



Summary of the MindShift CBT app study 2022

Thank you again for your participation in the research study testing the MindShift CBT smart phone app. Below is a summary of our results.

Study rationale

As we are sure you are aware, problematic anxiety is common and may be even more common over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic. Previous research established that only a small minority of people receive cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), which is the psychological treatment of choice for anxiety. There are many barriers to accessing these services including lack of available treatment providers, potential cost of these treatments if accessed in the private system, and the inconvenience of attending regular appointments. In recent years, there has been a considerable increase in the availability of smart-phone apps to help people cope with anxiety. While many of these apps are based on empirically supported strategies, the apps themselves have generally not been put to the test. As such, the research you participated in was designed to test the usefulness of the MindShift CBT app: Does it help people to manage their anxiety? How well does it work? Does it also help produce changes to one's quality of life?

Recruitment of study participants and study overview

- Between November 11, 2020 and December 9, 2021, 380 people expressed an interest in the study.
- A subset of people completed questionnaires on symptoms of anxiety and depression, quality of life, and how much anxiety and depression impaired life at the beginning of the study prior to using the MindShift CBT app.
- These questionnaires were repeated 2, 4, 8, 12 and 16 weeks after the beginning of the study while using the MindShift CBT app. 230 people completed the 2-week follow-up assessment; 234 completed the 4-week follow-up; 234 people the 8-week follow-up; 224 people the 12-week follow-up and 222 people completed the 16-week follow-up

Results thus far

- Over the 16-week study period, participants reported regular use of the MindShift CBT app. At the beginning of the study, most participants reported use of the MindShift CBT app weekly or more frequently. By the 16-week follow-up, app use changed to be, on average, 2-4 times/month.

- Participants reported an improvement in symptoms of anxiety and depression over the course of the 16-week study.
- Most of these improvements occurred within the first 4 weeks of app use, which is similar to previous studies of in-person therapy
- On the measures of quality-of-life and functional impairment (i.e., how much anxiety interfered with one's life), participants reported significant improvement (e.g., less impairment) over the course of the 16-week study. Again, the largest improvements in both quality-of-life and functional impairment were seen in the first 4 weeks.

Suggested implications of the results

- Anxiety, related psychological distress, quality-of-life, and functional impairment may have improved while using the MindShift CBT app
- Although the extent of improvement is relatively small, it seems to occur relatively quickly – within the first month of using the app

Thank you so much for your time and for your participation. It does make a difference!

Best of the season to you and your families and we wish you well in 2023 😊