How to Find Helpful Mental Health Apps

Using apps on your phone can be helpful in managing your mental health. For example, there are apps that promote mindfulness and offer guided meditation. There are apps that can help you to track your moods and thoughts, your sleep patterns, and/or your medications. However, with over 10,000 mental health apps in existence, it can sometimes be a challenge to find the right app. This article provides some resources to assist you in your search for the mental health app that best suits your needs.

Please note, if you have a mental illness, mental health apps are *not* a substitute for mental health services from a medical provider or mental health professional. Mental health apps can be helpful to supplement professional care, and they can provide data that can be used in conjunction with professional care. To check whether you or your loved one should seek the services of a mental health professional, you can use the screening tools at https://namimainlinepa.org/info-resources/mi-help/#mental-health-screening-tools. Recommendations and evaluations of apps that provide access to online therapy are available in Healthline, Verywell Mind and CNET.

We suggest two different sets of resources for finding a helpful mental health app. You can use either of these search engines to find a mental health app for your use.

- MIND (M-Health Index & Navigation Database)

  MIND (https://mindapps.org/Apps) is a search engine that can help you to identify helpful mental health apps. Apps are only approved for the database after being evaluated under the American Psychiatric Association's App Evaluation Model. This model looks at accessibility, privacy & security, clinical foundation, engagement style, and data sharing. This search engine contains a searchable app library with descriptions of apps and provides many different filters such as cost, condition, and app features.

- One Mind PsyberGuide

  One Mind PsyberGuide provides (1) a searchable database with accurate and reliable information about mental health apps (https://onemindpsyberguide.org/apps/) and (2) many short videos on topics related to mental health (https://onemindpsyberguide.org/). They select popular or trending apps and then score them based on credibility, user experience and transparency. This search engine allows the user to search for specific conditions or treatments or for multiple conditions and treatments at the same time.

OR

You can search through lists of the best mental health apps. The following lists of best mental health apps for 2022 include descriptions and the pros and cons of each recommended app. Some of the recommended apps are free, and some of the more expensive apps provide access to an online therapist.

- PsychCentral: https://psychcentral.com/blog/top-10-free-mental-health-apps

- Healthline: https://www.healthline.com/health/mental-health/mental-health-apps

- Verywell Mind: https://www.verywellmind.com/best-mental-health-apps-4692902

- CNET: https://www.cnet.com/health/mental/best-mental-health-apps/

For more information about choosing mental health apps, see this blog post from Psychology Today: https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/digital-mental-health/202003/there-s-app-is-it-the-right-one.