**Saving Lives Through Tele-Therapy**

For people living with mental illnesses, like anxiety or depression, it is often not easy to make a trip to a therapist’s office to ask for help. When battling these issues, leaving the house in itself can be a difficult chore, and in some cases, even becomes physically impossible.

Adding to the problem is society’s continued stigmatization and growing desensitization to mental health issues. We casually throw around terms like “OCD” or “paranoid” in everyday language, belittling the serious issues faced by those around us who are struggling. Because of this attitude, warning signs and calls for help are often overlooked or ignored. Many of those facing mental health challenges aren’t comfortable speaking about them even with their closest friends or family, because even today, many people aren’t comfortable discussing mental illness and may look down upon the person who speaks out about their issues.

But to start on a path to improving their quality of life, it is critically important those in this situation seek help from qualified and licensed professionals.

The good news is that with the advancements in technology, smartphones can now be used as an extremely helpful tool for therapy. While it might not be the best fit for everyone, quality tele-therapy done right is an invaluable asset for those struggling with mental illness and unable to participate in or uncomfortable with a traditional office setting.

New offerings like the just-launched [LARKR](http://larkr.com/) app are bringing together the best of both worlds with on-demand video talk-therapy. Through such platforms, patients still have the meaningful face-to-face interaction with their therapist, but the service can be instantly accessed from anywhere, providing treatment whenever and wherever it’s needed.

Just imagine the dramatic difference this can make for those in rural areas without local access to therapists; Or for women with post-partum depression unable to leave their homes; Or for those so overwhelmed by PTSD that they cannot get out of bed. Now, with tele-therapy, the mental health professional comes right in the palm of their hands.

Studies even show that most teens and Millennials, among the most at-risk for depression and other serious mental illnesses, prefer video calls over other forms of communication. Bringing help to the platform where they’re most comfortable has the potential to drastically increase the number of adolescents willing to seek the help they need, and ultimately, to save countless lives.

Of course, there is certainly still a place today for traditional, in-office therapy, but we should open our minds to new solutions that can provide help to the 30 million people in the U.S. alone who are currently going without needed treatment. Mental illness can take over a person’s life, so it is critical that we adapt with the latest communications preferences and utilize modern technology to employ all potential paths to providing needed care.