



2024 CASE STUDY

The 2024 Well-Being by Design Fellows participated in a four-month professional development program for designers and producers of interactive kids' technology and media. They met online to workshop their current projects, network with other fellows, and gain insights from research and industry leaders as they worked to incorporate principles of well-being into their designs. We are delighted to share highlights from each fellow's experience.

# Olivia Korchagin



Olivia Levenson Korchagin co-founded Global Tinker, a multi award-winning children's media company harnessing the power of stories, constructionist pedagogy, and ubiquitous technology to inspire kids to create more and consume less. Global Tinker's work, ranging from animated series to graphic novels and educational programming, has received awards from the National Science Foundation, Harvard's Early Education Innovation Challenge, Kidscreen, and MIPTV. Olivia is a graduate of USC's School of Cinematic Arts.

Approximately 60% of children who have suffered from trauma are below the age of six. The root causes of childhood trauma, including violence, poverty, neglect, natural disasters, and a shortage of counseling services, are widespread and varied. The repercussions of such early life trauma are profound and long-lasting, extending well into adulthood. Individuals may suffer from a range of severe mental health conditions, such as depression and obsessive-compulsive disorder, as well as physical health issues, including cancer. The global spread of this crisis is accelerated by factors such as displacement, economic instability, and catastrophic events, underscoring the urgent need for effective solutions.

This problem is compounded by one significant challenge: the lack of necessary tools and training for caregivers to provide immediate, effective interventions that pave the way for a child's long-term well-being.



**PRODUCT:** *Breathe, Make, & Flourish*

**TARGET AGE:** 3-5 year-olds, caretakers, educators, and mental health professionals

*Breathe, Make, & Flourish* is a 10-step multidisciplinary platform that merges age-old mindfulness and origami art therapies with cutting-edge augmented reality technology to address early childhood trauma.

→ [GLOBALTINKER.COM](https://www.globaltinker.com)

Despite the good intentions behind many programs aimed at addressing childhood trauma, the reality is that most of these initiatives are often too complex, expensive, or not sufficiently engaging for children.



### HOW WE INCORPORATE WELL-BEING COMPONENTS NOW

**Emotional Regulation:** Our product embodies 10 mental health themes, ranging from anxiety to resilience, all of which encourage children to verbalize and communicate their emotions.

**Social Connection:** Our product is designed to be an intergenerational experience. Children develop communication and social skills with their caretakers in a “low tech” setting.

**Creativity:** Our blend of meditative stories and associated origami projects allows children’s imagination to blossom and encourages project personalization.

**Empowerment:** Studies show that when a child makes something, it boosts their self esteem. In our case, a child folding and personalizing a paper project – and then seeing it “come to life” using augmented reality – amplifies their confidence.

**Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion:** Our product addresses digital equity by being “low tech”, easily translatable, and designed for multiple entry points to participation – from listening and reading to making and communicating.

### WHAT MORE CAN OUR PRODUCT DO TO ADDRESS CHILDREN’S WELL-BEING?

**Competence:** While our product’s origami component enhances underlying developmental skills (i.e. fine motor and spatial awareness), it would be fascinating to explore scaffolding other learning objectives, such as math and literacy.

**Safety & Security:** As we build on our product’s technology platform and website, and possibly integrate 3rd party partners, we’ll want to ensure we engage policies that ensure safety and protection amongst our users.

**Self-Actualization:** Our product experience is designed to be guided by adults. It would be interesting to explore complementary experiences whereby children are self and/or peer-directed and encouraged to explore and focus on areas and themes that interest them.



*Designing for well-being requires stepping outside of the box and flipping the script on its head – repeatedly! It’s a journey that goes far beyond a one-size-fits-all approach and calls for empathy, collaborative and evidence-based design, and lateral thinking.*





### REFLECTION

I learned that incorporating well-being into product design isn't a linear process – it's ongoing, requires consistent iteration and innovation, and feedback loops. Another key takeaway is that designing for well-being should be a creative and collaborative process amongst the product team and stakeholders – including the users themselves! Our Youth Design Team session was instrumental in discovering new angles and formats for our product. As a result of our session, we're considering integrating a teen mentorship program within our product.

### LOOKING AHEAD

We aim to incorporate the RITEC framework into our product's core, drawing upon the innovative strategies introduced by the Well-being by Design Fellowship. This includes the adoption of the Playful by Design Tool, developed by the Digital Futures Commission, to enhance our approach. We will actively integrate insights and feedback from our stakeholders and focus group sessions to refine and enrich our application of these frameworks and strategies. Alongside this, we are excited to announce plans to expand our digital offerings, with a particular focus on enhancing our website and developing an augmented reality feature for browser-based applications in the upcoming months. This multi-faceted approach underscores our commitment to delivering a product that is both impactful and user-centric.

Our hope is that *Breathe, Make, & Flourish* will positively impact kids by:

- + Enhancing emotional understanding, regulation, and mindfulness;
- + Building confidence through creative arts and development of fine motor skills; and
- + Empowering collaboration, communication, and problem solving.

We humbly hope we can set an example for other designers by emphasizing:

- + The blend between digital and physical experiences;
- + Amplifying creation over consumption through engaging stories and characters; and
- + Experiences that complement intergenerational collaboration and bonding.



Joan Ganz Cooney Center

For more information about the Well-Being by Design Fellowship program, please visit [joanganzcooneycenter.org/fellowship2024](https://joanganzcooneycenter.org/fellowship2024)