

Q&A

FROM BURNOUT AND BEYOND



With burnout at record levels, many people have been turning to digital wellness and mindfulness platforms such as Headspace and Calm during lockdown. The data shows the downloads of such apps have soared since mid March. One new entry in the market is Paradym (@theparadym), founded by Courtney Carlsson, who tells us how her app goes beyond the right now and digs into someone's past.

Q: How is Paradym different from the many other mental health apps on the market?

A: There are so many – but it's wonderful, because not everything is going to work for everyone, right? Paradym is different in that we're really a long-term solution. Meditation, mindfulness and breathing are all wonderful and they will help you in the moment – but sometimes people need to have deeper, more core questions answered, like: 'Why am I always picking the wrong kind of partner?' 'Why do I never feel good enough?' 'Why can I never trust anyone?' Those are all questions we try to answer in the app.

Q: How did you get into this field?

A: I was working in New York in the luxury fashion industry and, after five years, I realised I was really tired and burned out. I decided to take a step back. So, I applied for a master's program to do my MBA and got into London Business School. For the first time in a while, I was able to slow down. It opened my eyes to realise that my life wasn't looking the way I wanted it to. My relationships weren't in the place that I'd wanted them to be in, and I was a very selfish person and just focused on myself and my career. I met my future co-founder on the MBA. He was very well versed in psychology and personal growth – he'd been through depression and started coaching me through the beginnings of my own introspection. I eventually ended up going to therapy, but he helped guide me throughout my own process.

Q: And you basically turned your experience and that process into a company?

A: Yeah, I realised how impactful having these tools was and how necessary they are for everyone. This was back in 2016. So I was going through my own process of introspection and we decided to start a company around that. I tried many, many things, but the most impactful was coaching with my co-founder, therapy, and also asking the right questions. We took all of those learnings and created a beta product around it. It was very rough and we tested the format to see whether people liked it – and they did. Our users were all looking to dig deeper into themselves, to understand themselves better, to accept themselves. We then raised a round through Crowdfunder for about \$550k, a good pre-seed round, and brought on board psychologists to help us make it into an evidence-based product. We're now really focused on the science aspect to make sure that it's scalable, something that everyone can use, and we're recommending the right tools for people to support them in the right way.

Q: The app is based on Schema therapy – what is that?

A: It's something one of our psychologists brought in as she felt it was similar. Schema therapy looks at multiple pillars – but it also looks at your relationship with your parents and who you were as a child as well. A lot of us have old pain from childhood, and we can sometimes react or overreact in a way that the situation maybe doesn't warrant. That's a signal that maybe there's some deeper pain in there from childhood. Schema therapy talks a lot about that – looking back and looking at those old patterns. For me, it was volatility – knowing what makes me go up and down and have huge reactions that aren't necessary. It's about first knowing what your patterns are, and then digging deeper and understanding why those patterns are there, where they come from and how I can change them if they're no longer serving me. Which they weren't, for me.

DELIVERY

\$12m

FOOD + DRINK

After closing a seed round of \$10m back in November, Mexico-based e-commerce startup Jüsto – a fresh-food delivery platform – has raised another \$12m. Jüsto is riding the wave of online grocery deliveries – the sector received a significant boost during lockdown. However, in Latin America the percentage of the population shopping for groceries online is still tiny – with room for major players to disrupt the market.