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Media Literacies

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<div align="center">Better Tech Design Pitch</div>

Friendship is an idea for a social networking service, accessible by a website and

through a mobile app. Users would register and create a profile, providing their name, date of

birth, gender, and location. The only "public" information visible to other users would be their

first name, gender, and approximate location (e.g. Nation, state).

A user would then filter "matches" by language spoken and or region (local or worldwide), select

"Go", and be matched randomly with one other user and placed in a chatroom. Different

icebreakers in the form of games or prompts would be provided by the chatroom to initiate

conversation between the participants.

- Games would be fairly simple, and could consist of an ambiguous image for the users to

  interpret (similar to Rorschach Inkblot test), tic-tac-toe, or hangman.

- Prompts would be simple questions like "What do you think of this weather?" or "How's

  your day going?"

Users would only be able to send text-based messages to each other, and choose from a

predetermined selection of gifs, emojis, and stickers. Other features would include the ability to

add users to a friends list, form group chats, and to block and report users for breaching policy.

The purpose of this network would be to help strangers better form more genuine friendships. After forming a friendship, users may remain friends through the network, or exchange information so they may interact on other social networks or in real life.

The restrictions are in place to mask the users in limited anonymity to prevent them from building relationships based on superficial motives (appearance or income) or common ground (similar opinions or stances), with the intent of connecting people to form friendships that they may not have otherwise formed.

The main idea behind the network is that friends don't necessarily have to agree on things, or derive superficial/material benefits from each other. Friends should be those whose company you enjoy, and who you will to do good unto.

The interface of the network itself would be fairly minimalist and user-friendly, so that those with any level of tech-proficiency would be able to easily navigate and use it. Blue seems to be the industry standard for social networks, likely because it tends to be associated with safety, reliability, and is generally viewed as a calm color.

One major concern would be preventing users from harassing each other, or beginning conversations that negate the purpose of the network. To counteract this, certain words that are potentially offensive (profanity, slurs, words that are sexually-charged) or pertain to divisive topics (politics) would be censored or outright blocked, meaning users would be prevented from sending messages containing those words. As stated before, users would also be able to block and report those who breach policy.

Children under the age of 18 would be prevented from registering an account, mostly to protect them from predators. As with any age-restricted site, the issue would be how to enforce this in the face of those who lie about their age.