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Behavior Change Technologies and the Everyday Life

Devices such as smartphones and wearables are increasingly used to motivate individuals to change their behavior. Health and fitness apps account for over 15% of the market of mobile apps, and millions of people own a phone with a preinstalled mobile application for encouraging healthy lifestyles (e.g. Apple's HealthKit, and Google's Google Fit).

People's use of behavior change technologies is enmeshed in everyday life, and strongly connected to the activities and experiences that occur alongside the use of these technologies. Behavior change often involves other people (e.g. friends, family), and activities (e.g. work, jogging) and is connected to a high level of emotionality, deriving from people's lives, worries, hopes and interests.

The effectiveness of BCT seems to (partly) rely on the collection of information from people's everyday lives, and, when successful, they seem to clearly change people's everyday life. Reflecting on the notion of "everyday life" is important for at least two reasons: it allows explicating what kind of information of the lives of users designers (don't) need, and analyzing what kind of desirable everyday life is (implicitly or explicitly) presupposed in the design of BCT's. In this workshop we will: (a) introduce and scrutinize different conceptions of everyday life; (b) reflect on the conceptions of everyday life involved in the design, development, and evaluation of BCT's; (c) discuss the potential trade-off(s) that must be made between theoretical conceptions of the everyday life and their materialization in BCT's.