



## **Mobile apps to help with self-care and promote emotional wellbeing**

### **Learning to fit your own oxygen mask first**

Self-compassion and self-care are important for good mental health and emotional wellbeing. However, many people find them hard to do as they think that focusing on themselves is selfish and inappropriate. During my training as a Cognitive Analytic Therapist, someone used the metaphor of the safety instructions given to you by the cabin crew on a flight. You are told to “Put on your own oxygen mask before helping others,” and this, I believe, is also a good lesson for life. If you are psychologically and physically well, you are in a far better position to help and support yourself and those around you. I believe our physical and emotional energy is finite and if we drain both without re-energising ourselves, it can lead to exhaustion, anxiety, depression and stress.

### **Psychotherapy and self-care**

Deciding to engage in psychotherapy is a form of self-care, and your therapist will often talk to you about how you can look after yourself during the process. Getting enough sleep, rest, social interaction, exercise and good food are areas they may suggest to improve your overall wellbeing and mental health. Brighton and Hove Psychotherapy offer many different types of therapy. Here is one example of how this may work.

### **Extreme self-care**

Recently, Psychologies magazine tweeted an article on self-care by Ann James, which stated, *“When it comes to taking care of your own needs, extreme is where I’m urging you to head. Extreme self-care is, in fact an ART, to be nurtured and relished.”*

## **Phone apps to promote self-care and emotional wellbeing**

I have a few suggestions of apps to help with self-care, so you can start the New Year off well. Brighton and Hove Psychotherapy have no connection to these apps – they are just ones I have tried out as part of my work in promoting wellbeing.

# Brighton and Hove Psychotherapy



One of my favourite apps is Pzizz, a sleep app, which is based on NLP techniques and has been recently revamped. It used to be free but is now a subscription app, as they have made a lot of improvements to the latest version.

Stop, Breathe, Think is a meditation app, which is available for free download. It features in-app purchases to provide more choice. It begins with a check-in screen on which you choose how you are feeling physically, mentally and emotionally. The app then makes recommendations of meditations to fit your mood.

Mindshift aims to help you deal with anxiety. Its elements include a tool to assess how anxious you are feeling, reading up about anxiety and viewing inspirational quotes.

The Virtual Hope Box has been designed to help in times of crises and has five main elements. The 'Remind Me' section allows you to download photos, songs, inspirational quotes, videos and supportive messages, which can be accessed when needed. In addition, it has a 'Distract Me' section with a number of online games, an 'Inspire Me' section with helpful quotes, a 'Relax Me' section with guided meditations and a 'Coping Tools' section where you can add your own coping strategies to refer to when you need them.

As well as the ones mentioned above, there are many other self-help apps available, and some of them are free to download. Getting one on your phone today could be a step towards greater self-care in the future.

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