

# SAAJAN'S STORY

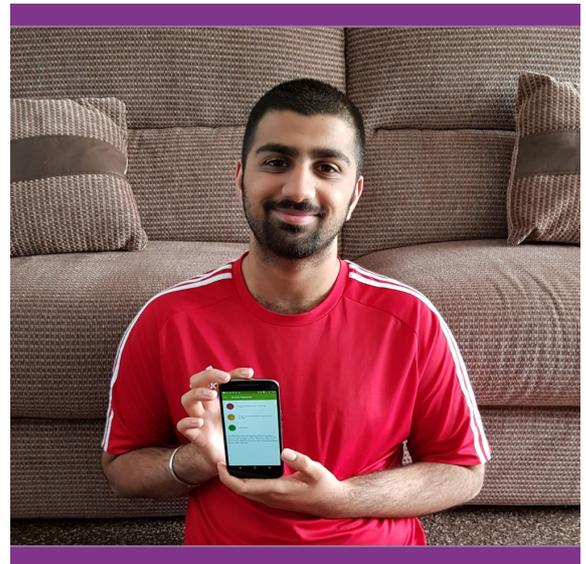


Saajan is 19 years old, has autism and is studying physics whilst living at home.

I use my Brain in Hand every day, I mostly use the Traffic Light system. I set prompts on my app to remind me to regularly monitor how I am coping and record how good my solutions are. Most of the time I press green to reassure myself, but just knowing someone is there if I need them is the main thing that makes me feel a lot more confident.

**“I feel a lot more settled and confident knowing someone is always there to help and will respond if I need them.”**

Last year I was preparing for a coursework presentation and I was extremely nervous. I pressed three amber Traffic Lights in a row when monitoring my anxiety. Someone from the Student Services team saw this and got in touch with me; they enabled me to settle myself down so I could get my work done and meet my deadline. A week later, at a scheduled support session, we developed more solutions to put into my Brain in Hand so that the next time I get stuck with a deadline I will have those solutions available to me and know exactly what I can do to help myself.



Although the Traffic Light feature is my favourite, I find the entire system easy to use. I also use the diary and unplanned events on my website to help me organise my time. I update these when I meet my Brain in Hand supporter, which is usually about twice a month.

**“Knowing I will have Brain in Hand in year two, when the course is going to be more intense, is already making me feel calmer and more positive.”**

Brain in Hand has had a huge impact on my life. When I look back at my Brain in Hand timeline and see the green Traffic Light presses I realise that I have been able to manage in situations that I would have struggled with before, and can see how far I've come.

## What have Saajan's supporters noticed?

Saajan's supporter Leanne notices that he now uses his Brain in Hand website to help him plan for the 'what if?' situations. "He likes to be very structured and rigid in his planning and it has really helped him to prepare for things that are out of his control.

For example, he lives with his family and commutes every day. His family are very supportive and have done a lot of travel training with him so he knows what to do, but he is so much calmer now he has these strategies in his Brain in Hand. He now has the reassurance that he can check what to do if anything goes wrong, and that gives him confidence."

**“Thinking about these situations in advance and deciding what to do lowers his anxiety about uncertainty. I think it's had a really positive impact on his life.”**

Saajan has a 5am start to travel by train and then walk into campus, which can leave him exhausted by midday. We started to think about the impact this might have during his exam period, and began planning breaks and snacks into his schedule to keep him healthy and alert. By doing this he

realised that his strategies would be useful for other long days too and so now applies these solutions regularly.

“He’s been transferring strategies from his past mentoring sessions into his Brain in Hand too, in case he lost his mentoring notes, and he’s realising the value of them as he’s mapping them out.”

### What does Saajan’s data show?

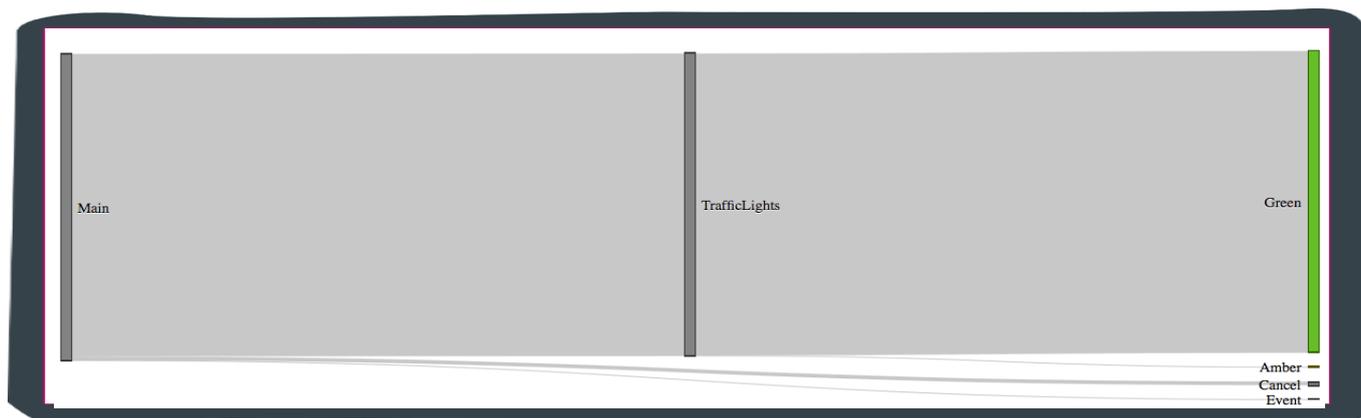
This heat map shows Saajan’s app usage March-May 2017 and the data confirms that he uses his app to view his strategies regularly throughout the day, and consistently throughout the week.

The peak usage on the heat map match up with the times when he had exams and the slightly higher app usage before 9am also confirmed that Saajan was using his travel strategies and preparing for his long days.



Heat map of ‘passive’ app activity (March-May 2017)

Saajan is still actively using his app features to reassure and reward himself that he is ‘green’ (he has done this 571 times during this period). When he does feel ‘amber’ he can look at his pre-planned solutions to get himself back on track.



User progression through the app (March-May 2017)

“It’s reassuring to see that, although Saajan’s app use has increased dramatically over his exam period, the most frequently pressed response is still the green Traffic Light.”