Improving mental health with VR

Virtual Bodyworks @ Digital & Brain
93% of mental health services were disrupted or halted critically by COVID-19 worldwide

4 in 10 adults in the U.S. have reported symptoms of anxiety or depressive disorder

24% Global prevalence of depression during the COVID-19 pandemic
Charlie Pearmund  
CEO

Charlie has 10 years of experience in startups and Technology M&A, during which time he raised more than €1bn in funding for SMEs.

After completing his MBA, Charlie implemented the world’s first stroke rehabilitation system based on embodiment in Virtual Reality in a clinical setting and has since successfully completed projects related to Diversity and Inclusion at Google Jigsaw and the World Bank.

Mavi Sanchez Vives  
Co-founder  
Chief Medical Officer

Medical Doctor with 15 years of experience in VR, neuroscience and medicine

Published c.120 papers, cited c.113,000 times, over 300 talks inc. TEDx, Frontiers Forum, World VR Forum, Impakt Festival.

Mel Slater  
Co-founder  
Chief Scientific Officer

Virtual Reality pioneer with ~30 years of VR research. Received 2 ERC Proof of Concepts and winner of several prizes, including the 2020 Humboldt Research Prize and the 2005 IEEE Virtual Reality Career Award: ‘In Recognition of Pioneering Achievements in Theory and Applications of Virtual Reality’.

Bernhard Spanlang  
Co-founder  
CIO

15 years of experience in VR programming

MSc in Computer Science and an Engineering Doctorate degree from University College London in Computer Vision, Imaging and Virtual Environments.

Implemented first VR for mental health application in Europe to gain CE mark and pass clinical trials.
SOLOMON’S PARADOX

The ability to reason more sensibly about someone else’s problems than your own
EMBODIMENT

Creating the illusion that the virtual body is the real body
90%

Found new solutions to existing problems and changed aspects of their lifestyle as a result.
Engage obese individuals in a self conversation to target three aspects that are inherent with severe obesity: recognition, self-stigmatisation, and self-determination.
RUBBER HAND ILLUSION

Feeling of ownership of non-body part
Embodiment reduces biases in a way nothing else can.

It disrupts negative associations that are made during our lifetime, particularly during socialisation.