

5 ONLINE RESOURCES



**SOMETHINGNEW**

When you request a chat on this app, a trained counsellor, social worker or psychologist will take up your chat within a few minutes. The app, developed by social service professionals Keith Lee (above left) and Jeremy Ho (above right), is accessible to anyone with a local phone number. A one-time password is sent to the user's mobile number to ensure protection and privacy. Upon signing up, each user is allowed two free chats of up to 25

minutes a day. Both the user and practitioner remain anonymous and use nicknames. The practitioners are from a recognised social service organisation in Singapore and their qualifications can be seen within their profiles in the chat. Their primary role is to provide assurance, empathy and facilitate a solution to move forward. If the situation warrants a physical meeting with a psychologist or medical professional, they will connect the user by sharing contacts of resources available.

**SAFE SPACE**



Digital mental healthcare provider Safe Space connects users to clinically trained counsellors and coaches. It focuses on five pillars of support – clinical therapy, life coaching, education, human resources consultancy and research. Singaporean founder and chief executive Antoinette Renee Patterson (left), 34, launched the platform in March 2019 after she faced problems finding a therapist to help her manage work stress in her job as an advertising team leader. She realised there was a need for a private and safe space for people dealing with mental health conditions and grappling with the stigma surrounding mental health in Asian society. Safe Space, she says, is an evidence-based holistic mental wellness platform for individuals and companies, and aims to reduce mental health-related work absence, increases retention and productivity. **Info:** Go to safespace.sg or download the Safe Space Counselling mobile app



**ACCESET**

Launched in June 2020, this Web-based platform comprises three parties: seeker, befriender and moderator. A seeker (or user) posts an anonymous e-letter on the app for free, which a befriender replies to. Before the reply is sent out, a moderator vets the content. This letter-writing feature serves as a "safe space" for youth to

confide their problems anonymously to a trained befriender who provides emotional support and encourages meaningful conversations, says founder and chief executive Matt Oon, 29. He started Acceset – a portmanteau of the words accept and reset – in 2015 to empower users to accept guidance and reset their lives. "The approach to mental healthcare is based on the idea that we are

all important and we matter," says the sociology graduate from Singapore Management University. Acceset recently concluded user trials with the National University of Singapore's N.I Institute for Health, a healthcare research and development unit. It seeks to assess the impact of text-based peer support among university students and the effect on their well-being. **Info:** acceset.com



Acceset (left), founded by Mr Matt Oon (above), allows users to post anonymous letters on the app, to which a befriender will reply.

**WYSA**

When the Ministry of Health Office for Healthcare Transformation joined hands with the Ministry of Social and Family Development, National Council of Social Service and Institute of Mental Health to launch mindline.sg in 2020, it collaborated with India-based mental health chatbot Wysa to offer free chat services on the website. Mindline.sg is designed as a self-care and whole-of-person well-being management platform for the pandemic and beyond. The emotionally intelligent Wysa was launched in January 2017 by Indian husband-and-wife team, Ramakant Vempati and Jo Aggarwal. It claims to lend an empathetic ear, use natural language processing to understand and classify conversations, and then respond with compassionate solutions from its digital resources provided by professional therapists. Wysa generates revenue by licensing its AI technology to enterprises, global insurers and healthcare providers. **Info:** Go to mindline.sg or download the Wysa mobile app

**WOEBOT**

This chatbot calls itself "your automated friend and life coach" and offers a wealth of online resources such as feel-good content and anecdotes. It also admits that it is "not for everyone" and that some users may be better served making an appointment with a human therapist. Founded in 2017 by a team of psychologists from Stanford University in the United States, the free chatbot, which looks like a stylised version of E.T. – the titular alien character in Steven Spielberg's 1982 film – is powered with state-of-the-art AI healthcare software. It leverages mental wellness approaches such as cognitive behavioural therapy, a way of talking to the app's user that helps in dealing with anxiety and depression. Through AI and neuro-linguistic programming, Woebot also closely monitors the user's moods and needs, and curates videos and other thoughtful tools for the user. **PHOTOS:** SOMETHINGNEW, ACCESET, SAFE SPACE