

The Science behind naia

How work and organizational psychologists build a preventive mental-mind mentor on top of AI

naia is not a generic chatbot with a wellness label. It is a psychologically engineered mentor, built by work and organizational psychologists on a state-of-the-art language model. The AI provides conversational fluency; psychology provides everything that makes naia safe, effective, and genuinely preventive. What follows is how that is done — and why it is difficult to replicate.

1 • A Frontier Model as the Foundation naia is built on a leading large language model rather than trained from scratch, which gives it natural, fluent, multilingual conversation from the very first interaction. Our value lies entirely in the layer we build on top: the scientific and behavioral architecture that turns a general-purpose AI into a focused, dependable mental-mind mentor.

2 • A Knowledge Base Curated by Psychologists naia does not draw on the open internet. It reasons over a validated knowledge base that is authored, reviewed, and continuously maintained by psychologists, so its guidance reflects evidence-based theory rather than anecdote or whatever happens to be popular online. This curated grounding is what keeps naia accurate, consistent, and defensible.

3 • naia's Orientation: Solution-Focused and Present-Oriented The way naia engages people is deliberately solution-focused rather than problem-focused. It rests on a conviction central to the work of Milton H. Erickson and to Gunther Schmidt's systemic approach: people already carry the resources and competencies they need, and the role of effective support is to activate them.

- **Resource and competence activation (after Erickson).** Following Erickson's principle of *utilization*, naia works with each person's own language, strengths, and goals — treating these as the starting point for change rather than as deficits to be corrected.
- **Present- and future-orientation (after Gunther Schmidt).** In the spirit of Schmidt's systemic work, naia keeps attention on what the person wants to move toward and on the next workable step, opening up a space of possibilities instead of analyzing the origins of a problem.
- **Solution-focused, not problem-archaeology.** naia does not dwell in the past or attempt the root-cause excavation associated with psychoanalysis. Its orientation is squarely in the present: practical, forward-looking, and centered on what helps now.

In one line: naia doesn't ask "*why is this broken, and where did it come from?*" — it asks "*what do you want, what already works, and what's the next step?*"

4 • Validated Frameworks, Encoded into Behavior Within this solution-focused orientation, naia draws on established psychological frameworks, each mapped to a specific conversational function:

- **Stress appraisal** follows Zapf & Semmer — naia responds to *how* a person evaluates a stressor, not just the surface complaint.

- **Cognitive reframing** draws on Ellis's REBT and its ABC model — gently shifting unhelpful thought patterns toward more balanced, constructive ones.
- **naia's relational stance** — calm, respectful, meeting the person as an equal — is grounded in Berne's Transactional Analysis.
- **Personalization** is guided by Grawe's consistency theory and the basic psychological needs.

The result is a CBT-informed mentor whose conversational moves are intentional rather than improvised.

5 • Guardrails: Preventive, Never Clinical Psychologists define naia's scope and its red lines. naia supports people *before* stress becomes crisis; it does not diagnose, and it is explicitly designed to recognize signals beyond its remit and to guide people toward appropriate human support. Just as importantly, naia adopts the *communicative stance* of the approaches above — resource-oriented, respectful, future-facing — without performing therapy or clinical hypnosis. It brings the orientation of the field's most effective methods into an everyday, preventive context. These boundaries are engineered in, not left to chance.

6 • How naia Is Trained — An Expert-in-the-Loop This is where "training" happens in practice. Psychologists continuously review real conversations, assess naia's responses against criteria derived from the underlying theory, and feed corrections back into its behavior and knowledge base. Each cycle sharpens naia's judgment — the equivalent of continuous expert supervision. naia improves not by accumulating more internet data, but by accumulating more expert-reviewed experience.

7 • Measured Against Outcomes, Improved Every Day naia's impact is tracked through structured stress surveys, stress trajectories over time, and validated acceptance measures (the Technology Acceptance Model). These insights feed both the ongoing scientific evaluation — including a cumulative PhD research program — and the daily product improvements that make each version of naia better than the last.

In short: theory → behavior → real conversations → measurement → refinement. This closed loop is naia's core moat. It is why naia keeps improving with use, why its guidance stays scientifically grounded rather than drifting toward generic advice, and why it is built to be a dependable foundation for long-term partnership.

8 • The RELIEF® Analysis by Scheelen — naia's Diagnostic Counterpart

naia shares its scientific foundation with the RELIEF® stress-prevention analysis by Scheelen — a validated diagnostic from the same scientific house. Where naia mentors continuously, RELIEF delivers the rigorous point-in-time analysis of a person's stress.

- **Stressors and strains** — where stress originates and how hard it hits.
- **Cognitive and emotional amplifiers** — how people intensify their own stress.
- **Meaning, motivation and engagement** — including leadership and workplace context.
- **Resilience, coping and a stress index** — existing resources and burnout risk.

Crucially, RELIEF rests on the same models that underpin naia — Zapf & Semmer and the frustration of Grawe's basic psychological needs — so the two form a closed loop: RELIEF pinpoints where to act, and naia turns that insight into everyday change.

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