REFLECTION
Making things visual
It might seem obvious as a visually thinking design student: making things visual. Nonetheless, I don't think it is a current standard practice of mine, which is something I would like to change in the upcoming semester. During this M21 project, I have found that I do a lot of work. But: a lot of work in my head specifically, which makes me feel stuck at times. In this project, I sometimes felt like I was floating, not sure where to go and trying to take on too much work at once. I already realised this a bit during last semester, which is why I set the learning goal: "Make at least 35 sketches at the start of the project and create at least two iterations that lead to the final end result of the project.". I did make the sketches, but when reflecting now, I don't feel like this really helped me to take steps in my design process. Rather, it sort of paralysed me by the pressure of the imposed iterations and the quality I wanted to achieve in these iterations. What did however help me was to write things in Miro and to make scenarios. To draw out situations to make them slightly more specific. To help me get a grip of the target group, context, problems and opportunities I am designing for, I would like to start using mind maps and storyboards more regularly. By visually seeing a scenario, it might become easier for me to unfold the topic and associated design or research challenge

Making decisions
When reflecting upon my project, I have made my scope too generic and broad. I know this feedback was given a while back, but instead of focussing on one thing I already worked on, I switched to a new direction: future meetings. Looking back now, it might have been better to focus on one of the hypotheses as described using the sketches. The previous reflection point regarding making things visual will hopefully help with this in the future. Working together with fellow students more often might also help to temper ambitious plans by breaking them up and leaving many things out deliberately. I will also discuss this with my coach to get concrete tips on improving my skills regarding critical thinking and decision making. The good thing is: I have an excellent exploration phase that points at many interesting topics, approaches and research directions. Now, it is a matter of choosing what would suit me and my development.

Using milestones
The other day I was talking to a fellow student, to whom I pointed out that she had already pushed the goal she had set for herself before she even made it. She wanted to make more designs which she did, but now she started a negative spiral of "I made the sketches, but the quality isn't that good". This recent example made me realise I do the exact same to myself. I set goals, but I make them too big. And if I do achieve the goals, I don't celebrate that I succeeded. I just look at the mountain of things I still have to do, which makes me lose confidence, energy and motivation. Over the last couple of weeks, I have been very conscious of setting smaller goals for myself and looking back more often to reflect on how far I have come. I made the difficult decision to stop working until graduation to offer myself time and attention for the next project. The learning goals I set at the beginning of this semester helped to reflect, as they were well defined and really fit my learning curve. By changing my approach and by dropping the extracurricular activities of my own company, I have started to look at the upcoming semester with more confidence and motivation.

Future career
Over the last couple of months, I have really started to dig into my future career. I have been an entrepreneur for a few years now, which already resulted in much experience. However, this master provides additional skills and knowledge that can be taken into consideration regarding the future. I defined where my personal interests lay and talked to many people to figure out what kind of position and company would suit me. People from the field call me structured, good at making connections and bringing people together is a strength of mine. A little while ago I wrote: "Striving for a bigger impact in design. That is where I can make a difference compared to others from for example ICT & Media Design. Strive for innovation while keeping it within the space of what is possible, by stretching but not breaking the boundaries." I still agree with this, as I don't want to keep making websites and apps forever as I did in my bachelor ICT & Media Design. I would like to work towards a position in which websites and apps are part of the complete service design I am working on with my team. The job description I would ideally work towards is the design director that oversees the entire process and design of branding, product, UI, UX, print and advertising. After the summer, I intend to contact multiple companies to spar about positions that they think fit my profile and what my positioning within such a company might look like in the future. An excellent prospect, which I am already looking forward to!