

Choosing Mental Health Apps

Mobile apps offer some very unique ways to help you overcome your psychological problems. Although there are an increasing number of studies suggesting that apps can be useful in helping you learn new therapeutic tools, apps have yet to be integrated into mainstream psychological treatment, and it will likely be many years before there is agreement on what type of apps are likely to be most effective. In the meantime, with thousands of mental health apps now available and more added every day, it is a difficult task to choose which apps can be most effective in addressing your particular problems. Doing some research on which apps are likely to be most helpful is highly advisable to avoid frustration and disappointment. This worksheet is designed to give you some guidelines on choosing one or more mental health apps.

While you will ultimately be the best judge of whether or not a particular app is helpful, if you are working with a therapist it is advisable to go over the app with your therapist and see how it fits into your overall treatment plan.

Use the chart on the next page to evaluate an app that you think might be useful in working on a problem or in your personal growth. You should read the descriptions and reviews for each app carefully and also visit the developer's website. To really understand an app, you will likely have to purchase and download it, but most apps just cost a few dollars and apps that come with a membership plan usually have a free trial.

Mental health apps come out frequently and keep in mind many apps that might be helpful to you are not specifically designated as having this purpose. Some sources to find out about mental health apps include:

Anxiety and Depression Association of America <https://adaa.org/finding-help/mobile-apps>

The Psychiatry Advisor: <http://www.psychiatryadvisor.com/top-10-mental-health-apps/slideshow/2608/>

Name of App _____

_____ Rate the Ease of Use

How easy is it to use the app and apply it to your specific issues?

1=Very Difficult 5=Very Easy

_____ Effectiveness

How likely do you think the app will be in meeting a specific therapeutic goal?

1=Highly Unlikely 5=Highly Likely

_____ Personalization

To what degree can the app be personalized for your specific needs?

1=Cannot Personalize 5=Complete ability to personalize

_____ Interactive Feedback

To what degree is the app able to give you feedback about your behavior?

1= Not at all interactive 5=Very interactive

_____ Research Evidence

Is there research evidence to support this app or is the app based on current psychological research?

1=No Research Evidence 5=Ample Research Evidence

_____ Background of Developers

Do the developers have specific knowledge or experience about the subject of this app?

1=No known experience 5=Highly experienced in this field

_____ Privacy Policy

Does the app have a clear privacy policy including what data is collected and stored and whether or not information is shared or sold?

1=No clear privacy 5=Clear privacy policy

_____ Specific Interface

Does the app allow you to export or print data or share data with other health related tools?

1=No interface 5=Clear and useful ability to use or share data

Comments:
