

# TESTING

My Problem of Practice was to design a S.U.P.E.R. Shirt which would help children with Anxiety by allowing them to control deep pressure exerted to their torso and in turn, help relieve their anxiety and perform better in school. Since I do not really have the skills to design one of these shirts on my own, I had to do some improvisation. There are some flaws in my testing, as I had to use what was accessible to me but I wanted to get a better idea of how and if deep pressure would help people with anxiety. While my focus is on elementary school children, I did not have access to them either nor did I really want to subject them to testing out something that was not a finished prototype. Instead, I asked Christine (the 15 year old I interviewed at the beginning of my Problem of Practice) and my friend Michael, both suffer from anxiety disorders, to help me with my testing. I wanted to see if they gained any positive effectiveness from a form of deep pressure application. I asked Christine if she had access to a corset or an ace bandage and she did have access to an ace bandage but not a corset. I asked her if she would be willing to wrap her torso in the ace bandage when she started to feel anxiety setting in and she agreed to do so. I also asked Michael if he would be willing to wrap his torso in an ace bandage when he felt anxiety setting in as well and he was also willing. I told them both that I am not an expert in this area and I didn't want them to cause any sort of harm to themselves, so to wrap the bandage to a point where it applied pressure but wasn't uncomfortable. I asked them to please make sure they didn't wrap it very tightly because I didn't want to make their anxiety worse. I also didn't want them to have to wear it for an extended period of time because that is not how my S.U.P.E.R. Shirt would be utilized. It would be made to apply pressure when needed and then to release pressure when it was no longer useful.

Over the weekend Christine had a panic attack when she was in Chicago. Her mother took her there for a fun weekend and she told me she felt extremely overwhelmed by all the

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people and sounds. I asked if she tried the ace bandage at all and she told me for the first couple of days she had forgotten all about it but that on her last day there she was getting dressed and saw it at the bottom of her bag. Christine told me they were going to go out to breakfast and felt it may be a good time to try it. She was having a little anxiety but she said it wasn't full blown, terrifying anxiety. Christine had her mother wrap the ace bandage around her torso, not too tight, but tight enough to feel the pressure and they went to breakfast. Christine did not feel the benefits from the deep pressure the ace bandage provided. She stated that she felt it made her feel worse and halfway through the breakfast she went into the bathroom to take it off. Due to this experience, Christine didn't feel she would benefit from a product like the one I designed. She did inform me that she thought it was a good idea and that maybe the ace bandage was just applied tighter than it needed to be. Christine also told me that she would be willing to try a prototype, if I created one, in the hopes that she would have a better experience.

Michael, has experienced a lot of anxiety when he goes to grocery stores and when we spoke I asked him if he would be willing to try out the ace bandage while in the store and he obliged. Michael said he did feel some relaxation from the pressure but he wasn't sure if it was all in his head or if the deep pressure was actually helping him. Either way he said he would be very interested in purchasing a product like the S.U.P.E.R. Shirt if I ever made one and branched out to making them for adults.

In conclusion, I know that my testing was subpar at best. I did not have the skills to create a prototype of the product I designed, nor did I have the resources. I do believe that people could find deep pressure beneficial and some may struggle with it a great deal. I don't even know that an ace bandage was the best object to use for testing and really would have liked to try a corset

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after reading about success people have had with them when they experience anxiety. I really feel that this would be a great product for someone to design who knows more about the medical implications needed to test it safely and to make it effective. I think if I was able to work with a doctor who specialized in the field and an engineer, this product would possibly help many people.