Wise Up

The latest on AI for Mental Health: Brought to you by Wysa

Taking Wysa's world-class AI to India's low-resource settings

Singapore's digital mental health and wellness platform for self-help: **mindline.sg**

National Health Service tackles mental health crisis with Wysa's AI.

Navigating the challenges the holiday season brings with it.

Special guest feature:

"Just get a job!" the lie we need to stop telling ourselves.

Real life user story:

Robin's talking therapy journey.

Ask Smriti:

Balancing year-end targets with team wellbeing.

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Welcome

Dear Readers,

Welcome to our fourth and final issue of 2024.

In this edition, we invite you to dive into the latest global insights at the intersection of AI and mental health. Discover which states rank best and worst for mental health, how chatbots approach sensitive topics like drugs and alcohol, and whether your next pet could be an AI-powered robot.

Next, we announce the launch of Wysa Copilot, an innovation that's paving the way for the future of mental health support.

You'll also hear about Wysa's transformative journey in India. Over the past two years, we've adapted our world-class AI to local languages like Hindi and Marathi, extending mental health care to underserved, low-resource communities.

We explore how the NHS in the UK is leveraging Wysa to support patients while they wait for care.

Similarly, MOHT takes us behind the scenes on how they built Singapore's national digital mental health solution.

In our special guest feature, the Founder and CEO of Radical Recruit sheds light on systemic barriers to employment, sharing actionable ways to help individuals break free from cycles of poverty and homelessness.

Those feeling the weight of the season might benefit from knowing they're not alone when it comes to navigating the challenges the holiday season brings.

Curious about your self-care style? Whether it's forest bathing, journaling, or quality time with friends, this issue's quiz will help you discover what truly recharges you, or perhaps present some new ideas to try!

In our Ask Smriti column, we tackle a timely challenge: how to meet year-end targets while keeping your team's wellbeing front and center.

And finally, in a real-life user story, 45 year old Robin talks about his experience using Wysa on his talking therapy journey as part of the NHS care pathway.

As always, thank you for being here and happy reading. Wishing you a wonderful holiday season and peaceful start to the New Year.

See you in January!

Megan

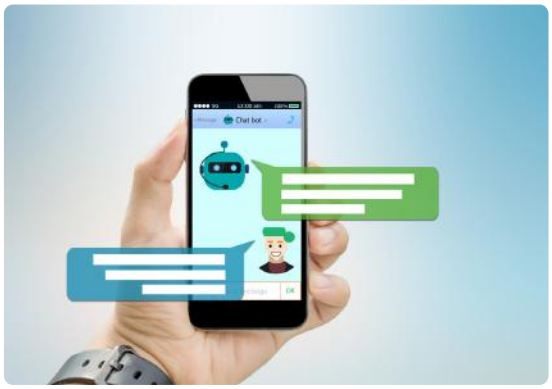
Megan Kirk, Marketing Manager, Wysa

Wise news round-up

Patient perspectives on AI for mental health care

A recent study by Columbia University School of Nursing explored public perceptions of artificial intelligence (AI) in mental health care, highlighting promising potential. In a survey of 500 US adults, nearly half (49.3%) saw AI as potentially beneficial. Key concerns included AI's accuracy, risks of misdiagnosis, data confidentiality, and potential loss of human connection in care. Despite these concerns, most respondents (80.4%) valued understanding the factors behind their mental health risks and maintaining confidentiality and autonomy. Notably, 81.6% believed health professionals, not AI, should be held accountable for misdiagnoses, reflecting the confidence in integrating AI as a collaborative tool, rather than a replacement.

The researchers conclude that it is crucial to address patient concerns about accuracy, confidentiality, and risk factors. Ensuring the patient-health professional relationship remains intact with the integration of AI will be essential.



Can chatbots handle mental health conversations around sensitive topics like drugs and alcohol?

Researchers from the University of Newcastle and HMRI are investigating whether AI chatbots can provide empathetic and nuanced support for mental health and drug and alcohol issues. With increasing demand and long wait times for human practitioners, AI could offer scalable, 24/7 assistance.

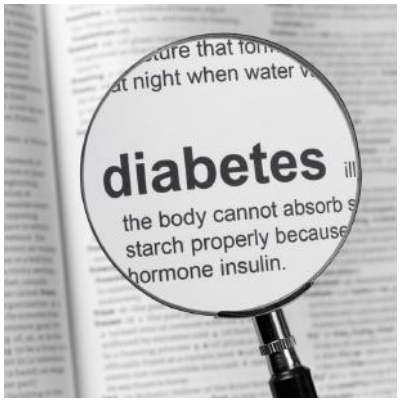
The study, led by Dr. Louise Thornton and colleagues, is recruiting participants to compare AI-generated responses with those from experienced psychologists and social workers. The chatbot, trained on the researchers' online treatment programs, will be tested for its ability to handle sensitive and complex scenarios.

“We’re not looking to replace humans but to augment what we do,” says Dr. Thornton. “It’s about finding ways to scale support without compromising quality or trust.” The survey is now open for participants aged 18 and over, offering a chance to shape the future of AI in mental health care.

A dog is for life, not just for Christmas - so what about a fluffy AI robot instead?

Moflin, an AI-powered robot pet, offers a glimpse into the future of companionship. Designed by Casio and Vanguard Industries, this fluffy, hamster-like robot simulates emotions, builds rapport, and adapts its "personality" through interactions. Journalist Justin McCurry's week-long experience with "Hammy" highlights Moflin's potential to comfort those unable to care for traditional pets, despite its quirks and limitations.

As Japan embraces robotic companions amid aging and loneliness challenges, Moflin reflects a broader societal shift and raises questions about the role of AI in emotional wellbeing.



Doctors highlight mental health's role in Diabetes prevention and management

For World Diabetes Day, doctors in Madurai emphasize the importance of mental health in preventing and managing diabetes. Exposure to chronic stress can trigger early onset, while depression may lead to neglecting diet and medications. Rising diabetes rates in younger adults in their 20's and 30's are linked to stress and sedentary lifestyles.

At an international diabetes symposium hosted by AIIMS Madurai and Govt Medical College, experts from various countries shared their knowledge and experiences, also discussing the role of technology in managing the condition.

Best and worst states for mental health care in the U.S. ranked

Forbes Advisor Health Insurance's new study highlights the stark contrast in mental health care across the U.S., ranking the top and bottom five states for access and quality of care. Texas was ranked as the worst state for mental health care for the second consecutive year, with high uninsured rates and limited treatment centers. Meanwhile, Vermont took the top spot, praised for its strong mental health infrastructure and low uninsured rates.

Experts point out that the disparity between regions, particularly between the South and Northeast, is driven by factors like access to resources, cultural stigma, and financial barriers. The study stresses the importance of choosing health insurance plans that cover comprehensive mental health services, especially for those living in underserved areas.

AI and Mental Health

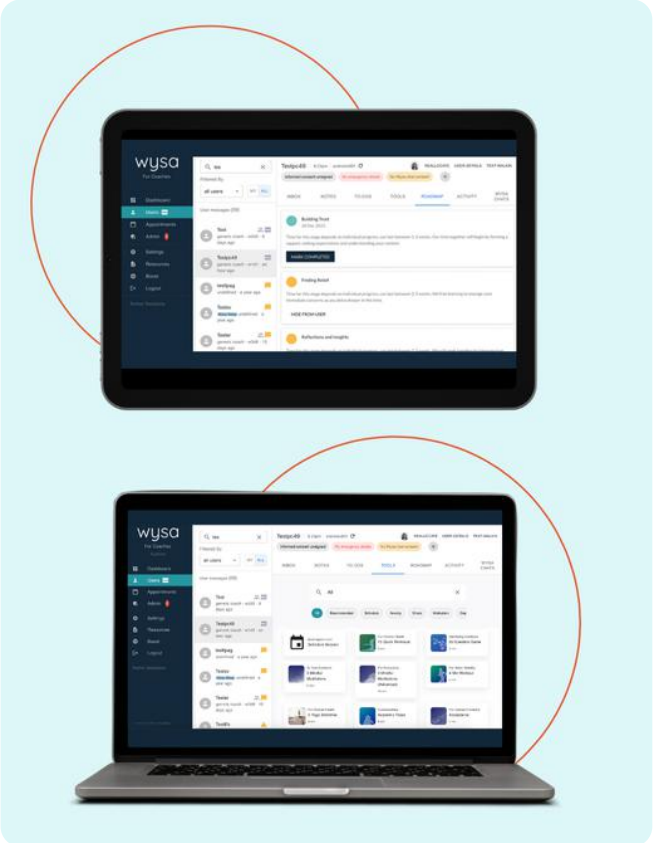
Launching: Wysa Copilot

In a significant step forward for mental health care, we're proud to announce the launch of Wysa Copilot, a cutting-edge hybrid digital and human coaching platform developed by our own team acrosss 5 years and 125,00 hours of human coaching sessions.

Selected by Talking Therapy services within the UK's National Health Service (NHS), Wysa Copilot is designed to enhance clinical care by seamlessly integrating AI and human support, offering secure, real-time and asynchronous messaging, personalized digital tools, and automated patient tracking.

With Wysa Copilot, we aim to address key challenges faced by mental health services, including increasing patient engagement, efficient tracking of therapeutic progress, and the prevention of relapse. This solution allows clinicians to extend their reach beyond in-session therapy by providing patients with safe, interactive, AI-guided tools and personalized support.

Learn more about Wysa Copilot or register for a live demo.



Wysa Copilot: Key Features and Benefits for Clinicians

Engaging Digital Tools: Therapists can search for and prescribe AI-guided cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) tools and psychoeducational materials, empowering patients to manage their mental health symptoms between sessions. Clinicians can monitor progress through the completion of these exercises, allowing for the creation of personalized treatment plans tailored to the patient's needs.

Secure, Real-Time Messaging: Wysa Copilot enables therapists and patients to communicate securely through live text-based support or asynchronous messages. This ensures continuous care and attention to patient needs, while providing the flexibility to address issues as they arise between scheduled appointments.

AI-Driven Crisis Detection: AI monitors patient interactions for signs of crisis and encourages users to seek immediate help through emergency lines if necessary. This additional layer of safety is integrated within both the Wysa app and Wysa Copilot, enhancing crisis prevention and ensuring timely intervention.

Automated Assessments and Progress Tracking: Automated assessments and mood screenings reduce clinician workload, while keeping a detailed screening history. This ensures patients receive appropriate treatment at the right time, allowing therapists to focus on providing care rather than managing administrative tasks.

Seamless Collaboration and Patient Transfers: Patients and clinicians can set recovery goals, add tasks, and share session summaries, promoting a collaborative therapeutic relationship. Wysa Copilot allows seamless patient transfer of Wysa case history, ensuring continuity of care and preventing any delay in treatment.

Relapse Prevention and Post-Discharge Support: Patients can continue to use Wysa's self-help tools after discharge, helping them maintain their mental health and reduce the risk of relapse. This feature provides long-term benefits for patients even after formal therapy concludes.

Anonymity and a Safe Space for Patients: Wysa's secure platform fosters openness, allowing patients to engage in difficult conversations with the AI chatbot. With patient consent, clinicians can review these interactions, enabling a deeper understanding of the patient.

Increased Clinical Capacity: With Wysa Copilot, each therapist can manage larger caseloads effectively, thanks to automated workflows, and the AI helping to ensure self-regulation for the patient in between sessions.

Taking Wysa's world-class AI to India's low-resource settings

Mental health support that meets people where they are

By Rhea Yadav, Director of Impact and Strategy at Wysa.

Rhea is a development professional convinced that the root of human change is mental health. As someone living with depression, she is committing to her passion, and can otherwise be found leading a slow life in Goa, India.

The WHO reports that every 40 seconds, someone dies by suicide, with additional research indicating at least 20 attempts for every death. AI is proving to be a game-changer in saving lives. Wysa's own data reveals that only 18% of people in crisis who are experiencing suicidal thoughts actively seek SOS help. The remaining 82% - who would otherwise go unnoticed - were proactively detected by Wysa's AI.

India's mental health crisis needs no introduction. Suicide is the leading cause of death among young India. What exacerbates the acuity is the deep-seated stigma associated with seeking any form of professional or 'visible' support for mental health.

Wysa has proven its clinical efficacy globally, in reducing symptoms of depression and anxiety, most notably through a random control trial published earlier this year, which showed a 40% reduction in depression & anxiety, and a 10x reduction vs treatment-as-usual.

The question we then asked ourselves was "How do we take this scalable, cost-effective, and life-saving intervention to India and within it, to the people who need it most?"

Two years ago, this started our journey to build Wysa for Bharat - a moniker that represents the India beyond the top of the economic pyramid, a non-English speaking India, and an India that encompasses the next half billion users, all booming and thriving with new-found internet and smartphone penetration, but still riddled with systemic barriers to upward mobility and positive human development outcomes.

Partnership spotlight: Supporting migrant workers with Smartstaff

We partnered with Smartstaff to pilot our Hindi app with 250 factory workers in peri-urban Delhi and Bangalore, and the results have been so promising!

- **User profile:** 90% men, mostly aged 19–25, earning less than INR 10,000/month.
- **Usage insights:** Psychoeducation by field executives drove 90% adoption, with 41% of users engaging in 5+ sessions.
- **Key focus areas:** Workers prioritized sleep improvement (46%) and anger management (21%), reflecting their challenges related to finances (20%) and job stress (18%).
- **Impact:** 92% positive ratings, 80% return usage, and a 27% increase in positive emotions per session.

One user describes how Wysa became an outlet for his emotions: "When my mother stresses me out, I can't talk to my sister - it would add to her burden. I've used Wysa to manage my anger, and it's helped me realize how to control it."

Highlighting the partnerships value, Arpit Dave, Co-founder and CEO of Smartstaff said "At Smartstaff, we're dedicated to creating a safe experience for our workers. Partnering with Wysa offers 24/7 clinically effective mental health support directly on their phones - a significant step toward improving their quality of life."

3 Important insights for anyone working in development for Bharat

One

Firstly, try and visualise the user of a digital mental health app. What comes to mind is likely a tech-savvy and assured person, who goes onto the internet in search for help or support, typing in something like "have anxiety need help" onto google, and hopefully landing on the Wysa app. In fact, this is exactly how most of our 6.5million users globally found us – organically through the internet.

Once they land our global English app, users typically go through a robust onboarding that includes multiple screening questions around anxiety and depression. That is effective, because a user comes to Wysa seeking answers and relief for their mental health distress.

But this is not how a user in Bharat behaves. Even if we overlook the evident tech literacy and access barriers, the key difference lies in how explicit vs implicit the felt need for seeking mental health help is. The Bharat persona who uses Wysa for the first time, does this not with an end-goal in mind, but in a discovery mindset. They're exploring, seeing what's on offer, curiosity guiding them forward, or perhaps simply doing so because a trusted friend or an NGO worker asked them to – and therefore, payoff needs to happen much sooner.

"Even if we overlook the evident tech literacy and access barriers, the key difference lies in how explicit vs implicit the felt need for seeking mental health help is."

Wysa's India app has a completely revamped onboarding flow, focusing a lot more on the value proposition, and seeking no real investment from the user until their first conversation that aims to offer them "value" within just 5-10 mins of chat.

Two

Secondly, mental health, unfortunately, is still not a standalone priority – both for the end users, and often for the payors too. This is true for mental health when it is viewed through a clinical lens, and pathologized as anxiety or depression. But when you think tangentially, mental health is quite front and center. What does it look like? Managing stress. Building confidence. Feeling more prepared for a job. Reducing anger towards family. Not feeling lonely.

Veiled and tangential framing for mental health has been powerful. The Wysa solution at its heart, is a skilling intervention, that builds intrapersonal skills within a person to take ownership of their wellbeing and offers support in regulating emotions and managing stress. Therefore, when framed as a skilling intervention, both end users and payors listen.

Integrate. Complement. Bundle. These are the names of the game. In international development as well, while mental health sits in its own Sustainable Development Goal – wellbeing is a cross-cutting lens. You can't think of socio-emotional learning outcomes in education without combating bullying - that is mental health. You can't think of gender justice outcomes without tackling trauma from violence and abuse - that is mental health, too. In fact, you can't even think about agricultural productivity in emerging economies, without battling farmer suicides - this very much mental health.

"When framed as a skilling intervention, both end users and payors listen."

This is why we strategically choose to collaborate and partner with non-profits and ecosystem-players in a way that adds to their programmatic outcomes for a scalable and sustainable impact model.

Three

Lastly, 'community-led' is often a term used nowadays in global development. It is indeed a much-needed shift from the historic global north oppressor systems imposing charity, to a significantly more democratic and bottom-up approach to interventions on-ground. One part of being community-led that is often overlooked is nurturing the expertise that lies within the users, especially those with lived experience.

One of the most powerful use-cases for Wysa's AI chatbot emerged from listening to the end user. In a pilot with frontline community workers in North India, we observed that not only were the workers using Wysa for their own wellbeing (the intended objective), but they were using Wysa as an assistant to help them help people in their community. By speaking to Wysa as a coach, they were able to input the challenges faced by people in their community, and in some cases, even sit with individuals 1:1 with the Wysa app third-wheeling the conversation as a safe guide for a meaningful mental health conversation.

"One of the most powerful use-cases for Wysa's AI chatbot emerged from listening to the end user."

A timeline of Wysa's Bharat journey:

September 2022

We started building Wysa in Hindi backed by ACT Grants – an early believer in the power of tech-enabled solutions for Bharat.

May 2023

8 months in, we released the world's first mental health AI chatbot in Hindi.

June 2023

We embarked upon partnerships as the primary go-to-market for our Bharat users – across B2NGO, B2B, and B2G; while pushing the envelope on overcoming access barriers through platform expansion into WhatsApp and Voice.

December 2023

We were able to unlock catalytic capital from anchor players like British International Investment, USAID, and LSE 100x Impact Accelerator.

January 2024

The first 6 months was about piloting and learning through real-world deployments across domains like gender, skilling, and livelihoods; and refining a hybrid deployment model that can work at scale.

July 2024

We launched Wysa's improved India App and its second regional language, Marathi.

November 2024

We have laid the foundation for a scalable and sustainable impact model, signing an MoU with the Maharashtra State Government and Central Government Department. We also have one India evaluation underway with IIT Gandhinagar and LSE on resilience and self-efficacy in young people.

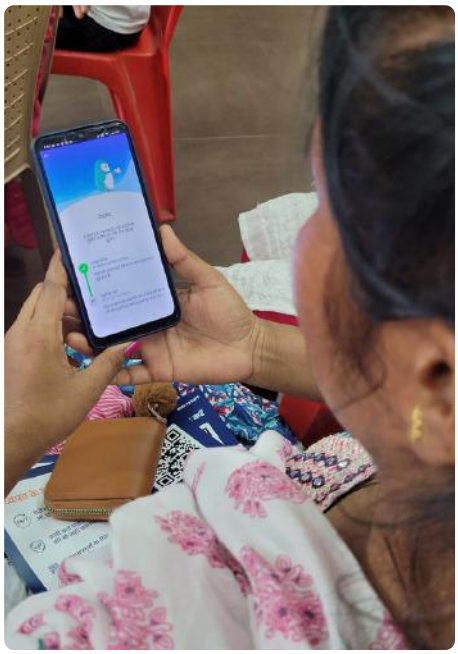
User story: How Wysa empowered a 13-year-old girl to advocate for herself

Rama is a 13 year girl growing up in the bustling streets of Delhi. As a first-generation learner, her daily challenges extend beyond her schoolwork. Her mother, who works as a househelp, along with others call Rama "mentally weak" because of her quiet and disengaged demeanor. But no one sees the world from Rama's perspective or knows the courage it takes for her to navigate it.

Through her conversations with Wysa, Rama found a safe space to express herself - a place where her quiet nature wasn't something to fix but something to understand. Her growing confidence surprised her family. One day, Rama turned to her mother and, drawing on Wysa's words, said: "I might be quiet, but that is ok. The way I am is fine, the way I am is valid, and Wysa says so, so that must be true."

This small but powerful statement was transformational. For the first time, Rama stood up for herself. She found the strength to assert her right to be accepted as she is. This quiet but resolute act shifted how her family saw her and, more importantly, how she saw herself.

For Rama, Wysa is a source of reassurance, giving her confidence to embrace her uniqueness and push back when others weaponise it against her.



Our mission is to support 10 million young people in India by 2030. We're only just getting started.

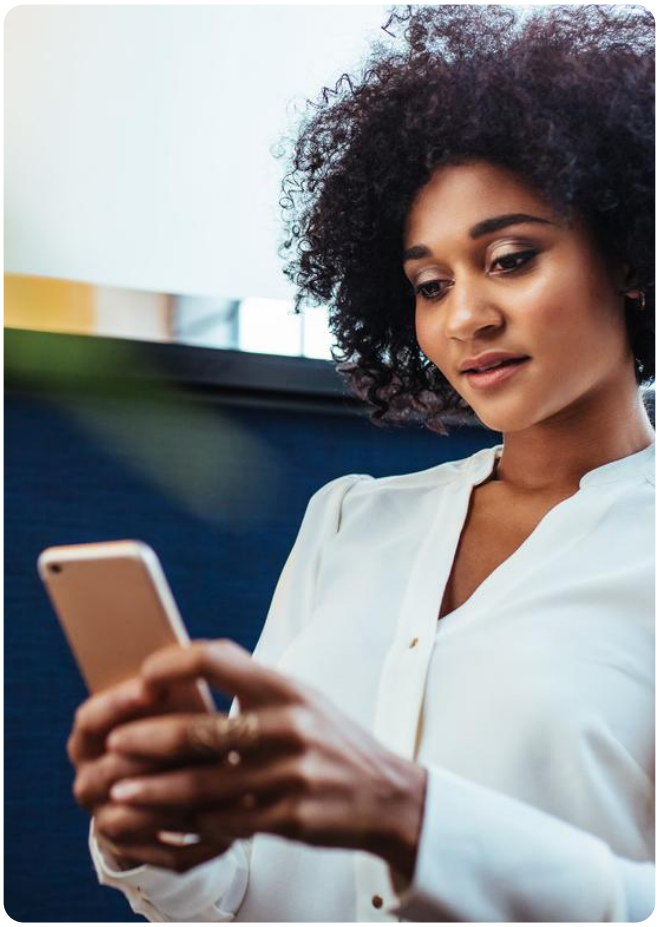
Adapting Wysa's global AI for India's low-resource settings has also been a personally gratifying experience for most of the team at Wysa. Over 100 of our team members at Wysa call India home, many from smaller rural towns and with family members who have never received any form of mental health care in their life. A colleague gave Wysa in Hindi to his mother for trial, and recounted tears falling out of their eyes as their mother worked through a difficult conflict in her life, by simply having a safe, judgment-free space to share freely in the language of their heart. Wysa is Indian-born, used and validated by the world, now committed to solve for Bharat.

NHS tackles mental health crisis with Wysa

Improving mental health symptoms while patients wait

We're thrilled to share the success story of how Wysa's AI-driven mental health support is making a difference in the National Health Service (NHS) Talking Therapy pathway. By partnering with 31 NHS Talking Therapy services, we've helped streamline self-referrals, making it faster and easier for people to begin their mental health journey. And while they wait for traditional therapy, individuals are already seeing real improvements in managing symptoms of depression and anxiety with the support of Wysa's AI-guided tools.

NHS mental health services are treating an extra one million people annually versus six years ago, with over one million stuck on waiting lists. Yet 31 NHS Talking Therapy providers have taken a bold leap towards modernisation by teaming up with AI-driven mental health platform Wysa, delivering results that are set to reshape how mental health care is delivered. In line with Health Secretary Wes Streeting's vision for a "big shift from analogue to digital" Talking Therapy services that have implemented Wysa have rapidly boosted patient outcomes.



Wysa's Digital Referral Assistant

Saves clinicians **20 minutes** per assessment.

Increases the likelihood of patients completing a self-assessment to **91%** (+25%).

Wysa Everyday Mental Health App

Has supported **36,000 patients** with their mental health while on **wait lists**.

1 in 5 patients using Wysa meet **clinical recovery** while waiting for treatment.

Getting people in need into the system

By streamlining self-referrals, Wysa's Digital Referral Assistant can save NHS clinicians an average of 20 minutes per assessment, time that can now be spent delivering care. What's more, 91% of patients who start a self-referral now complete it – a 25% increase on previous figures. The result has been fewer missed appointments, faster care, and more people getting the help they need when they need it.

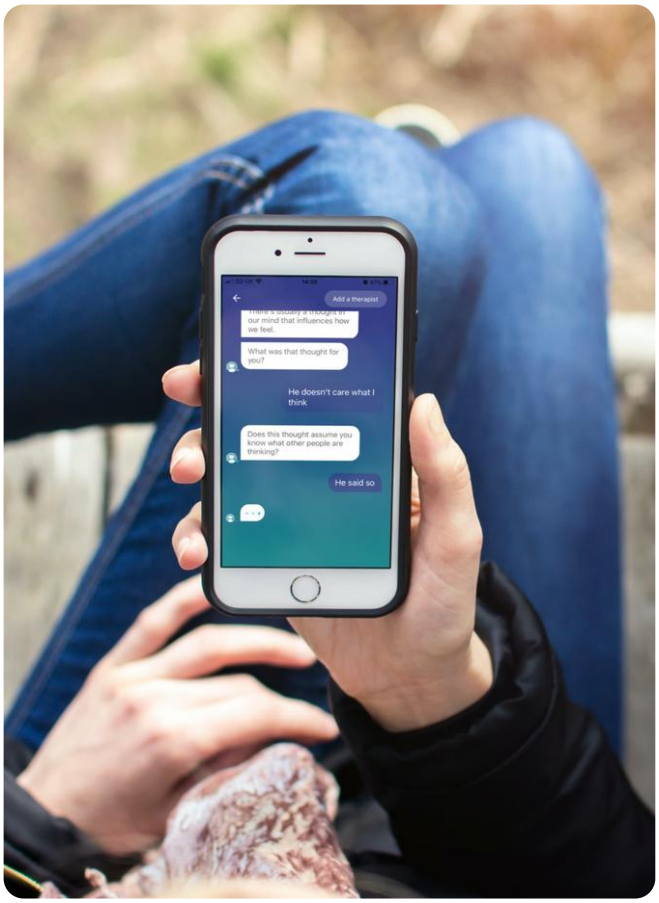
Over 117,000 patients have utilised Wysa Digital Referral Assistant since 2022, streamlining self-referral processes across 31 NHS talking therapies services. And, in a breakthrough for urgent care, 1.9% of patients were correctly identified by AI or screening scores as "at risk" and directed to crisis helplines. For younger patients, Wysa has also successfully referred more than 500 under-18s to local CAMHS services, ensuring they get the right care at the right time.

Improving clinical outcomes – even before seeing a clinician

The struggle to reduce waiting times is one of the NHS's most pressing challenges, with many patients left to struggle alone for months on end before receiving any care.

Over 36,000 of these patients are now using Wysa to manage their mental health while they wait for treatment and between treatment sessions.

The Wysa app, which provides AI-driven conversational care and engaging self-help tools, has proven highly effective. 89% of users say the app helps them feel better while they wait for more formal treatment, with over 1 in 3 (36%) seeing reliable change in anxiety symptoms and over 1 in 4 (27%) seeing reliable change in depression symptoms. A remarkable 1 in 5 (19%) patients using Wysa while waiting for treatment actually met clinical recovery criteria (reliable improvement of both GAD7 and PHQ9 scores).



"As the Health Secretary pushes for a tech-driven future to improve patient outcomes, Wysa's partnership with NHS services is proving that digital innovation can not only streamline access to healthcare but also transform lives. Our tools are revolutionising the way mental health care is delivered in the NHS, helping people feel better faster and making it easier for clinicians to focus on what they do best - providing care. This partnership shows that AI can truly change the game for healthcare."

John Tench,
Managing Director of Wysa

"Wysa allows patients to refer to our service easily and they can be offered some additional signposting at an earlier stage. The e-triage form means that patients can spend some time thinking about what they hope to get out of treatment before speaking with a clinician and can share their main difficulties with the assessor. This means that more time can be spent in the assessment exploring what is important to them and considering treatment options. The added bonus is that patients have access to the premium Wysa app, which can help them whilst they are waiting for treatment. We have had positive feedback about the app, with patients particularly liking the daily reminders to spend some time doing the exercises or simply taking some time to focus on their wellbeing."

Kelly Colbeck, Senior Service Lead,
Dorset Steps2Wellbeing

"Wysa has enabled people to have digital access to our local NHS Talking Therapies service. This increases engagement and supports people with a suite of MH Apps to promote positive wellbeing linked to experiences of anxiety and depression. The data that Wysa collects is robust and informative, providing assurance this is an offer that is well used and compliments other routes into Talking Therapies."

Eleanor Cappell, Head of Business and Transformation (Adult Mental Health), Coventry & Warwickshire Partnership Trust

“Just get a job” The lie we need to stop telling ourselves.

By Emma Freivogel

Founder and CEO, Radical Recruit

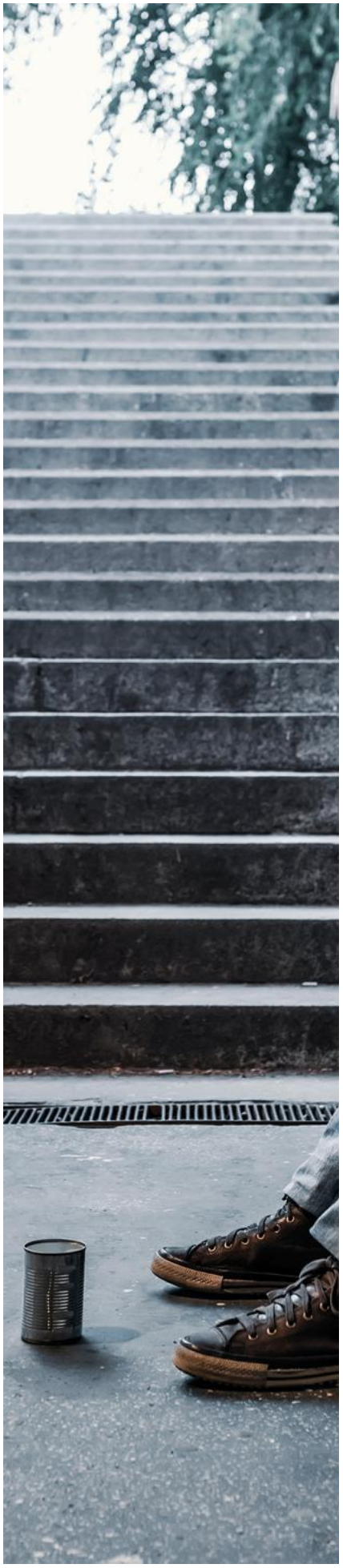
A couple of years ago, I watched a woman on Tottenham Court Road scream “just get a f*cking job” at a homeless man begging for money. I’ll never forget it. It was freezing, the sidewalk glazed with ice. The woman was dressed to impress - immaculate makeup, designer clothes. The man she verbally assaulted was wrapped in a filthy duvet, barefoot and shivering.

This moment captured a brutal truth: society is riddled with the toxic "just get a job" narrative - a dangerous single story that oversimplifies unemployment and homelessness into a matter of personal willpower.

This thinking suggests that we live in a meritocracy, where hard work leads to success, and failure is just laziness. It refuses to acknowledge that not everyone has access to the same resources, opportunities, or privileges. It erases the experiences of people like Malcolm, who we supported at Radical Recruit.

When I met Malcolm in 2019, he had been living on the streets for 10 years. He wasn’t “lazy,” as the woman on Tottenham Court Road might have assumed. He was deeply traumatized. His father’s death when he was 18 shattered his family and sent him into a downward spiral of grief and alcoholism. The streets became both a refuge and a prison, and he found himself trapped in a cycle of poverty and self-blame, with suicide attempts marking the lowest points of his despair.

But in the eyes of many, Malcolm was just another statistic, another man who didn’t care enough to “sort himself out.” Never mind his mental health struggles or the trauma he carried like a weight on his back. In the world of the "just get a job" mentality, Malcolm wasn’t seen as someone worthy of support—he was seen as a failure.



The myth of meritocracy and the real barriers to employment

The truth is that Malcolm's story is far from unique. Many people who experience homelessness and long-term unemployment face overwhelming internal and external barriers. It's not as simple as polishing a CV and attending interviews. For Malcolm, just getting ready for that first job interview was a monumental task. He didn't have formal work experience. He didn't own clothes appropriate for an interview. He didn't even believe he was worthy of a job.

It's not as simple as polishing a CV and attending interviews. For Malcolm, just getting ready for that first job interview was a monumental task.

Good support, like what we provided at Radical Recruit, acknowledges these barriers and works to dismantle them. For Malcolm, that meant six weeks of intensive coaching - helping him understand his own worth, preparing him for interviews, and dealing with the practical realities of job hunting as a homeless person. It meant providing him with the resources he lacked, from financial help to cover transport costs to emotional support as he rebuilt his confidence.

Systemic barriers to employment

It's critical to recognize that people like Malcolm don't face a level playing field. The system is rigged against them. Research shows that 64% of homeless individuals experience mental health issues (Mental Health Foundation, 2023), and 77% struggle to access employment because of a lack of basic resources—like an address or clean clothes (Homeless Link, 2021). Add to that the fact that Malcolm, as a Black man, faced racial discrimination. The unemployment rate for Black people in the UK is more than double that of their white counterparts (Office for National Statistics, August 2023) , and even when they do find work, they earn less (Resolution Foundation, 2022).

This systemic inequality isn't just a hurdle—it's a wall. Malcolm had to send seven more CVs than his white counterparts to receive the same level of interest from recruiters (Nuffield College, University of Oxford, 2019). This isn't about merit—it's about bias, conscious or not.

The economic and social value of employment: A conservative estimate

For every Malcolm who finds work, society saves significant sums of money—between £40,408 and £58,408 annually (Crisis, 2020). These savings come from reduced public service costs, including emergency healthcare, law enforcement, and social services, which are often needed to support individuals like Malcolm when they are homeless or unemployed. On top of that, when Malcolm secured employment, he began contributing to the economy in real, measurable ways. His salary, roughly £25,500, meant an annual tax contribution of around £5,408 (Institute for Fiscal Studies, 2022). That's money going directly back into public services.

Moreover, Malcolm's newfound stability meant he started spending more, injecting an additional £6,000 to £7,000 into the economy each year through consumer spending (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2022). And the State saved another £10,000 to £12,000 annually by no longer needing to provide welfare payments (Shelter, 2021). The benefits don't stop there. Employment provides stability, which leads to better physical and mental health, reducing strain on the NHS by an estimated £3,000 to £5,000 annually for someone like Malcolm (King's Fund, 2021).

These numbers aren't abstract—they represent real savings and tangible benefits for society. By investing in people like Malcolm, we not only change their lives but save society millions in the long run.

What good support looks like

Radical Recruit's approach is different. It's about understanding that you can't simply match someone with a job without addressing the full picture of who they are and the barriers they face. For Malcolm, that meant working not only with him but with the employers, like Honest Burgers, who would be interviewing him. We had to ensure their recruitment process wasn't biased against someone like Malcolm. We helped them see past the stereotypes that are hardwired into so many hiring processes, training them on unconscious bias and how to spot potential in candidates who don't fit the "popular" mold.

Our work didn't stop at the job offer. Once Malcolm was hired, we continued to support him and the employer, offering coaching, mentoring, and advice on creating trauma-informed workplaces. This kind of ongoing support is crucial. People like Malcolm don't just need a job - they need to feel safe, valued, and supported as they transition into employment. It's about creating inclusive environments where they can thrive, not just survive.

The danger of the single story

The "just get a job" narrative is a single story - a story that strips away the humanity of people like Malcolm and blames them for their circumstances. It ignores the complex, systemic factors that keep people out of work and erases the trauma, discrimination, and poverty they endure. It's time we reject this single story and replace it with one that recognizes the real barriers to employment and the importance of tailored, compassionate support.

Malcolm's success - along with the nearly 700 others we've placed at Radical Recruit (Radical Recruit, 2024) - is proof that when you stop seeing people as problems to be solved and start seeing their potential, you can change lives. For every Malcolm who finds work, we all win: socially, financially, and morally. It's time to stop perpetuating the myth of meritocracy and start dismantling the barriers that keep people on the streets.

It's time to reject the "Just get a job" myth and take action

Malcolm's story proves that when we stop seeing people as problems to be fixed and start recognizing their potential, real change happens. But we can't do this alone. It's time to stop perpetuating the damaging myth of meritocracy and face the reality: the barriers to employment are complex, systemic, and deeply personal.

If you believe in creating a world where everyone has a fair shot at employment, where equity replaces bias, and where compassion trumps judgment, we invite you to take action. Partner with us at Radical Recruit to help more people like Malcolm break free from the cycle of poverty and homelessness. Whether you're an employer, consultant, or advocate, you have a role to play in dismantling these barriers and providing life-changing opportunities.

Get involved. Donate. Advocate. Hire differently. Because for every Malcolm we lift up, society wins - and together, we can create lasting change.

Ready to make an impact? Join Radical Recruit.

- ***Learn more*** *about the woman who inspired Radical Recruits mission.*
- ***Donate*** *to Radical Recruits Crowdfunder.*
- ***Learn*** *more about how businesses can sponsor Radical Recruits work and reap the CSR and ESG benefits.*
- ***Sign up*** *as a volunteer.*

Building a person-centric and scalable digital mental health solution

By Janice Weng, Deputy Director, mindline.sg, Ministry of Health Office for Healthcare Transformation (MOHT), Singapore

mindline.sg: Singapore's digital mental health and wellness platform for self-help

The COVID-19 pandemic cast a spotlight on mental health struggles worldwide and Singapore was no exception - facing unique challenges in maintaining mental wellbeing amidst lockdowns and social distancing norms. As the lead for the digital mental health and wellness programme at Singapore's Ministry of Health Office for Healthcare Transformation (MOHT), I have had the opportunity to work with my team to explore ways in which technology can bridge mental health gaps and facilitate wellness.

With prolonged isolation, economic disruptions, and heightened anxiety levels, mental health demands escalated during the pandemic, and many people needed immediate, accessible support to navigate this unprecedented crisis. Recognizing these challenges, we developed mindline.sg, a digital mental health platform designed to empower users with resources to manage their own mental well-being anonymously.

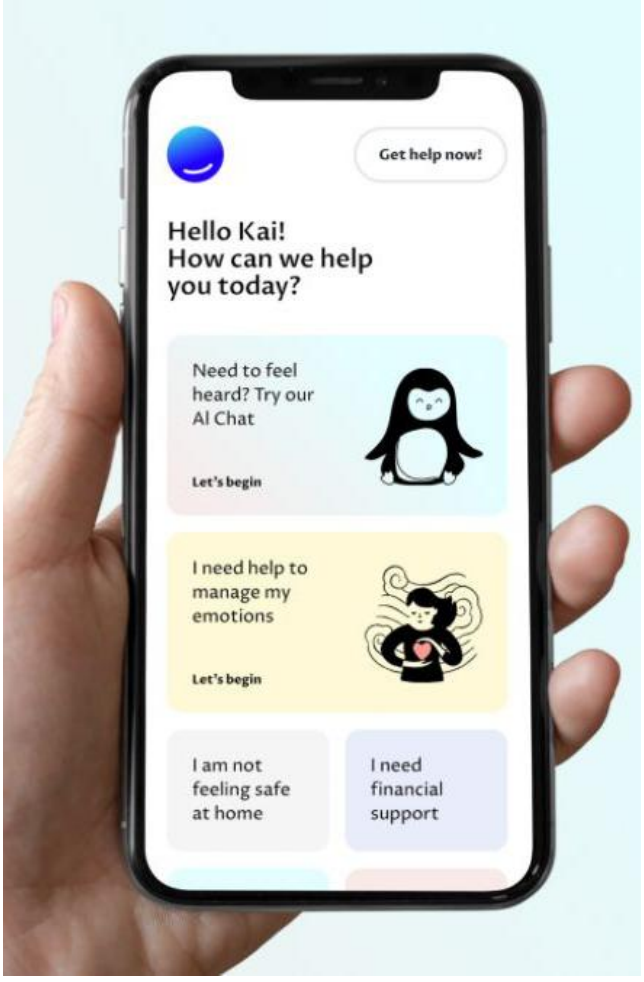
Why digital mental health solutions?

Mental health issues are often underreported due to cultural stigma and a preference for resilience over help-seeking in many Asian societies. Singapore, where one in seven adults has experienced a mood or anxiety disorder in their lifetime, faced a significant gap between mental health needs and the availability of trained professionals. Digital mental health tools can help overcome these barriers by providing accessible, anonymous, and stigma-free support at scale.

MOHT, alongside the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF), the National Council of Social Service (NCSS), and the Institute of Mental Health (IMH), launched mindline.sg in 2020 as an immediate response to COVID-19-driven demand for mental health resources. Since then, the platform has grown into a comprehensive "digital front door" for Singaporeans, offering tools like self-assessment tests, evidence-based cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) exercises, and an emotionally intelligent AI chatbot, Wysa, which supports users with mental wellness exercises, and ways to practise mindfulness and reframe negative thoughts.

Core features: Making mental health support accessible and scalable

One of the primary goals of mindline.sg is to reduce barriers to mental health care by making it accessible, customizable, and user-friendly. The platform offers three key components:



1. Self-Assessment tool:

mindline's clinically validated self-assessment tool leverages established measures such as the PHQ-9 and GAD-7 scales, enabling users to gauge their mental health status. Based on the results, users are directed to appropriate resources, ranging from self-help materials to professional hotlines. This self-assessment tool is designed to help users identify and manage anxiety or depression symptoms on their own and signposting them to support services when needed.

2. Wysa AI chatbot:

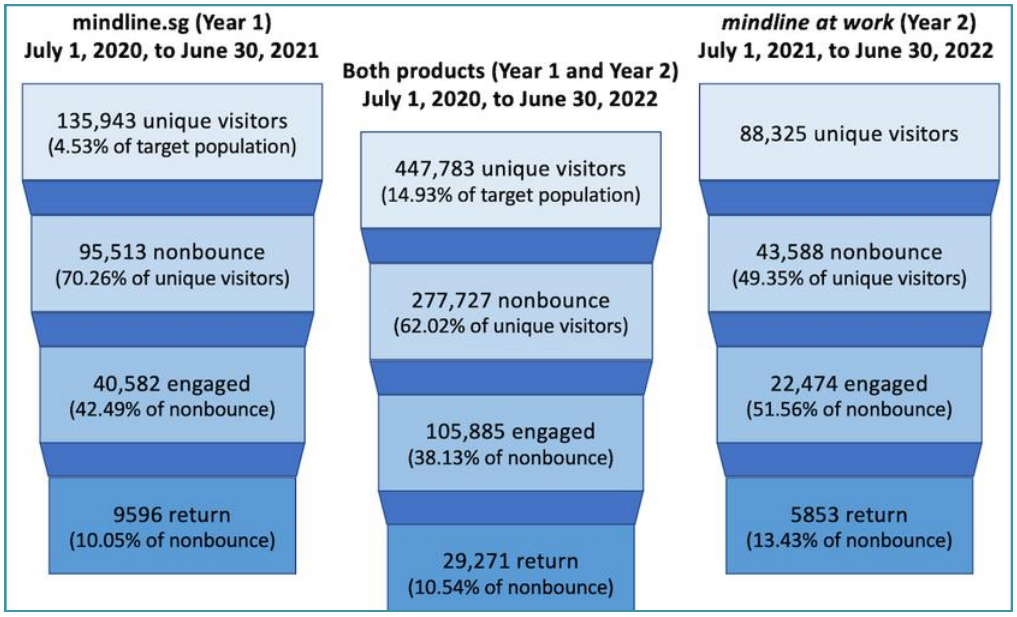
Integrated as a "pocket coach," Wysa allows users to engage in a safe and anonymous space where they can express their thoughts and emotions freely. Using CBT-based techniques, Wysa delivers exercises for stress management, mindfulness, and coping skills. While Wysa may not be able to directly resolve the issue at hand, it helps users reframe a negative mindset towards one that is more optimistic and open to exploring options, with clearer perspective. This feature, with its 24/7 availability and chat functions, supports users at any time, even during late-night hours when traditional services may be unavailable.

3. Local sesource directory & referrals:

mindline.sg signposts users to local Singaporean resources covering areas like job support, financial assistance and caregiving. In doing so, it provides curated resources that offer support beyond mental health, including the real-life challenges that can affect it. By signposting individuals to practical resources, mindline.sg fosters resilience and reduces the strain on healthcare facilities.

Engagement metrics and impact

Since its launch, mindline.sg has demonstrated strong reach and engagement. In the first two years, the platform attracted over 447,000 unique visitors, representing approximately 15% of Singapore's target population of 3 million people between the ages of 17 and 60 years old. Notably, over 62% of these visitors engaged with the resources offered, such as therapeutic exercises and self-assessments, and 10.5% of them returned to the platform. For the mindline at work version tailored to working adults, engagement rates were even more apparent, with over 51% engaging and 13.4% returning. These statistics underscore mindline.sg's role in addressing a vital need for accessible mental health resources across demographics.



1.Unique visitors are counted via a browser cookies. Each visit by a user will be counted as one unique visitor. A subsequent use by the same user on another browser or device may be recorded as another visit.

2.Non-bounced are visitors who have made 2 or more actions in their session.

3.Engaged are visitors who spend more than 40 seconds on the platform.

4.Return are visitors who have returned to the site at least once during the defined period.

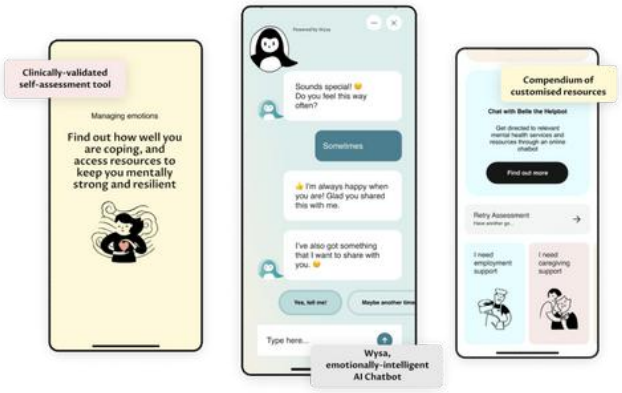
The analytics from mindline.sg offer a valuable population-level snapshot of mental wellbeing trends across Singapore. Through anonymous engagement data, we can observe which self-care tools, resources, and exercises are most utilized, helping to identify specific areas of concern, such as stress or anxiety. For example, the self-assessment tool's usage provides insight into symptoms for depression and anxiety, and the high engagement with AI-guided therapeutic exercises reflects a demand for accessible mental health support. This data-driven approach enables MOHT to adapt and refine services to meet evolving national mental wellness needs.

The role of anonymity and accessibility

Stigma around mental health remains a significant challenge, particularly in societies where cultural norms equate mental wellness disclosures with weakness. To address this, we designed mindline.sg to ensure full anonymity, with no personal information required to access any of its resources. By prioritizing user anonymity, mindline.sg removes the fear of judgment and builds trust, a critical factor in encouraging users to take the first step towards seeking support. As a web-based platform, it is compatible with both smartphones and computers. Users do not need to download a separate mobile application, thus enabling greater accessibility.

Personalised and adaptive approach to population needs

Recognising that different groups experience distinct stressors, mindline.sg includes a dedicated product, mindline at work, tailored for working adults. This version incorporates features like mood check-ins and resources tailored to workplace challenges, addressing the unique pressures faced by employees and employers, such as job insecurity, toxic work environments, burnout, and work-life imbalance. MOHT will continue to adapt the platform's offerings to meet the evolving needs of Singapore's population based on the usage data and feedback received.



A platform for mental health literacy and prevention

Beyond immediate support, mindline.sg contributes to longer-term mental health literacy by empowering users with tools and information to manage stress and promote resilience. The platform's progressive engagement strategy is to introduce users to mental wellness concepts using educational content; guide them through exercises; and ultimately help them build long-term habits to foster preventive mental health practices. By integrating self-help exercises with educational resources, we are encouraging users to view mental health as a continuum of wellbeing, rather than merely a binary state of health or illness.

Shaping the future of mental health support

The impact of mindline.sg exemplifies Singapore's commitment to proactive and scalable mental health solutions. By prioritizing accessibility, privacy, and population-specific needs, we have created a digital platform that offers reliable mental health resources while empowering individuals to take charge of their own wellbeing. As mental health concerns continue to rise globally, mindline.sg contributes towards Singapore's multi-agency, multi-ministerial approach to harness technology to manage mental health and wellness at a national level.

Going forward, MOHT will continuously innovate and enhance mindline.sg by incorporating new insights and adding specialized resources. Eventually, we hope to grow a culture where seeking mental health support is normalised, and where individuals are empowered to prioritize their wellbeing.

How to navigate the challenges of holiday season

The holiday season brings warmth, tradition, and time spent with loved ones, but it can also bring waves of stress, sadness, and anxiety. Last year, 59% of U.S. adults said that spending too much or not having enough money to spend caused them stress around the holidays; 40% were stressed about finding the right gifts and 38% were missing family or loved ones.

Between financial concerns, family obligations and difficult emotions like loneliness, the holiday season can take its toll. So, if you're struggling to feel merry and bright, you're not alone. Holiday stress is common, but there are effective ways to cope. Here's how to enjoy a more peaceful and joyous season despite it all.

Family gatherings

When it comes to family reunions, they can be both cherished and challenging. If you haven't seen family in a while, reuniting can feel overwhelming and bring up old tensions and anxieties. Recognizing that family gatherings may not be perfect, and accepting that it's okay if they aren't can relieve some of the pressure you might feel. The pictures you see on social media rarely capture the burnt roast, crying kids, or the inevitable family disagreements. With the recent U.S. election, political differences may also surface. Whether it's politics, money or other polarizing subjects, if a conversation starts getting heated you can try redirecting it to a lighter topic, or politely excuse yourself to grab a drink or refresh your plate. If you can grab 5 minutes alone, apps like Wysa offer quick in-the-moment support to help you discreetly find a sense of calm. Remember, sometimes it's best to focus on enjoyable, simple moments and let everyone's quirks and opinions be part of the holiday charm. All families have their... unique dynamics!

Gift shopping and financial stress

Gift-giving is a joyful tradition, but finding the perfect gift for everyone on your list can add financial strain. 4 in 10 Americans say finding the right gift causes them stress during the holidays. To ease the burden, try setting a realistic budget for the holidays and explore creative alternatives for gift-giving. For example, you might agree on a budget with friends or family members you exchange gifts with, or consider planning a shared experience instead of giving gifts. Activities like ice skating, baking, or attending a festive show or event together are fun ways to connect without the additional pressure of buying multiple gifts. This approach lets you enjoy holiday moments with loved ones while avoiding overspending. Just keep in mind that some people's love language is gift-giving, so check in with those who might appreciate a physical token of appreciation over quality time (learn more about love languages here).

Finally, if you're embarrassed about bringing up money, don't be! Chances are, some of your family and friends are also worried about finances this season and they'll be relieved you brought it up first. If they're not, it's likely they'll understand if your budget is a little tighter this year. Discussing money can be difficult so if you're still feeling anxious about the topic, try out Wysa's tool for planning and practicing difficult conversations. The holidays are about creating meaningful moments with loved ones, not about how much you spend.

Loneliness and isolation

For some, the holidays are a lonely time, especially for the elderly or those separated from family. Stats suggest around 55% of Americans experience the holiday blues, feeling loneliness during and around the Christmas season. The emphasis on togetherness and celebration can amplify feelings of isolation, making it a challenging time for many.

If you're experiencing loneliness, try to focus on meaningful activities that bring you peace. Volunteering, reaching out to friends, or even spending time in nature can help you feel more connected. Many people also find comfort in small rituals, like journaling, taking a wintery walk, or connecting online with communities that share similar interests. Volunteering at a local charity, food bank, or animal center can provide a sense of purpose and connection, while also lifting your spirits.

If you know someone spending the holidays alone or away from family, reach out to them, plan a video call, or send a heartfelt message - it can make all the difference in knowing they're cared for.

Navigating grief during the holidays

The 'most wonderful time of the year' can feel like the most difficult time for those who have lost loved ones. Traditions that once brought joy can now feel like stark reminders of absence. You might notice the empty seat where a loved one once sat, their laughter missing from conversations, or the gap in family photos that makes their absence all the more real. These moments can bring up a deep sense of longing and grief. It's important to honor those feelings rather than push them aside. Grief is a personal journey, and there's no right or wrong way to approach it. You might find comfort in dedicating a special part of the celebrations to remembering your loved one. This might look like lighting a candle in their memory, watching their favorite Christmas movie, or preparing a recipe that reminds you of them. Sharing stories with others of the fond memories you hold can also be healing. It's okay to talk about them - it's likely others will be feeling their absence, too.

If you're struggling, consider connecting with a support group or seeking help from a mental health professional. Whatever approach feels right for you, allowing yourself the space to acknowledge and sit with your grief can help you navigate the holiday season with compassion and care for yourself.

Bringing meaning to the season

Despite the hustle and bustle, the holiday season offers a chance to slow down, reflect on the past year, and renew our spirits. Embrace small moments of joy, practice gratitude, and spend time with those who uplift you. May this Christmas bring warmth, love, and reflection as we look toward a hopeful new year.

For further support with managing difficult emotions during the holidays, chat with Wysa or connect with a human coach via the Wysa app.

Discover your self-care style: A journey to better wellbeing

During the holiday season, when life often gets busier and expectations run high, it's easy to lose sight of what truly helps us recharge. We're often reminded of the importance of self-care, but the idea can feel vague. In a world of influencers suggesting it requires luxury skincare, wellness retreats, or high-end fitness gear, self-care can feel out of reach. But real self-care doesn't have to come with a price tag or look a certain way, especially not during the holidays. Each of us has unique needs and rhythms, so it's all about finding what genuinely resonates with you.

This article will help you discover your self-care style, guiding you to create a personal approach to wellbeing that supports you through both the holiday hustle and the quiet winter days ahead.

What is self-care?

Self-care is often seen as a hard-to-define concept. It's portrayed as this "soft" idea that can mean different things to different people, which makes it tricky to pin down exactly what self-care should look like in practice. Self-care involves any activity that we do deliberately to take care of our mental, emotional, and physical health. It's about being kind to yourself, recognizing your needs, and taking steps to meet them. While it sounds simple, many people overlook self-care due to their busy schedules and demanding lives. The holiday season can make this even trickier, as packed schedules, added stress, and extra obligations often push self-care to the bottom of the list.

Types of self-care

Self-care can be categorized into types, each addressing different aspects of your wellbeing. We'll explore the following five types today: physical, emotional, social, environmental and spiritual.

1. Physical self-care

Physical self-care involves activities that improve your physical health. This includes exercise, nutrition, and sleep.

Examples:

- Engaging in regular physical exercise like yoga, running, or dancing.
- Eating a balanced and nutritious diet.
- Ensuring you get 7-9 hours of sleep each night.
- Practice good dental and body hygiene.

Who benefits most? People who feel physically drained or are prone to health issues may find physical self-care especially beneficial. This type of self-care can be considered as meeting your body's basic needs for good health, but it is so simple it is often overlooked and one of the first to drop during stressful or challenging times.

2. Emotional self-care

Emotional self-care involves activities that help you connect with and process your emotions. This includes practices that help you manage stress, reflect on your feelings, and express yourself.

Examples:

- Journaling about your thoughts and feelings.
- Practicing mindfulness or meditation.
- Engaging in creative activities like drawing, painting, or writing.
- Talking to a therapist or counselor.

Who benefits most? Those who feel stressed or overwhelmed by their emotions will benefit from emotional self-care. If you find comfort in expressing your feelings and reflecting on your inner experiences, this could be your ideal self-care style.

3. Social self-care

Social self-care involves activities that nurture your relationships with others. This can include spending time with loved ones, building new connections, and participating in social activities.

Examples:

- Meeting friends for coffee or a meal.
- Joining clubs or groups with shared interests.
- Volunteering for causes you care about.
- Scheduling regular family time.

Who benefits most? People who feel lonely or disconnected will benefit from social self-care. If you gain energy from social interactions and feel fulfilled by connecting with others, this self-care style will resonate with you.

4. Environmental self-care

Environmental self-care focuses on creating a soothing, restorative connection with the natural world and the spaces around you. It emphasizes the healing power and physical health benefits of nature, fresh air, and surroundings that support your wellbeing.

Examples:

- Creating a peaceful home environment, embracing natural light and greenery.
- Taking a mindful walk soaking in the sights and sounds of nature.
- Forest bathing in wooded areas or spending time in blue spaces, such as by the ocean.
- Gardening or taking care of indoor plants.

Who benefits most? Those who feel recharged by spending time in nature or thrive in calm, harmonious environments will find environmental self-care especially beneficial. If you feel a sense of peace when surrounded by greens, blues, or the sounds of bird song and crunching leaves, this style might be perfect for you.

5. Spiritual self-care

Spiritual self-care involves activities that nourish your spirit and give you a sense of purpose. This doesn't necessarily have to be religious; it can also include any activity that helps you feel connected to something greater than yourself.

Examples:

- Practicing meditation or prayer.
- Spending time in nature.
- Reading inspirational or spiritual texts.
- Volunteering or participating in community service.

Who benefits most? Individuals seeking deeper meaning or connection in life will benefit from spiritual self-care. If you are particularly religious, spiritual, or enjoy contributing to a greater good, this self-care style is likely for you.

A quiz to discover your self-care style:

1. When you feel stressed, what activity helps you the most?

a) Going for a run or doing a workout.
b) Writing in a journal.
c) Calling a loved one.
d) Cleaning or organizing your space.
e) Meditation or prayer.

2. How do you prefer to spend your free time?

a) Being physically active or playing sports.
b) Reflecting on your thoughts or creating art.
c) Socializing with friends or family.
d) Getting out in nature.
e) Engaging in spiritual or religious practices.

3. What makes you feel most fulfilled?

a) Achieving fitness goals or maintaining good health.
b) Understanding and processing your emotions.
c) Building strong relationships and community connections.
d) Watching something I've taken care of grow.
e) Feeling connected to a higher purpose.

4. Which statement best describes your ideal relaxation method?

a) Cooking and eating a nice meal.
b) Finding a quiet space to reflect, write or draw.
c) Enjoying a fun activity with friends or family.
d) Sitting by the ocean.
e) Meditating or reading religious text.

Interpreting your results

- **Mostly A's:** You thrive on physical self-care. Prioritize activities that keep you active and healthy.
- **Mostly B's:** Emotional self-care is your style. Focus on activities that help you understand and manage your emotions.
- **Mostly C's:** Social self-care is important to you. Nurture your relationships and seek social interactions.
- **Mostly D's:** You naturally learn towards environmental self-care. Spend time outdoors in nature and take care of your home and garden.
- **Mostly E's:** You resonate with spiritual self-care. Engage in practices that connect you to your beliefs and the larger world.

Integrating self-care into your life

Once you've identified your self-care style, make a plan to integrate these activities into your daily or weekly routine. Remember, self-care is not a luxury but a necessity for your overall wellbeing. When life feels most overwhelming, self-care can seem like just another task on the to-do list, but that's when it's needed the most. In those moments, focus on the type of self-care that resonates most with you for the greatest impact. If you're in a position where you're looking to truly thrive, aim to strike a balance between all self-care types. Understanding the different types of self-care, and identifying your self-care style is a fantastic step toward enhancing your everyday wellbeing. Remember, you can't pour from an empty cup! Taking care of yourself is the first step toward being able to care for others and reach your fullest potential. Happy self-caring!

Q. Balancing year-end targets with team wellbeing

Towards year end, there's always a big push to meet performance targets, which sometimes conflicts with our mental health goals. Team members are feeling the strain, but we're still expected to hit our numbers. How can I help my team navigate these conflicting priorities without burning out or feeling like they have to sacrifice their wellbeing?

A.

Dear Reader,

It's that time of year again, isn't it? The countdown to year-end, when everything seems to ramp up. Goals to meet, numbers to hit, targets staring at us from every corner. It can feel like we're all sprinting towards the finish line, hoping we have enough energy left to make it. But there's something else we're all juggling too: our mental health, and the wellbeing of our teams. So, how do we manage these competing demands without burning out or feeling like we have to sacrifice wellbeing for the bottom line?

After working with so many teams over the years, I know this: balancing these pressures isn't easy. But it is possible. With a few small shifts, you can help your team finish the year strong, without leaving their mental health behind.

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1. Start the conversation - and keep it real

The simplest things are often the most powerful, and open communication is one of them. Encourage your team to share how they're feeling—without the pressure to sugarcoat it. Acknowledge that this time of year is tough, and let them know it's okay to be honest. Maybe it's a weekly check-in where people can talk about what's on their plate and share any concerns, big or small.

Imagine how empowering it would be for someone to say, "I'm a little overwhelmed" and feel they'll be supported, not judged. You'll find these honest moments can bring the team closer, and they can make all the difference in creating a supportive, connected workplace.

2. Focus on what truly matters

In the rush to hit every target, we sometimes try to do everything. But maybe now's the time to prioritize what truly matters. Which goals will have the biggest impact? Can some things wait? Shifting the focus from "do more" to "make it count" isn't about lowering expectations - it's about being smart with our time and energy.

When the team knows they're working on something meaningful, not just racing through a list of tasks, they feel a greater sense of purpose. That feeling of purpose is incredibly powerful, especially when things get hectic.

3. Encourage real, guilt-free breaks

If there's one thing I'd say to every team, it's this: don't underestimate the power of a break. When we're feeling the pressure, we tend to think, If I just keep going, I'll get more done. But that usually ends up backfiring. Short breaks, even just five minutes, help refresh our minds and make us more effective in the long run.

And if you're the leader, take breaks yourself! It might sound simple, but when people see you prioritizing your own wellbeing, they feel more comfortable doing the same. We're all human—sometimes we just need a little permission to step back and recharge.

4. Celebrate the wins, no matter the size

When the to-do list feels endless, it's easy to forget how far we've already come. Make time to celebrate, even if it's just a quick "Well done" in a team chat or a simple email acknowledging someone's hard work. Recognition doesn't need to be a grand event; it just needs to feel genuine.

These small moments of appreciation help us all remember why we do what we do and that our work is noticed and valued. It's amazing how much a small thank you can lift spirits and remind people they're part of something meaningful.

5. Be flexible and supportive

Lastly, remember that a little flexibility can go a long way. If someone's struggling, maybe they need a slight change in their workload or a bit of extra support. This doesn't mean lowering expectations; it just means meeting people where they are, especially during a busy period.

If you're using wellness resources like Wysa, remind your team that support is available anytime. Small gestures like these show people you care about their wellbeing, not just their work.

Remember, it's about people first

At the end of the day, yes, we all want to hit our targets, but we're in this with people, not just numbers. A caring, supportive team culture is what makes a workplace feel alive, even when things are demanding. Take a moment to show your team you're there for them. These small efforts can help everyone finish the year feeling valued and motivated.

With a little care, a bit of flexibility, and some genuine appreciation, we can all cross that year-end finish line together, stronger than ever.

Warmly,

Smriti

Smriti Joshi, Chief Psychologist, Wysa

Ask Smriti

Every issue, we ask Wysa's Lead Psychologist Smriti Joshi one of your burning questions, and she offers expert opinion, rooted in science and decades of experience. If you have something related to mental health technology, employee wellbeing, artificial intelligence or population health, please get in touch on ***press@wysa.io*** and we will **Ask Smriti**.

About Smriti

Smriti Joshi, Chief Psychologist at Wysa and a licensed clinical psychologist, has over 21 years of experience in India's mental health sector. She is an Advanced Telemental health professional and has authored papers and book chapters, contributing significantly to tele-counselling guidelines through the Indian Association of Clinical Psychologists. Smriti leads mental health tech discussions on the Therapists in Tech platform and is a part of the National Mental Health Council for WICCI. She has appeared in several media outlets, including a TEDx talk and CNBC-TV18. Smriti holds an M.Phil in Clinical Psychology from the University of Delhi and specializes in treating depression, anxiety, insomnia, anger, and loneliness.

Real life user story

Navigating mental health with Wysa: Robin's talking therapy journey

Robin's story

45-year-old graphic designer, Robin, from Bournemouth, UK, started using the Wysa app as part of his ongoing mental health journey. Having recently completed an NHS Talking Therapy session, he continues to find Wysa a helpful companion for managing his wellbeing. "I just wanted some tips on improving my mental health and help with anger management" Robin explains. With its proactive approach to mental health, Wysa has proven to be an effective and supportive tool.

A smooth start with Wysa

Robin's first impression of Wysa was overwhelmingly positive. "The onboarding was very easy and smooth - I could just get started with it immediately" he recalls. This immediate ease of use made it possible for him to dive straight into the app's features without any friction.

"The onboarding was very easy and smooth - I could just get started with it immediately."

One of the most valuable features for Robin has been the twice-daily check-ins. "It's a great habit-building feature that keeps you involved," he notes. This regular engagement has encouraged him to build better routines, including getting to bed earlier - a welcome change.

Impact on daily life & mental health

Since using Wysa, Robin has felt more in control of his mental health. "It gave me some confidence that I was working on the areas I needed help with," he says. Specifically, he points to the mindfulness exercises and the breathing animations as particularly helpful. "The exercise elements are a great addition," Robin adds, explaining how these tools help him feel calmer and more focused.

Ongoing support and recommendations

Even outside of therapy, Wysa continues to be a valuable resource. When asked about the future, Robin is optimistic about continuing to use Wysa for ongoing mental health support. "I am continuing to use it and have found it very helpful," he says. Although he hasn't had to use Wysa's SOS feature, he finds comfort in knowing that help is available should he need it. "It's very comforting knowing it's there," Robin admits.

"I've used Wysa before and after my therapy sessions; in both cases, the time has been quite helpful so far."

As for recommending Wysa to others, Robin is enthusiastic. "In general, I will definitely recommend Wysa to others and am grateful for its support in my journey."

Looking forward

Robin's experience with Wysa has been largely positive, offering him an accessible and effective tool for managing his mental health. "It's quick and easy, which is what you need," Robin reflects, appreciating how Wysa has provided him with the right tools at the right time. With some technical updates and content expansion, Robin sees even greater potential for Wysa in supporting people on their mental health journeys.

For Robin, Wysa serves as a steady companion, helping him manage his mental health after therapy and beyond. And for many like him, that's invaluable.

Ready to try Wysa for yourself? Start your mental health journey with Wysa today.

Discover more real life user stories on the Wysa blog.

wysa

Wherever this season finds you, may it bring warmth, connection and joy.