



Sōsh™ Mobile App Walkthru Guide

Welcome to Sōsh. Click on the Sōsh app icon on your device to begin.

You will be welcomed by the Splash Screen as the app loads.

When you first begin, you will see the Sōsh Home Page that contains the Sōsh logo in the center surrounded by the “**5 R’s**” essential to social skills development: **Relate, Relax, Reason, Regulate** and **Recognize**. You can press any of the buttons you see on this page to navigate to the desired area of the Sōsh application.

The center “**S**” button directs you to the Sōsh **Daily Navigation Page**. This is where you will spend most of your time and is the easiest way to navigate the application.

When using the application for the first time, it is recommended that you take a moment to complete the **Questionnaire**. This is found toward the bottom of the Sōsh **Daily Navigation Page**.

Sōsh Toolbar

The **Toolbar** is located throughout the Sōsh mobile app at the bottom of each page.

The Home Icon can be pressed to quickly navigate to the Home screen which shows all 5 Main Categories (the “**5 R’s**”) and the Sōsh logo in the center.

The Sōsh Icon takes you immediately to the Sōsh **Daily Navigation Page** from anywhere within the application.

The **MySosh.com** icon allows you to open the mysosh.com website and Members Only access (that is included with purchase of the application). The only way to register for access to the website is by pressing this button on the app. This area is useful for connecting with other people and reading the latest tips and suggestions from the community of people using the app.

The **Archive** icon allows you to enter the Archive section of the application. As you navigate through the application you will see various pages that allow you to Save to Archive (represented by a file folder icon in top right corner of screen). When you select this option, your data from that page will be saved to the Archive for later review (organized by storage date and with the option to personalize the title of the Archive folder). If you choose to, you can also email any of this saved information from within the Archive. This option is especially useful if you need to send information to parents, teachers, therapists, etc. It is also useful to save your information to review your progress and accomplishments at a later time.

Note: Any data you enter into the Sōsh app is your private information stored only on your device and is not communicated outside of the app unless you choose to email or share it. The app does not communicate with any internet servers. Instead all data is stored locally on your specific device until you delete it. Thus, pressing the Archive button simply catalogs your data within the app for your organization and personal review at your convenience.

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The **Stress** balloon icon is useful to illustrate and document your stress level throughout the day. Each time you experience a moment of stress that you want to track, you can quickly open this page and inflate the balloon to represent your stress. Keep an eye on your stress level, though because too much stress will make the balloon pop!

Sōsh Daily Navigation Page

Questionnaire

The Questionnaire helps to get you started by identifying what the app can do for you. Once there, you will see a list of Yes/No questions related to social skills. We recommend you answer “Yes” if the item applies to you at least 4-5 days per week. Indicate “No” if the item applies to you less than 4 days per week. Answering “Yes” to any question (i.e., that you are experiencing some difficulty in that area) will reveal the portion of the Sōsh application that can help you improve your skills in that area. You can click on the link that is revealed with a “Yes” response to instantly navigate to that area of the application. Press the “Back” arrow to return to the Questionnaire or use the Sōsh button in the toolbar at the bottom of every page to return to the Sōsh Daily Navigation Page.

As you are reading questions on the Questionnaire, you can scroll down the page with a vertical finger swipe to reveal additional questions. Feel free to revisit the Questionnaire after you have improved various social skills to reevaluate your performance and improvement.

Note to parents/caregivers: If your child is answering “Yes” to most questions, he or she may begin to feel frustrated that there are many areas to work on. We suggest you stop and work on the Questionnaire a little at a time in this case. Remind the child that this app will help improve any areas of difficulty so that the answer to these questions will eventually be “No!”

Journal

The Journal is an integral component of the Sōsh application. Although you are free to use it as you wish, the Journal is designed for daily self check-ins and reflections on progress. The blank content fields can be answered by pressing in each empty field and typing the desired response. There is also an audio record option in the event that you would prefer not to type. You can simply press the microphone icon in the upper right portion of the page and record any thoughts or answer the questions listed. This audio recording will then be stored on the Journal page (until you change it) and in the Media Library (which can be accessed by pressing “Media Library” in the Sōsh Daily Navigation Page). You can press the email button at the bottom of the screen and send your Journal entry (with optional feature to attach audio recording) to anyone you wish. The Save to Archive button in the top right of the page stores your responses to the Journal indefinitely as you continue to enter new information on various days.

Goals

Goal setting is an important aspect of any effective social skills training program. These goals may be related to social interaction (e.g., “Talk to one person today”) or to another aspect of your life (e.g., “Only drink one cup of coffee per day”). The Sōsh app provides you with three fields to enter your goals. Press the “info” icon in the top right corner of the page to receive a reminder of how to write appropriate goals. If you are out of ideas for goals, the app provides you with a dropdown menu with some things to work on. You can also press the reminder button next to each goal to set a daily, weekly, or monthly reminder. The app will remind you at the set frequency while you are using the app. When a goal is completed, tap on the blank box next to the goal to check it off. You might even be applauded for your progress!

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To Do

Many of us are more productive when we create a To Do list. It feels good to be able to check off that a task has been completed. The To Do page provides six fields to enter your list. You can add an additional task by pressing the “+” button in the top right corner of the page. If you are more visually oriented, there is an option to take a picture of the task. Some children prefer to see a picture of a toothbrush or even themselves brushing their teeth instead of reading it on their list. Push and hold any pictures you add to your list to enlarge the picture on the screen for easier viewing. A sound indicates completion each time you check off an item from your list. You may want to create your list for an entire day of tasks, a portion of a day, or use it to break down a single task into manageable steps. Once you have created and/or completed your list, you can press the Archive button in the top right corner of the page to save your activity for that day.

Rate

This is a useful tool to quickly quantify your performance, an event, or a situation. For example, you could rate your level of anger while feeling upset. You can simply touch the stars to indicate your level of anger (e.g., 1 star = A Little Angry; 5 Stars = Very Angry). You could also rate your school day (e.g., 1 Star = Bad Day; 5 Stars = Good Day). This feature is an important part of the Daily Navigation page given that social skills research cites the need to be able to quantify or measure progress or performance toward goals. You will use this feature for a variety of situations in your everyday life.

Feedback

This page is a place for observations by peers, friends, parents, teachers of your behavior, skill set, or progress. This is a technological alternative to a notebook-style back and forth book that allows a teacher, for example, to quickly type or audio record a few comments about a student on a particular day. The teacher can then send that information along via email (before the student has even left school for the day) or Archive the data for later review and sharing. Individuals conducting social skills groups may find this feature especially useful to use at the end of each group. Participants can be encouraged to share feedback with each other via the app, or the group leader(s) can provide notes and quickly send these to each member’s family via email.

Favorites

The Sōsh mobile app contains a substantial amount of strategies, exercises, and information to improve social skills (over 60 pages in all). We understand that improving social skills is hard enough as it is, let alone trying to sift through pages of information. The Favorites feature of the Sōsh Daily Navigation Page allows you to select the pages of the app you visit most, and quickly access these pages without having to navigate through the pathways of the application.

Media Library

The Sōsh app contains a variety of exercises and strategies that incorporate the use of video, still photography, and audio recording. This data can be stored in the Media Library of the Daily Navigation Page. The Media Library allows you to search your photos, audio, and video stored throughout the app. It also serves as a backup for your media files. Thus, if you decide to delete a file from a specific page in the app, you can always access the file again in the Media Library.

Note: All content you create and store within the Sōsh app remains stored only on your device and is not accessible by anyone other than the device owner/user unless you choose to email or send the data elsewhere.

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Relate (Connect with Others)

What Did That Mean?

Some individuals with social skills difficulties interpret conversations literally, which creates confusion. This is especially the case with figures of speech or idioms. Sōsh has teamed up with www.UsingEnglish.com to incorporate their extensive list of idioms and their meanings into the Sōsh mobile application. If you hear an expression or phrase that is confusing, you can quickly type it into the search bar to find the phrase and further understand its meaning. These are also a lot of fun to review outside of conversations to develop your conversational skills.

First Impressions

How often do you meet someone new and then forget their name later or perhaps you were nervous and forget what you discussed with them? Further, you may focus more on your own side of the conversation. This section of Sōsh encourages you to pay attention and document certain categories (i.e., how you know the person, the person's interests, and something you discussed). This way, the next time you see this person, you can quickly access their information as one of your "friend files." This portion of the app also incorporates Bump technology so that individuals who use the Bump app can share their contact info and photo, in a very fun way, if they choose.

Common Ground

We are all guilty of talking about ourselves too much at one time or another. Individuals experiencing social skills difficulty may talk extensively about their own interests but fail to pay attention to the interests of others. Further, they may not know how to join in a conversation about a topic of little personal interest or knowledge. The "Mine" tab of Common Ground asks you to list your current set of interests. The "Other" tab asks you to enter topics that you hear others discussing. This serves as a quick reference to illustrate similarities and differences in topics of interest and possibly discussion. More importantly, information entered in the "Other" field is linked to Google search so that you can quickly access information on a topic that you may know little about. Simply double tap on the topic you have entered (after hearing others discuss it), and you have access to information to aid you in beginning a conversation of this topic.

Out and About

Get Out!

We sometimes allow our feelings about the "What ifs" to interfere with our interest or desire to get out of the house or attend a social activity. We don't *feel* like going, so we stay home. This strategy of Sōsh is a reminder to put your Behavior before the Mood. You have to go through the motions and go to the social event before you can decide whether or not you like it or want to be there. You will see some sample text to guide you, but you are encouraged to add your own experiences to help you get out and be with others; thereby making progress.

Explore

This incorporates features of the popular app Foursquare to encourage you to explore your community. Consistent with the Sōsh philosophy, people need to get out and be around others to practice social skills. This feature rewards you with badges (you will need a free Foursquare account) the more that you check in at various locations. You might even become the Mayor of a store or location for checking in enough! Also, you can use the camera or audio buttons to document your experiences. You might even practice a conversation or ask someone a question (using the **Talking Strategies** button as a guide) that you can later listen to and analyze.

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Talking Strategies

This is a comprehensive listing of all things related to conversations such as eye contact and personal space. Each “skill” is separated and includes specific exercises and strategies to improve functioning in each of these areas. Each strategy page encourages and allows for use of audio and video technology to document your practice in these areas (e.g., eye contact, turn taking, physical space, etc.).

Relax (Reduce Stress)

What Helps?

During times of stress, people often respond emotionally first before thinking rationally or logically about the situation. In these instances, it is useful to have a list of strategies or approaches that you have used in the past that were helpful but might be difficult to think of in the moment when you are upset. By referencing this page, you can be reminded of these methods, and the likelihood of follow-through is higher given that these are your own strategies. Teachers and parents can direct a child to this page when they are upset so that they can choose a strategy to help calm down. This page is also helpful for the response that frustrated children often give to adults trying to help calm them, which is, “Nothing helps!”

The Shredder

Sometimes you just have to destroy some unpleasant thoughts or ideas and move on. The shredder is a fun way of accomplishing this. Simply type something into the text box and drag it in to the shredder and let the app do the rest. This can be especially helpful for thoughts that you just can’t seem to get out of your mind.

Block Out

For individuals with sensory issues or who need to tune the world out for a moment, this feature provides sensory buffers in the forms of nature sounds or music to help drown out the sounds of a noisy or busy environment. As with most features of the Sōsh app, you can customize these sounds and add songs or other audio that you prefer. This feature is best used with headphones plugged into the device so that you do not disturb other around you, but also so that you can effectively block out noises around you.

Imagine

A powerful strategy to relax is to visualize a peaceful scene using a clinically proven technique called guided imagery. This portion of the app provides a quick and easy five minute exercise that teaches you how to relax as you visualize a peaceful scene. You can upload a photo of a place where you feel relaxed or a vacation spot where you would like to be to assist in your visualization of a relaxing place.

Deep Breathing

A quick, and effective strategy to lower stress is deep, diaphragmatic breathing. This feature provides both audio instructions as well as visual text to guide you through a deep breathing exercise. Repeat the exercise as much as you need in order to feel relaxed. Each interval takes about one minute.

Reason (Think it Through)

Transition Timer

Transitions are one of the biggest battles for parents and children. What is interesting, though, is that removing yourself (i.e., the parent or caregiver) as the transition reminder and instead using a countdown timer can help to alleviate stress and arguments. You simply set the amount of time the child has left before the transition occurs and then you select whether you want to provide a 5-minute or 1-minute warning, which is recommended. This way, the device does the work for you and all you have to do is set it and forget it. You can also set whether the device speaks the warning

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reminder or whether the reminder occurs in the form of a brief tone. Kids who are willing can set this timer for their own transitions.

Perspective

Many children use very strong language when describing experiences from their daily life. Statements like, “I did awful,” “Everyone hates me,” or “I am going to fail miserably” may not be uncommon. These statements cannot be left unchecked because they will ultimately affect your mood and behavior. Use this page to help put stressful situations in perspective. The green number meter allows you to rate how much of an effect a given situation has on your life. We have provided sample effect ratings for 30-60-90. You can personalize these. As situations arise, enter them into the “Enter Situation” field and slide the green number meter to rate the significance of the situation. This method encourages you to critically think through how important certain life events really are.

Problem Solver

This is a very useful exercise, especially after a difficult day when something did not go as planned. This can be completed independently or with assistance, but the purpose is to identify a problem (already experienced or anticipated) and enter it in the appropriate text field. You can then generate three possible solutions for how to address the problem and select the one most likely to be effective. Following your use of the solutions, you can rate the solution to quantify how well it worked. You can also archive this process to refer to at a later time if the same problem arises again, or you may decide to generate a completely new series of solutions.

Mental Strategies

This section of Sōsh contains recommendations related to executive functions such as organization, mental flexibility, and emotional control. You simply select the area that you want to learn more about and you are then presented with a definition of the executive function and a set of recommendations to help. You can also add your own ideas for review at a later time or share these ideas with others. The idea here is to learn strategies that can help in these daily functioning areas and also link you to areas of the Sōsh app that can be of assistance. Finally, you can use this section of the app in IEP meetings and can email your selection(s) to the members of your school team while in the meeting. The Sōsh team plans to continue to add to this list of strategies for future versions of the app (free to users for the lifetime of their app usage), and many of these additions will be based on member feedback.

Regulate (Manage Behaviors)

Voice Meter

If you experience speech difficulties, especially in the area of speech volume, the Voice Meter provides a visual rating of your voice to practice speaking at more appropriate levels. Simply hold your device near your mouth and speak at your normal volume to learn how loudly you speak and adjust your approach accordingly.

Monitor

Becoming more aware of your behavior and how it affects others as well as your own performance on tasks is an important skill. The Monitor timer allows you to set a random alert or fixed alert (at a specific time interval of your choosing). Your device will then beep at this interval or set time as an indication that you need to pay attention to your behavior. For example, a teacher or parent who is rewarding a child for paying attention for 3 minute intervals can set the monitor to track this time interval and reward the child each time the device beeps. Or, the child who is working on sitting in his chair will receive a ticket or reward point each time he is seated when the timer (set at a random interval) beeps. Another example is the older child who repetitively taps his pencil on the desk, which annoys his classmates. The monitor can be set by the student to remind him to pay attention to his behavior (i.e., tapping his pencil) at the set interval. The specific uses for this feature are numerous.

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Tracking

An effective way to improve your behavior is to track it. Research has shown that paying attention to your behavior (e.g., calorie counting, how many steps you walk) helps to reach your goals (e.g., losing weight). Tracking is a useful behavioral tool in which you designate one or two behaviors that you are counting and then press the “+” button each time you observe this behavior in yourself or others. You can reset each field or subtract the number tracking one at a time. A child might review audio or video of himself in a conversation and track a specific behavior (e.g., how many questions they ask the other person).

Interest Log

It is important to NOT spend too much time on any one activity (especially if that activity is done alone). The Interest Log provides you with a template to track your interests and the amount of time you engage in your interests (e.g., INTEREST: Play Video Games; TIME: 4 Hours). The more varied your interests, the more likely you will connect with a variety of people and make new friends.

Remember: Too much of anything is never a good thing!

Recognize (Understand Feelings)

Triggers

Triggers takes *What Helps?* one step further and allows you to identify what situations or events upset you and prepares you to cope if and when these situations occur. That way, you can learn both what upsets you as well as effective ways to cope.

Facial Expressions

This page allows you to practice making and understanding different emotions. It is the Sōsh version of a feelings poster that you carry with you wherever you go. You can even be the face depicting each feeling, if you choose to photograph yourself. We provide sample template pictures but these can be changed so that you can add up to four feelings pictures and their corresponding emotional label beneath each picture.

Shades of Gray

For anyone who struggles to identify the shades of gray or “middle ground,” with emotions, this feature is for you. By dragging the green bar left to right across each continuum, the various levels of emotion are revealed. There are also two bars available for you to create your own shades of gray for a variety of emotions or situations.

Feeling

Feelings is a good activity to learn more about why others feel the way they do in situations. You can use this to reflect on your own experiences, but we also encourage you to use this strategy in your environment and complete this exercise while observing others. You may even want to watch a sitcom or favorite movie and complete this page by describing what the actors/characters might be thinking of feeling. Using the Archive button on this page stores your observations for later review.

THANK YOU FOR READING THE SŌSH WALKTHRU GUIDE.

SōshTM

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