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MIG-HEALTH APPS

Mobile Health Apps for Migrants

<https://apps4health.eu/>

Module 10 - Teaching session (10.1)

Health Apps for Mental Health



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Teaching Session: Content

1. [Introduction to mental health and its importance in everyday life](#)
2. [Importance of emotional management](#)
3. [Types and use of mental health applications](#)



Objectives

- ✓ Learning about the importance of taking care of mental health
- ✓ Learning how to use mental health apps
- ✓ Learn what emotions are and their importance
- ✓ Learn how to detect emotions and how to regulate them.
- ✓ Learn how to control your breathing in stressful moments.
- ✓ Be able to differentiate between each of the mental health applications.
- ✓ Know how to use them and make good use of them



Source: Image by nuraghies on Freepik



10.1.1

Introduction to mental health and its importance in everyday life

Objectives

- Learning about the importance of taking care of mental health
- Learning how to use mental health apps



[Designed by Freepik](#)

Training Content

- What is mental health and why is it important?
- What are mental health apps?
- Advantages of using mental health apps

Migrants and Mental Health

- The impact of migration on the mental health of labour migrants and refugees and asylum seekers remains a controversial area of research (Moussavi et al., 2007).
- It is unclear whether migration leads to an increase or decrease in mental health burden and significant differences in mental health have been found between different groups of migrants (Alegria et al., 2008).
- There may be significant differences between migrant groups, especially between refugees and labour migrants, with a higher burden of depression and post-traumatic stress disorder among refugees and a lower burden of depression among labour migrants.



What is Mental Health?

- According to WHO (2022), Mental Health is a "state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, to develop their full capacities, to be able to learn and work well, and to contribute to the betterment of their community".



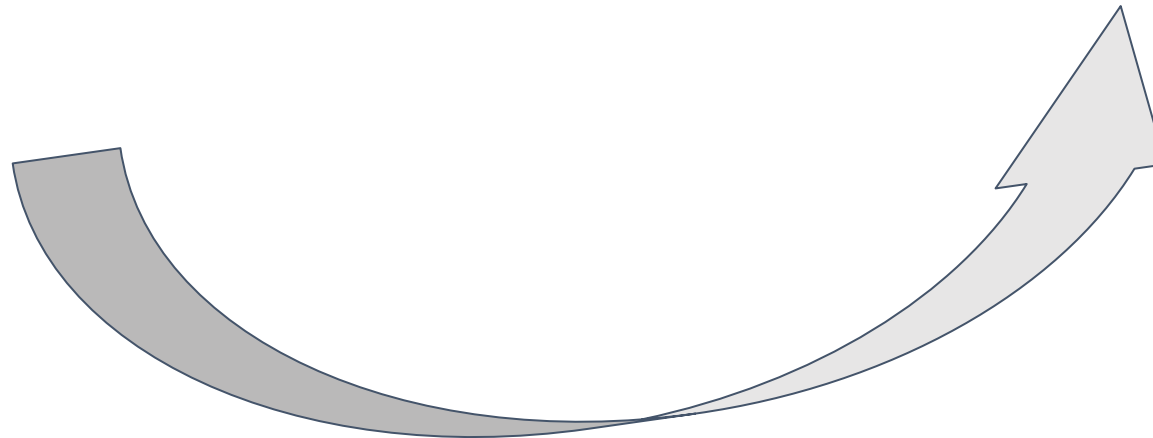
What is Mental Health?

There are a number of **factors** that influence people's mental health, the most important being:

- Biological factors (genes or chemical alterations in the brain).
- Family history
- Life experiences
- Lifestyle

When these factors are altered, Mental Health problems begin to appear:

- **Stress**
- **Depression**
- **Anxiety**



STRESS

Stress can be defined as a state of worry or mental tension caused by a difficult situation. Everyone experiences stress to some degree. The way we respond to stress, however, makes a big difference to our overall well-being. (WHO, 2023).

ANXIETY

According to the WHO (2023), everyone can feel anxious at some time, but people with anxiety disorders often experience intense and excessive fear and worry. They are difficult to control, they cause significant distress and can last for a long time if left untreated. Anxiety disorders interfere with daily activities and can impair a person's family, social and school or work life.

DEPRESSION

Depressive disorder involves a depressed mood or loss of pleasure or interest in activities for long periods of time. Depression is different from regular mood changes and feelings about everyday life. Depression can happen to anyone but people who have lived through abuse, severe losses or other stressful events are more likely to develop depression.



What are Mental Health Apps?

The applications that we are going to learn about and use during this module are intended to help regulate emotional state, improve self-management of health and prevent possible Mental Health problems.

They cover different functions and areas:

- **Stress**
- **Anxiety**
- **Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)**
- **Counselling**
- **Motivation**
- **Emotional regulation**



What mental health applications will we find in this module?

Mental Health Apps

MoodLog: Daily Insights

PTSD COACH

BREATH2RELAX

Therapyside





10.1.2

Importance of emotional management

Objectives

- Learn what emotions are and their importance
- Learn how to detect emotions and how to regulate them.
- Learn how to control your breathing in stressful moments.



[Designed by Freepik](#)

Training Content

- What are emotions?
- Emotional regulation techniques
- Breath control activities

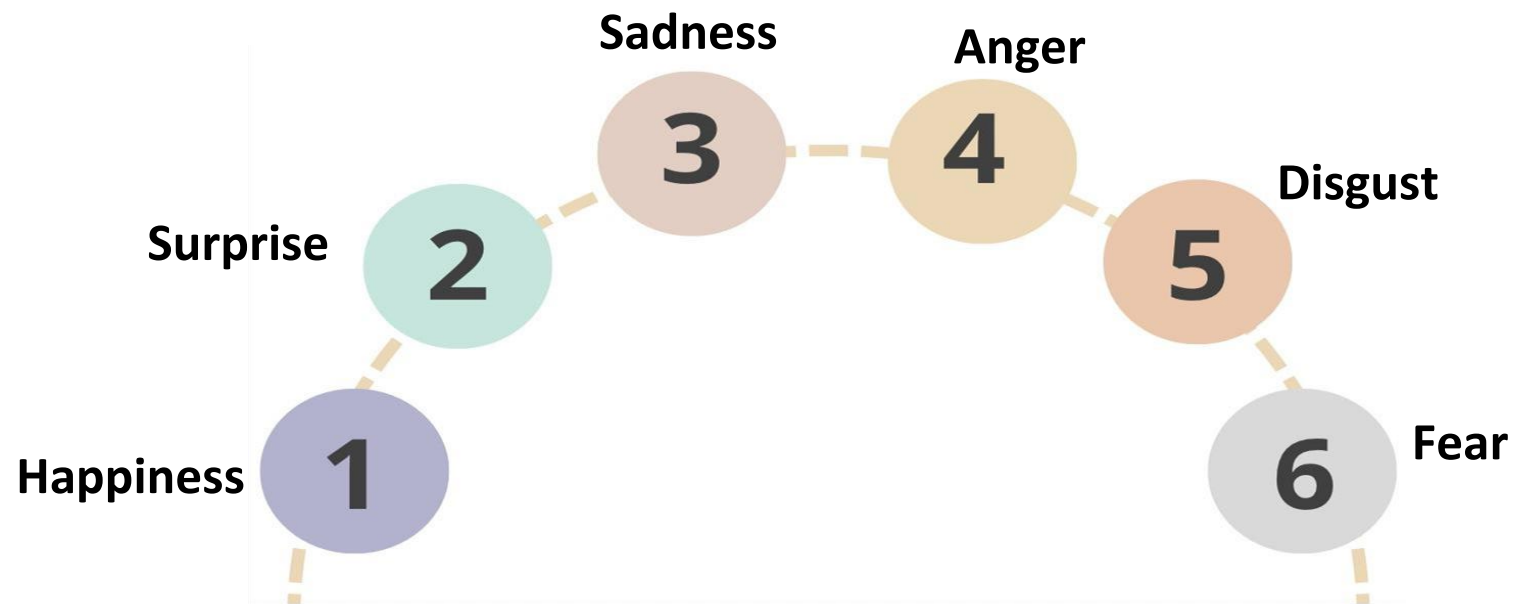
What are emotions?

- Emotions are conscious mental reactions (such as anger or fear) subjectively experienced as strong feelings usually directed toward a specific object and typically accompanied by physiological and behavioral changes in the body. (American Psychological Association)
- An important aspect is emotional intelligence, i.e. the ability of people to "perceive, understand, regulate and adaptively control their own and others' emotions" (Schutte et al., 2002).
- People with high emotional intelligence also have better emotional well-being, and are able to see situations from a better perspective (Schutte et al., 2002).



What are basic emotions?

- Emotions are universal, and several studies agree that there are six basic emotions (Keltner et al., 2019).



Emotional regulation techniques

- Emotion regulation strategies focus on modifying the magnitude and type of emotional experiences and their effect on ourselves
- When the person has emotion regulation problems, it can lead to mental disorders, the most typical ones being anxiety and depression (Aldao et al., 2010).



Types of emotional regulation

RE-EVALUATION

It consists of trying to generate new interpretations of the situation in a positive way when experiencing stressful situations.

This results in a series of positive responses, both emotionally and physically, to situations that provoke a series of stressful or negative emotions (Aldao et al., 2010).

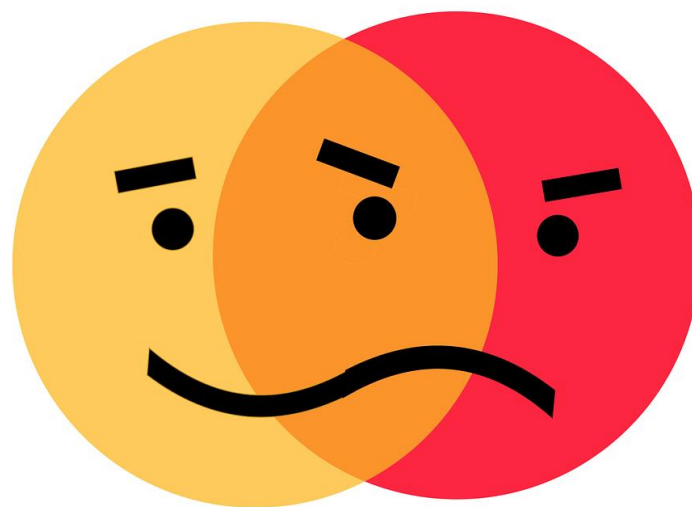
PROBLEM RESOLUTION

The person has to be able to think through a stressful situation, and consciously propose new actions aimed at solving that problem (Aldao et al., 2010).





EMOTION IDENTIFICATION EXERCISE



[Source](#) | [Pixabay license](#)



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Emotion identification exercise: describe an emotion

Think of one of the emotions you have had in the last few days or weeks and try to describe it by writing it down on a piece of paper. Follow the outline shown below.

- **Sensations:** e.g. I felt tightness in my chest
- **Thoughts:** e.g. I think it is impossible for me to do this.
- **Expressions:** e.g. my shoulders are tense.
- **Emotion:** e.g. I feel anxious



Emotion identification exercise: describe an emotion

Sometimes we think that doing nothing about an emotion that we feel, avoiding it or ignoring it, will make it go away, but this is often not the case. Confronting what triggers an emotion can help us to control its effects and be able to re-evaluate the situation or think of a solution to the problem that is causing the emotion.

For example, if I feel anxious about a task and I feel pressure in my chest and tension in my body, I become aware of it and take a few minutes to think about how to tackle the task with less anxiety. I try to breathe for a few minutes, relax my body and think of a more positive way to deal with the task.



Breathing control techniques: Diaphragmatic breathing

- A good technique to control breathing is the diaphragmatic or deep breathing technique.
- It is a technique that helps gain control over emotions. It has the advantage of being one of the easiest and quickest techniques to learn. It can be used during a stressful situation (Consolo et al., 2008).

VIDEO DEMO:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vMjTJf4-xz0>





10.1.3

Types and use of mental health applications

Objectives

- Be able to differentiate between each of the mental health applications.
- Know how to use them and make good use of them.



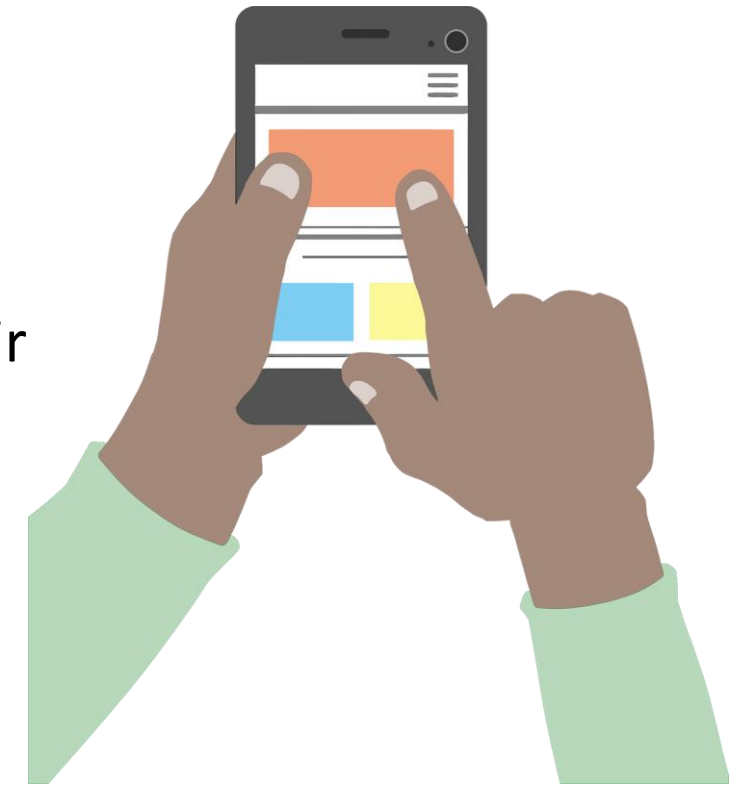
[Designed by Freepik](#)

Training Content

- What are mental health apps?
- What are the objectives of each of the apps?
- How are they used?

What are mental health apps

- New technologies and the correct use of their apps are a great opportunity to improve the provision of mental health services to help people with various problems (Hind and Sibbald, 2015).
- The use of apps is changing the way many people go about their daily life activities, and several studies have shown smartphones and apps are able to change and improve the mental health of users (Hind and Sibbald, 2015).



[Source](#) | [Pixabay license](#)



What are mental health apps

The applications to be presented below focus on different aspects:

- ✓ Recording of the user's mood and day to day life
- ✓ Tools for PTSD, anxiety and stress management.
- ✓ Helping to seek psychological support, as well as teaching and informing professionals.
- ✓ Helping to manage emotions and feelings



Mood Tracker Apps

Daylio Journal - Mood Tracker

- Android:

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.mediastudios.daytracker>



MoodLog: Daily Insights

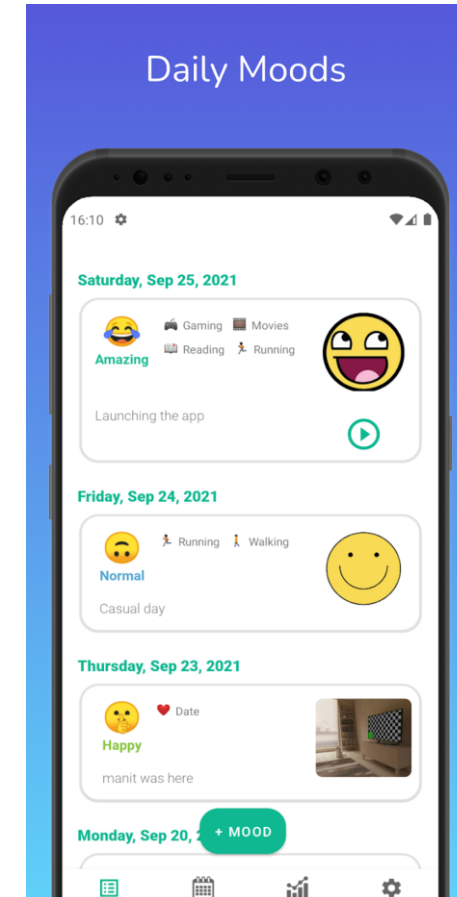
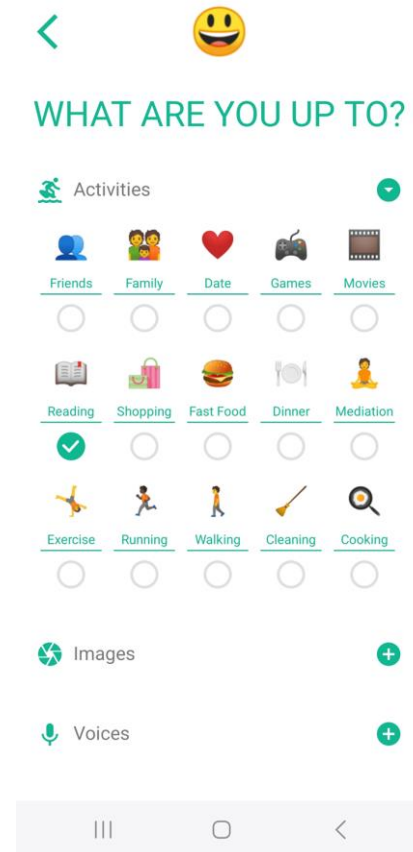
The app offers a comprehensive and simple approach to mood tracking and recording. With a few taps, it tracks your mood, your activities and even weather conditions, providing a complete picture of your day.

- ANDROID: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.mediastudios.daytracker>



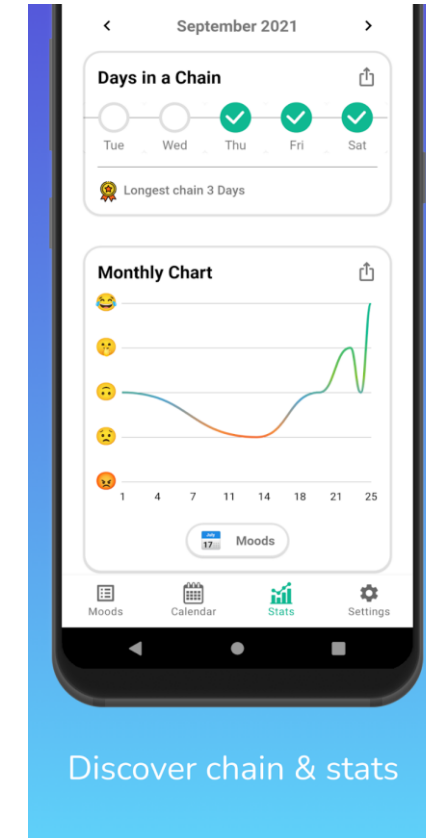
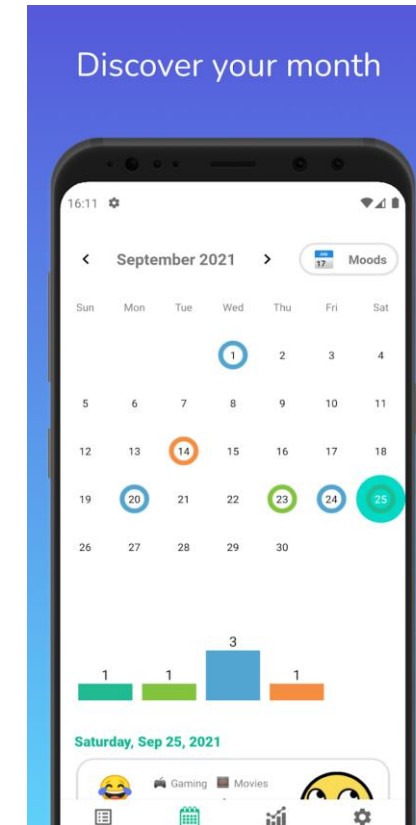
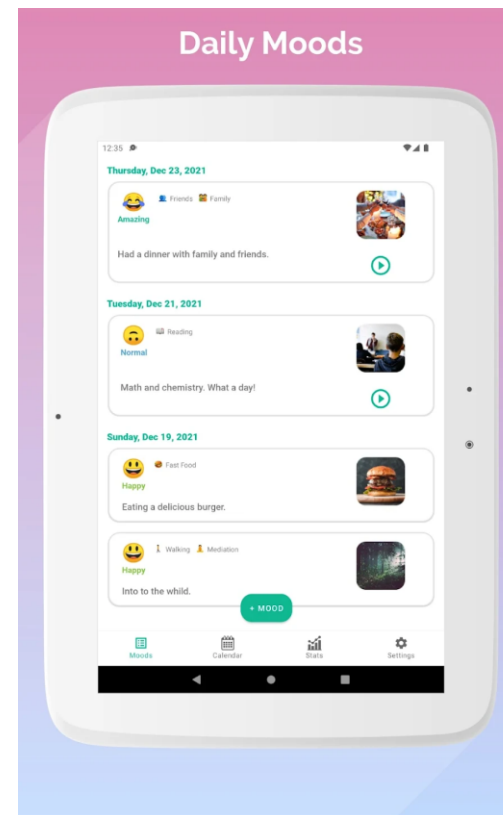
MoodLog: Daily Insights

The application allows you to record how you feel each day and the activity you are doing at the time of recording, adding photos, recordings and notes.



MoodLog: Daily Insights

The application offers a calendar with all moods, weekly and monthly stats, reflects the achievements



Apps PTSD/Stress/Anxiety

PTSD COACH

- Android:

https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=is.vertical.ptsdcoach&hl=en_US

- IOS: <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/ptsd-coach/id430646302>



PTSD COAH

This app focuses on users with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). It gives information about the disorder, about their professional care, a self-assessment and also provides opportunities to find support and tools to help with stress management.

It is available for both Android and iOS:

- ANDROID: https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=is.vertical.ptsdcoach&hl=en_US
- IOS: <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/ptsd-coach/id430646302>



PTSD COAH

1

Once you download the application and open it, the first thing that appears is a series of information and terms and licences of use that you have to accept if you want to continue with the app.



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SOFTWARE END USER LICENSE AGREEMENT

By agreeing to have any of VA's software products installed on to your device and by subsequent use of the Licensed Software, you agree to comply with the terms of this general End User License Agreement ("EULA") where no specific agreement is in place between VA and the user of the software. If you do not agree to the terms of this EULA, do not install or use the Licensed Software but uninstall it from your device. This EULA applies to any upgrades and supplements to the original Licensed Software provided and is referred to on your opening screen.

- The Licensed Software is owned by VA. The Licensed Software is licensed, not sold, only on the terms of this EULA. Acceptance and installation of the software indicates your acceptance of the terms and conditions of this EULA.

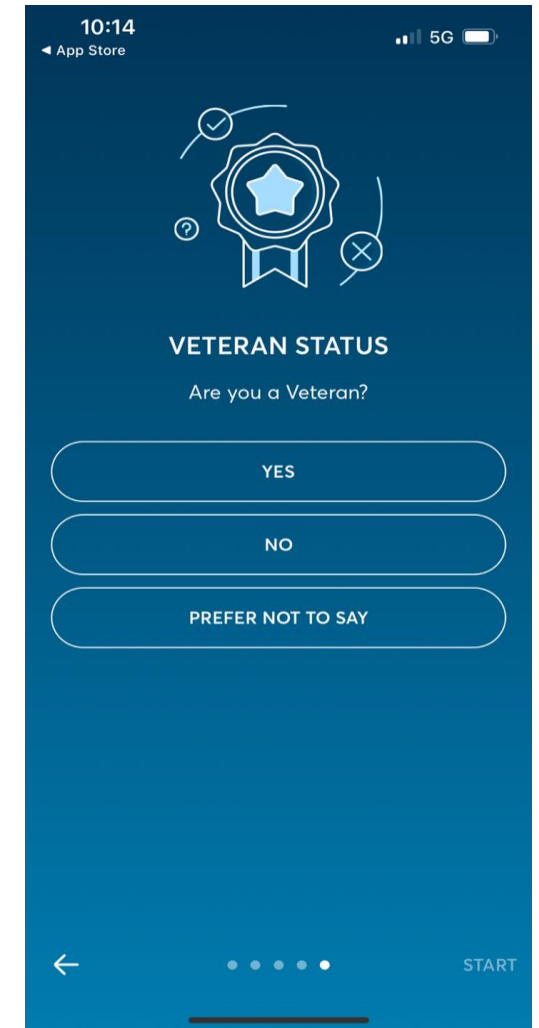
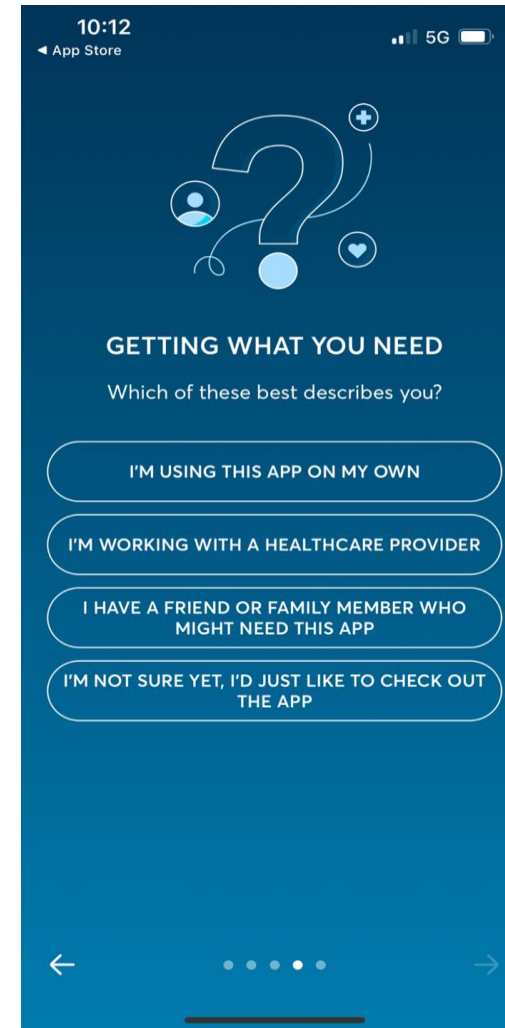
I Accept



PTSD COAH

2

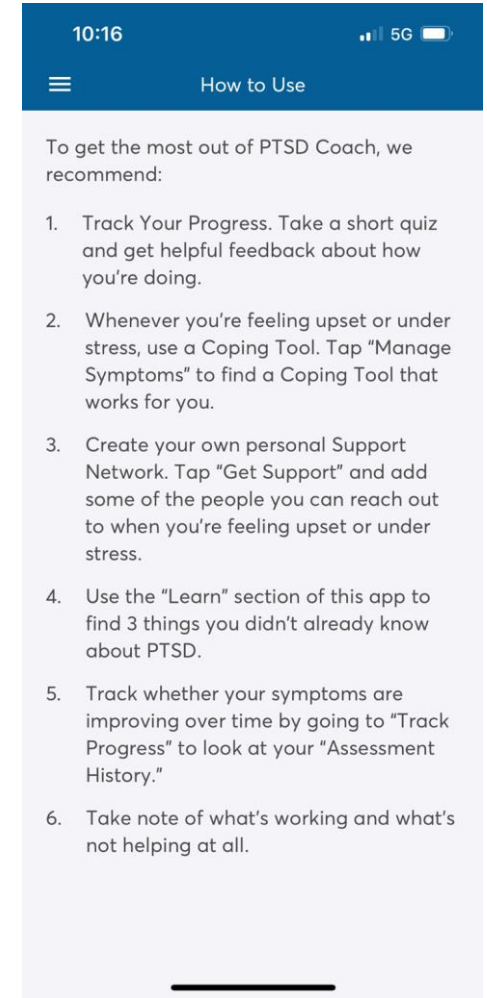
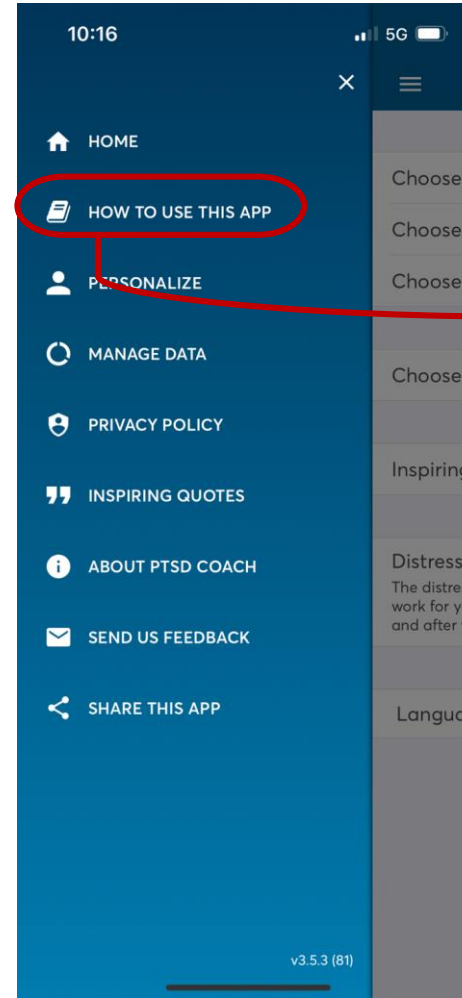
The second step is to answer the questions you are asked, giving the option that best describes the user, and then whether they are a veteran or not.



PTSD COAH

3

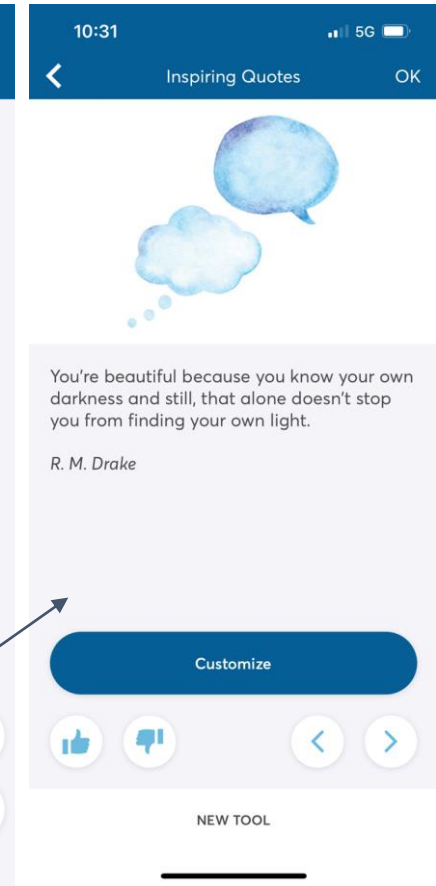
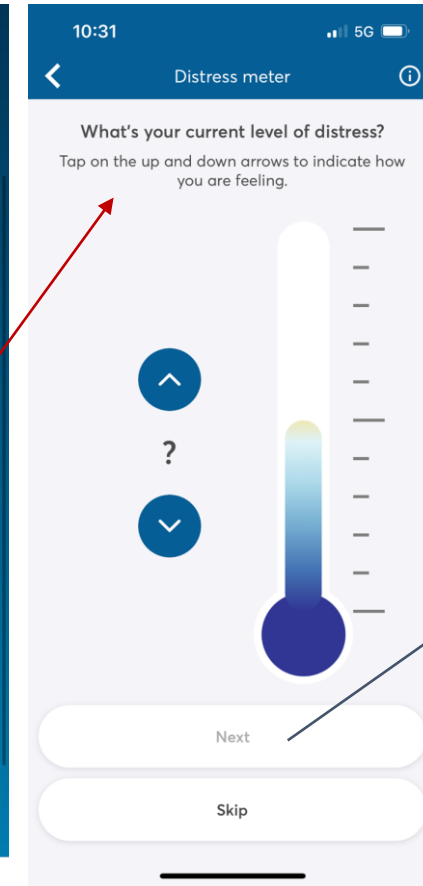
Once you accept all the terms and conditions, the application leads to the main screen. You now have an option explaining how to use the application.



PTSD COAH

4

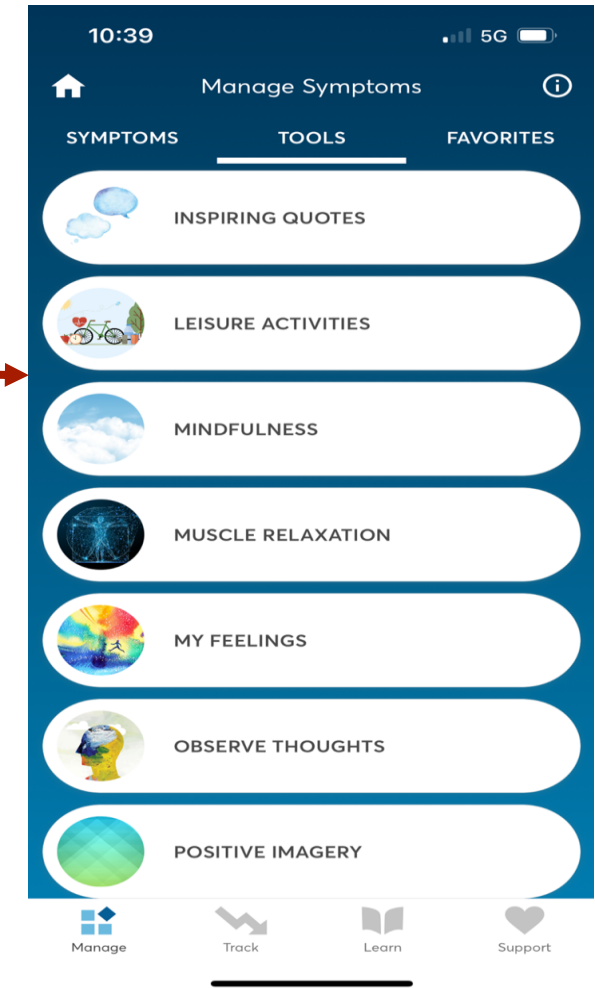
Going back to the main page, you have several aspects to explore, such as symptom management. This focuses on the degree to which you are feeling that emotion at that moment, and offers a series of tips and techniques that you can use.



PTSD COAH

4

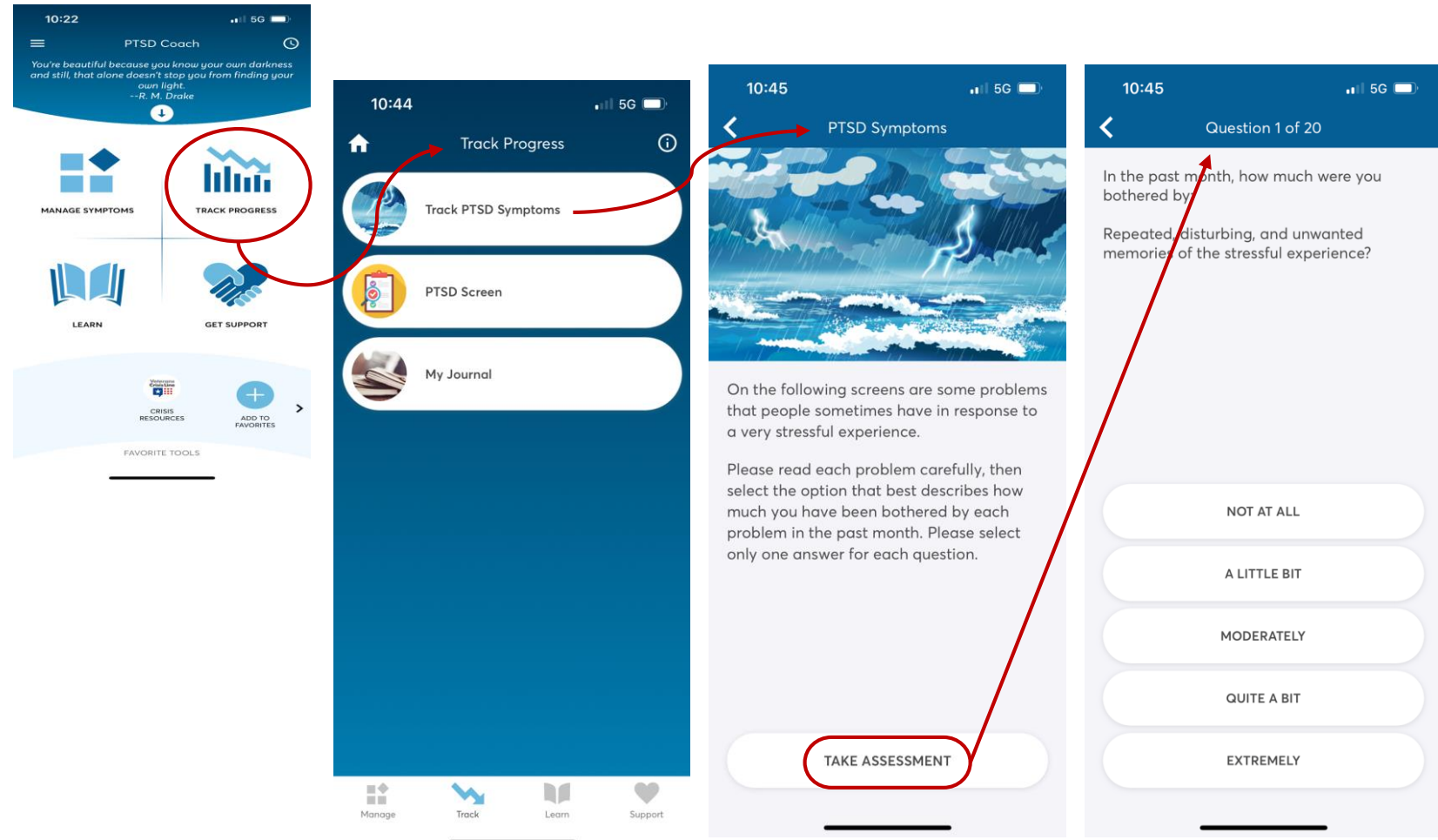
In the symptom management section, there is also another option that offers coping tools.



PTSD COAH

5

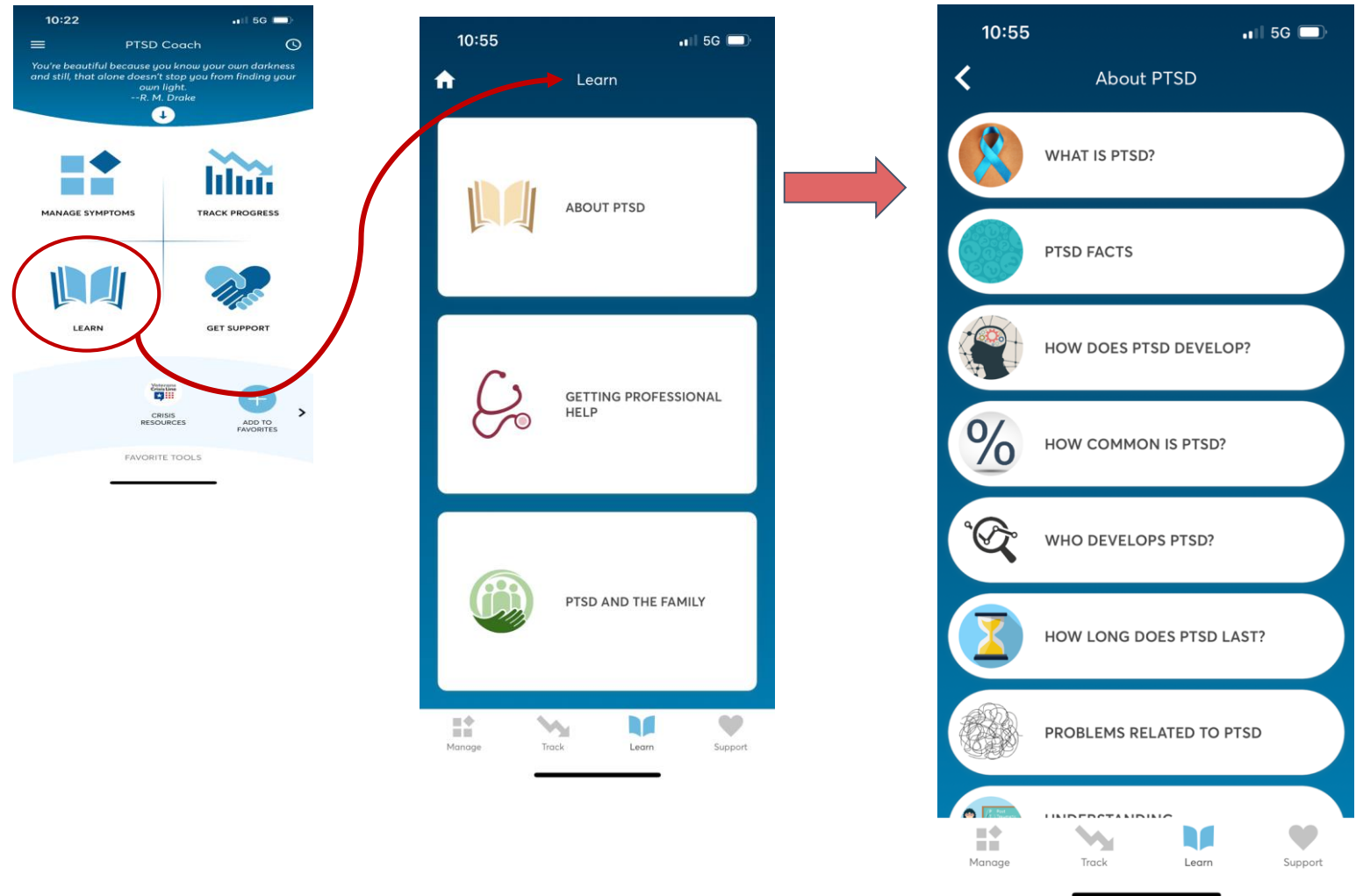
Another option allows you to track your progress. With this option, you can record your symptoms based on a questionnaire. This helps the user to understand if what they are feeling is related to PTSD.



PTSD COAH

6

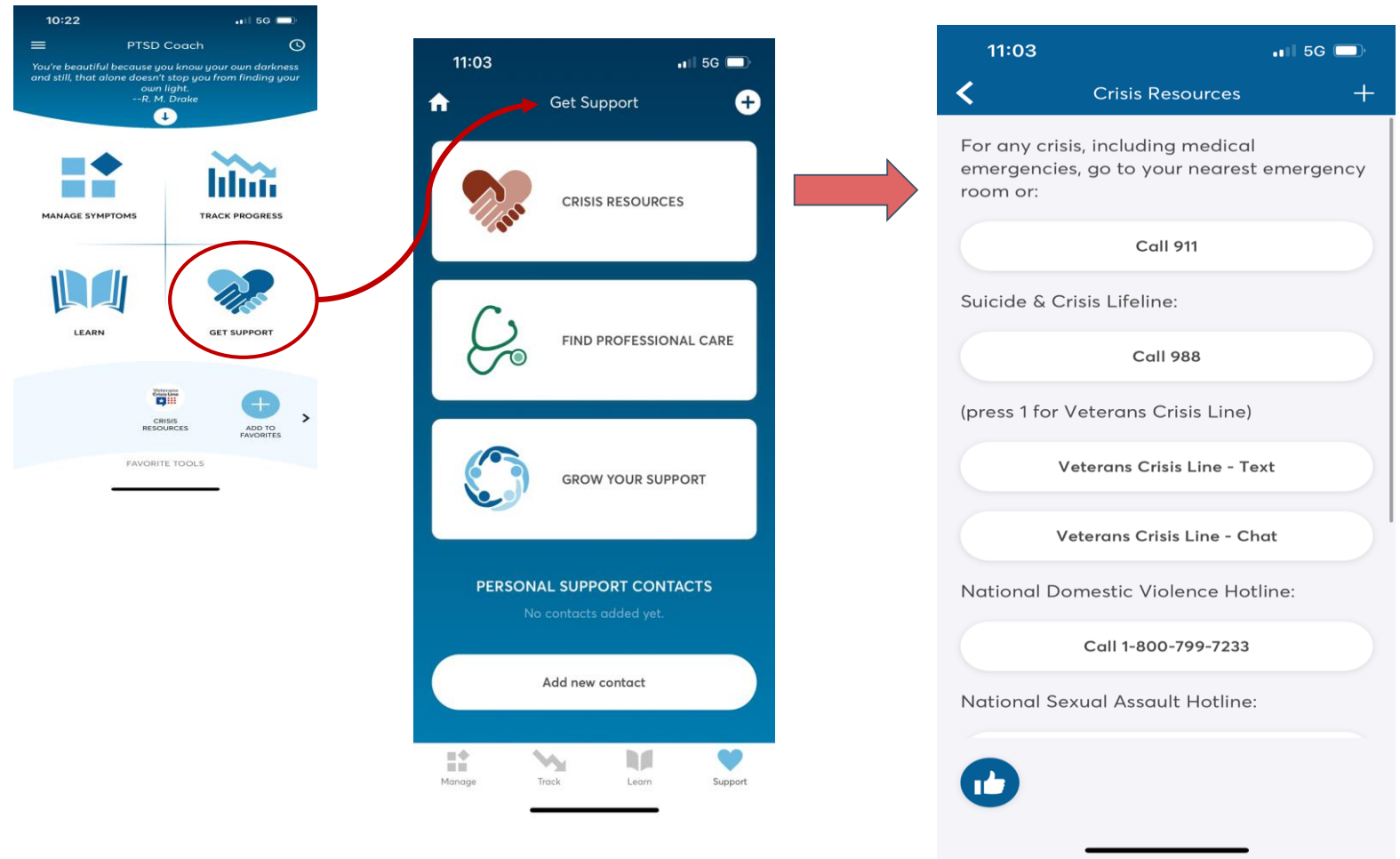
This application also offers a section to learn about PTSD disorder, gives advice, helps you to contact professionals in times of crisis, and provides a list of the most common PTSD symptoms.



PTSD COAH

7

Finally, it also offers a support option so that the user feels supported in the process.



Apps for Psychological support

Therapyside

- Android:

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.terapiachat.android&hl=es&gl=US>

- IOS: <https://apps.apple.com/es/app/therapyside-psicólogo-online/id1223472664>



Therapyside

This application helps users to contact professional psychologists through video calls. Downloading the application is free, but then payments have to be made at professional rates.

Users can find psychologists specializing in a wide range of areas (self-esteem, anxiety, depression, sexuality, couple therapy and coaching).

It is available for both Android and iOS:

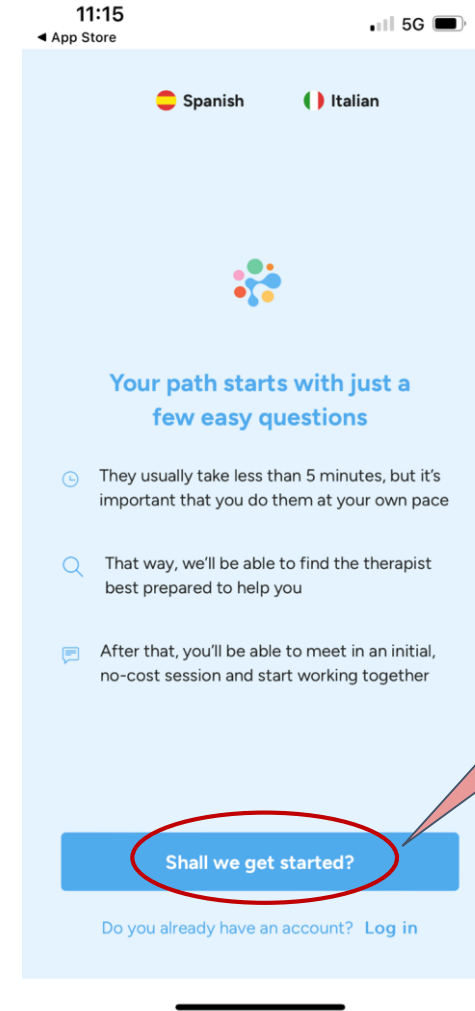
- ANDROID: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.terapiachat.android&hl=es&gl=US>
- IOS: <https://apps.apple.com/es/app/therapyside-psicólogo-online/id1223472664>



Therapyside

1

Once the application is downloaded, a questionnaire appears in which the user is asked about their situation, how they feel, etc.



Leads to the questionnaire



Therapyside

Examples of questions asked in the questionnaire

The image displays four sequential screenshots of a mobile application questionnaire. Each screen shows a list of options for a user to select. The first two screens show a list of nine options, with the first option selected in the second screen. The third screen asks about gender preference with three options. The fourth screen asks about session timing with three options. Each screen includes a 'Next' button at the bottom and a status bar at the top showing the time and 5G signal.

Screenshot 1 (11:16): Select the option you most identify with:

- I have anxiety and I'd like to learn how to manage it
- I feel sad and I suspect I may be depressed
- I want to improve my self-esteem and grow as a person
- I'd like to improve my relationship with my partner
- I want to understand and improve my sex life
- I'm looking for ways to better handle challenges at school or work
- I'd like to resolve conflicts in my social or family relationships
- I've suffered a loss and I need support to work through it
- For a reason not listed above

Screenshot 2 (11:16): Select the option you most identify with:

- I have anxiety and I'd like to learn how to manage it ✓
- I feel sad and I suspect I may be depressed
- I want to improve my self-esteem and grow as a person
- I'd like to improve my relationship with my partner
- I want to understand and improve my sex life
- I'm looking for ways to better handle challenges at school or work
- I'd like to resolve conflicts in my social or family relationships
- I've suffered a loss and I need support to work through it
- For a reason not listed above

Screenshot 3 (11:17): To find the therapist who best suits your needs, do you have a preference about their gender?

- I prefer a man
- I prefer a woman
- I don't have a preference

i If you're not sure, no need to worry about it. You can always ask for a change of provider.

Screenshot 4 (11:17): I've got that down, Alba. When is a good time to focus on you?

Choose when the best time is for you to have sessions:

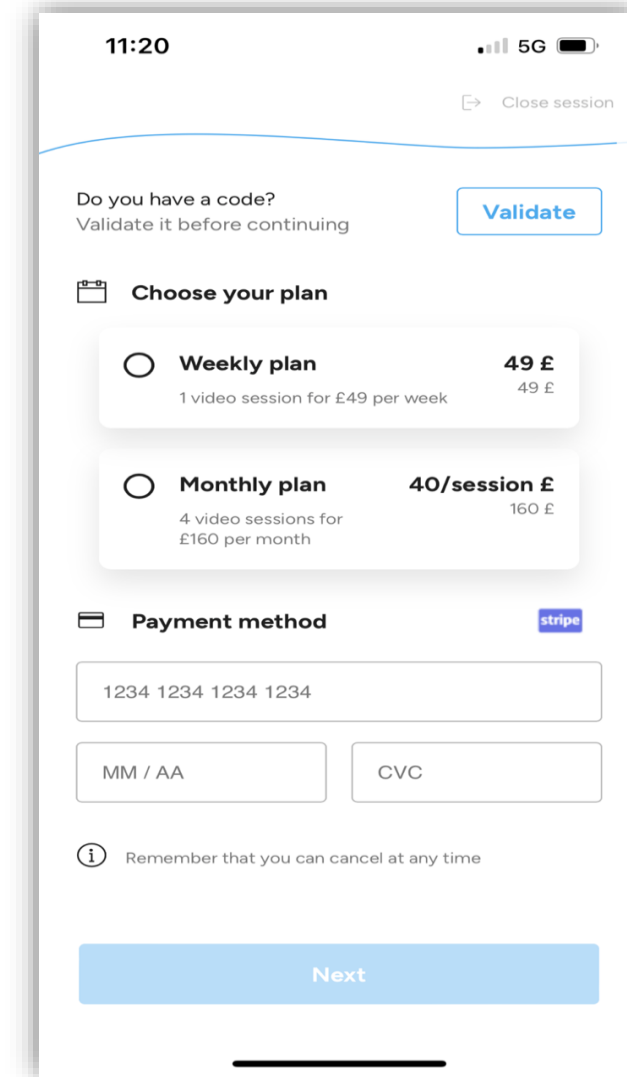
- In the mornings
- In the afternoons
- I have wide availability

i Keep in mind that all options are based on the time in the UK mainland.

Therapyside

2

Once the questionnaire is completed, different payment options are offered, and once the data is filled in, the professional can be contacted.



The screenshot shows a mobile app interface for payment. At the top, the time is 11:20 and the network is 5G. A 'Close session' link is in the top right. The main content is a payment form with the following sections:

- Do you have a code?** with a 'Validate' button and the instruction 'Validate it before continuing'.
- Choose your plan** with two options:
 - Weekly plan**: 49 £ (49 £ per week), 1 video session for £49 per week.
 - Monthly plan**: 40/session £ (160 £ per month), 4 video sessions for £160 per month.
- Payment method** with a Stripe logo and a card number field containing '1234 1234 1234 1234'.
- Fields for 'MM / AA' and 'CVC'.
- An information icon and text: 'Remember that you can cancel at any time'.
- A large blue 'Next' button at the bottom.



Emotion management Apps

BREATHE2RELAX:

- Android:

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=mil.dha.breathe2relax&hl=es&gl=US>

- IOS: <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/breathe2relax/id425720246>



BREATHE2RELAX

This app is considered a stress management tool that provides information about the effects of stress, as well as instructions and exercises to help learn stress management techniques.

This application, based on breathing, helps to manage the emotions and feelings presented by the person.

It is available for both Android and iOS:

- ANDROID: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=mil.dha.breathe2relax&hl=es&gl=US>
- IOS: <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/breathe2relax/id425720246>



BREATHE2RELAX

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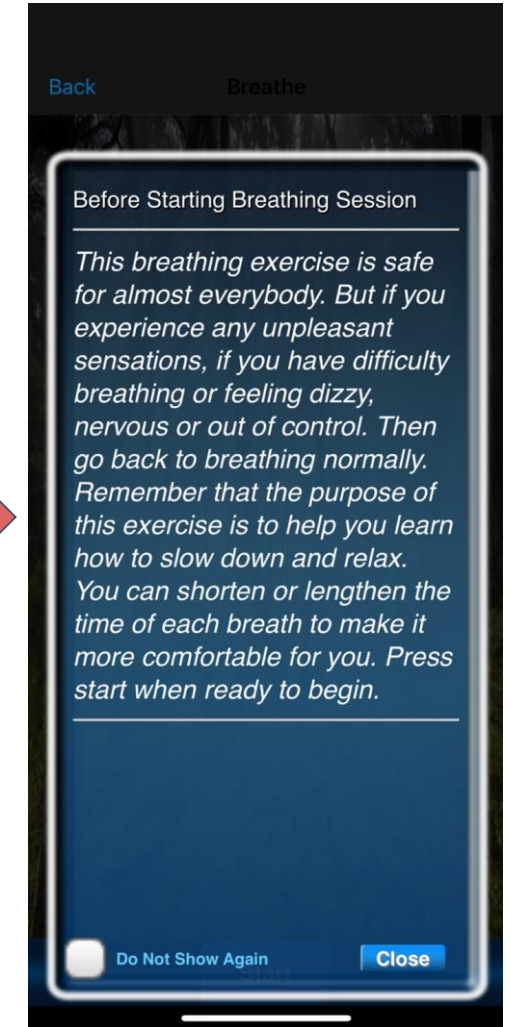
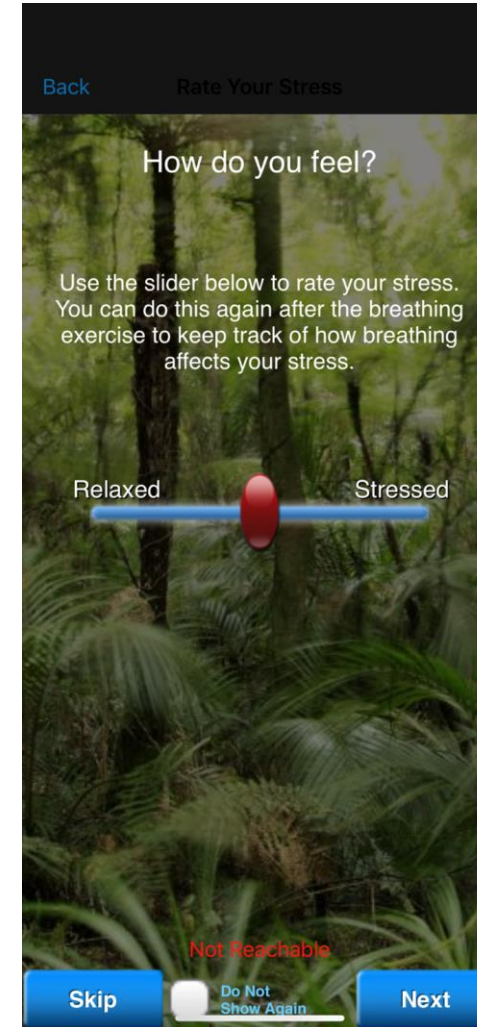
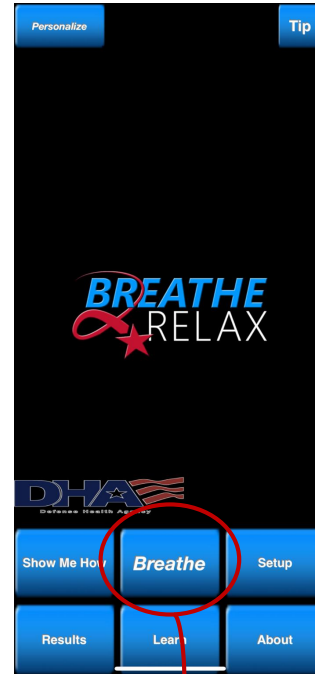
Once the terms and conditions of the application have been accepted, the initial screen opens with different sections.



BREATHE2RELAX

2

One of the sections is the breathing exercises. First, you have to record the level of stress you feel at the moment, and then the exercise to be performed is explained, followed by the execution of the breathing activity.



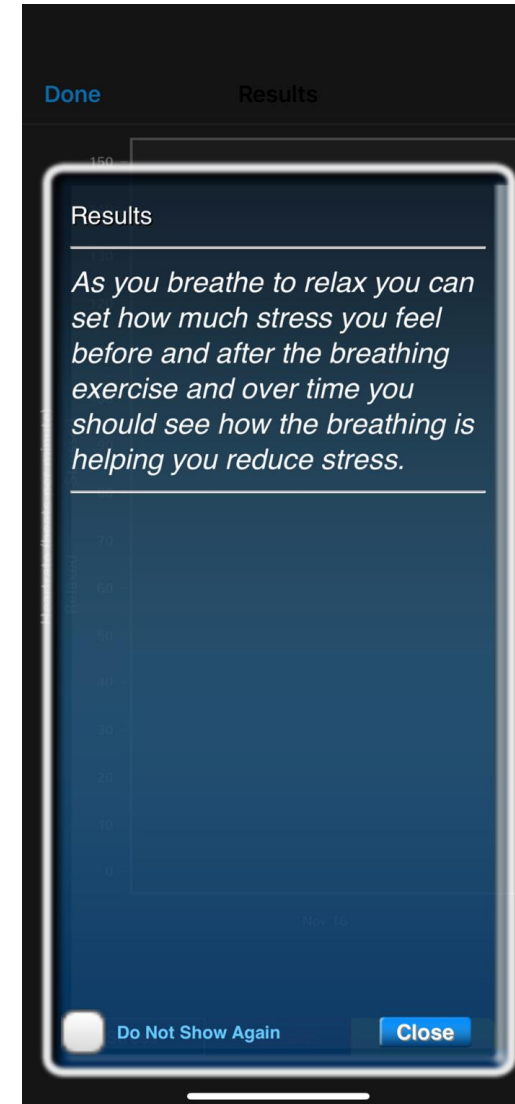
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BREATHE2RELAX

3

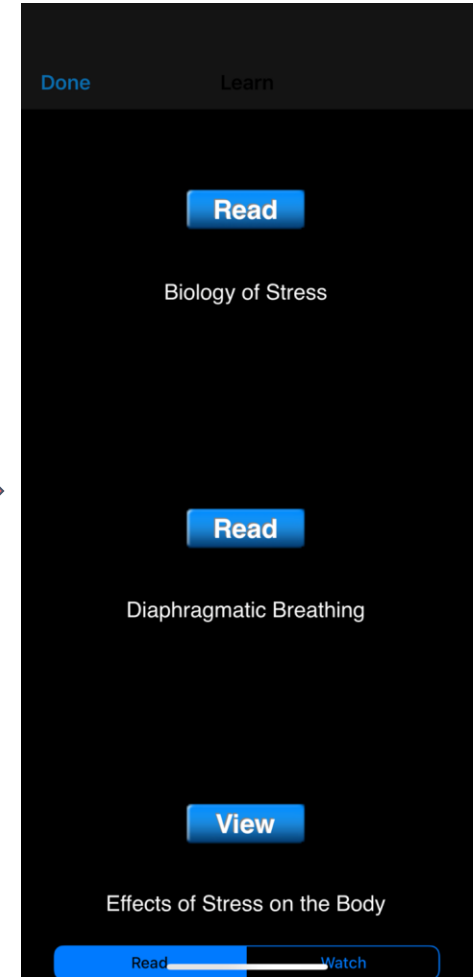
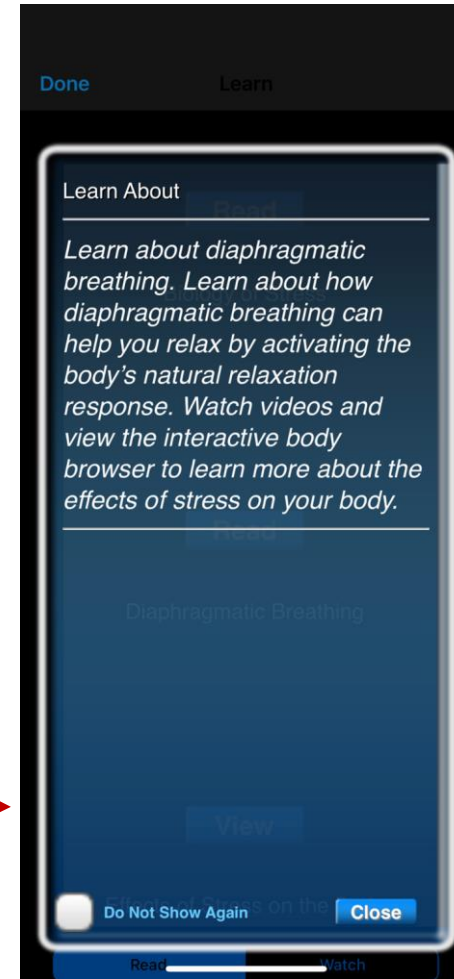
In the results section, the difference in stress before and after the breathing exercises is shown.



BREATHE2RELAX

4

Another section focuses on explaining aspects related to diaphragmatic breathing and how it can help to manage stressful situations.



Evaluation Questionnaire

The module enhanced my knowledge of the subject matter (1 minimum, 5 maximum)

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I would recommend this module to others (1 minimum, 5 maximum)

1

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I am satisfied with the module overall (1 minimum, 5 maximum)

1

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5





References, further Readings and Closure

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<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/anxiety-disorders>
- World Health Organization. Stress.
<https://www.who.int/es/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/stress>
- World Health Organization. Depression.
<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/depression>



MIG-HEALTH APPS

Mobile Health Apps for Migrants

Congratulations!
You have completed the teaching
session of this module!

