

# Nikita Kissel

## Product builder

*Emotional intelligence meets systems thinking.*

## CONTACT

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U.S. Citizen

## CORE SKILLS

### Product

User research & interviews, product strategy, PRD / spec writing, UX direction, roadmap & prioritization.

### Focus

Prioritization of prioritization.  
The right next step.  
Friction eliminated.  
Minimalism.

### Human insight

Behavioral psychology, emotional intelligence, NVC, coaching.  
Core needs.

### Systems thinking

Process design, workflow optimization.

### Leadership

Direct, empathetic communication.  
Change management

### Tools

Notion, Jira / Linear, Figma, wireframing, pitch decks, AI tooling (Claude Code, Cursor)

## EDUCATION

### MS, Civil Engineering

Yaroslavl State Technical University, Russia, 2014

### Professional Coach Certification

Transformation Academy, Florida, USA, 2025

## DRAWN TO

Relationships, deep human needs, authenticity, emotional intelligence at scale, behavioral science, AI products, learning.

## SUMMARY

Engineer turned product builder. I cut tangled problems down to their essentials, then turn that toward what people feel and need.

The friction that matters most is the one users don't notice. The need that matters most is the present one. I build for both.

Priority is not time spent in the product. It's a better life outside of it: attention reclaimed, a deep need met. Anything this user doesn't need gets cut, even if it works.

Looking for a product role with research and real product or business impact. Early-stage or human-centered teams are a bonus.

## EXPERIENCE

### Stealth-Stage Consumer Wellbeing App

2025 – Present

Product Strategy, UX & Fundraising · *Pre-seed app translating wearable signals into emotional and physical state.*

- Defined the core data architecture: a two-layer model translating wearable signals (sleep, nervous-system, activity) into seven everyday state scores, structured so any score change traces back to a specific driver and is explained in a single human sentence.
- Established a "zero-effort input" philosophy — passive capture and intuitive input over onboarding and check-ins — anchored in a "trust through confirmation" principle: what's on screen must match what the user physically feels.
- Designed the post-onboarding daily iOS experience: dashboard, goals layer, metric sliders, and a dual-thumb feedback loop where the gap between the system's estimate and the user's own input becomes the model's learning signal.
- Set the technical data approach and the product's aesthetic direction.
- Shaped a three-stream business model on a milestone-gated rollout.
- Built a pre-seed pitch deck, working slide-by-slide to a locked narrative, visual system, and business model.

### Horsepower Electric · New York, NY

03/2022 – Present

Electrical Engineering Manager

- Lead the engineering department; designed and refined the workflows that set how the team scopes, owns, and delivers work.
- Acted as product owner for internal workflow software built from scratch — wrote requirements and gave UX / QA feedback to an Agile development team, shipping a tool the department now runs on.
- Initiated and led the company-wide migration from AutoCAD MEP to Revit — learning the platform first and building the procedures while keeping projects on schedule.
- Drove adoption by addressing the human resistance to change through coaching-style communication across a multicultural, multi-time-zone team — treating rollout as a people problem, not just a software one.

### Engineering Roles · New York, NY / Russia

10/2014 – 03/2022

Electrical Engineer, Assistant Project Manager

- Coordinated design and construction teams to keep complex systems aligned, constructible, and code-compliant.
- Documented inefficiencies and introduced process improvements that reduced friction and gave teams clearer ownership.
- Supported change orders, estimating, scope clarification, and cross-team communication.

Quality Control Engineer

- Led field and lab testing and quality evaluation for major construction projects.
- Automated Excel-based reporting, cutting submission time more than 10x.

### Wargaming.net · Belarus

11/2011 – 02/2014

QA Tester — World of Tanks (User Acceptance Testing)

- Tested gameplay, UI changes, and balance updates for a live consumer product with millions of players.
- Identified UX problems from observed player behavior and proposed improvements; partnered with developers to validate fixes.
- Built early grounding in iterative development and user-centered design.