

INFORMATION LETTER

Center ÜBERLEBEN launches apps for refugees suffering from mental strains

Berlin, 11. April 2018

The research department at the Center ÜBERLEBEN has been conducting research in the field of internet-based therapy for many years. SMILERS (Smartphone Mediated Intervention for Learning Emotional Regulation of Sadness) and ALMHAR (Application for Mental Health Aid for Refugees) are two smartphone applications that use different approaches. They are now available for download in the respective stores (SMILERS in the App Store and ALMHAR at Google Play).

ALMHAR: Helping people to help themselves after a traumatic life event on the flight

ALMHAR is an app that takes a low-threshold, psychoeducative approach. In Farsi, English or Arabic, 12 modules provide information about psychological symptoms that can occur due to stressful/traumatic life events before, during or after the flight as well as tips on how to deal with these symptoms. These include anxiety, stress, feelings of guilt, sleeping problems, re-experiencing of traumatic/stressful events and aggression.

Dr. Maria Böttche and Dr. Nadine Stammel, heads of the research department at the Center ÜBERLEBEN, and their team have been working on the development of the app for a year. The project idea arose from the increased demand in the course of the high number of refugees from war-affected countries. Nadine Stammel explains: "There is a high demand for psychoeducative services, especially in Arabic-speaking countries, both among those affected and among colleagues. With ALMHAR we address both groups and offer exercises that can be performed independently or integrated into ongoing therapeutic processes. Our main aim is to help people to help themselves and, ideally, to counteract a worsening of symptoms at an early stage."

SMILERS: Help in dealing with depressive symptoms

The IOS application SMILERS follows a different approach. Although it is also a low-threshold offer, it is aimed specifically at Arabic-speaking people with depressive symptoms. SMILERS is also aimed at self-help, but there is also the possibility of making contact in crisis situations. Seven consecutive modules contain information on the development and maintenance of depressive symptoms, suggestions for positive activities and how to deal with negative thoughts. Each module lasts one week. The app also contains an anonymous questionnaire that the users fill out before, during and after using the app. In this way, the offer can be sustainably improved and refined by the researchers in the Center ÜBERLEBEN.

"SMILERS was created based on our longstanding experience in the Arabic-speaking internet-based therapy project Ilajnafsy," explains Maria Böttche. "With Ilajnafsy we address a group of people who have a very circumscribed symptomatology. However, many people do not meet all the necessary criteria, but still need help. Some are not able to participate in the therapy project due to other factors, for example if they do not have regular access to computers. For all these people, we now have SMILERS as a mobile service that can be used flexibly in terms of space and time."

The development of the app ALMHAR was financed by the Federal Foreign Office, the Hamburg Foundation for the Promotion of Science and Culture and donations from the Center ÜBERLEBEN. SMILERS was implemented thanks to the support of MISEREOR. For more information on the apps and download links, please visit www.almhar.org and www.ilajnafsy.de.

The Center ÜBERLEBEN is the only German-speaking institution for survivors of torture and war violence to have its own research department. Its aim is to empirically investigate the psychological consequences of war and torture. This includes scientific accompanying research at the Center, the development of diagnostic instruments and treatment modules, as well as studies of psychological consequences in post-conflict regions and the evaluation of internet-based interventions.

We inform you about the work of the Center ÜBERLEBEN on www.ueberleben.org as well as on Twitter and Facebook.

Contact Research Department

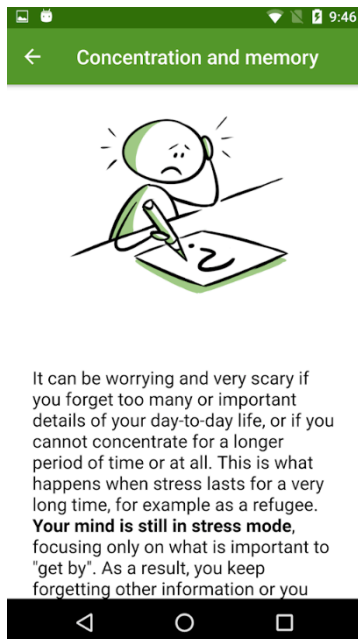
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PHOTO MATERIAL

ALMHAR



It can be worrying and very scary if you forget too many or important details of your day-to-day life, or if you cannot concentrate for a longer period of time or at all. This is what happens when stress lasts for a very long time, for example as a refugee. **Your mind is still in stress mode**, focusing only on what is important to "get by". As a result, you keep forgetting other information or you



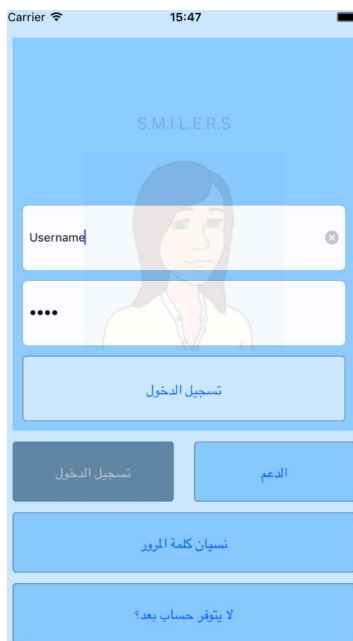
Stress

Introduction

Relaxation - Progressive muscle relaxation (PMR)

Relaxation - deep breathing

SMILERS



S.MILERS

Username

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تسجيل الدخول

تسجيل الدخول

الدعم

نسيان كلمة المرور

لا يتوفر حساب بعد؟



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بالنسبة لي، تطلب الأمر التفكير المبكر بالإشارات التي تنتشر بقدوم أعراض الاكتئاب.

صعوبة اليوم

نقد ذاتي بشكل قاس

عدم رغبتني بزيارة الأصدقاء

القائمة