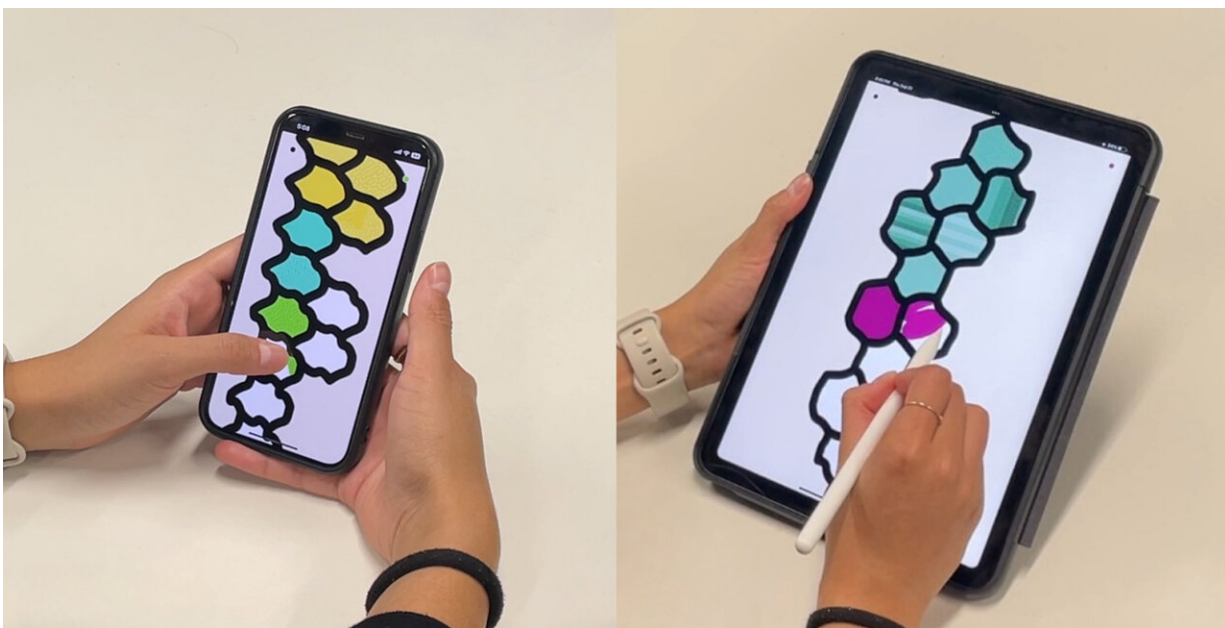


App helps users transition from doom-scrolling to mindfulness

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An infinite scroll abstract coloring app for mindfulness. Credit: University of Waterloo

Do you find yourself doom-scrolling, or spending more time than you should consuming negative news on the internet and social media and want to stop? Well, there's now an app for that.

Researchers from the University of Waterloo have created [Mindful Scroll](#), a [mobile app](#) that helps users transition from doom-scrolling to

adding mindfulness into their daily routines.

The [research](#), "[Mindful Scroll; An Infinite Scroll Abstract Coloring App for Mindfulness](#)," was published in *Proceedings of the CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*.

In Mindful Scroll, users fill in endlessly scrolling patterns of geometric shapes using predetermined, soothing color palettes. During a study that tested the app, participants found it reduced their anxiety and increased their mindfulness.

"So many of us struggle with endlessly, mindlessly scrolling using [social media](#) apps like TikTok, Instagram, and Twitter," said Saralin Zassman, first author of the study and a recent Computer Science master's graduate who now works with internationally renowned media artist Rafael Lozano-Hemmer.

"Mindful Scroll unites art and computer science to help turn that scrolling into something healthier."

The researchers drew on existing research into the effects of adult coloring books and other creative exercises to create an easily accessible mindfulness tool.

Unlike a coloring book, however, the app's patterns appear and then disappear soon after being colored, prompting users to focus on their current actions instead of a larger pattern or accomplishment. The team also coded the app's brush to grow smaller if users attempt to color quickly, encouraging them to slow down and be present.

They conducted a test of the app where 28 participants used the app for 10 minutes a day over a five-day period. All study participants reported that they would use the app again and felt more mindful and less anxious

after using it.

"It's hard for people to build good mindfulness habits without ease and consistency," said Daniel Vogel, a Computer Science professor specializing in [human-computer interaction](#). "This technology makes mindfulness easier to practice, helping to turn a negative behavior like doom-scrolling into a positive one."

More information: Saralin Zassman et al, Mindful Scroll: An Infinite Scroll Abstract Colouring App for Mindfulness, *Proceedings of the CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (2024). [DOI: 10.1145/3613904.3642729](#)

Provided by University of Waterloo

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