom happens. I identified that few prisoners would jump to their games as soon as they arrived on the wings, but the majority (60/70%) would stay wondering around, with nothing to do. I understood that those who played games were enjoying, it was very positive, and so my design was to make table cloths with games on them for others to enjoy. We made two games to accommodate diverse ages and tastes identified through the research. Other games can be added on future."

George



BOREDGAMES

// INSTRUCTIONS

1- A Table football game (previous page) that can be set up and played on the communal table on wings. This is a 2 player game, the football is flicked across the table (much like Subbuteo) with a goal keeper at either end to make saves.

2- The Maze Runner game: "I'm a prisoner, get me out of here!" (opposite page). The maze is set on a grid and different squares on the grid have different colours. Each player must throw the dice in turn and navigate their way through the playing area, from the start to the exit. The coloured squares have respective coloured playing cards to be picked up any time any player lands on that colour. This is a strategic, turn based game.

Why?

These games have been created for prisoners of any age group, as alternative activities/games that can pass time on the wings and tackle boredom.

Next steps

Consult card text content with relevant stakeholders. Trial on wings, collect feedback from players and officers.



PRODUCT TITLE:

// WEARABLE YOGAMAT

By Rokas

A yoga mat that you can carry around the prison to be used at the gym, in cell...etc. It has basic yoga instructions sewn into the back.

Why?

Looks great and may encourage others to practice yoga. Some people don't practice on the floor as it is not easy. They may forget what to do, this garment has the instructions attached.

Next Steps

Some security concerns regarding the material thickness and consistency. To be redesigned with different materials such as softer fabrics or foam.

Would this product be beneficial in other contexts outside?





PRODUCT TITLE:

// GYMBELT

By Bhatia

Comfortable fabric belt with a pocket to hold a bottle, to ensure you won't lose your water bottle during exercises.

Why?

All bottles look the same. If things were personalised or kept on you it would be less likely to drink from other people's bottles and get their colds. You need to hydrate yourself while exercising to keep healthy.

Next steps

After consultation with security, certain elements raised concerns about carrying bottles (need to be empty). Also, the shape and material could not be safe enough for prisoners that may be on ACCTS.

Products need redesign to consider these setbacks. However, we believe the product may be successful in other contexts like gyms in the community.

PRODUCT TITLE:

// BLACK OUT VIZOR

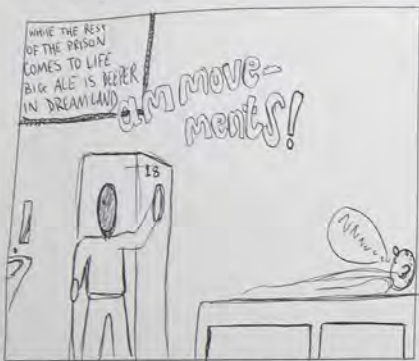
By Sam

Research method// Immersion and interviews.

"There is ALWAYS stress. The only time when there is no stress is when you have a single cell. The silliest things sometimes get everyone STRESSED.

In previous prisons, I usually take the TV and give it to the officers. In this prison it's stuck to the wall, and you know they will have it on 24/7. I talked to many people who had many different ways to cope with stress, such as singing in the shower. That gets others stressed. One mans de-stress is another mans stress. This products creates a multisensory shelter so everyone can feel more relaxed." Sam

>Storyboard: ONE MANS STRESS SOLUTION IS ANOTHER MANS STRESS!



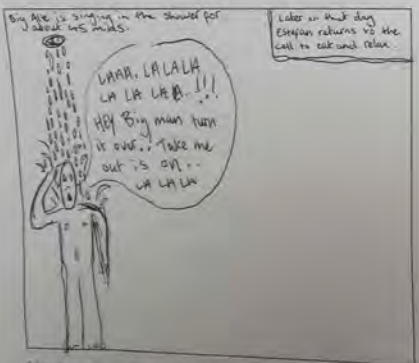
Estefan heads off to face the day but there is no movement from BIG ALE. It would seem that Big Ale is delving the inevitable. The reality of what the day holds, or the stress that haunts them.



Estefan returns for lunch to find Big ALE in the shower. 35mins pass and Big ALE is still singing in the shower. Big ALE copes with his stress by singing in the shower.



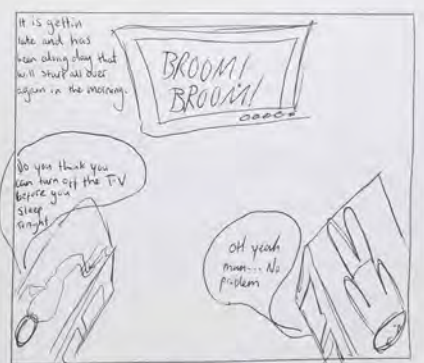
After the shower Big ALE settles back down to watch t.v., anything that shows fast cars, big trucks or girls. Estefan also needs to escape ~~some~~ more so settles down to read a book before it is time for afternoon movements.



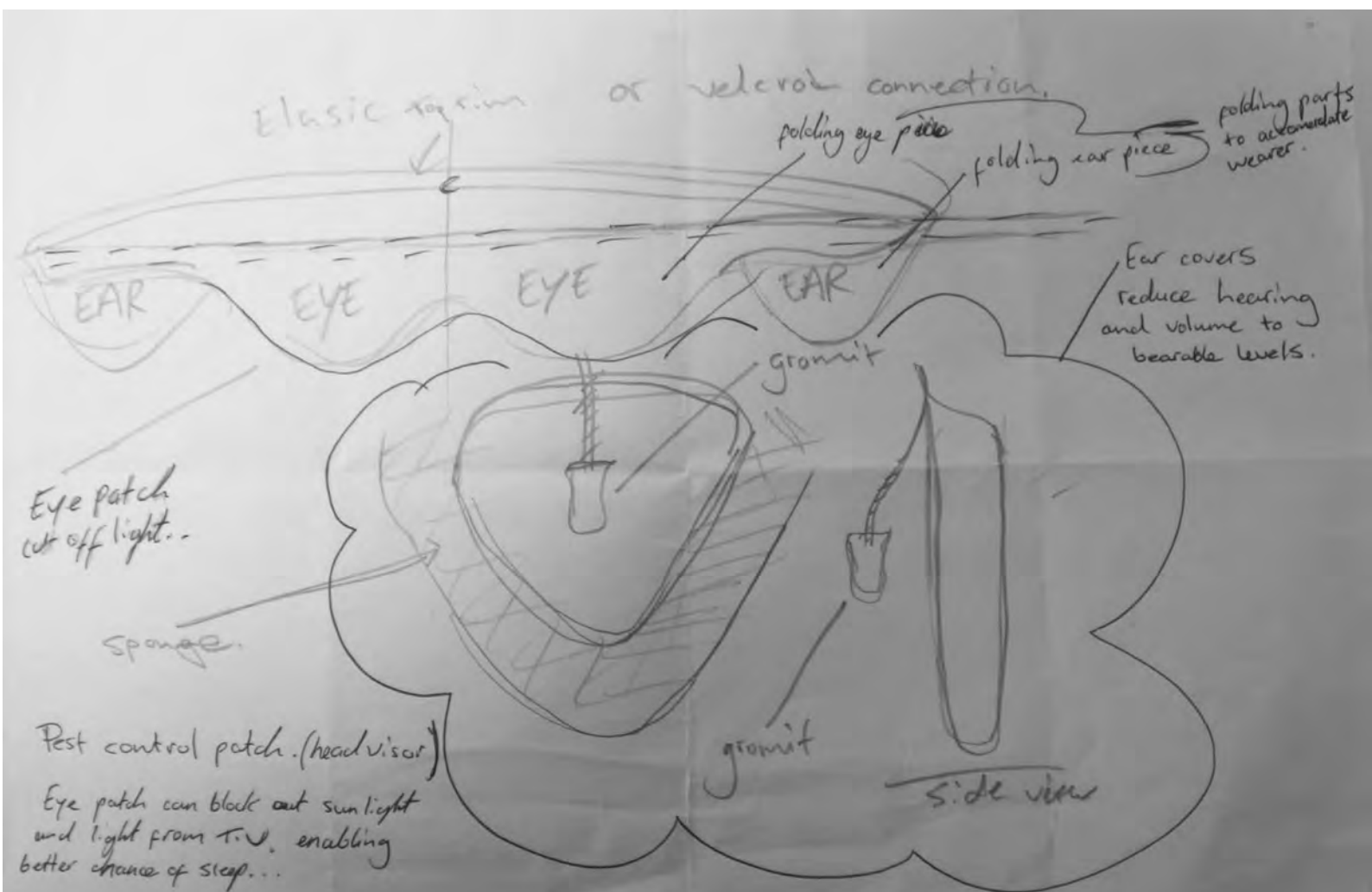
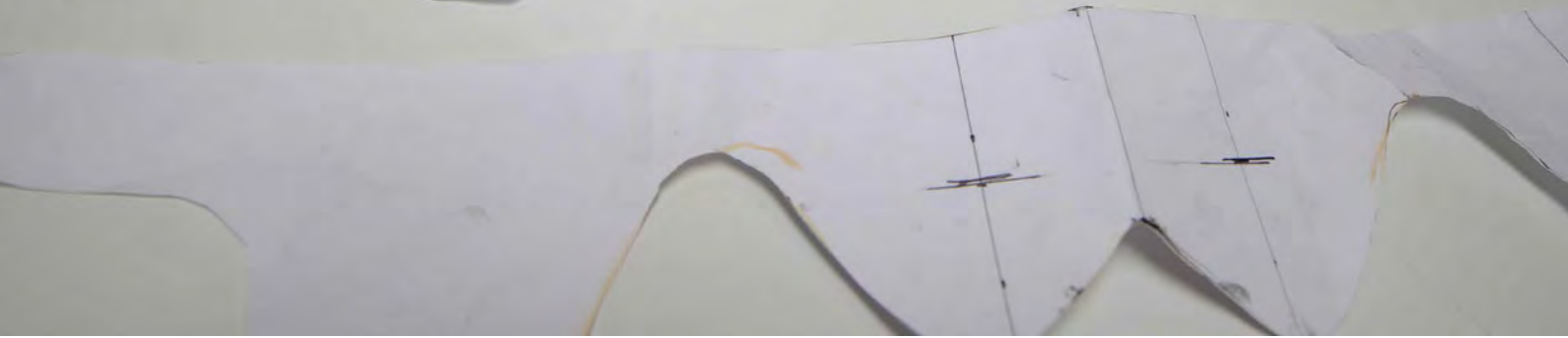
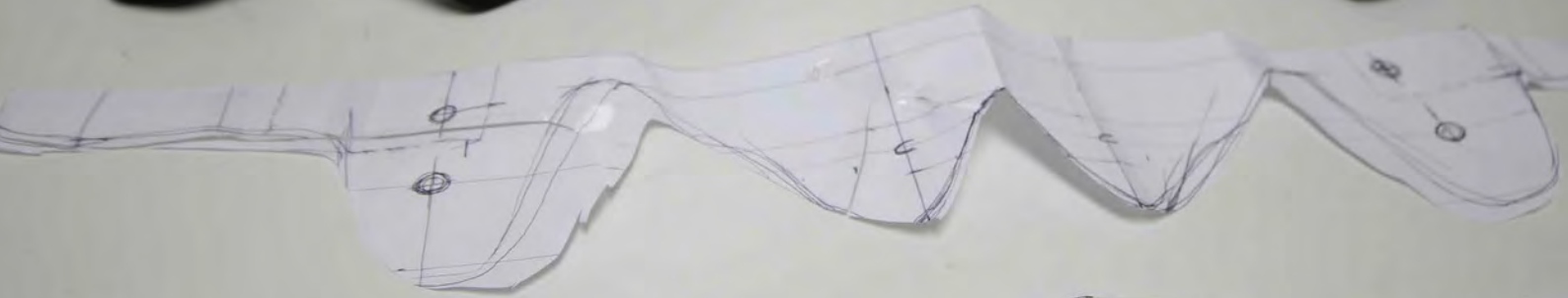
Estefan was trying to watch something on the tv but needed to hear it over the singing and the noise playing. ~~Estefan~~ needs to be very close and in good luck this morning.



Big ALE spent so long singing in the shower that he missed take me out so has to watch the re-run on ITV+1. It's a good thing Estefan can read a book and escape. But the constant noise is making it difficult to concentrate on reading and is causing more stress and bad side's.



yet again Estefan has to get up at silly o'clock to turn off the TV as Big ALE has fallen asleep with it on. Estefan's only way of escape from his own stress is to turn off his own head and everything in it which is causing stress... He needs help. He doesn't want to be read or woken but sometimes feels he is cracking up. The stress of prison life is two much.



My Self-

- ① Keep occupied, exercise, silence, Meditation, read, plan for the future. ^{Smoke} _{Spice} : cut.
- ② Set example, they will always follow
- ③ Keep busy, gym, work, Substance misuse program, library, read, make notes - set goals, domestic chores.
- ④ " same as above
- ⑤ create other solutions ie space and storage
- ⑥ bite size, within reach & dream and inspiration
- ⑦ live within means as well as never spending it all. Buy what I need not what I want
- ⑧ Get involved with programmes, IAA, change - State of mind
- ⑨ Stay occupied
- ⑩ keep clean, keep music and tv to reasonable volume. Share but don't take the piss. No graffiti
- ⑪ Get to know the opposition
- ⑫ think of loved ones, think about myself. ^{think what I could have not what I had} _(state of mind)
- ⑬ Set example, half everything if need be

Alex - inmate.

- ① Shower, listen to music and singing
- ② Never exercise in the wing
- ③ Drawing, watch mega truck TV
- ④ " as above
- ⑤ clean tidy cell NO Tooth Paste
- ⑥ thought processing
- ⑦ Max spend £2-4 a week on essentials
- ⑧ Never used stay strong
- ⑨ Singing + draw - treat like stress
- ⑩ clean, constant, remove tooth paste + graffiti
- ⑪ ??
- ⑫ Go gym, set goals, going to work
- ⑬ tell them after two, three days if no change move out 100%



Why?

This is a multisensory barrier for you and your cell mate to enjoy each others company. You are able to block your sense of sight or sound, in case your cell mate is singing in the shower, which might annoy you, but be beneficial for his stress level reduction.

This product allows everyone to keep their coping mechanism without creating stress for others.

Next steps

Sourcing of softer, safer materials and pricing.

PRODUCT TITLE:

// FABRIC PICTURE FRAMES

By Baran and Eugen

Research method// Interviews and own experience.

"It all started when I wanted to do something to keep my photos safe, and Erika and I started to think of other options. In the design project we went back and started to research. I asked 3 inmates that I was friendly with the question: do you have any pictures in your cell? all 3 said yes, so I invited them to my room to show them the picture frame I made in textiles. One inmate said that he wanted one and wanted me to make him one, which I politely refused. I also asked him if this was available in the prison canteen would you buy it...? Sometimes when prisoners are getting moved around to different cells, prisoners refuse to go in a cell covered in toothpaste which causes problems. Its not fair on the prisoners so officers have to find another cell to move the prisoner into, which is very time consuming" Baran



Brain

> how to feel more connected to your loved ones.

> how? Have more phone calls.

- > how work more sessions in prison
- > how only call Landline numbers
- > how Stop smoking/Save money.

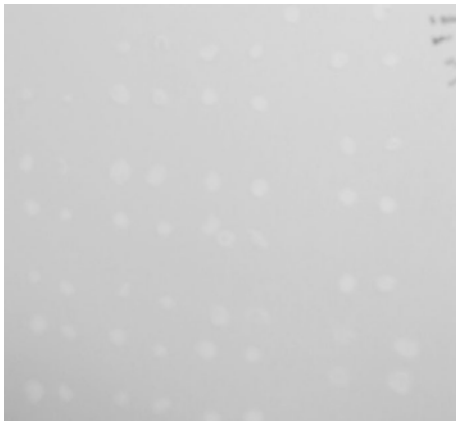
> how? Have pictures on your cell walls.

- > how Get your loved ones to send photos
- > how Put your favourite pictures in a self made frame.
- > how

> how? Have more visits.

- > how become enchanted.
- > how Finish the 6 book challenge to have 3 hour visits.
- > how

Research methodologies: Ask to individuals within the community - set a short interview to give to people / how did others respond to the questions? / inspiration in analogous scenarios / identify experts / seek inspiration in analogous cases.



*toothpaste marks are a hygiene issue.

Why?

"Usually people that want to put pictures up on the walls have nothing to do so and use toothpaste. It smells weird, ruins the walls, and if someone wrote on the back of picture the toothpaste will ruin the note. Also some new inmates refuse to move into the old cell if it is full of toothpaste so officers need to find another place which takes up time and resources. This fabric picture frame is safe and easy to mount and take down using Velcro. When you change cell, simply remove the frame and mount it on a new wall."

Next steps

Produce with off-cuts and donated materials and add to the canteen for an affordable price.

How will this help inmates?

* People that want to put pictures on the wall have to use toothpaste. When they want to take the picture off the wall, their photo is covered in toothpaste, this ruins the back of the photo and gives it a weird smell.

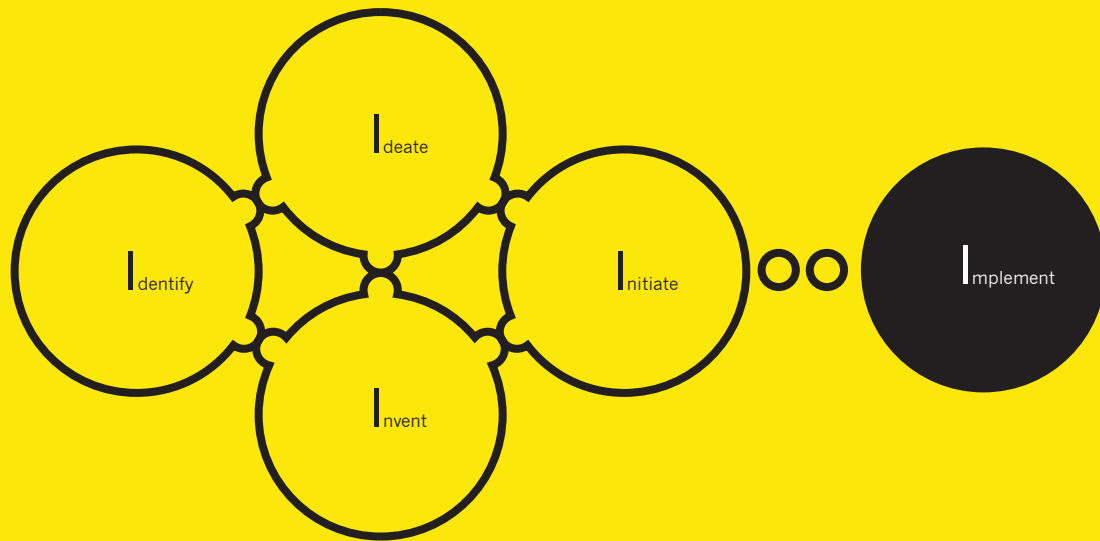
* The photos can't be replaced as easy. For example if you got a frame you can easily change your picture whenever you want whereas if you use toothpaste to stick your photos changing the photos can be hassle.

How this will help the officers?

Sometimes when prisoners are getting moved around to different cells, prisoners refuse to go in a cell covered in toothpaste which causes problems. It's not fair on the prisoner so the officers have to find another cell to move the prisoner into, which is very time consuming.

How will this help the cleaners?

Cleaners are the people who have to deal with removing the toothpaste covered walls which can be very frustrating. It is hard to get rid of completely. So in a way the frame idea will get rid of this problem for cleaners.



IMPLEMENT

Our aim is to continue to develop these products and produce them to improve everyday life for prisoners and officers at HMP Thameside.

In order to implement these innovations, your feedback is really important.

Although we had considered security regulations in our research, we are aware that some of these products would need to be redesigned to better fit their purpose, both in terms of safety and budget. Our aim is that prisoners and officers benefit from these inventions, and that they are affordable and easy to get.

Please let us know what you think and help us implement these ideas and make the change they intend to generate!

// SOME FEEDBACK FROM THE EXHIBITION VISITORS

"I was amazed to see the project in Textiles this morning. I was very impressed by the different ideas that were generated by fellow prisoners and how they can benefit other prisoners in so many ways. Congratulations to all involved" David

"Textile exhibition notes; Basically with what I saw in the exhibition, are things that should be supplied to the prisoners as standard, are then taken away when we make them out of prison materials. This costs more, as soon as they take them the prisoners make them again, therefore always making the costs of materials go up rather than down. These are trivial things which are small in matter but make a big difference to prisoners and their lives (...) Money is saved on stuff being destroyed and broken and modified to suit their requirements! Also this could have a calming effect as well so contributing to a more chilled and calm environment where people are a bit happier! So this has more than one positive effect: Money saved and calmer happier prisoners and staff! Because people get upset when things are taken and thrown in the bin anyway. So how does that make sense!

Summary: Supply the small things and saving money being the main one from the staff or governors point of view and more happier prisoners and less aggression towards staff."
Wahid Ali

Project Team: Ahmed, Anthony, Ashley, Ayaz, Baran, Bankole, Bhatia, Christopher, Constantine, David, Dennis, Dhillon, Dorjan, George, Javed, K, Kadeen, Laurenztu, Lorenzo, Mohammed, Nicolas, Rokas, Sam, Samuel, Sesay, Shah, Sofian, Mr.T, Tesfai, William, Pras and Erika.

Collaborators: Charles, Joe, Juditha and Louisa.

Thanks to Keith, Linda, Nathan for providing support and valuable feedback into the design ideas.

Thanks to all prisoners and officers who responded so positively to our research inquiries found in this book and exhibition, helping us further the understandings of everyday life at HMP Thameside. We appreciate they gave their time and provided their views and opinions about the product ideas we are developing.

Thanks to everyone who attended the exhibition and gave us essential feedback that will help us progress our projects onto the next stage.

Design Academy: Textiles Studio, April 2016.



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