

NJDMAVA Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging

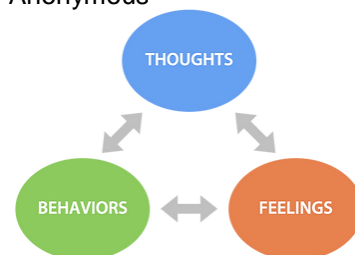


As we bring the month of May to a close, we wanted to recognize that May is Mental Health Awareness Month. The NJDMAVA Office of DEIB held a 'Lunch & Learn' at the Lawrenceville Headquarters where staff were invited to explore ways to support their mental health through a team outdoor walk in the sunshine followed by breaking bread together with healthy snacks while utilizing therapeutic coloring sheets, learning about mental health supportive apps, and sharing tools we personally use to help support our mental health. It is here that we share with you a SMALL sample of FREE mental health supportive apps.

"Life is ten percent what you experience and ninety percent how you respond to it." ~Anonymous



When concentrating on wellness, it is important to note the circular affects that your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors play in your life.



According to Parade Magazine, on average 25% of people are dealing with depression or anxiety and 55% of people say they've experienced some mental health issue since 2020. Here are FREE apps for sleep, anxiety, stress, and meditation that may assist in dealing with symptoms.

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTIVE APPS

Breathe2Relax – This app is a portable stress management tool which provides practice exercises to help users learn the stress management skill called diaphragmatic breathing. Breathing exercises have been documented to decrease the body's 'fight-or-flight' (stress) response, and help with mood stabilization, anger control, and anxiety management. Proper breathing can not only lower heart rate and blood pressure, but it can get you through an all-out panic attack.

What's Up? A Mental Health App – This app uses some of the best CBT (cognitive behavior therapy) and ACT (acceptance commitment therapy) methods to help you cope with depression, anxiety, anger, stress, and more. This app helps you put things in perspective by keeping a journal and playing an interactive game that's ideal for moments when you're in the thick of high anxiety.

Moodfit – This app, which has been voted Best Overall Mental Health App, provides a comprehensive set of customizable tools such as a mood journal, gratitude journal, breathwork, mindfulness, and more. It also helps in understanding how lifestyle activities such as sleep, exercise, nutrition, and more affect your mood. With this app, you can input your goals as well as view data on your mood. *Premium features are available for a fee.

Mindfulness Coach – This app is created by the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) and is a great instructive resource for anyone seeking to learn about and embrace mindfulness as a healthy coping strategy lifelong skill. The app also provides a gradual, self-guided training program designed to help you understand and adopt a simple mindfulness practice. Here, you can follow guided audio meditations, set goals, track your progress, and learn more about the history of this mental practice.

Insight Timer – This app of the year winner is acclaimed for its guided meditation talks led by the world's top meditation and mindfulness experts, neuroscientists, psychologists, and teachers. With various sessions to help from guiding you through mindfulness meditation, assisting with sleep, exploring breathwork, and the art of yoga, the app provides many free meditations for each category. Popular topics searched on the app include: sleep deeply, dealing with anxiety and reducing stress, self-love and compassion, focus and concentration, leadership, better relationships, and more. *Premium features are available for a fee.

Healthy Minds Program – This app turns neuroscience into everyday tools that train your mind to unlock the four pillars of well-being: awareness, insight, connection, and purpose. With podcast-style lessons and both seated and active meditations, you'll learn what science says about the brain while developing skills to tap into these learnings for a healthier, happier you. 🧘

Smiling Mind – This 2018 best Health & Wellbeing app provides programs for both children and adults. During the suggested 10 minutes a day, you will be provided with accessible, life-long tools to support healthy minds in school, home, and in the workplace. Popular programs offered include: attention and concentration, wellbeing, performance, sleep, mindful eating, relationships, and stress. Guided meditations will help you to reflect and bring balance to your life.

Disclaimer: DMAVA does not endorse any particular app, website, reference source, or approach.