Spotify iOS App Case Study
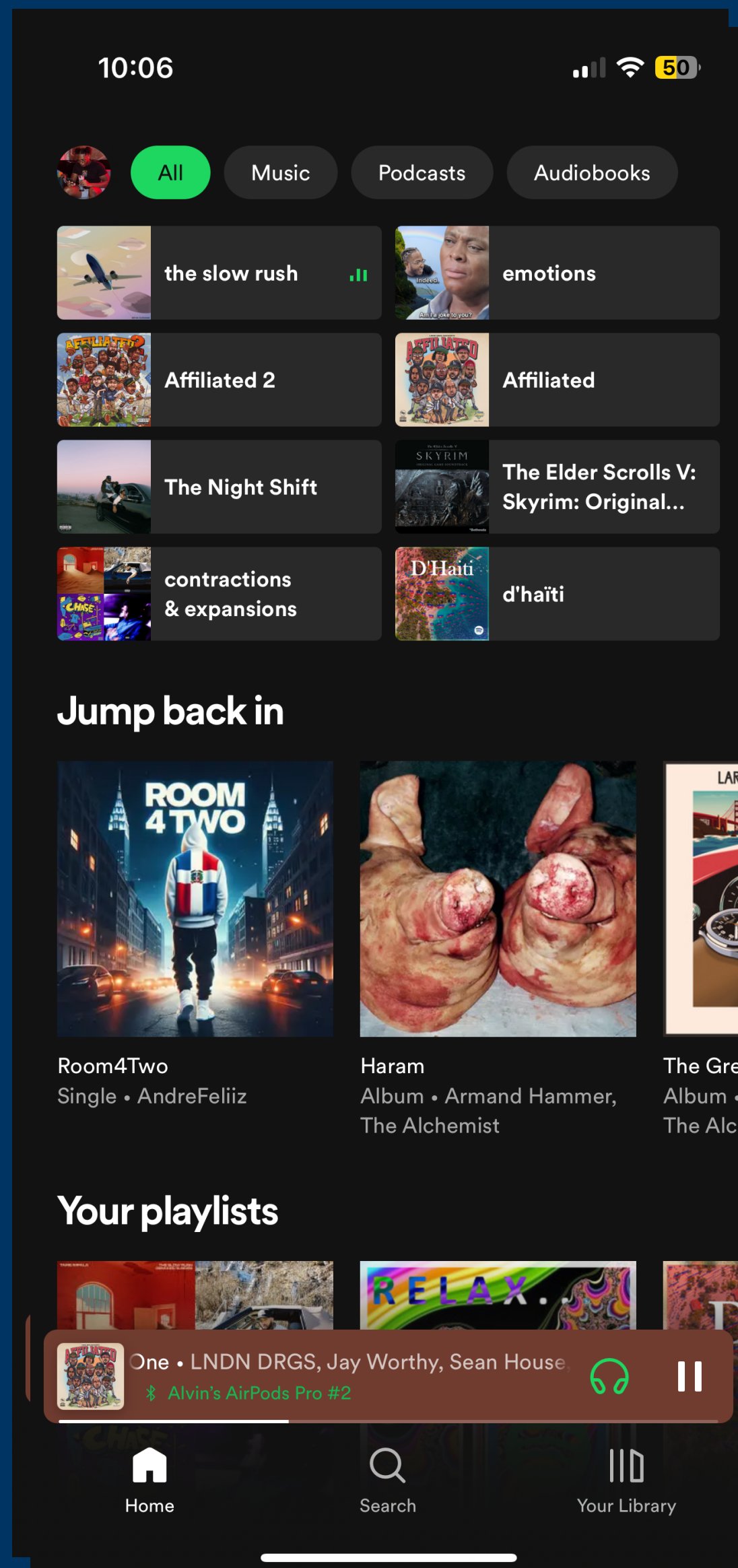
A brief presentation on how we can optimize the app design

Alvin Lalanne — 3/14/2024

The Home Page Can Be Optimized

Here's how:

# The Current Design?

Too Complicated.

A couple aspects that I've noticed in 2024 come to mind:

- Where are the settings?
- Methods of music curation is not consistent
- Daily Mixes disappear and are not seen again for an indeterminate amount of time

Hypothetical User Research

How should we go about this?

In order to establish the issues highlighted, a series of user research methods would be ideal. Surveys focusing on navigation ease could quantify the prevalence of user frustration, while targeted interviews could provide qualitative insights into the challenges users face with the app's current design. For instance, a survey might show that 60% of users struggle to locate the settings, corroborated by interview excerpts where users detail their struggles with the app's navigation. These hypothetical findings would form the basis for the proposed design changes.
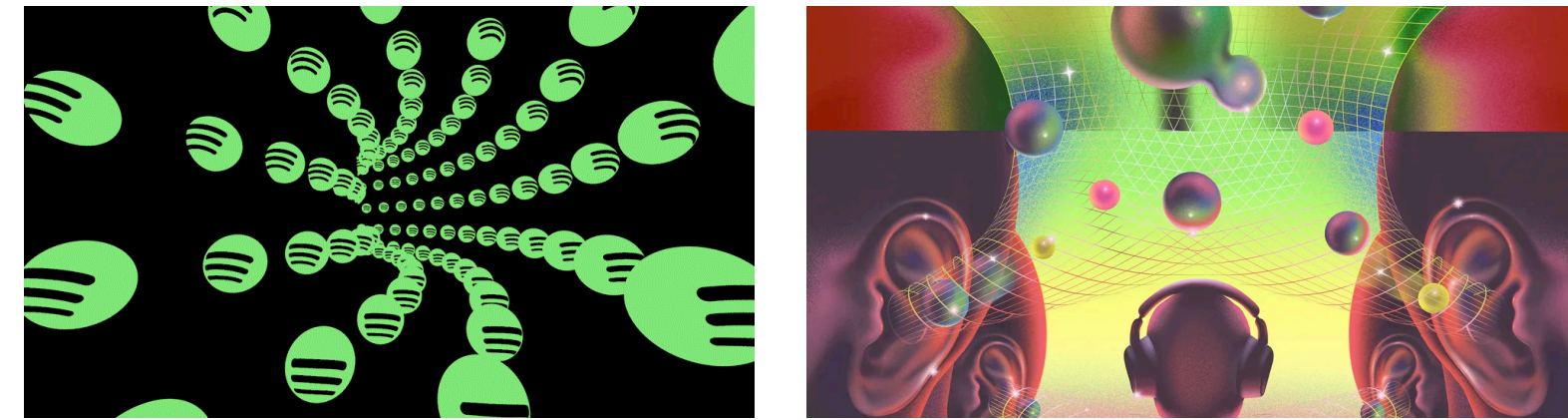
What about the data?

Data underpins every design decision made in this case study. The relocation of the settings button, for example, isn't just an arbitrary choice—it's a decision informed by a hypothesized common user complaint. This design recommendation stems from a presumed pattern in user feedback indicating that the current navigation structure hinders, rather than helps, app usability.

Why these design changes specifically?

A hunger for balance

The proposed redesign of the Daily Mixes and recently played music to a fixed location in the app's architecture is grounded in the UX principle of consistency. By aligning the app's layout with Nielsen's usability heuristics, specifically 'consistency and standards,' the design aims to reduce the user's memory load and streamline the navigation process, thus enhancing the overall user experience.

## How can we ensure that these changes are overall improvements?

To validate the effectiveness of these proposed solutions, a methodical approach involving A/B testing would be implemented. For example, the new settings icon placement would be tested against the current design, monitoring metrics such as the time taken to access settings and user satisfaction ratings. Such testing ensures that any redesign aligns with user preferences and improves the intended aspects of the user experience.

Consistent Music Curation Layout

Having a set location for Daily Mixes and recently played music respects the user's mental model of the app's structure. This consistency aids in quick navigation, making use of the app more seamless and enjoyable. It also ensures that users can reliably find and enjoy their personalized content, increasing their time spent on the app and loyalty to the platform.

Daily Mix 1

Daily Mix 2

Daily Mix 3
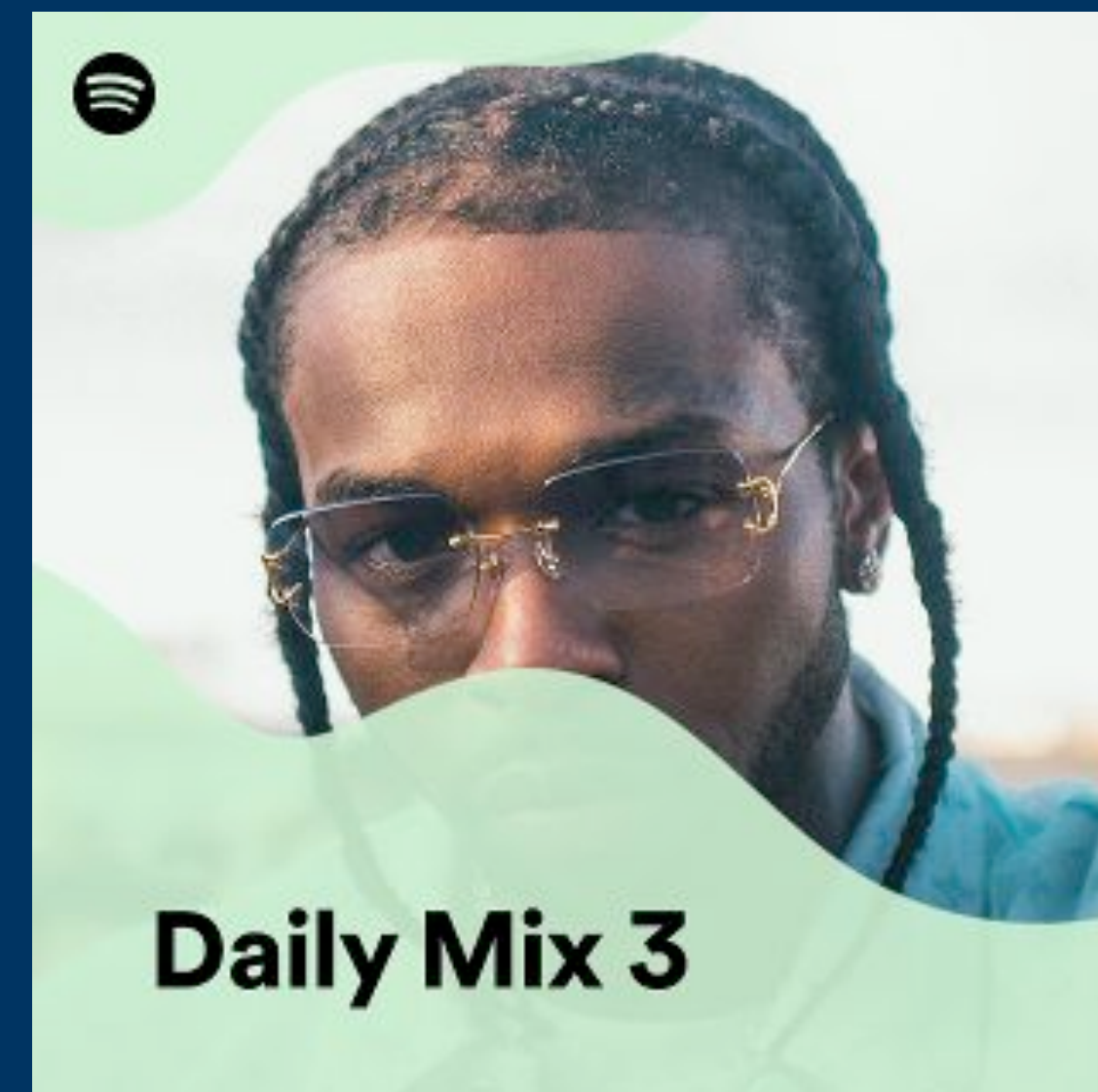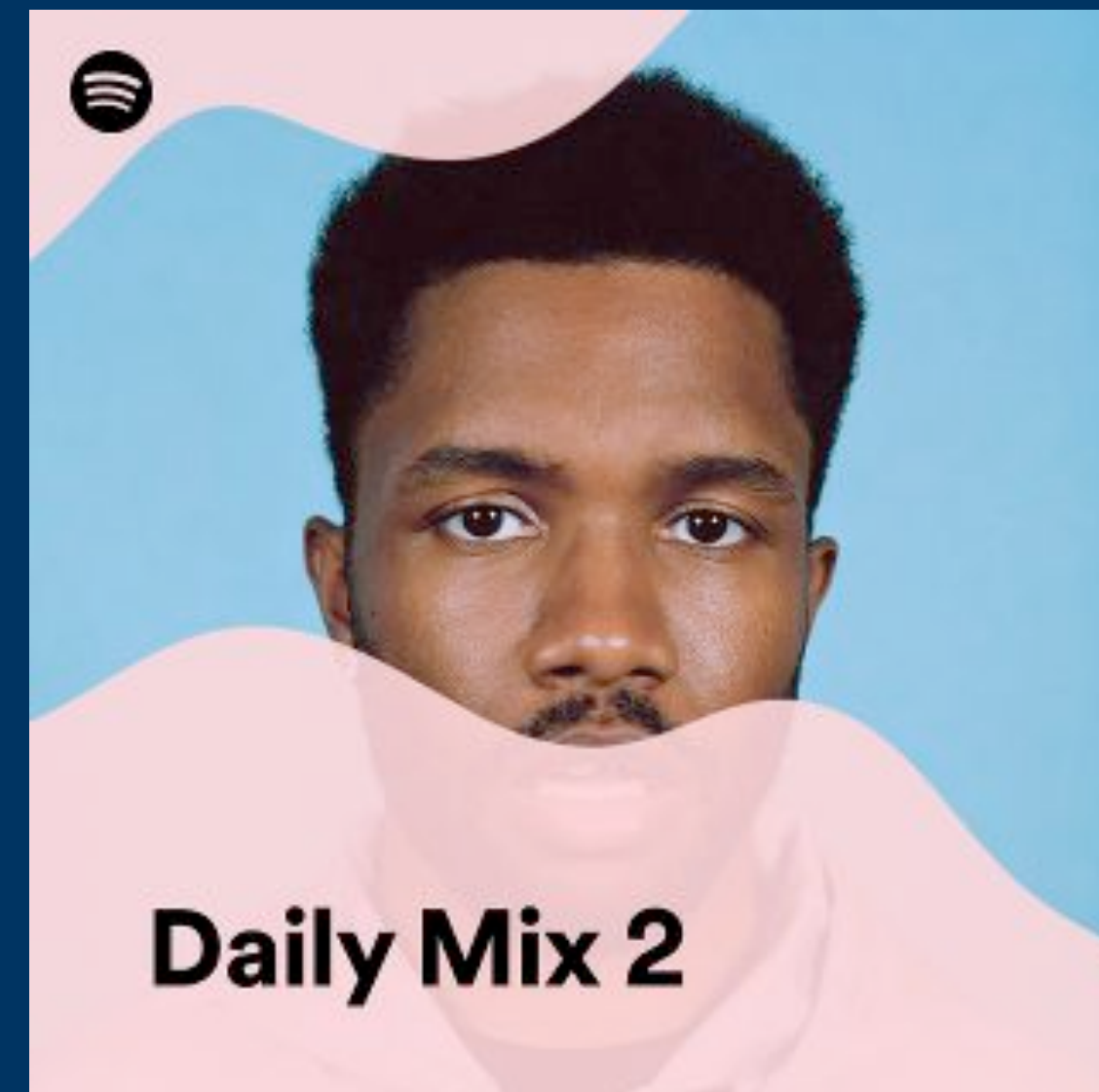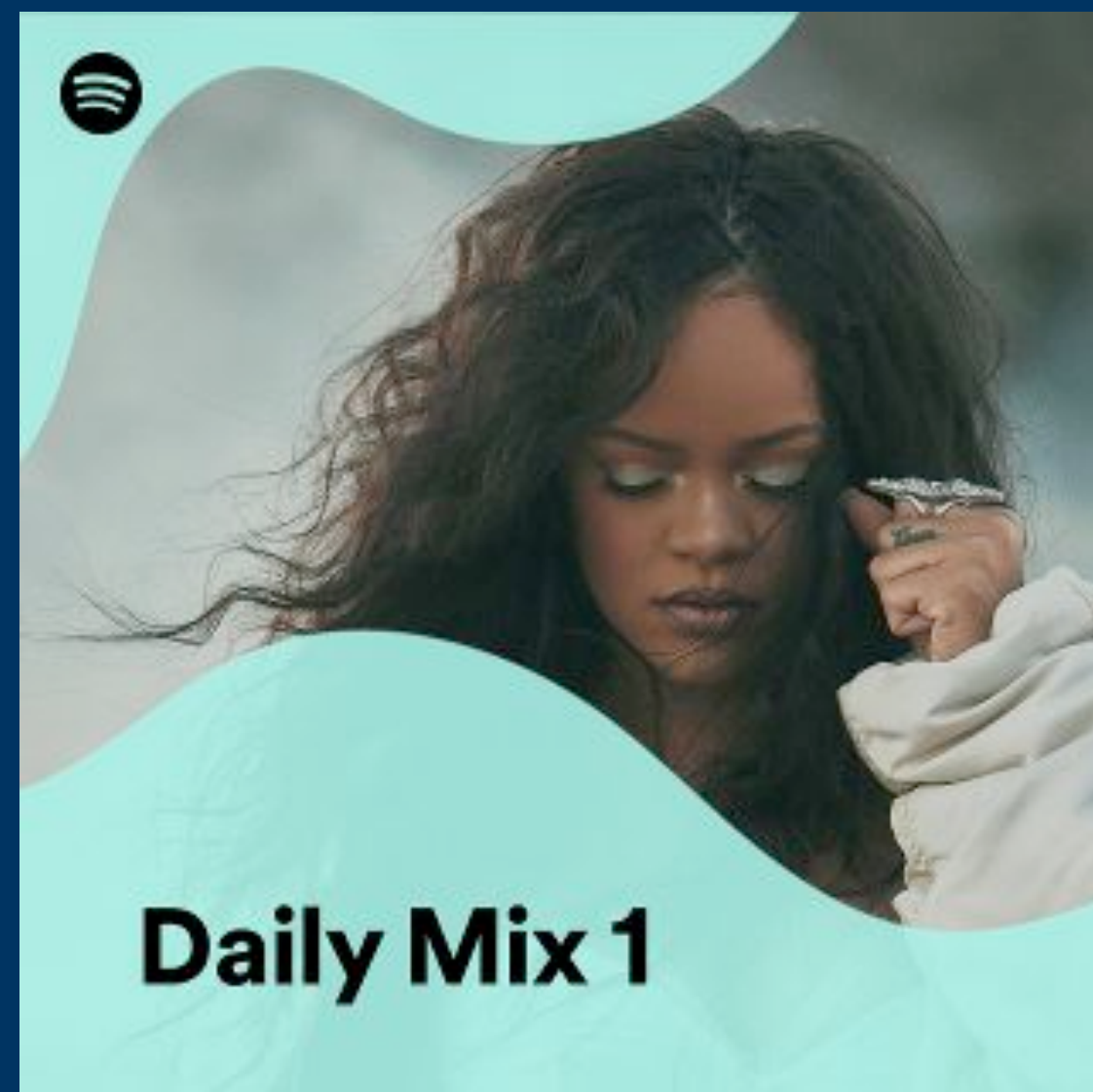
Placing Emphasis on Feedback
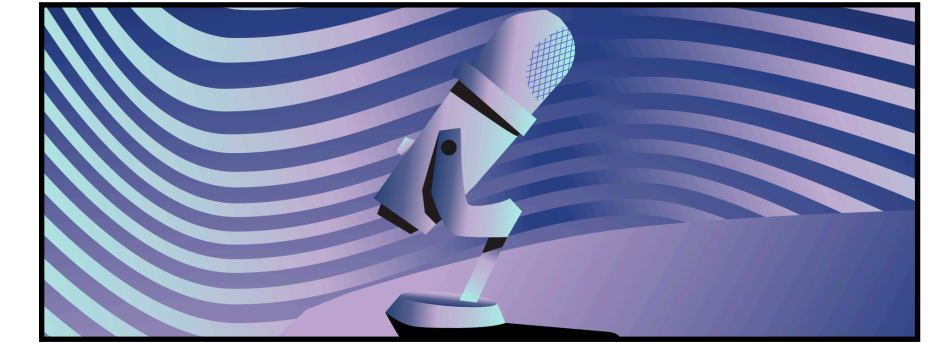
How should we go about this?

Recognizing the iterative nature of design, the solutions presented would undergo continuous refinement based on user feedback and interaction data post-implementation. This iterative process is critical to evolve the design over time, ensuring that it adapts to changing user needs and preferences while maintaining the high standard of user experience that Spotify users expect.

Incentivizing User Participation

In addition to a structured approach to iteration and refinement, incentivizing user participation in research and testing phases is crucial for collecting diverse and meaningful feedback. Recognizing the time and effort users contribute, incentives such as exclusive access to new features, membership extensions, or Spotify merchandise can significantly boost participation rates. These rewards not only acknowledge the value of user input but also foster a stronger community around Spotify's continuous improvement efforts. By effectively engaging our user base in the design process, we ensure that our solutions are not only theoretically sound but also grounded in the real-world experiences and preferences of our diverse user population.

User Impact

The inconsistency in the current design may lead to user frustration, as exemplified by the hidden settings and disappearing Daily Mixes.

- The complexity and inconsistency in the current design may lead to user frustration, as exemplified by the hidden settings and disappearing Daily Mixes. These elements disrupt the user flow and could potentially increase cognitive load, making the app less intuitive.

- Users rely on predictability to navigate efficiently and quickly access their favorite features. By not having a consistent and clear path to settings or expecting content to appear in a regular spot, we risk users feeling lost within the app, which could lead to dissatisfaction and reduced engagement.
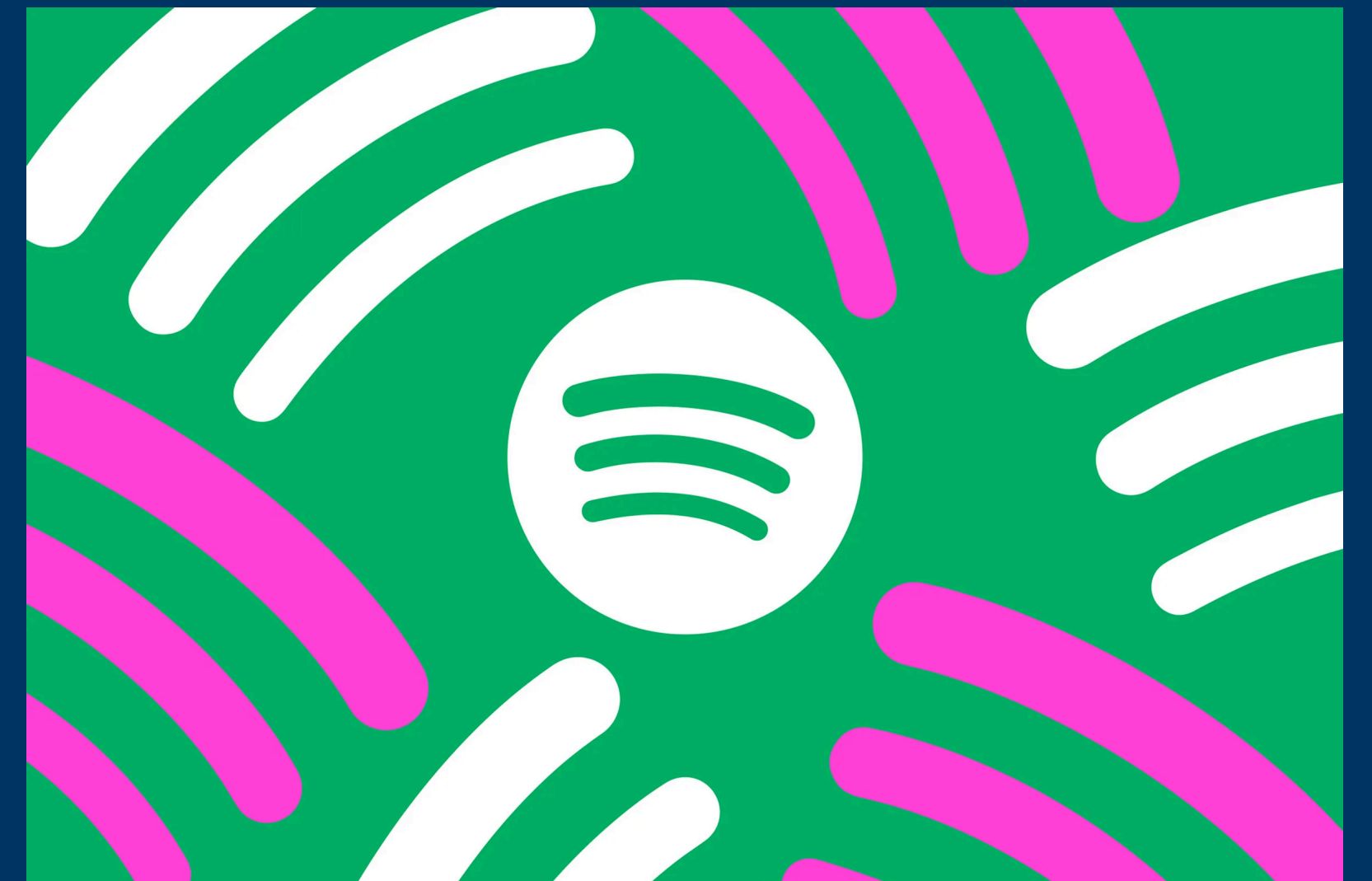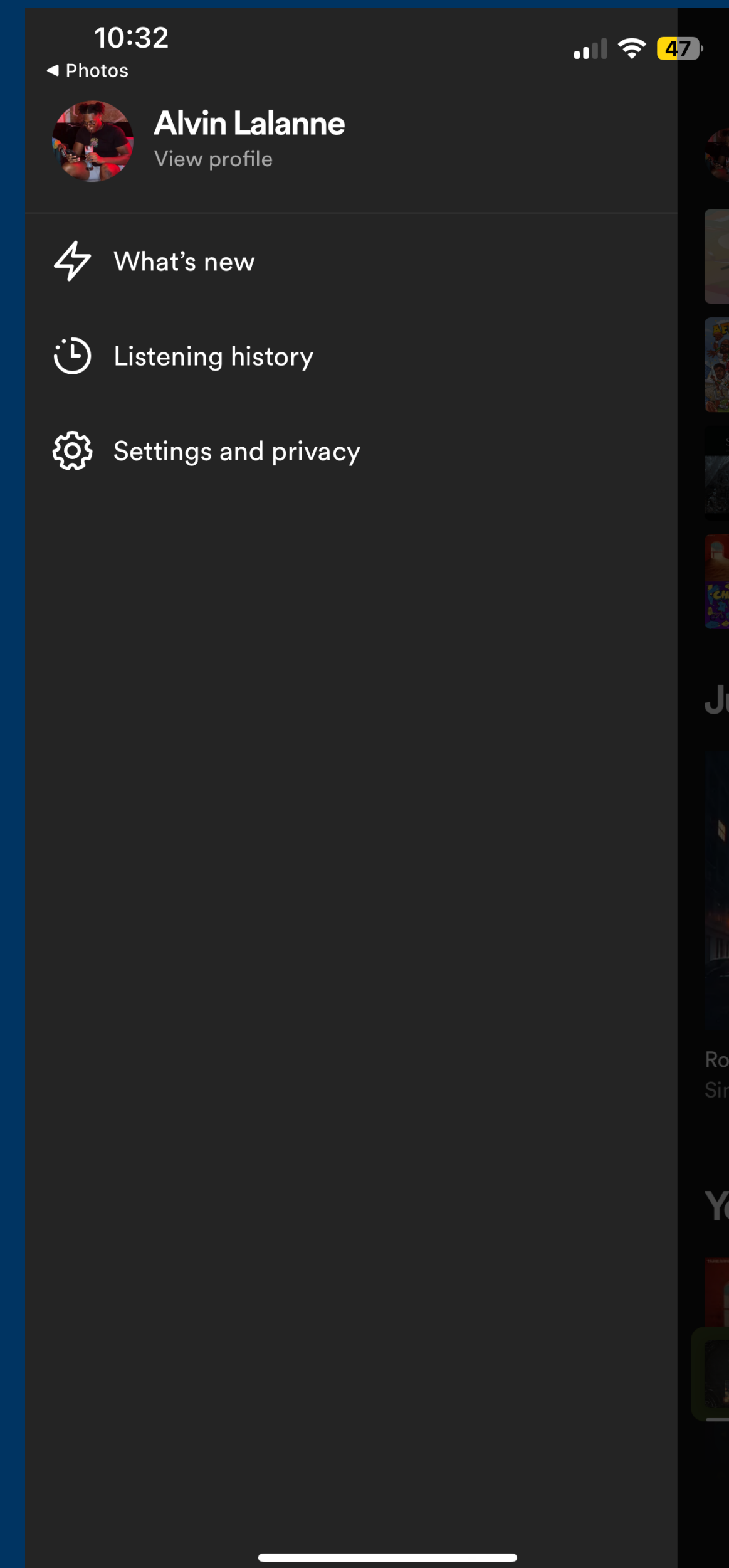
Currently,
To Get to Settings,

You must tap the profile picture

...but shouldn't that take you to your profile instead?

There is potential for this to be revamped in a more dynamic way

The primary objective is to create a more practical layout that would save consumers time navigating the app.
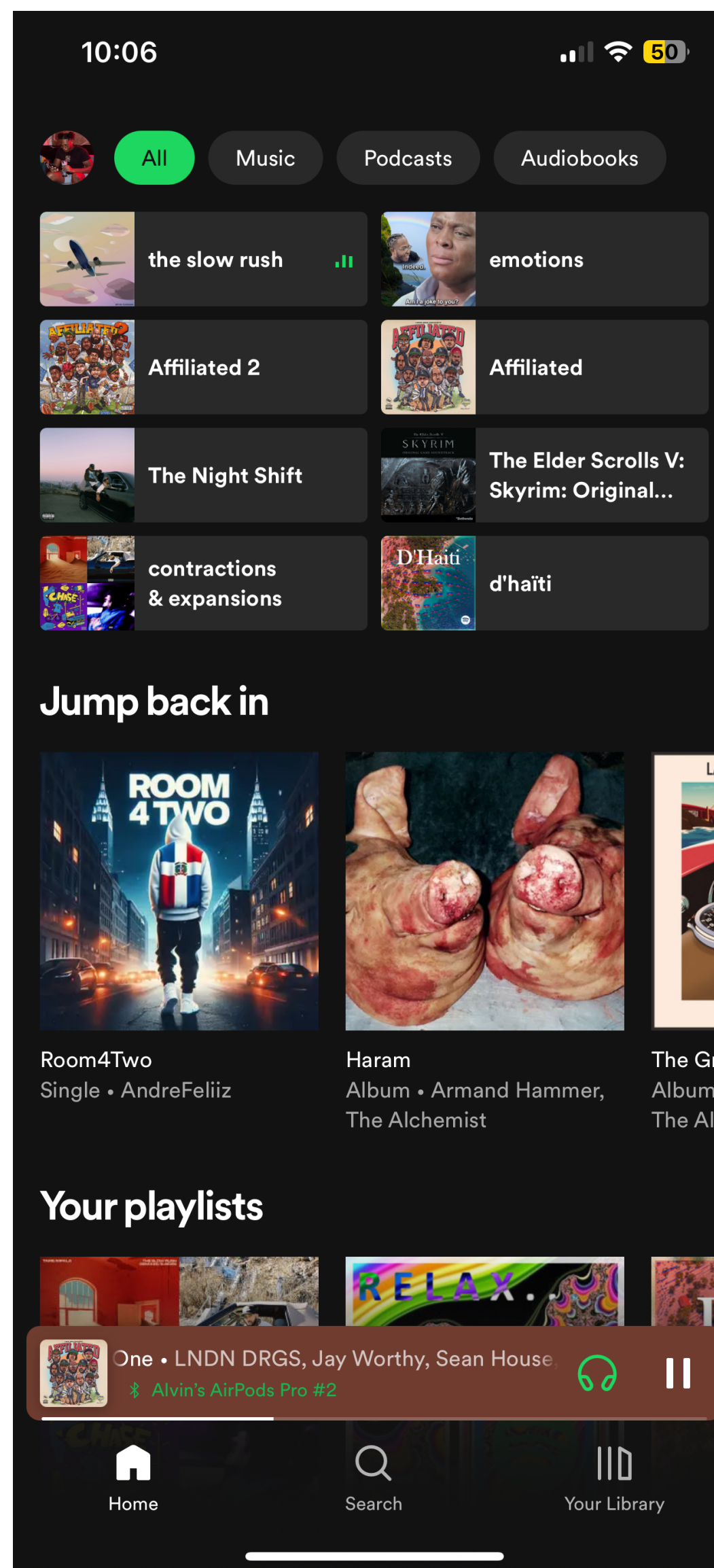
Let's fix this:

My suggestion?

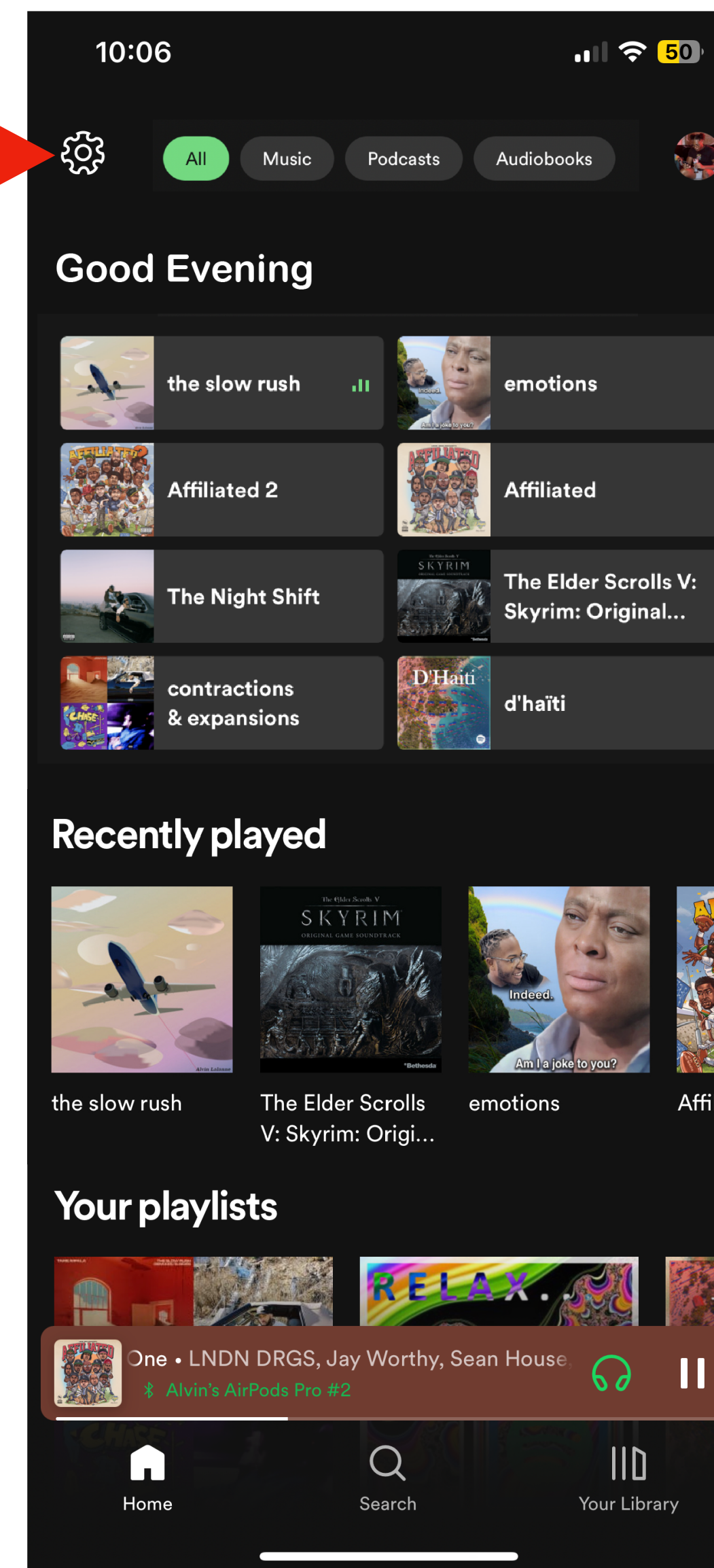**Add a dedicated settings button in place of the profile picture**

Here's my reasoning:

• Removing the settings icon detracts from the app's navigational efficiency. Ideally, the settings option ought to be prominently positioned in the top-left corner for intuitive access.

Current Layout

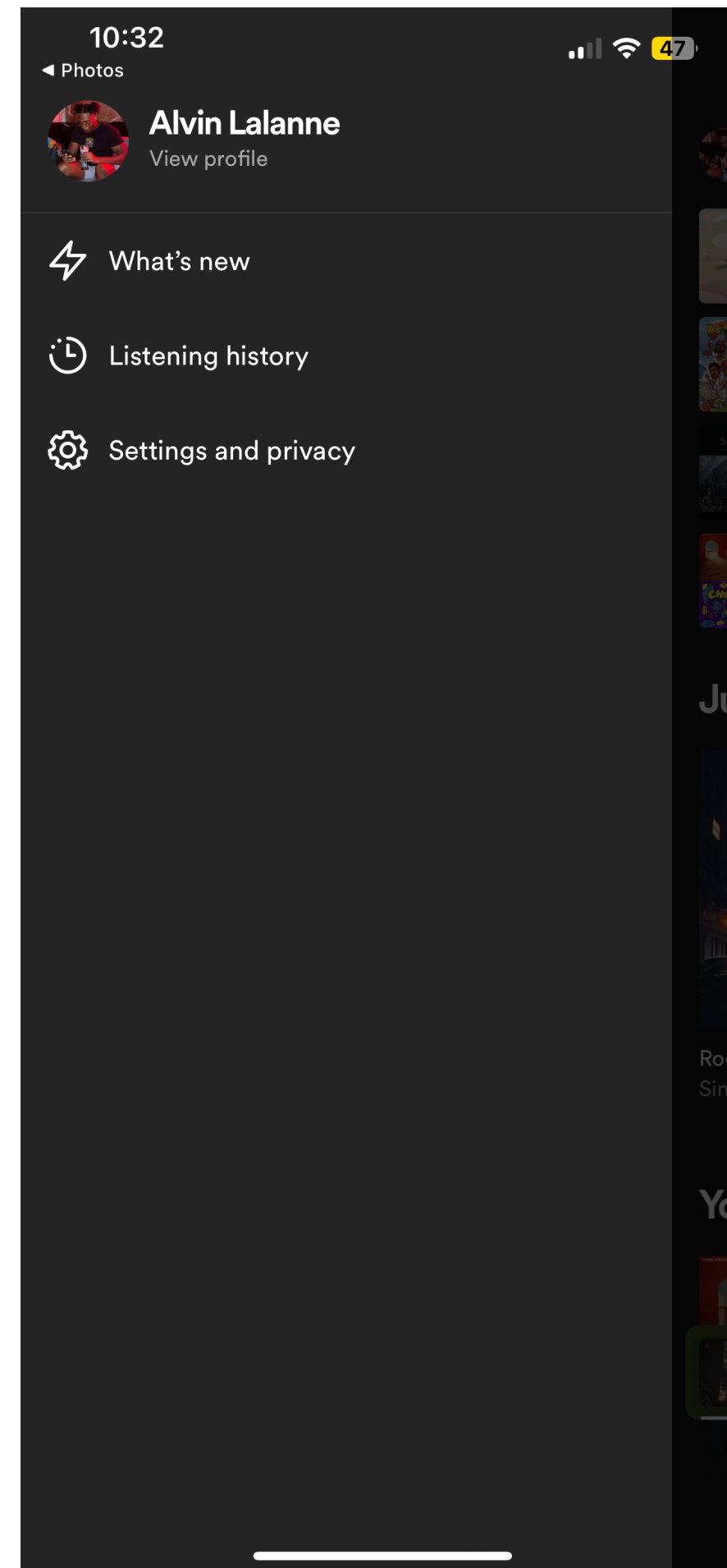(Profile picture switched over to the right side)

My Layout

(The profile picture must be tapped to access the profile screen)
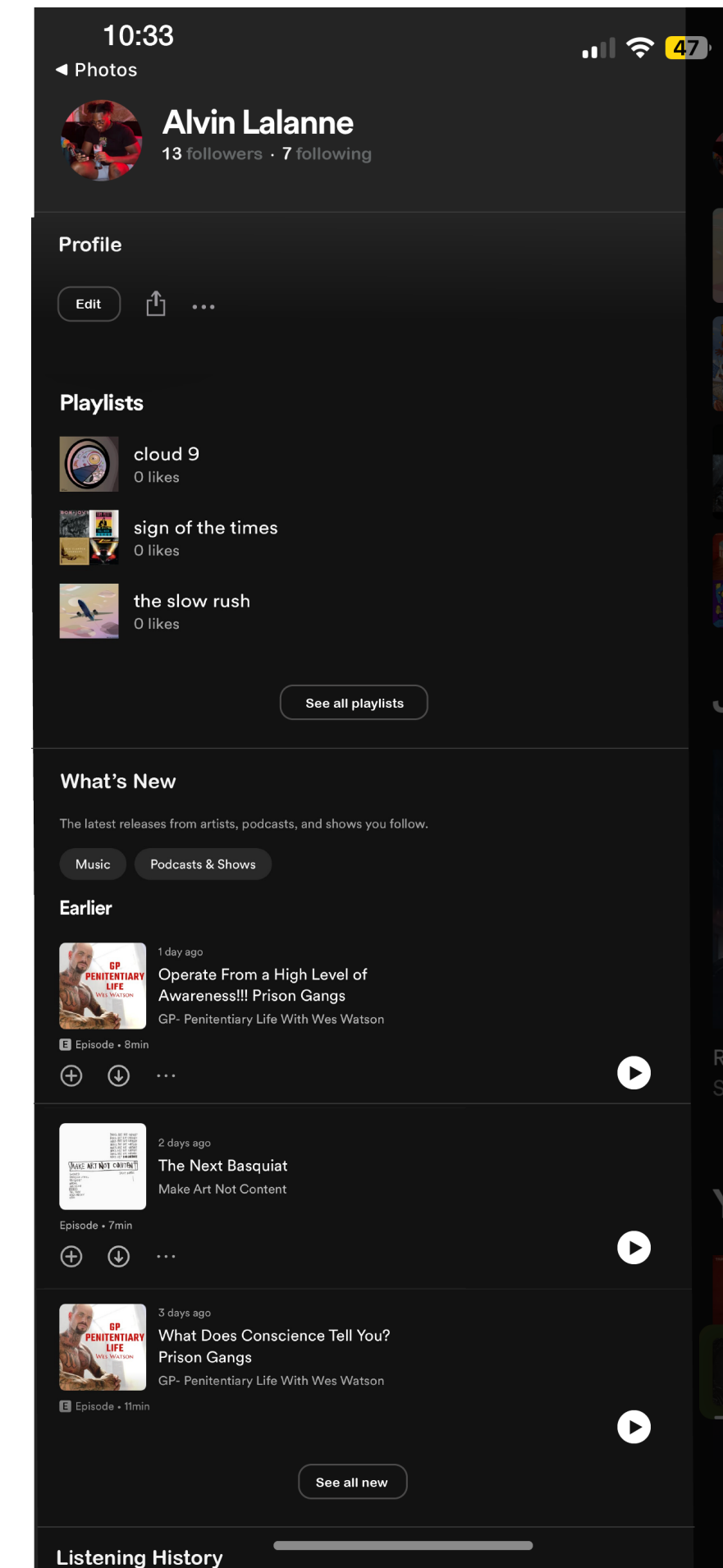
Concept
Profile Screen

- My adjustments were based on heuristic evaluation and user-centered design principles.

- My goal was to increase ease of use and to minimize the amount of steps by the consumer.

Current Layout

My Layout

Enhanced User Flow

- The profile page navigation has been refined for better aesthetics and usability, presenting key information more prominently to enhance Spotify's user experience.

Additionally,

The placement of the music curation should remain consistent.

- Music curation on Spotify should present a reliable experience. Currently, the placement of Daily Mixes and new releases varies daily, which may confuse users expecting a consistent interface

- For improved user navigation, it is proposed that recent music should always be featured first. Daily Mixes require a dedicated and permanent spot within the app to ensure they are easily accessible and not subject to disappearance.

- Album highlights at the bottom of the app should adopt a more space-efficient design, akin to the compact layout of YouTube Shorts and Instagram Reels. This change could provide a more dynamic and engaging content presentation.
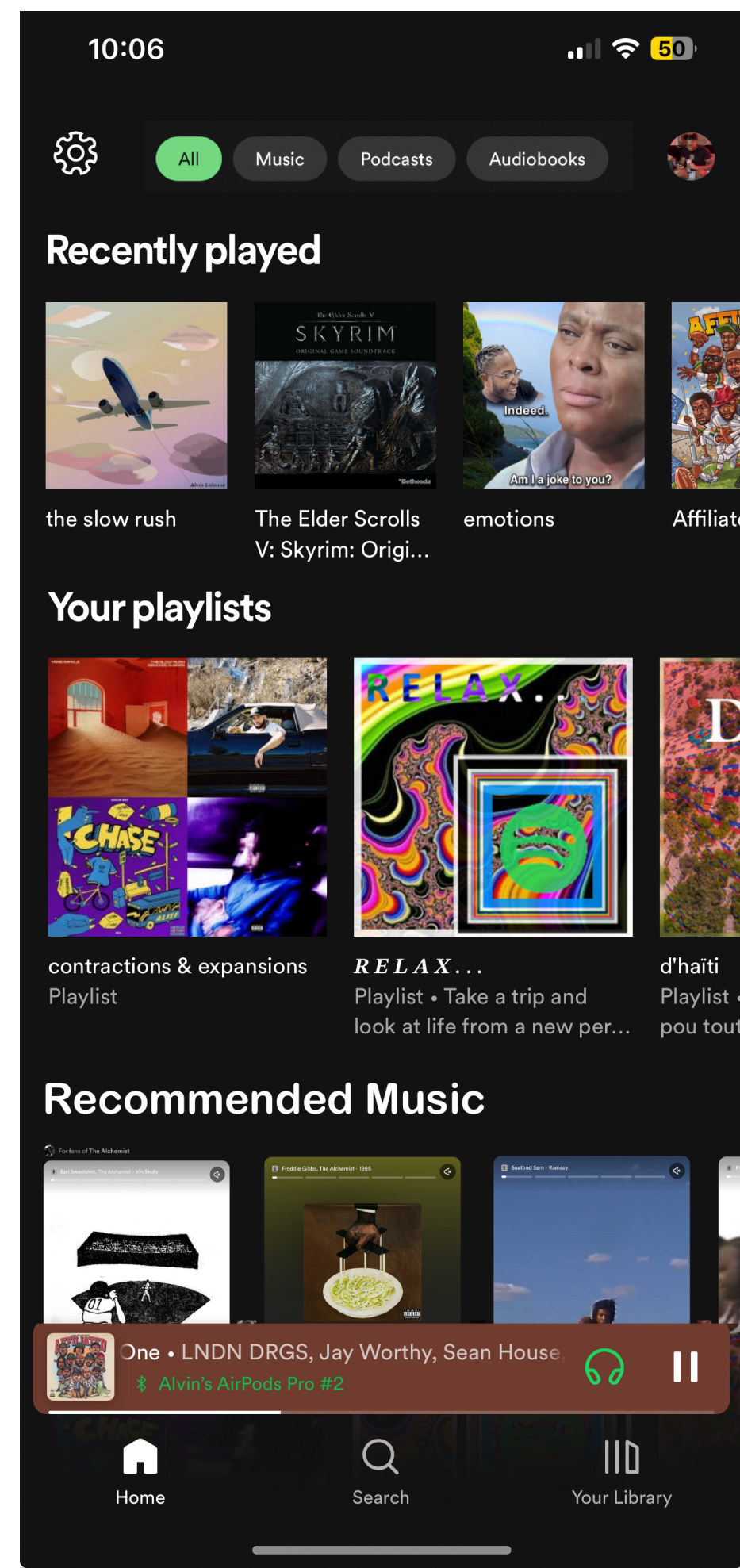
It should be noted that these changes were implemented in my design

We don't have to reinvent the wheel

New Home Screen
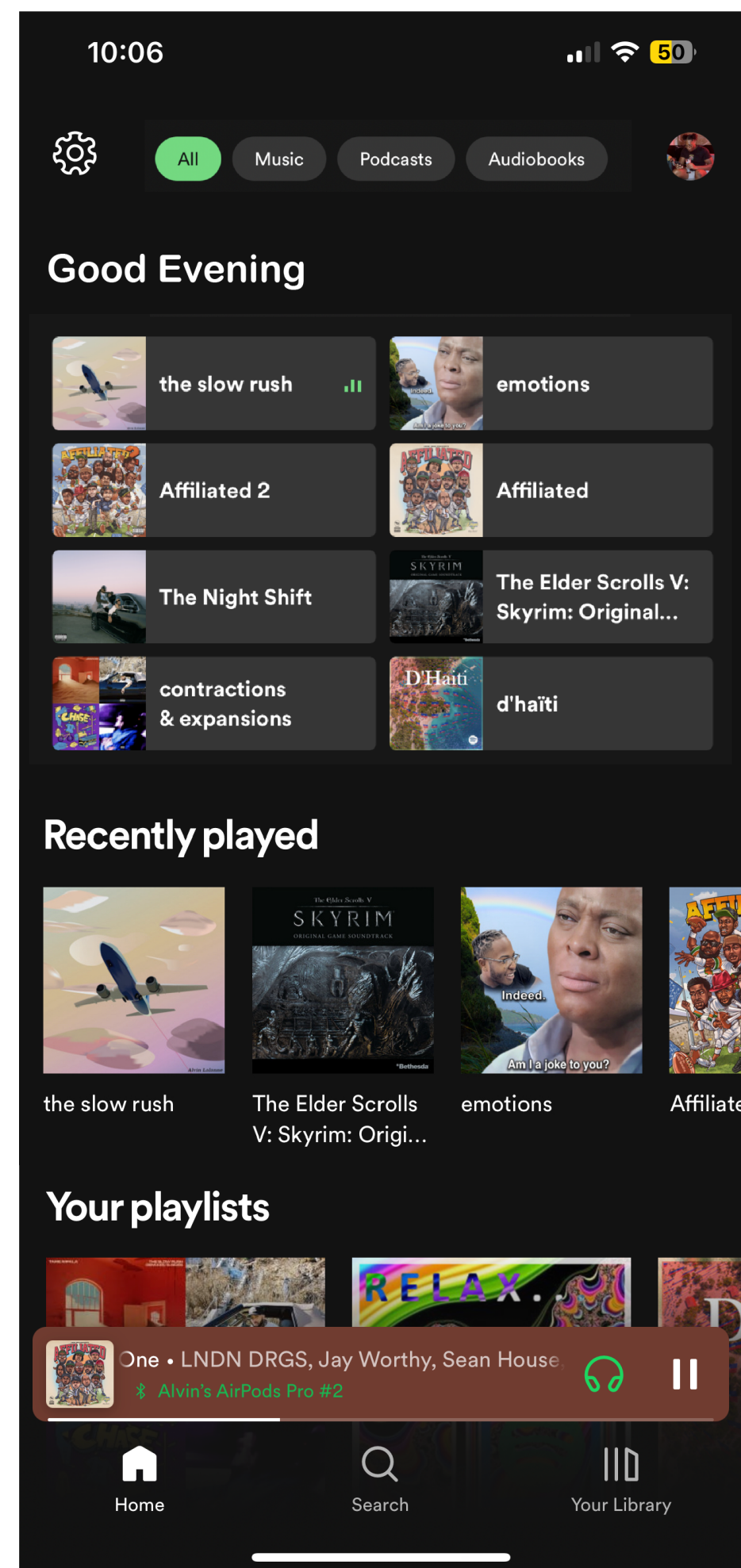
Farther Down Same Screen
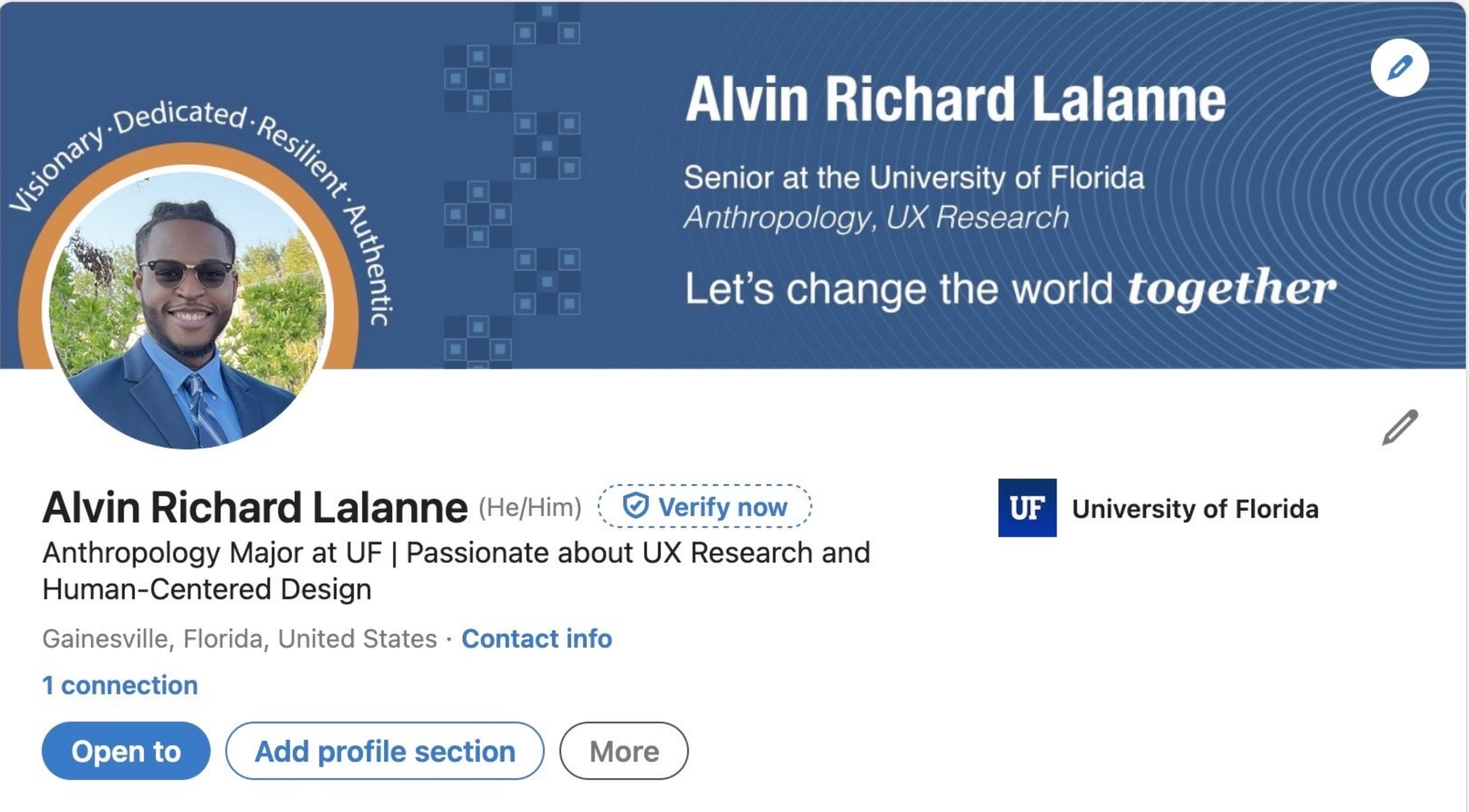

The current design works

- This redesign optimizes the home screen without overhauling the familiar user interface of Spotify, maintaining brand consistency while enhancing user navigation.

What's needed is <u>consistency in layout</u>

- To enhance the user experience on Spotify, maintaining a consistent layout is essential. It's not just about the visual appeal—it's about creating a predictable and reliable environment where users can enjoy their music without confusion or unnecessary complexity.

- By affirming a commitment to a consistent layout, we lay the groundwork for thoughtful innovation that resonates with users and stands the test of time.

Like what you see?

Consider adding me onto your team.
Many more great ideas and insights to come!

I am excited about the possibility of applying a rigorous, user-centered research approach to continually refine and enhance user experience. My goal is to create designs that not only resonate with users but are also validated through empirical research, aligning with commitment to innovation and excellence.