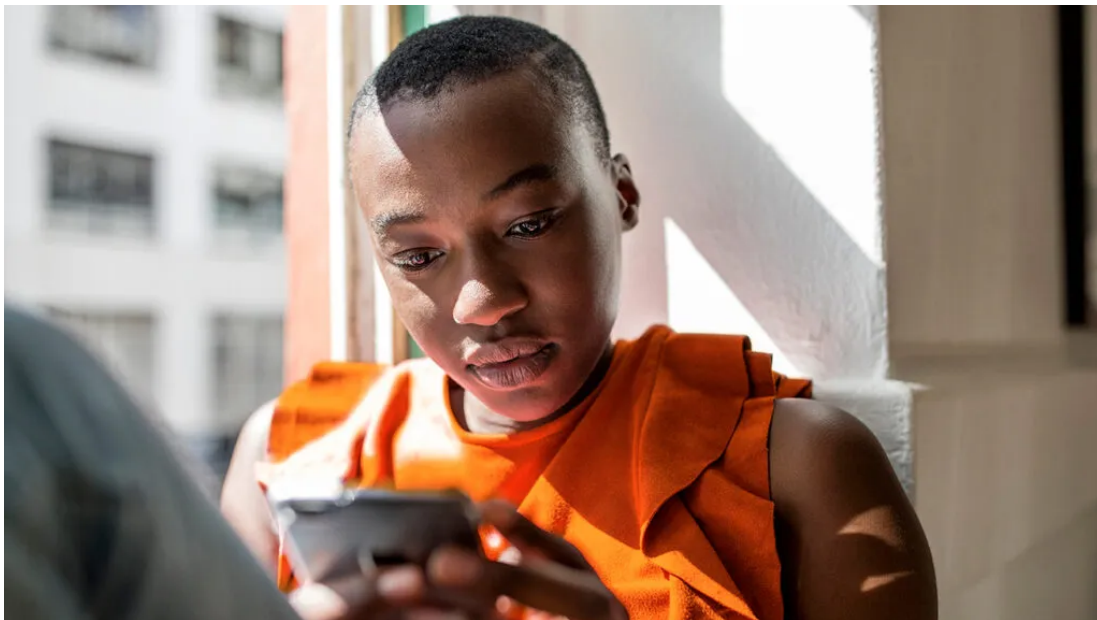


Top 10 Free Mental Health Apps in 2022

Medically reviewed by [Kendra Kubala, PsyD](#), Psychology — By Connor Rice and [Traci Pedersen](#) — Updated on March 9, 2022



Mental health apps can be great tools to improve your mental well-being, and many are free to download.



Tomas Rodriguez/Getty Images



Many of us rely on apps to help us meet our daily goals and manage our lives. One other area in which this tech can come in handy is in managing and tracking mental health and wellness.

That's why Psych Central has highlighted some of our favorite mobile apps designed to improve mental wellness.

The apps on this list may not be useful only for your personal mental health mobile toolkit (and for referring to clients, if you're a mental health professional), but they're also all free to download — making them good options if your budget is tight.

Something to keep in mind

While mental health apps like the ones on this list can be beneficial for many people, they cannot replace treatment if you've been diagnosed with a mental health condition. Still, they may be helpful tools to use in addition to therapy, medication, or both.

Was this helpful?  

List of the best free mental health apps

If you want to jump directly to the sections for each app, you can click the links below.

- **Best for anxiety:** [MindShift](#)
- **Best for PTSD:** [PTSD Coach](#)
- **Best for deep breathing:** [BellyBio](#)
- **Best for quitting smoking:** [QuitNow!](#)
- **Best for stress relief:** [Take a Break!](#)
- **Best for CBT and ACT:** [What's Up?](#)
- **Best for People of Color:** [Shine](#)
- **Best for better sleep:** [Relax with Andrew Johnson Lite](#)
- **Best overall symptom tracker:** [Bearable](#)
- **Best for bipolar disorder:** [eMoods Classic](#)

Criteria we used to pick

In our search for the best free mental health apps, we kept the following factors in mind:

- **Free.** Each mental health app in this list offers free quality content.

- **User reviews.** We take into account what current users say about the app.
- **Rating.** Most of the apps in this list are rated at 4 stars +.
- **Operating system.** All of the apps are available on iOS, and all but one are available on Android.
- **Vetting.** All apps [have been vetted](#) to ensure that they meet Psych Central’s [medical](#), [editorial](#), and business standards.

Our picks for the best free mental health apps

Best for anxiety

[MindShift](#)

- **Price:** Free
- **Key features:** CBT-based tools, community forum, guided meditations
- **Rating:** 4.3 (App Store); 4.1 (Google Play)

Developed by [Anxiety Canada](#) — an anxiety awareness nonprofit organization — MindShift uses [cognitive behavioral therapy \(CBT\)](#) to teach relaxation skills, help develop new ways of thinking, and suggest healthy activities.

The app was designed for younger users but can be useful to people of all ages.

Why we chose it

Mindshift uses CBT-based techniques to help you reframe your anxious thoughts and make lasting behavioral changes.

What we like

- lots of useful tools, including a thought journal, chill zone with guided meditations, and a “quick relief” tool if you’re feeling [overwhelmed](#) in the moment
- the ability to share mental health data with people in your support network

What to look out for

- lots of active mood tracking, which may not be for everyone
- some of the app's reviews say that it's not the best choice for managing complex, interconnected mental health issues

GET STARTED WITH
MINDSHIFT (IPHONE)

GET STARTED WITH
MINDSHIFT (ANDROID)

Best for PTSD

PTSD Coach

- **Price:** Free
- **Key features:** Screening and tracking tools, self-help strategies for stress, anger, and trauma
- **Rating:** 4.7 (App Store); 4.4 (Google Play)

PTSD Coach is helpful for symptoms of combat-related [post-traumatic stress disorder \(PTSD\)](#). This trusted military app has been downloaded more than 500,000 times and features versions in different languages.

Why we chose it

This military app offers education about PTSD as well as numerous tools and tips to help you handle stress, anger, and sleeping difficulties.

What we like

- direct links to resources for help and support
- free [companion app](#) for family members

What to look out for

- focus on members of the military may mean this app isn't as suitable for people with PTSD that isn't combat related

GET STARTED WITH PTSD
COACH (IPHONE)

GET STARTED WITH PTSD
COACH (ANDROID)

Best for deep breathing

BellyBio

- **Price:** Free, offers in-app purchases
- **Key features:** Real-time breathing feedback, stress graph
- **Rating:** (App Store)

BellyBio is a [biofeedback](#) app that monitors your breathing when you rest your device on your belly.

It plays music, sounds reminiscent of ocean waves, and more while you relax — and it's great for anxiety and stress.

Why we chose it

BellyBio offers real-time feedback on your [deep breathing](#) patterns by synchronizing music and light to your belly movements.

What we like

- multiple interactive music themes to choose from
- one [2019 study](#) ✓ on BellyBio found that using apps like this showed promise for abdominal breathing training

What to look out for

- the [2019 study](#) ✓ found immediate results were difficult to obtain for inexperienced users
- not available on Android

Best for quitting smoking

QuitNow!

- **Price:** Free, in-app purchases (QuitNow! Pro \$3.99)
- **Key features:** Goal tracking, live chat room for support
- **Rating:** 4.7 (App Store); 4.6 (Google Play)

QuitNow! is a popular app designed to help you [quit smoking](#) for good. The app tracks your various achievements, including:

- how many days you've been smoke-free
- how much money you've saved
- how many cigarettes you've avoided

Why we chose it

QuitNow! helps you achieve your goal of quitting smoking by dividing the task into small and easy steps. Along the way, you'll celebrate numerous goals, such as unlocking money-saving achievements as you continue to give up buying cigarettes.

What we like

- keeps track of how many cigarettes you haven't smoked, the money you've saved, and how long you've been smoke-free
- shows how your health is improving day-by-day
- community forum of people who used to smoke

What to look out for

- pro version charges a fee
- user complaints regarding customer service

GET STARTED WITH
QUITNOW! (IPHONE)

GET STARTED WITH
QUITNOW! (ANDROID)

Best for stress relief

Take a Break!

- **Price:** Free, in-app purchases (ad-free content \$0.99)
- **Key features:** 2 short meditations, nature sounds
- **Rating:** 4.5 (App Store); 4.5 (Google Play)

Developed by [Meditation Oasis](#), Take a Break! is a free app that helps you quickly recharge. Listen to a 7-minute Work Break or 13-minute Stress Relief recording with or without music or nature sounds.

Why we chose it

If you're looking for a short, guided meditation, this free app offers two popular meditations from the Meditation Oasis podcast. Or you can simply listen to nature sounds and music without the meditations.

What we like

- features two popular [meditations](#) from the Mediation Oasis podcast
- simple app design allows for easy use

What to look out for

- features ads and in-app purchases
- limited number of meditations available for free

GET STARTED WITH TAKE A
BREAK! (IPHONE)

GET STARTED WITH TAKE A
BREAK! (ANDROID)

Best for CBT and ACT

What's Up?

- **Price:** Free, in-app purchases (donations)
- **Key features:** CBT & ACT techniques, habit tracking tool, diary
- **Rating:** 4.4. (App Store); 4.2 (Google Play)

What's Up? uses CBT along with [acceptance and commitment therapy \(ACT\)](#) to help redirect negative thoughts and feelings.

The app gives you tools to help put your problems in perspective if they feel overwhelming. It also lets you track your positive and negative habits, and more.

Why we chose it

What's Up? uses techniques from evidence-based therapies to help you cope with stress, anxiety, depression, and anger.

What we like

- connect with others who use the app through the What's Up? forum
- sync data between multiple devices and across Apple and Android operating systems

What to look out for

- in-app purchases

GET STARTED WITH WHAT'S
UP? (IPHONE)

Best for People of Color

Shine

- **Price:** Free, in-app purchases (\$14.99 monthly subscription)
- **Key features:** Daily meditations, motivational messages
- **Rating:** 4.7 (App Store); 4.7 (Google Play)

The mental wellness space is predominantly white. Because of this, many apps and other mental health resources don't take into account the unique experiences facing People of Color. That's why [the founders of Shine](#) set out to create an app specifically geared toward People of Color, as well as women.

An app like this is important — for example, only [1 in 3 Black people](#) in the United States receive the mental health care they need.

Free apps like Shine may make it easier and more convenient for People of Color to [improve their mental wellness](#).

Why we chose it

The primary goal of Shine is to make mental health care more accessible to and representative of People of Color. Users are greeted with daily meditations, motivational messages, and gratitude check-ins.

What we like

- specific meditations for Black well-being and mental health
- integration with Apple Watch and Siri for iPhone users

What to look out for

- full version of the app requires paid subscription

GET STARTED WITH SHINE
(IPHONE)

GET STARTED WITH SHINE
(ANDROID)

Best for better sleep

Relax with Andrew Johnson Lite

- **Price:** Free
- **Key features:** Guided sleep meditations, mindfulness sessions
- **Rating:** 4.5 (App Store); 3.9 (Google Play)

This app offers a lot of great mindfulness resources, but one of the best features of Relax with Andrew Johnson Lite is the Deep Sleep meditation.

This tool helps you build off the app's other mindfulness features aimed at sleep to help you [get the best night's rest](#) possible. Not ready for bed? Why not try the Power Nap meditation?

Why we chose it

This app specifically focuses on helping you wind down and de-stress with relaxation techniques and guided sleep meditations.

What we like

- more features beyond sleep help, including meditations for [panic attacks](#) and healthier eating

What to look out for

- this is the “lite” version of the app — you have to buy the [full version](#) to unlock more benefits

GET STARTED WITH RELAX
LITE (IPHONE)

GET STARTED WITH RELAX
LITE (ANDROID)

Best overall symptom tracker

Bearable

- **Price:** Free, in-app purchases (Bearable Premium \$27.99)
- **Key features:** Customizable healthcare tracker
- **Rating:** 4.7 (App Store); 4.7 (Google Play)

Bearable is a well-rounded health tracker that helps you put mental health symptoms into context with your [general well-being](#).

You can also integrate Bearable into your formal mental health treatment plan, sharing data securely with your therapist.

Why we chose it

Bearable is unique in that it allows users to track and evaluate their moods, symptoms, medications, and healthcare routines (like meditation, no alcohol use, exercise, sleep). Users can then determine whether their daily habits are improving or reducing their quality of life.

What we like

- Apple users can integrate Bearable with Apple Health Kit for an even closer look at your health
- set reminders to journal, take medication, and more

What to look out for

- Android users don't have an equivalent way to track data the way Apple Health Kit does

- in-app purchases

GET STARTED WITH
BEARABLE (IPHONE)

GET STARTED WITH
BEARABLE (ANDROID)

Best for bipolar disorder

[eMoods Classic](#)

- **Price:** Free, in-app purchases (eMoods Enhanced: \$50/year; eMoods Pro: \$100/year)
- **Key features:** Mood and medication tracker
- **Rating:** 4.8 (App Store); 4.4 (Google Play)

When tracking [symptoms of bipolar disorder](#), few other free apps offer what eMoods Classic does.

You can track your symptoms and medications to give you and your healthcare team a better understanding of what is and isn't working in your treatment plan.

This app also prides itself on its privacy — all data is stored locally, meaning nothing leaves your phone unless you want it to.

Why we chose it

The eMoods app is specially designed to help users with bipolar disorder, anxiety, or depression track their mood symptoms and medication changes.

What we like

- optional PDF printouts can be sent to your healthcare team to help adjust treatment as needed
- colorblind-friendly screen settings

What to look out for

- in-app purchases
- full version of the app requires a paid subscription

GET STARTED WITH
EMOODS CLASSIC (IPHONE)

GET STARTED WITH
EMOODS CLASSIC
(ANDROID)

How the apps compare

App	Best for...	Operating system	Price	App Store Rating	Feat
MindShift	anxiety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • iOS • Android 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • free 	4.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CBT techn • guid medit s
PTSD Coach	PTSD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • iOS • Android 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • free 	4.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • scre & trac tools • stres tips
BellyBio	deep breathing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • iOS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • free • in-app purchases 	3.9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • brea feedb
QuitNow!	quitting smoking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • iOS • Android 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • free • in-app purchases • QuitNow! Pro: \$3.99 	4.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • goal tracki
Take a Break!	stress relief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • iOS • Android 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • free • in-app purchase • ad-free content: \$0.99 	4.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • brief medit s • natu sounc
What's Up?	CBT and ACT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • iOS • Android 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • free • in-app purchases (donations) 	4.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CBT ACT techn

					• habit tracking
Shine	people of color	• iOS • Android	• free • in-app purchases • monthly subscription: \$14.99	4.7	• daily meditations • motivational messages
Relax with Andrew Johnson Lite	better sleep	• iOS • Android	• free	4.5	• guided sleep meditations • mindfulness sessions
Bearable	overall symptoms tracker	• iOS • Android	• free • in-app purchases • Bearable Premium: \$27.99	4.7	• customizable health tracker
eMoods Classic	bipolar disorder	• iOS • Android	• free • in-app purchases • eMoods Enhanced: \$50/year • eMoods Pro: \$100/year	4.8	• mood medication tracker

How to choose the right app for you

If you didn't find what you were looking for on this list, here are some questions to ponder before choosing an app:

- **Purpose.** What do I need most out of a mental health app? For instance, are you most interested in tracking your moods or medications? Do you need help with relaxing and falling asleep? Quitting smoking?
- **Price.** Are you looking for an app that's mostly or completely free? Are you open to a one-time fee or monthly subscription?
- **Reviews and ratings.** Do current users find the app useful? What are its pros and cons?

- **Accessibility.** Is the app available on your phone's operating system?

Frequently asked questions

Who should use mental health apps?

Mental health apps are great tools for anyone wanting to invest in self-care on a regular basis. These apps offer a variety of content, from mood-tracking tools to guided meditations to CBT techniques.

What types of mental health conditions can apps help with?

Mental health apps can help with various mental health conditions, including:

- anxiety
- depression
- addiction
- stress
- sleeping difficulties
- bipolar disorder
- PTSD

Still, they can't replace treatment but can be used in addition to your regular treatment plan.

Can mental health apps be used in place of therapy?

Some [online therapy](#) providers offer apps to enhance their users' experience and schedule or facilitate online therapy sessions.

Still, mental health apps such as the ones included in this roundup can't take the place of therapy.

Apps can act as a supportive tool by offering you daily encouragement and helping you manage your condition. For instance, apps allow you to track and manage your daily symptoms, routines, and progress. You can

also learn to apply helpful strategies, such as mindfulness or CBT techniques, daily.

BEZZY COMMUNITY

With Bezzly for Depression, you're never alone.

If you're living with Depression, join others who understand what you're going through. Discover a safe space to find community, guidance, and support together.

LEARN MORE

Next steps

Smartphone apps are a great way to help track mental health and wellness. There are many free-to-download options for a variety of needs.

Not every app of this kind is right for everyone. Free apps allow you to try multiple programs so you can find the best fit for you. Sample a few to find the most effective free app possible.

Last medically reviewed on March 9, 2022

— 2 sources

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