

Therapist’s Opinions of TAO Connect Online Therapy Tools

Executive Summary

TAO Connect asks for feedback from professionals using the product every year. The survey is designed to collect information about how TAO is used, what works well, and any improvements that are desired. TAO’s tools and services receive consistently high approval ratings. TAO can be, and usually is, used as an adjunct to traditional therapy. Therapists who have used TAO with four or more clients find that there are benefits to using an online component. Therapists can save time by using TAO as psychoeducational material. Many therapists appreciate the quality of the resources in TAO. Moreover, therapists believe TAO is convenient to their clients, easy for them to understand, and beneficial to treatment.

Key findings:

- Therapists save time by using TAO.
- Over 90% of therapists are satisfied or extremely satisfied with TAO’s Tools and Services.
- Therapists are impressed by TAO’s educational materials, client convenience, and use as an adjunct to therapy.
- Therapists are likely to recommend TAO to their clients with anxiety or depression and to other therapists.

“It provides hands on tools that clients can walk away with from session 1.”

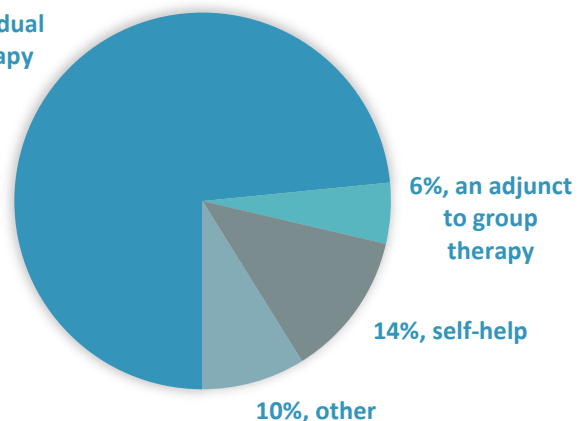
“The modules are brief yet packed with relevant information and examples.”

Survey

This is the third annual survey of therapists using TAO. The survey asked respondents for information regarding their use of TAO with clients, the aspects of the program they like and use often, and areas for development to improve their experience using TAO. The survey was open from June 20th – July 6th, 2017 and generated 169 responses.

TAO IS USED AS:

83%, an adjunct to individual therapy



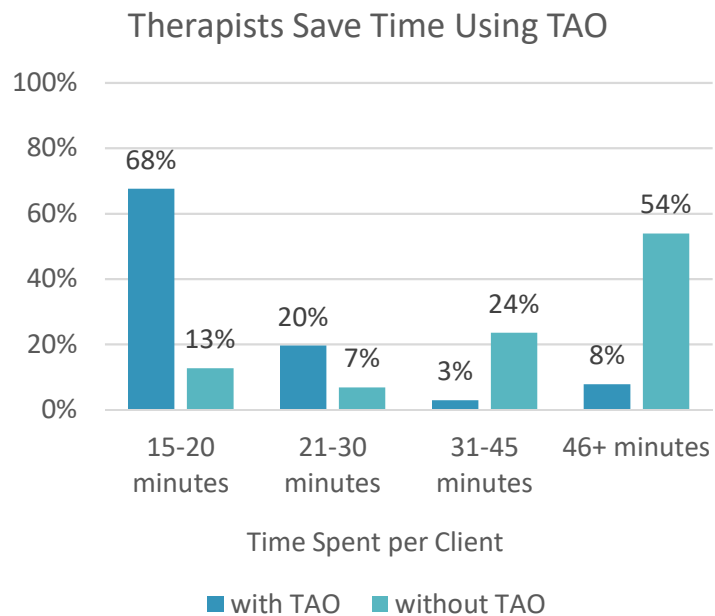
On average, respondents have used TAO with 16 clients (range 0 – 50). With some overlap, 83% of therapists use TAO as an adjunct to individual therapy, 14% use TAO as a standalone self-help option, and 6% use TAO as an adjunct to group therapy, with 10% reporting some other use such as “prevention” or “videoconferencing”.

Time Spent per Client

The following data come from 102 therapists who reported working with four or more clients using TAO. When using TAO, therapists tend to spend less time in sessions with clients. When using TAO, 68% of therapists report spending just 15-20 minutes in session with their clients; without TAO 54% of therapists report spending over 45 minutes in session with their clients. This trend indicates hours of potential time savings for therapists as well as treatment improvement for their clients who are interested in using an online adjunct for therapy.

“[It’s a] convenient way to give more psychoeducation and skills to clients without taking away time in session.”

“The client can get more work done in between sessions and we can make therapeutic progress more quickly when we meet.”



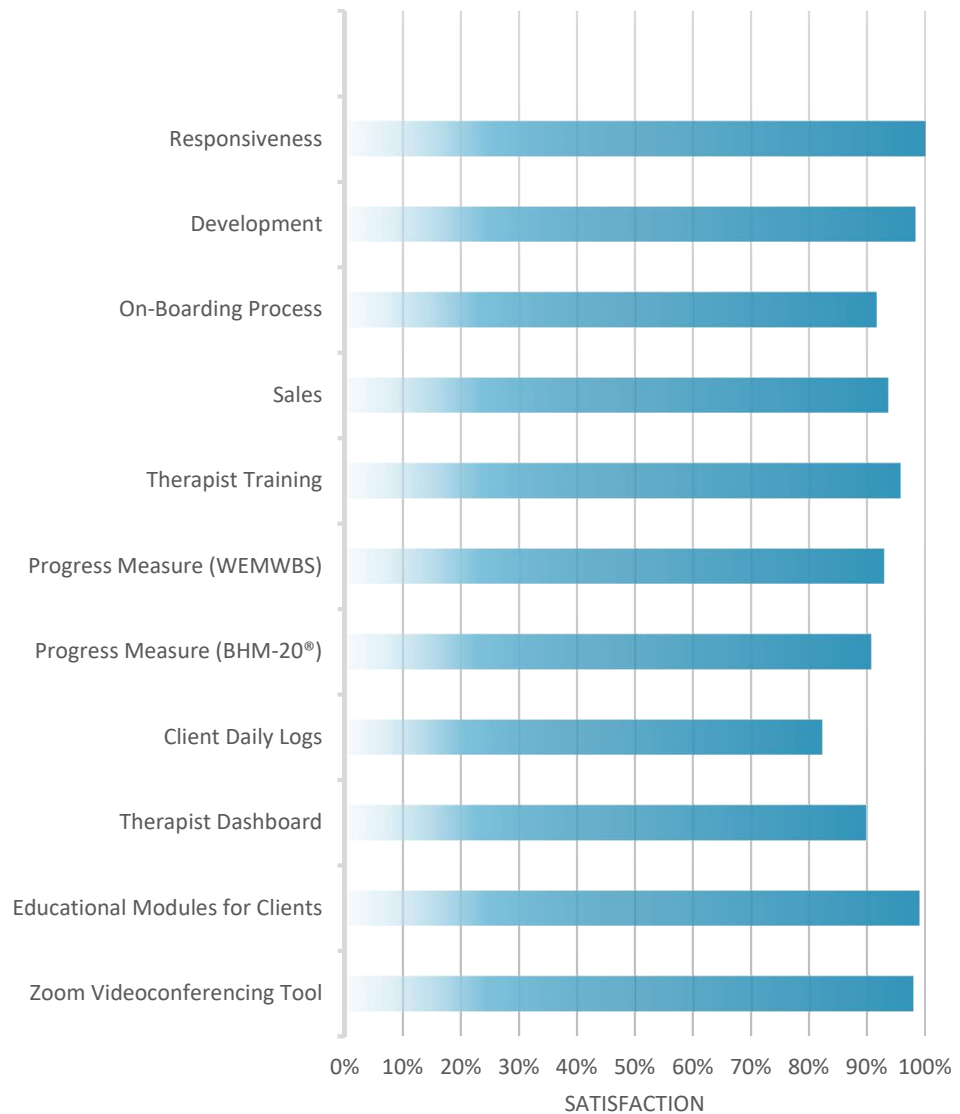
That is not to say that the time spent with the client in session is unimportant. In fact, many therapists consider their sessions more efficient when using TAO for psychoeducation and homework. In their responses, many therapists commented that TAO provides their clients with psychoeducation on their own time, freeing up time in-session for the therapist to address the clients’ individual needs. When TAO is assigned as homework, time in sessions can also be used to discuss which modules and activities the client completed, answer any questions the client may have, and evaluate what is working for the client.

Both the reduced time in session and the more efficient use of that time can benefit mental health. Therapists may see more clients or have more time for other necessary duties without reducing the quality of their clients’ treatments. Clients may improve more quickly when they can review material on their own and sessions are focused on their individual concerns.

TAO Tools and Services

TAO Tools and Services get consistently high marks. 98% of therapists are satisfied with the videoconferencing tool provided in TAO and the educational modules received 99% approval. 90% of therapists are satisfied with the Therapist Dashboard and 82% are satisfied with client daily logs. Of the two progress measures provided in TAO, the Behavioral Health Measure 20 received 91% approval and the WEMWBS received 93%.

TAO Services all received satisfaction ratings from 92% (on-boarding process) to 100% (responsiveness). Technical support was rated satisfactory by 98% of therapists. Therapist training was considered satisfactory by 96% of therapists. Sales received 94% approval and development received 98% approval.



What Therapists Like About TAO

As an Adjunct to Individual Therapy

Respondents like to use TAO as an adjunct to individual in-person or videoconferencing therapy sessions. As detailed above, therapists tend to save time by using TAO with their clients. A repeating theme in therapists' comments was that they appreciate having TAO for psychoeducation so that more time during sessions can be used to address the client's individual needs. This not only saves the therapist time, but aids the client's personal wellbeing.

Many therapists like using TAO's modules as homework, then using part of the session to discuss the client's progress. In sum, therapists appreciate that clients have structured material to reinforce concepts and keep clients engaged between sessions.

“Students are able to feel empowered when they can track their own progress and see how far they've come. I simply have to reinforce the new coping skills that promote healthy well-being and my clients are on their way to a better lifestyle.”

Quality of Educational Materials

Most likely leading to the wide use of TAO as an adjunct to therapy, respondents believe the material presented in TAO's educational modules, videos, and interactive activities is of good quality. Therapists know they have trusted material to reference clients to whether as an adjunct to therapy or as a primary, self-help treatment.

“I like that the modules are easy to understand and a fast way for clients to gather relevant information regarding their presenting concerns”

Considering the amount of mental health information and material freely available on the internet, this is an important factor. Research has shown that university students (Chan et al. 2016) are concerned about the quality of information online and whether they will be able to find the information they need. Clients should feel more comfortable knowing that the resources they are using have been approved by their therapist and assigned to them personally.

Convenience for Clients

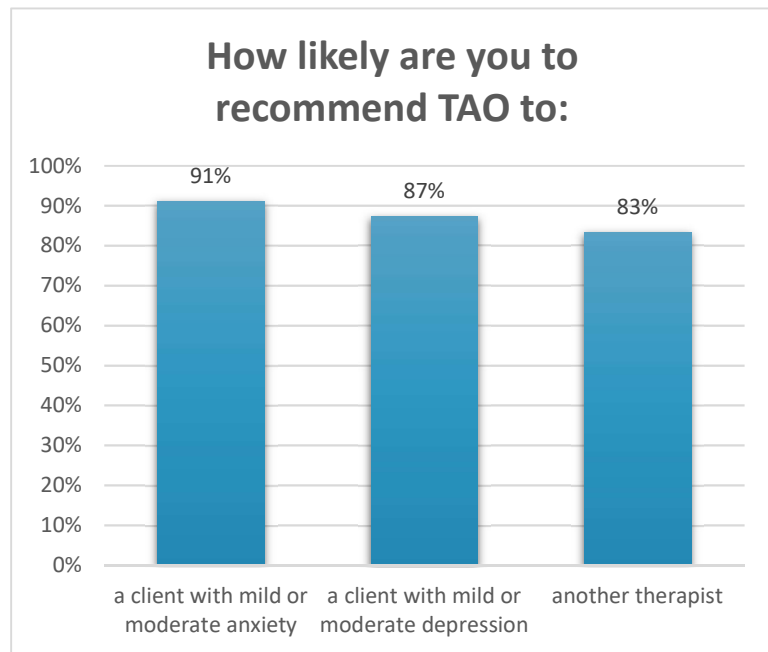
The third major theme is respondents believe that TAO is convenient to their clients, especially those who are enrolled in university courses or who have busy schedules. TAO can be accessed online at any time, allowing clients to practice techniques and revisit concepts without having to request an appointment.

“It's convenient, it's accessible from pretty much anywhere, it allows the client to keep working on things between sessions.”

TAO Comes Recommended

Therapists who use TAO are highly likely to recommend TAO to clients with mild or moderate anxiety (91%) and mild or moderate depression (87%), and are also likely to recommend TAO to another therapist (83%).

We expect there will be a high likelihood of therapists recommending TAO to clients with other psychological disorders as there have been requests for treatments focusing on psychological disorders not yet covered by TAO.



Next Steps

New Treatments

New treatments such as the recently released Substance Abuse Treatment are continuously being developed and added to TAO to meet the needs of therapists and their clients.

Mobile App

In response to many requests for a mobile version of TAO, we plan to release practice tools such as the Mind Elevator, mindfulness library, and practice logs on mobile apps for iOS and android. This will make TAO tools even more convenient for clients on-the-go.

Individualized Messaging

To support clients and keep them engaged with their treatment, we are creating individualized and customized messaging that encourages, reinforces, and helps clients identify best next steps. Clients will receive reminders, encouragement, and suggestions via these messages through TAO.

Searchable Index

As the number of tools, modules, and educational material in TAO have increased, therapists have a greater need for TAO to create a searchable index of therapy materials. This tool will allow therapists to more quickly and easily access the information and tools they need.

References

Chan, J. K., Farrer, L. M., Gulliver, A., Bennett, K., & Griffiths, K. M. (2016). University students' views on the perceived benefits and drawbacks of seeking help for mental health problems on the Internet: a qualitative study. *Journal of Medical Internet Research Human Factors*, 3(1).