

Jewel(s)
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Jewel

GLISSON
GLISSON
GLISSON

www.Jewels.gay
Jewel.Glisson@gmail.com
636-209-3764

Industrial Designer

Problem

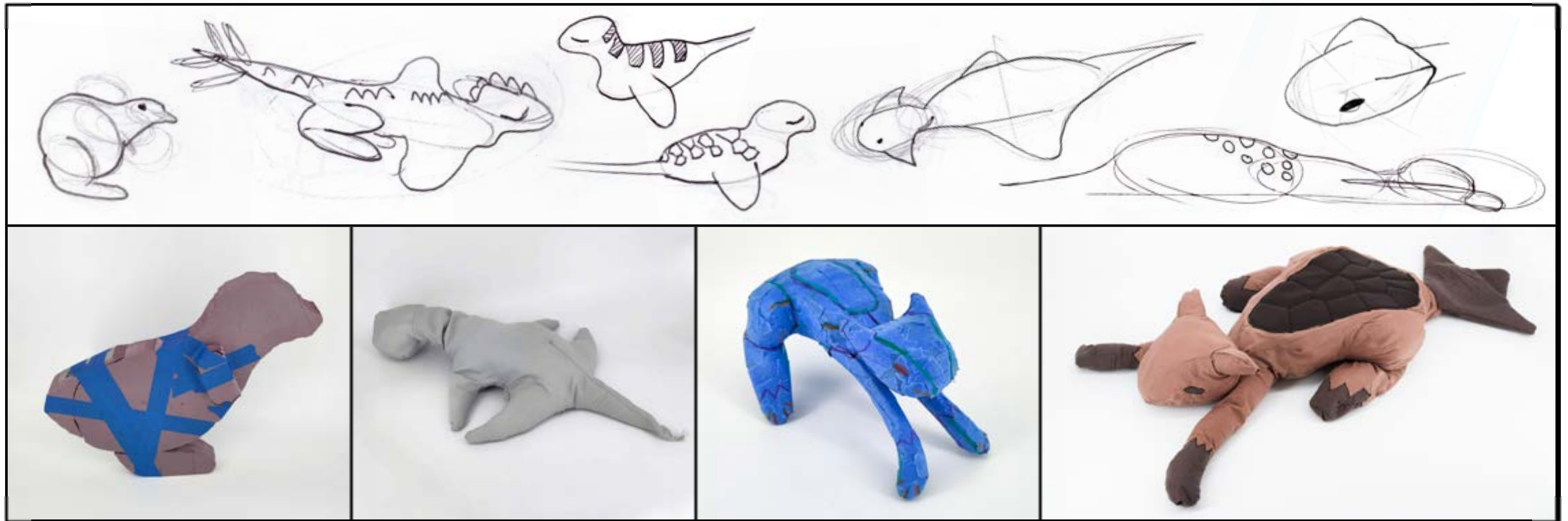
No products designed to help people who struggle with dissociation exist on the market despite the frequency of dissociation. Dissociation is the separation of the mind and body causing issues with being present, memory, identity, and more. Dissociation causes issues with productivity, maintaining relationships, fine motor skills and all other tasks that involve both the mind and body. In other words, dissociation impairs basically everything, including using techniques to combat dissociation.

Approach

This project started with a lot of research. During the research phase I noticed another designer I knew was working on a similar problem, so we decided to collaborate. Once we compared notes, we began separately sketching concepts. We selected our most promising concepts and made a rough prototype for each, all the while researching more. The concept of a comfort plushie was the best received in user testing, so we began refining the concept. Based on the feedback of multiple practicing therapists and people living with dissociative disorders, we refined the design further.

Solution

Inspired by a traditional adolescent comfort item, Socia was designed to become a comfort tool by mirroring common grounding exercises. It contains weight for deep pressure therapy. Cotton, wool and leather offer different sensory experiences for sensory grounding. Brown coloration mimics nature, reducing stress. The form minimizes the risk of triggers associated with real animals. The pattern on the shell guides the user through the 5-4-3-2-1 grounding exercise.



First Prototype

Early Prototype

Pattern Prototype

Final Prototype

Gradient Slide Light *a Sensory Friendly Dimmer*

Problem

Despite sensory issues being incredibly common among all locations and socioeconomic statuses. Most everyday items are designed to be “good enough” for neurotypical people to not notice any issues with, but can cause over-stimulation, difficulty focusing, and distress for people with sensory issues. Digital dimmers function by rapidly turning a light on and off which often leads to flickering. I wanted to explore a better, more inclusive solution that would avoid causing irritation to people with sensory issues, while creating a more satisfying and natural dimming effect for everyone.

Approach

I initially experimented with a variety of ways to manipulate light. I found that honey produced the dimming effect I was looking for while producing a beautiful warmth. From there, I sketched and researched. Varying the amount of honey the light shone through controlled exactly how much the light diffused. Through iteration, I landed on an unpigmented PLA wedge rather than honey, so that there is no risk of leaking, and when I discovered issues with overheating, added copper accents that allow for better heat dispersion.

Solution

The Gradient Slide Light is a wall mounted interior lighting solution that allows for a range of atmospheres and brightnesses. Since the dimming action is caused by diffusion rather than electric fluctuations, the light does not flicker any more than standard lighting.



Inspiration

Early Prototype

Pattern Prototype (90% Diffused)

Final Prototype (5% Diffused)

Habitat 1P *an Anxiety Safe Space*

Problem

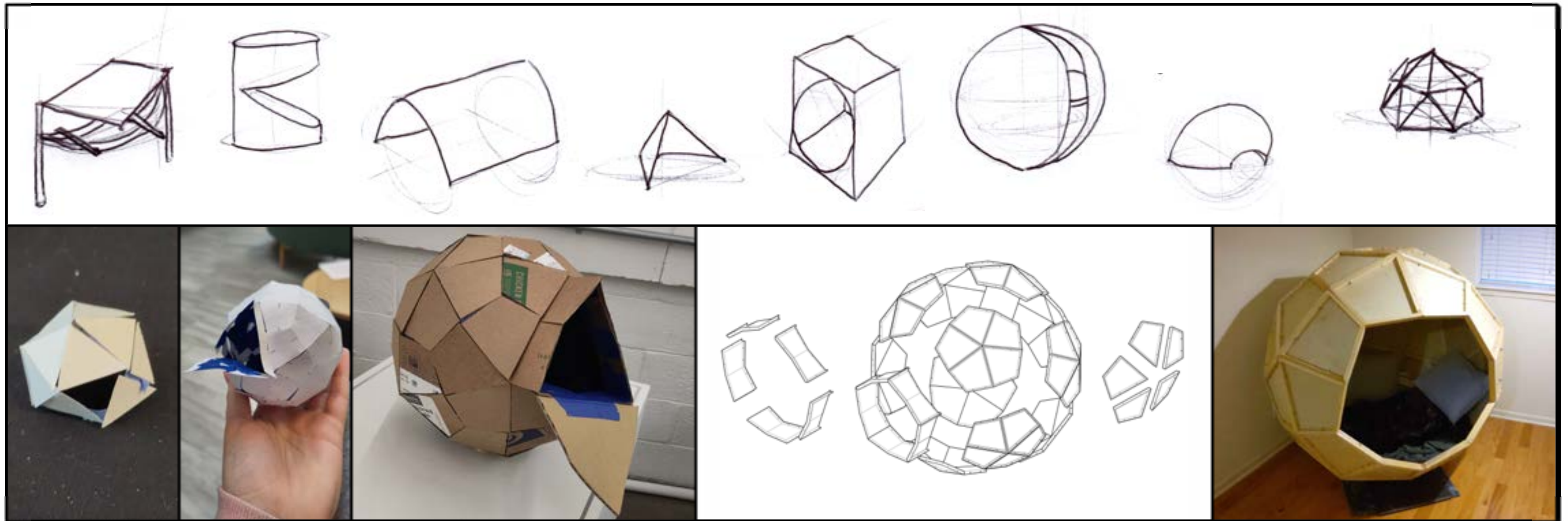
Despite the social taboo of discussing it, well over half the population has to cope with trauma. Often, people with trauma disorders often want an escape from the world, avoid other people, and effectively cease to exist. There are few practical healthy ways to achieve this. One ad hoc solution some people use is to turn their closet into a small dark enclosed space to relax in. However, this limits the ability to use the intended function of a closet without sacrificing the function as an escape.

Approach

I initially explored how to create a safe space for people with PTSD through sketching and research. Eventually, I landed on the importance of an enclosed space. The questions then became where and how. Clear sight-lines out of a space, while feeling protected within was the primary focus. Additionally, people with PTSD on average have lower quality of life and lower income than neurotypical people, so price was an important factor, so construction required minimal materials, easy shipping, and cheap production.

Solution

Habitat 1P is a deltoidal hexacontahedron made up of fifty-five identical panels. Assembled it is five feet tall. The nearly spherical interior has no harsh corners, and feels sturdy. It has been described by people who layed inside as hammock or womb like. The internal pattern formed by the construction and wood grain gives a focal point for grounding exercise without being overwhelming. The structure is acoustically isolating, which contributes to the feeling of escape.



First Prototype **Early Prototype** **Later Prototype**

Construction Document Drawing

Current Prototype