



RAINBOW OF EMOTIONS APP

Teaching Emotional Regulation Skills Step by Step

USER GUIDE

www.rainbowofemotions.app

By Dolly Bhargava



Behaviour Help



Registered
NDIS
Provider

Copyright

Rainbow of Emotions App: Teaching Emotional Regulation Skills
Step by Step

© Dolly Bhargava/ Behaviour Help, 2021

The contents of this electronic book (text and graphics) are protected by international copyright law. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, transmitted, broadcast or communicated in any form or by any means, optical, digital, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the written permission of Behaviour Help (www.behaviourhelp.com).

To obtain permission, email dolly@behaviourhelp.com

Disclaimer

The information contained in this booklet is general in nature only and not exhaustive on the subject matter. The information may or may not be relevant or particular to the circumstances of the individual/s you support. Persons implementing any recommendations contained in this publication must exercise their own independent skill or judgement or seek appropriate professional advice relevant to their own circumstances when doing so.

About Me

Hi there,

I'm Dolly Bhargava, the founder of Behaviour Help. As a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Registered Behaviour Support Practitioner and Speech Pathologist, I work with children, adolescents and adults with complex social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD) in a variety of settings such as family homes, early childhood, schools, accommodation, post school options, employment and corrective services.

Based on the practical wisdom I have gathered from working with individuals with EBD, their families and incredible staff over the last 21 years, I have developed the Rainbow of Emotions App: Teaching Emotional Regulation Skills Step by Step.

The app aims to educate, equip and enable individuals with EBD with the necessary emotional regulation skills to help them identify, understand, express and manage their emotions. By enabling the individual to take CHARGE of their rainbow of emotions, they can learn positive ways of behaving and managing their emotions to reach their fullest potential.

Dolly Bhargava




Behaviour Help



Registered
NDIS
Provider

Contents

- 4 TOPIC 1: What are emotions?
 - 4 TOPIC 2: What is emotional regulation?
 - 5 TOPIC 3: Why is emotional regulation so important?
 - 5 TOPIC 4: What is the RAINBOW OF EMOTIONS app?
 - 7 TOPIC 5: Who can benefit from the RAINBOW OF EMOTIONS app?
 - 8 TOPIC 6: Who can set up the RAINBOW OF EMOTIONS app?
 - 10 TOPIC 7: What are the features of the RAINBOW OF EMOTIONS app?
 - 11 TOPIC 8: How to use the RAINBOW OF EMOTIONS app?
 - 18 TOPIC 9: Conclusion
 - 19 TOPIC 10: References
- 

INTRODUCTION

SECTION 1

TOPIC 1

What are emotions?

Emotions exist as an essential part of human nature. Emotions stimulate us to react and respond to events. We all experience a variety of emotions on a daily basis, including:

- Physical emotions (e.g. hurt, sore, sick, nauseous, tired, hungry, thirsty, cold and hot),
- Positive emotions (e.g. happy, OK, content, very happy), and
- Negative emotions (e.g. sad, angry, anxious, afraid, nervous, bored, confused, lonely and embarrassed).

more coping strategies. We could listen to the radio, eat something, look around at people and their cars, or think about the weekend.

As you can see, if you don't manage your emotions, then your emotions will manage you (Childer and Rozman, 2006).



TOPIC 2

What is emotional regulation?

No matter who we are, where we are or how old we are, we all face stressful situations. We don't always have a choice about many of the stressful things that happen to us in life, but we do have a choice about how we emotionally manage these situations.

We've all experienced being stuck in a traffic jam - a stream of cars for kilometres ahead and behind us. As we think about the waste of precious time and fuel, our blood pressure begins to rise. We prepare to scream a barrage of scathing remarks at the cars ahead of us. At the last moment, the thought crosses our mind that getting angry, frustrated or distressed will only make the situation worse. Therefore, we opt to pacify our irritation by using one or

Infants begin displaying and managing their emotions as early as the first weeks of life. However, there are wide variations in how children manage their emotions. One child may become easily frustrated and cry with even moderate levels of stimulating play. Whereas another child may enjoy rough play and seek out more exciting events (Rothbart & Rueda, 2005). As the child's brain develops, their emotional regulation skills become more sophisticated (Kopp 1982; Blair & Diamond 2008).

Emotional regulation is the ability to identify, understand, express and manage emotions in a healthy way. Some individuals (children, adolescents and adults) need direct, systematic and explicit teaching of emotional regulation skills.

Why is emotional regulation important?

If there is a mismatch between the emotion the individual is experiencing and their emotional regulation skills, the individual can become overwhelmed by the emotion. This is called emotional dysregulation. When the individual becomes emotionally dysregulated, they may react in challenging ways that can have a negative physical, psychological and emotional impact on the individual as well as the people around them. These behaviours can look like intense anger outbursts (going from 0-10 in nanoseconds), becoming verbally or physically aggressive, self-harm, withdrawing, damaging/destroying property and many other socially inappropriate behaviours.

These behaviours of concern (otherwise known as challenging behaviours) are perceived to be disruptive and challenge the physical safety of the individual or others in the environment. Challenging behaviours can seriously limit or delay the individual's access to certain activities, services and experiences which can interfere with their social relationships, academic achievement, employment and inclusion in different settings, impacting the individual's ability to reach their full potential (Bailey & Wolery, 1992; Baumgart, Jeanne & Helmstetter, 1990, Emerson et. al, 1987; Gresham, 1985; Koegel, Koegel & Dunlap, 1996, and Stremel et. al, 2002).

Hence, developing emotional regulation skills is a key component of overcoming these behaviours and leading a healthy, fulfilling, and happy life.

What is the Rainbow of Emotions app?

The Rainbow of Emotions App: Teaching Emotional Regulation Skills Step by Step helps the individual using it (child, adolescent or adult) to identify, express and manage their emotions in a healthy, safe, and socially acceptable way. It is a web-based app that can be use on a PC, laptop, tablet or phone.

The app is made up of two main components:

Component 1 – Rainbow of Emotions

A rainbow is an arch made up of different coloured parallel lines that forms in the sky in special circumstances. Residing within each one of us is our very own Rainbow of Emotions, where each colour of the rainbow represents a different emotion. In the Rainbow of Emotions app you can set up two types of rainbows: one rainbow to represent physical emotions such as hungry, thirsty, tired or pain and another rainbow to represent negative emotions such as angry, worried, sad or jealous. For each rainbow the app helps the individual discover and design their own rainbow of emotions. You can choose the colour, picture, sound and name for each line in the rainbow to identify and express their emotions.

Component 2 – CHARGE toolkit

The next step is to help the individual manage their emotions by using tools in the CHARGE toolkit.

The CHARGE toolkit gives the individual the power to choose tools to manage and repair their emotions.

The letters in the CHARGE toolkit stand for the different emotional management categories:

- **C**hat tools
- **H**elpful thinking tools
- **A**musement tools
- **R**elaxation tools
- **G**ood routine tools
- **E**xercise tools



CHAT TOOLS

Tools that help the individual talk about their emotions in an appropriate manner by:

- Finding the right person (and/or pet) for emotional support,
- Communicating about what emotion they are experiencing,
- Talking and sorting out the problem.



HELPFUL THINKING TOOLS

Tools that help change thinking from unhelpful and unhealthy to more realistic, helpful and healthy ways of thinking by:

- Thinking in a balanced and realistic way about the situation,
- Responding with a calmer mind to the challenging situation,
- Thinking in ways that enable them to stay in control of their emotions.



AMUSEMENT TOOLS

Tools that help shift focus from the stressful situation to something fun by:

- Distracting themselves so that they stop focusing on the stressful situation,
- Improving their mood,
- Releasing their tension to better deal with the challenging situation.



RELAXATION TOOLS

Tools that help the individual calm down by:

- Preventing further escalation of the emotion,
- Regaining their sense of control,
- Returning them to a calmer state so that they can act and think in a controlled manner.



GOOD ROUTINE TOOLS

Tools that help the individual have a sense of structure, predictability, security and balance in their day by:

- Providing a planner containing information about the sequence of activities within a specific time period,
- Incorporating mood enhancing (pleasurable) activities, healthy lifestyle activities, choice making opportunities and daily goals,
- Information about any changes in their day.



EXERCISE TOOLS

Tools that help the individual discharge any energy by:

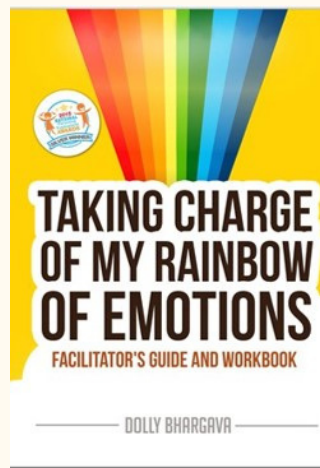
- Engaging in physical activities that suit their personality, preferences and fitness levels,
- Stimulating the production of endorphins (feel good hormones) to restore emotional equilibrium,
- Regaining composure.



The Rainbow of Emotions app allows you to personalise the CHARGE toolkit by including tools the individual already uses and find work for them, and adding select tools from the library provided in the app. The colour, picture, sound and name can be customised for each tool.

The app guides the individual to use both the Rainbow of Emotions and CHARGE Toolkit components systematically so that they can practice and learn the steps involved in emotional regulation, which allows them to improve and build emotional regulation skills.

To learn more about how to provide emotional coaching to the individual you can refer to Bhargava, D. (2013). Taking CHARGE of my Rainbow of Emotions. Shawnee Mission, KS: Autism Asperger Publishing.



[Get the Book](#)

Who can benefit from the Rainbow of Emotions app?

This app is useful for individuals with emotional regulation difficulties. The range of diagnostic labels includes but is not limited to:

- Aphasia (for example, Alzheimer's disease, acquired brain injury, stroke)
- Communication disorders (e.g. language disorder, stuttering and social/language disorder)
- Disruptive, impulse-control and conduct disorders (e.g. oppositional defiant disorder, conduct disorder, intermittent explosive disorder, kleptomania and pyromania)
- Mental health conditions (e.g. anxiety, depression and schizophrenia)
- Neurocognitive disorders (e.g. Alzheimer's disease, cerebrovascular disease, frontotemporal lobar degeneration, Lewy Body disease, Huntington's disease, traumatic brain injury (TBI), and substance-use-associated diseases)
- Neurodevelopmental disorders (e.g. Autism spectrum disorder, intellectual disability, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and Down syndrome)
- Trauma and stress related disorders

TOPIC 6

Who can set up the Rainbow of Emotions app?

Parents, educators, support staff and professionals play a critical role in helping the individual develop emotional regulation skills. The information in this booklet can be used to set up the app and coach the individual on how to identify, express and learn how to manage their emotions effectively. Please remember that the information contained in this booklet is not meant to be prescriptive and should be used with flexibility. When designing the app it is important to give the individual the opportunity to contribute ideas and suggestions in the set up and use of the app as appropriate. So please adapt, expand or modify the suggestions to suit the individual you are supporting.

TOPIC 7

What are the features of the Rainbow of Emotions App?

The Rainbow of Emotions App allows you to design the two components (Rainbow of Emotions and CHARGE Toolkit) to be as personalised as possible to your individual. This is to ensure that the app is set up to match your individual's skills, which will help increase your individual's connection, motivation and sense of success when using the app.

Component 1 – Rainbow of Emotions

The Rainbow of Emotions allows you to:

- Customise the number of lines in the rainbow (up to 10) so you can decide the number of emotions you want to introduce to the individual.
- Customise the label for each emotion based on the individual's preferences (e.g. angry could be labelled as mad, upset or frustrated).
- Customise the voice by recording the individual or another person verbally naming the emotion. This will allow the individual to verbalise what they are feeling (e.g. I'm feeling sad).
- Customise the image that represents the emotion by replacing the existing image with another image stored on your device.
- Select the colour that represents the emotion to change the colour of its line in the rainbow.



Component 2 – CHARGE Toolkit

The CHARGE toolkit allows you to:

- Select the number of tools in each of the different categories of emotional management tools (Chat tools, Helpful thinking tools, Amusement tools, Relaxation tools, Good routine tools and Exercise tools).
- Customise each tool image by replacing it with a photo or an image from your library.
- Customise the text used to label each tool.
- Customise the sound by recording a voice to narrate a message that the individual can use to express their preferred tool.
- Customise the number of tools (up to 20 per category).
- Create a visual schedule using the good routine tool that can be used to provide information about the sequence of activities that will occur within a specific time period. Choose whether to show or hide the time for each activity.

History

The app will record each time the individual uses it (i.e. identifies an emotion, selects a tool, and documents if it helped address the emotion). This information is stored in the app history, allowing you to:

- Filter and sort the user history table by any column by clicking the title of the column to sort by emotion, rating, date, time, tool category and outcome.
- Print selected history within a date range or save as a pdf that can be shared with the individual's support team.



USING THE APP

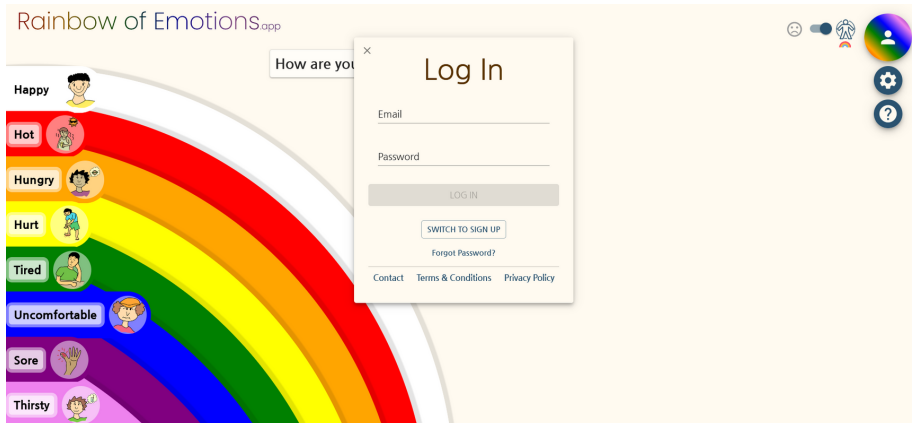
SECTION 2

How to use the Rainbow of Emotions App

The following section provides step by step instructions on how to access, setup and use the app.

Logging into the app

To use the app, visit rainbowofemotions.app and sign in or sign up.



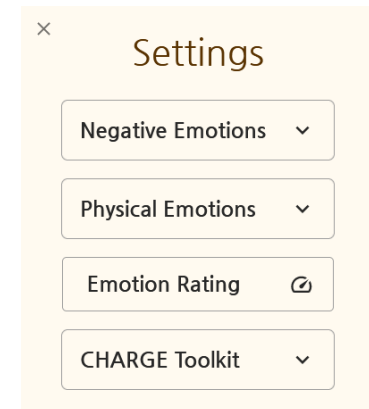
Setting up the app

Setting up the Rainbows

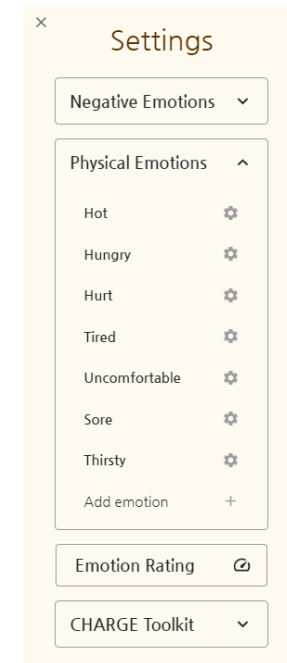
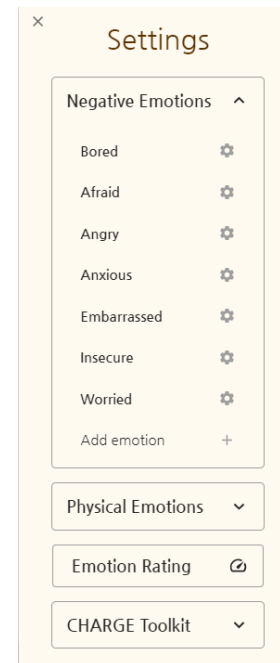
- Click on the settings icon on the right-hand side of the screen



- Select the emotions you would like to set for i.e. rainbow of negative emotions or rainbow of physical emotions.



- For the selected rainbow, go through each of the listed emotions and click on 'add emotion' to go through the library.



- Once you have selected the emotions you would like to include, click on the settings symbol ⚙️ next to each emotion. You can choose none, some or all of these features mentioned below to personalise the emotion as appropriate.

×


Update Emotion

Title

Tired

Color:

Image:



REMOVE IMAGE

×

Audio:

Start recording

🎤

SAVE

💾

DELETE EMOTION

🗑️

Replace the label representing the emotion with a name based on the individual's preference.

Change the colour of the line of the rainbow based on the individual's preference.

Replace image of the emotion with an image based on the individual's preference

Remove the image so only the text (emotion name) appears in the rainbow line

Record a voice naming the emotion

Save changes

Delete emotion if you do not want to include it in the rainbow

Please note that all the emotions except 'happy' can be edited as shown to the left. The 'happy' emotion label cannot be changed, but you can change the colour and record audio. This is to ensure there is a line in the rainbow dedicated to a positive emotion and that the individual knows that they can use the rainbow to express negative, physical but also positive emotions.

- (Optional) Click on 'Emotion Rating' to set a rating scale (e.g. 1 → 3; 1→5; 1→10). This allows you to rate the intensity of the selected emotion.

×

Settings

Negative Emotions

▼

Physical Emotions

▲

Hot

⚙️

Emotion rating

?

☒

Include emotion rating

Max Rating

3

SAVE

💾

Thirsty

⚙️

Add emotion

+

Emotion Rating

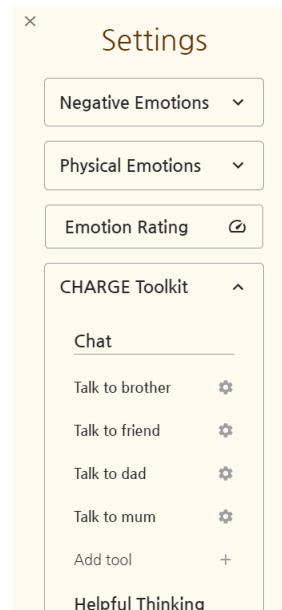
🔗

CHARGE Toolkit

▼


Setting up the CHARGE toolkit

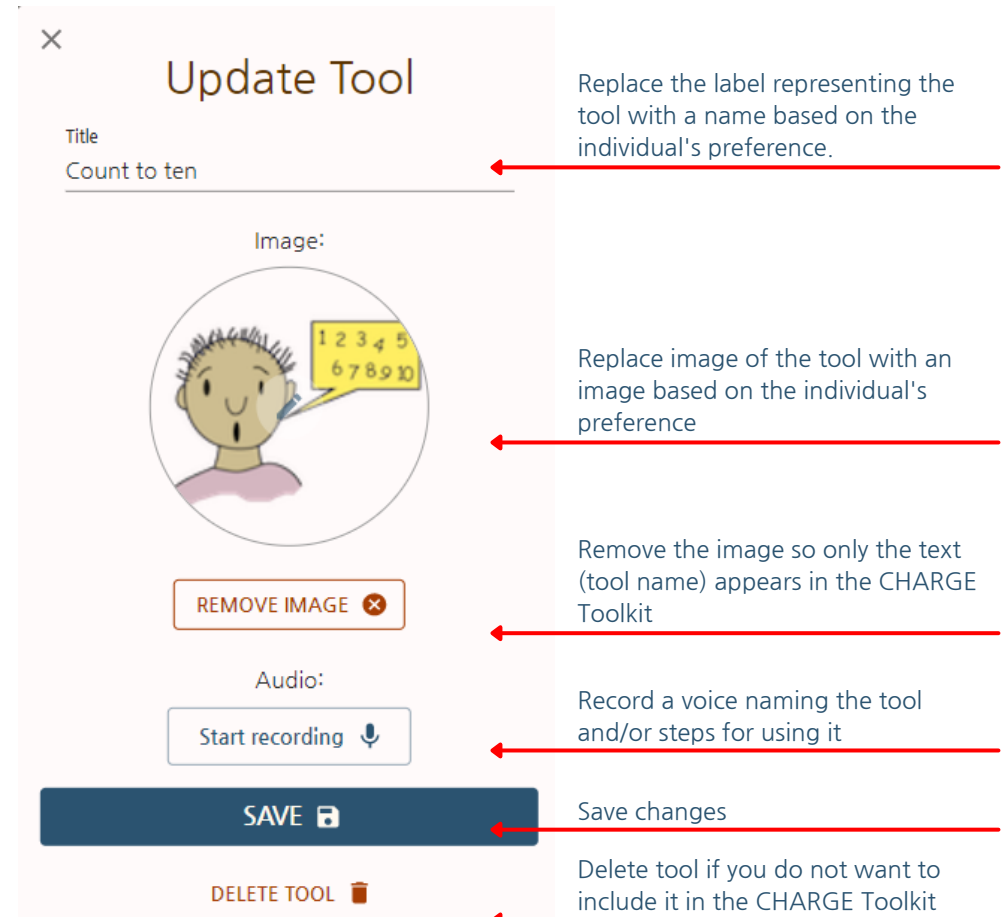
- Click on CHARGE Toolkit
- Consider which emotional management category (i.e. Chat, Helpful thinking, Amusement, Relaxation, Good Routine and Exercise tools) would be useful for the individual. For each of the identified categories consider the listed tools in the library by clicking on 'Add tool'. You can have up to 20 tools in each category.







Below are some tips for creating tools:

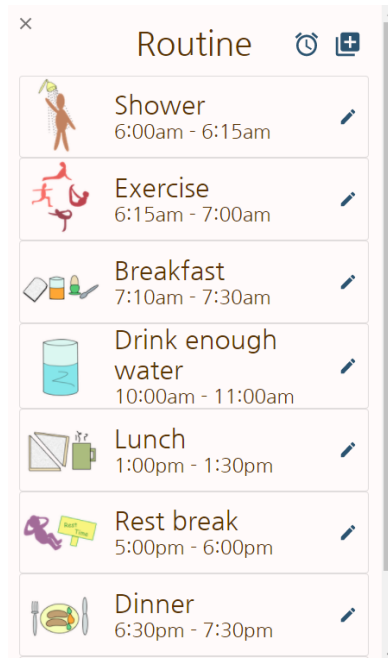
- Identify tools the individual is already using.
- Identify other CHARGE tools provided in the app that could be useful with the individual.
- Work with the individual to name the tool, identify what it looks like (e.g. replace the provided image with a photo or another image from your device) and record audio (narrating how to use the tool).
- Discuss how it will be used.
- Review the effectiveness of tools regularly. The individual's emotional needs may change over time, so some tools may need to be deleted, modified or added.
- Remember to coach the individual to learn how to use the tools to repair and fix their emotions.

- Click on the settings icon  next to each tool to personalise the tools as appropriate.



- The Good Routine tool is displayed as a schedule. You can use the schedule to provide information about the sequence of activities that will occur within a specific time period.

- Click on  to look at more activities available in the library.
- Click on  to edit the text, time and image used to represent the activity in the schedule.
- Click on  to show the time or  to hide the time.



The app has been set up and is now ready to be used.

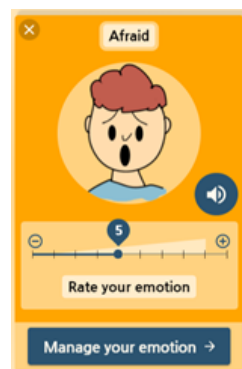
Teaching with the App



- After logging into the app, the individual can select the rainbow i.e. rainbow of physical emotions or rainbow of negative emotions by clicking on the sad icon or the body icon .

- The individual then can select the emotion by clicking on the image and/or text in the rainbow line. To express the emotion they can click on the audio icon (if audio was recorded) to express the emotion.

- The individual can then rate the emotion by selecting the matching number.



- The individual can then click on 'Manage your emotion'.
- The individual can then click on a tool category from the CHARGE toolkit.

CHARGE toolkit

Choose your emotional management tool, Dolly Bhargava



Tap a tool to select

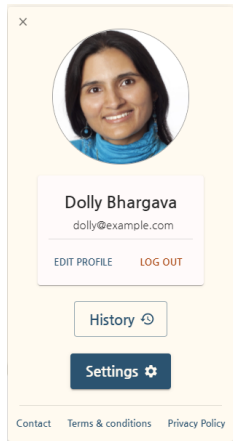
- The individual selects a tool from that category.
- The individuals uses the tool.
- The individual then rates how happy they feel after using the tool.
- If the emotion has not been resolved then the user can go back and identify another tool they can use to resolve their emotion.

App history

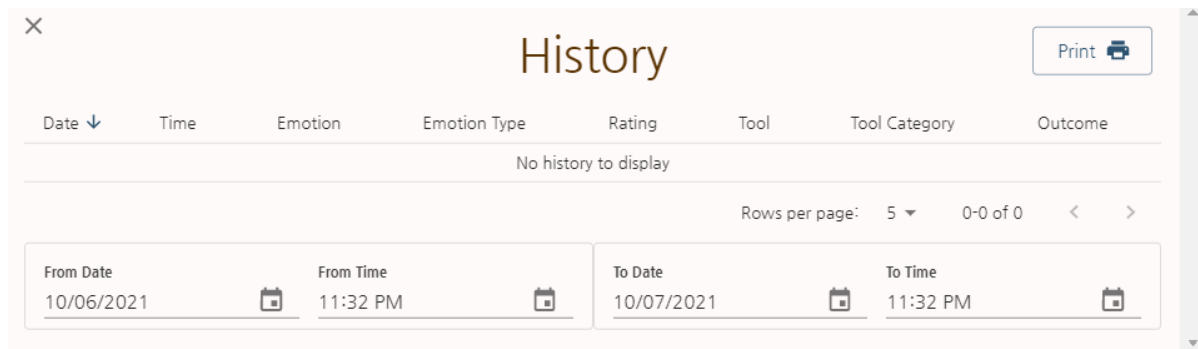
- To view history in the app, click on the profile icon



- Select 'History'



- Filter the user history table and sort the information by clicking on the arrow keys according to emotion, rating, date, time, tool category and outcome. The history can be printed or saved as a pdf of selected history within a date range that can be shared with the individual's support team.





CONCLUSION

SECTION 3

Conclusion

Remember that it's never too late to promote positive change in your individual and help them develop crucial emotional regulation skills. Our emotions and reactions are not set in concrete. We have a choice about how we think and react to challenging situations. Between any event and a response, there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our emotional response. In choosing effective emotional responses lies our growth and our freedom (Frankl, 2000). The Rainbow of Emotions app can assist the individual to develop these crucial emotional management skills.

References

- Bailey, D.B., Wolery, M. (1992) Teaching infants and preschoolers with disabilities. New York: MacMillan.
- Baumgart, D., Jeanne, J. & Helmstetter, E. (1990). Augmentative and alternative communication systems for persons with moderate and severe disabilities. Baltimore : P.H. Brookes Pub. Co.
- Blair, C., & Diamond, A. (2008). Biological processes in prevention and intervention: The promotion of self-regulation as a means of preventing school failure. In Development and Psychopathology, 20: pages 899-911.
- Childer, D. L. & Rozman, D. (2006). Transforming anxiety: The heart math solution for overcoming fear and worry and creating serenity. Canada: New Harbinger Publications.
- Emerson, E., Barrett, S., Bell, C., Cummings, R., McCool, C., Toogood, A. & Mansell, J., (1987). Developing services for people with severe learning difficulties and challenging behaviour: Report of the early work of the Special Development Team in Kent' cited in <http://www.minervation.com/ld/challenging/introduction.html> Accessed on 12th May 2013.
- Frankl, V. E. (2000). Man's search for meaning. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Gresham, F.M. (1985). Behaviour disordered assessment: conceptual, definitional and practical considerations. School Psychology Review, 14: pages 495-509.
- Koegel, L. K., Koegel, R. L., & Dunlap, G. (1996). Positive behavioural support: including people with difficult behaviour in the community. Baltimore: P.H. Brookes.
- Kopp, C.B. (1982). Antecedents of Self-Regulation: A Developmental Perspective. In Developmental Psychology. 18: pages 199-214.
- Stremel, K., Bixler, B., Morgan, S. & Layton, K. (2002). Communication fact sheets for parents. Monmouth, Or. : The National Technical Assistance Consortium for Children and Young Adults Who are Deaf-Blind.