Technology and its impact on mental health treatment

Technology has opened a new frontier in mental health support and data collection. Mobile devices like cell phones, smartphones, and tablets are giving the public, doctors, and researchers new ways to access help, monitor progress, and increase understanding of mental wellbeing.

Mobile mental health support can be very simple but effective. For example, anyone with the ability to send a text message can contact a crisis center. New technology can also be packaged into an extremely sophisticated app for smartphones or tablets. Such apps might use the device's built-in sensors to collect information on a user's typical behavior patterns. If the app detects a change in behavior, it may provide a signal that help is needed before a crisis occurs. Some apps are stand-alone programs that promise to improve memory or thinking skills. Others help the user connect to a peer counselor or to a health care professional.

Excitement about the huge range of opportunities has led to a burst of app development. There are thousands of mental health apps available in iTunes and Android app stores, and the number is growing every year. However, this new technology frontier includes a lot of uncertainty. There is very little industry regulation and very little information on app effectiveness, which can lead consumers to wonder which apps they should trust.

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Global Information Technology is proud to provide the GIT Scholarship Program. Every month, this scholarship will be awarded to highly driven individuals wanting to begin or advance their IT career. Exclusively, the scholarship will provide a grant of $2,500.00 towards any certification course or remote live training at GIT. GIT created this opportunity to give back to the community and spread our desire to help those in need. We believe that learning is essential and we will continue to help and develop individuals to help them succeed in their personal development goals.
Apply here:

https://www.global-itech.com/the-global-it-scholarship/

Career Guide

Quick & to the point – Career Advice

Question: *"Andrei, I need help keeping things together! Mentally, I find myself tired and a lot. Name a way I can practice mental fitness. Thank you."*
– *Belinda St. Clare*

Answer: Meditation is hands down one of the best forms of mental exercise. Meditation not only reduces the negative effects of the nervous system and allows you to relax, but it also enhances and activates the 'positive' nervous system by slowing down your heart rate, controlling your breathing, and maintaining your blood pressure. Mindful meditation also improves connectivity between areas of the brain, improving the ability to focus and concentrate.
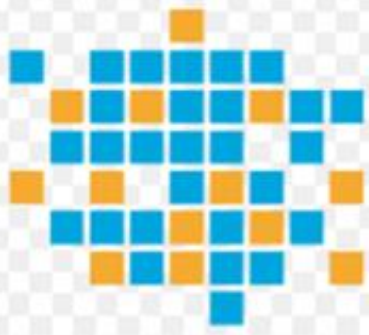
Check out these tips for mindful meditation! You got this!

– Andrei

VETERNS, GET READY TO POWER YOUR TECH FUTURE AT GLOBAL IT

Global Information Technology (Global IT) is approved by the Department of Veteran Affairs to receive Veterans benefits. We accept Chapter 33 Post 9/11 GI Bill®, Chapter 30 Montgomery GI Bill® for Active Duty, Ch 31 Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E), Vet Tec, and VRRAP. Whether you are serving or have already served, Global Information Technology is here to work with you to start your IT career. These benefits may cover up to 100% of tuition and fees and housing allowance, courseware, and other training-related costs as well. For more information about your specific benefits in regards to your service, call 248-557- 2480 to set up an appointment with one of our School Certified Officers (SCO) (career advisors) or complete the inquiry form at **https://www.global-itech.com/va-program/**.

GIT thought Provoking corner

"Mental health problems don't define who you are. They are something you experience. You walk in the rain and you feel the rain, but you are not the rain."

— Matt Haig

DID YOU KNOW?

- *More people on Earth own a mobile phone than a toothbrush.*

- *91% of all adults have their mobile phone within arm's reach every hour of every day.*

- *Hewlett Packard, Microsoft, as well as Apple have one not so obvious thing in common – they were all started in a garage.*

- *Every minute, 100 hours of video are uploaded on YouTube by individual users.*

- *90% of text messages are read within three minutes of being delivered.*

- *It has been 40 years since the world's first mobile phone call successfully took place.*

- *There are 350 million Snapchat messages sent every day.*

- *Of the 60 billion emails that are sent on a daily basis, 97% are considered spam, Spammers get 1 response to every 12 million emails they send (yet it still makes them a small profit).*

- *Google handles an estimated 1 billion search queries each and every day, releasing almost 200 tons of CO2 per day.*

- *On average, technology users carry 2.9 devices on them at all times.*

- *Amazon sells more e-books than printed books.*

- *Facebook has more than 1.3 billion registered users; about 100 million of those are fake profiles.*

5 Reasons to be thankful for technology during the pandemic

Technology has been making travel easier for decades. For example, can you imagine airlines having to sell, cancel, and track flights manually? It seems like an impossible task.

Without technology, airlines wouldn't be able to offer near-instant seats on cancelled flights or offer self-booking through a website. Without technology, you wouldn't get up-to-the-minute price change email notifications

for hotel rooms and car rentals, either.

Under normal circumstances, technology is a blessing to travelers. Here are several reasons to appreciate technology even more during the COVID-19 pandemic.

1. Software programs can sift through medical studies
There are currently more than 45,000 medical studies available as part of the White House's COVID-19 data hub known as CORD-19. This data hub is considered "the most extensive collection of machine-readable coronavirus literature

to date."

There is an open invitation for AI researchers to sift through the data to gain unique insights about the incubation, treatment, symptoms, and prevention of the disease. The sheer volume of data available is too much for humans to sort through page-by-page. Using AI and machine learning algorithms to identify key pieces of data will bring faster understanding to the whole situation.

2. Technology makes traveling safer by limiting personal contact
Despite worldwide bans on non-essential travel, many people need to travel internationally to get home, tend to a family emergency, or access essential medical care. For those who have a legitimate reason to travel, technology creates a safer experience by limiting points of personal contact.

Electronic documentation reduces personal contact Traditionally, international

travelers have been required to carry a physical passport that gets stamped at each destination. When all the pages are filled, the traveler must obtain a new passport. Although the technology isn't new, some travelers qualify for electronic passports and electronic visas. An electronic passport is purely digital, while an electronic visa allows travelers to bypass sending a photo copy of their passport to obtain a visa. Just like electronic passports, there are electronic visa substitutes for certain countries. For example, say a British business traveler obtains an eTA to enter Canada.

Applying for an eTA can be done entirely online without requiring any in-person appointments. The lack of in-person appointments eliminates a potential point of contact that could spread the virus.

Likewise, when the business traveler enters Canada, their eTA will contain most of their information in an electronic record. They may be required to show their passport and/or other identifying documents, but interactions with customs and border officials will be brief.

3. Airport and other travel technology is being pushed to the limit

At first glance, this might sound like a bad thing. Why would anyone be thankful that travel technology is being pushed to the limit?

The benefit to having our electronic travel systems pushed to the limit is that if something is going to break, it will break much sooner when the system is under stress. If there are problems in the system, we'll become aware of these issues quickly.

Since we're in a time when our travel systems can't afford to be
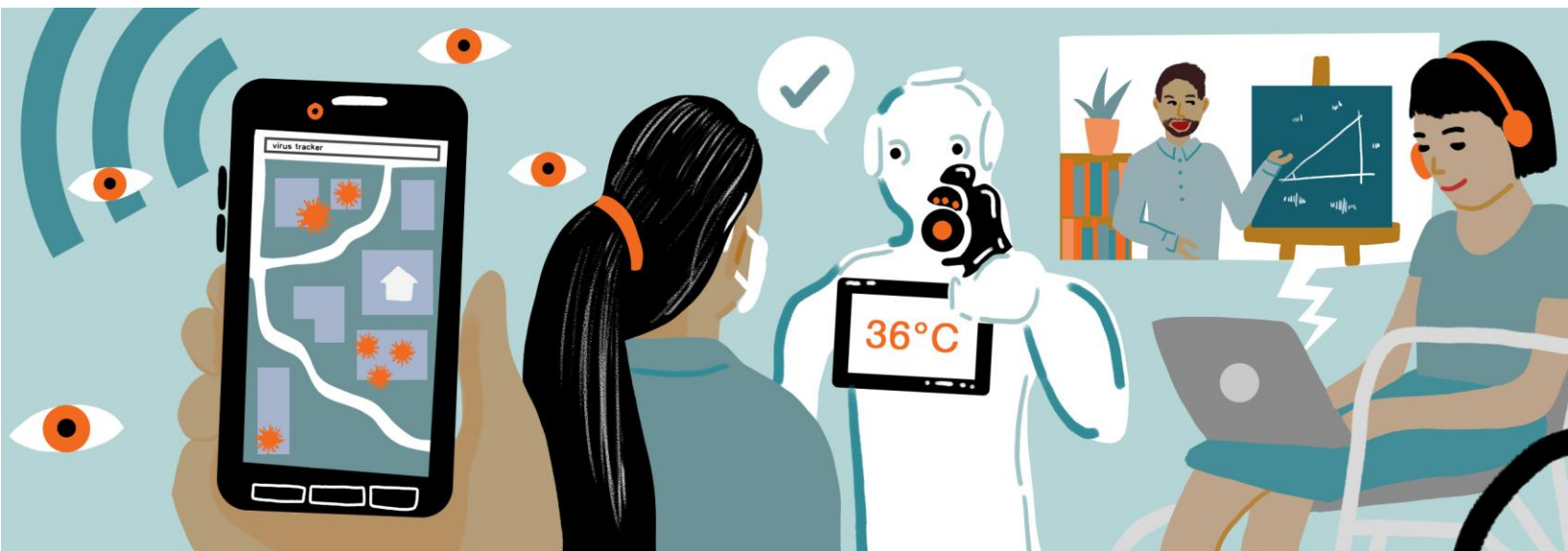
down for long, it's almost guaranteed that issues will be swiftly dealt with whether it's a software issue or a coordination problem. When issues arise outside of an urgent situation, they often go unresolved and cause even more problems. The need to manage travel safely and efficiently in a post-pandemic world will ensure that all issues will be handled promptly.

5. Technology can predict infection

Although the data is currently limited, researchers from Stanford Medicine want to use wearable tech devices to predict viral infection through data sent to the cloud.

In a new partnership with Fitbit and Scripps Research, researchers want to use smartwatch data to measure heartrate and skin temperature to identify when someone might be fighting off a virus. Their ultimate goal is to curb the spread of viral infections like COVID-19.

In 2017, an algorithm was created to detect infection using data from a change in heart rate from a smartwatch. One study in particular showed that heart rate variation patterns can indicate illness even when the individual is asymptomatic.

The Stanford researchers are currently looking for study participants. Researchers acknowledge that an elevated heart rate isn't always a sign of infection, but want to investigate to see if they can sort out the different causes.

The sky is the limit
With technology, the sky really is the limit. Every new technological advance has the potential to improve the way we respond to and fight this coronavirus outbreak.

Three common myths about stress to keep in mind

Myth 1. Stress feels the same for everyone.

Fact: Stress is a very subjective experience. People feel — and also cope with — stress in different ways. At the same time, what is stressful for one person may not be stressful for another. People also deal and cope with stress in very different ways.

Myth 2. You can always tell when someone is stressed.

Fact: While many experience common symptoms of stress, such as social withdrawal, anger, and mood swings, there are many other symptoms that are internal and may not be noticeable. Symptoms like anxiety, depression, and excessive worry are may not be apparent.

Myth 3. Only major stress symptoms need attention.

Fact: Minor and major stress symptoms need to be addressed. Minor stress can quickly become more severe and lead to chronic stress. Additionally, stress hormones (which are present even during minor stress) can have a negative impact on a person's memory, learning, and wellness.

10 Tips to deal with academic stress

Academic stress is at an all-time high for students from elementary school through college. From curriculum-based pressures like studying for exams, completing homework, and writing reports, to overwhelm and burnout from overloaded schedules and diverse and often unmet learning needs, students are buckling under the weight of high academic expectations combined with fast-paced lifestyles.

If you are a student feeling the pressure, or if you are the parent or friend of a student who is showing signs of academic stress, here are 10 tips from student Hailey Fuchs to help ease the pressure and find more school/life balance:

1. Make To-Do Lists
To do lists can take a seemingly insurmountable pile of obligations much more manageable by helping prioritize and lay out exactly what needs to be done. Outline the set of tasks that you have to complete. Once you can visualize what you have to do, you won't be daunted by your

assignments.

2. Budget Your Time
Plan out your day, minute-by-minute. With a clear view of your schedule, you will feel more in control which will allow you to approach your tasks calmly and confidently.

3. Create a Rewards System
Giving yourself incentives to complete daunting academic tasks can help when the going gets tough. Set up a system of rewards so that you can look forward to finishing a set of tasks.

4. Ask For Help and Move On

When you find yourself stressing over a seemingly impossible problem, text a friend or email a teacher. Then move on to other tasks. Don't spend hours focusing on this problem, however significant it may seem to be at the time. Wasted time will slow you down, and you will be emotionally drained when preparing to shift your focus to your other remaining tasks.

5. Take Breaks to Breathe

Mindfulness is an immense help when experiencing overwhelm and academic stress. Finding a way to calm yourself physically will help relief mental stress simultaneously. Go online and find some breathing exercises. Whenever you find yourself worrying, put your pens and pencils down and breathe. Try closing your eyes while breathing in through your nose and out through your mouth. Moments like these are necessary to recharge.

6. Eat Healthy

While you may be tempted to reach for that slice of pizza, putting the right foods in your body will boost your energy and thereby give you the stamina you need to get your work done. Foods with high fat and sugar contents can make you feel sluggish and unmotivated to complete your tasks. Focus on fruits, veggies, and other high-fiber foods for sustained energy, and combine protein with carbohydrates to avoid a 'crash'.

7. Get More Restful Sleep, Especially If You Can't Get More Hours of Sleep

Obviously, you won't be able to focus or work your best without a good night's sleep.

8. Exercise

Experts say that everyone needs at least a half hour of exercise each day. Not only does exercise help you with restful sleep but exercise also boosts endorphins, which, in turn, make you more happy and less anxious.

9. Set Aside Days to Relax

Just like a good night of sleep, you need a day of fun to recharge from a week of school.

Set aside time to spend Friday or Saturday with friends or family. Do not focus on anything relating to work or school during these times. It can be tempting to work all the time, especially if academic stress is at a peak, but you will work more efficiently and effectively with breaks to rest and socialize as opposed to burning yourself out.

10. Seek Help If Necessary

If you find that academic stress has consumed your life, talk to a teacher, guidance counselor, parent, or another trusted adult. While a certain amount of anxiety is normal, no one should worry alone, and prolonged academic stress can lead to mental health struggles like anxiety and depression.