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PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Self-compassion exercise

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You are being invited to participate in a research study. Before you decide whether to take part or not, please carefully read through the following information which outlines what your participation would involve. Feel free to talk with others about the study (e.g., friends, family, etc.) before making your decision. If anything is unclear or you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me on the above email.

Who am I?

My name is Mayuka Abe. I am a postgraduate student in the School of Psychology at the University of East London (UEL) and am studying for the Applied Positive Psychology and Coaching Psychology. As part of my studies, I am conducting the research that you are being invited to participate in.

What is the purpose of the research?

I am conducting research into a self-compassion exercise. The aim is to see how a self-compassion exercise affects the score in a self-compassion scale (SCS) and mood scale (Positive Affect and Negative Affect Schedule: PANAS). Self-compassion refers to the ability to be kind and helpful to one's self at times of error or despair (Ferrari et al., 2019). This research includes loving-kindness meditation (LKM) as a self-compassion exercise (see details below). This research will help us to better understand mechanisms involved in self-compassion and mood.

Why have I been invited to take part?

To address the study aims, I am inviting male and female adults, living in the UK, and using English in their daily life, to take part in my research. If you are currently receiving psychological therapies, you should not take part in the study due to contraindications.

It is entirely up to you whether you take part or not, participation is voluntary.

What will I be asked to do if I agree to take part?

If you agree to take part, you will be asked to have a 1-hour online session on a one-on-one basis.

This 1-hour session includes the introduction/explanation of the research, LKM for 10 minutes, answering two questionnaires (i.e. SCS and PANAS) before and after the exercise. LKM is a technique used to increase feelings of warmth and caring for self and others (Fredrickson et al., 2008) and it is known that loving-kindness and compassion are linked to the notion that all living beings are connected (Hofmann et al., 2011).

This will be conducted via an online meeting application (e.g., Microsoft Teams) so that you can take part from home or office. However, it is necessary to be alone in a quiet room to concentrate during session.

Can I change my mind?

Yes, you can change your mind at any time and withdraw without explanation, disadvantage or consequence. If you would like to withdraw from the session, you can do so by saying so. If you withdraw, your data will not be used as part of the research.

Separately, you can also request to withdraw your data from being used even after you have taken part in the study, provided that this request is made within 3 weeks of the data being collected (after which point the data analysis will begin, and withdrawal will not be possible).

Are there any disadvantages to taking part?

The self-compassion exercise is normally considered as one which has mental benefits. However, when you are in a negative mood, there is a possibility to feel more negative to self and others. As noted above, you can stop exercise whenever you feel any discomfort or distress.

How will the information I provide be kept secure and confidential?

- When recruiting participants and arranging the date for the session, personal information is collected and used. At the same time, the participants will be randomly assigned a participant number.
- In order to identify participants' data, a separate file will be made to show which participant was assigned to which number. This file will be stored on the University of East London's OneDrive so that no one except the experimenter can open. It will be deleted after the data analysis commences.

- All data gathered during the experiment will be stored in the university's OneDrive with the participants numbers without any personal information. This can be accessed by the researchers including the experimenter and supervisors.

For the purposes of data protection, the University of East London is the Data Controller for the personal information processed as part of this research project. The University processes this information under the 'public task' condition contained in the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Where the University processes particularly sensitive data (known as 'special category data' in the GDPR), it does so because the processing is necessary for archiving purposes in the public interest, or scientific and historical research purposes or statistical purposes. The University will ensure that the personal data it processes is held securely and processed in accordance with the GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. For more information about how the University processes personal data please see www.uel.ac.uk/about/about-uel/governance/information-assurance/data-protection.

What will happen to the results of the research?

The research will be written up as a thesis and submitted for assessment. The thesis will be publicly available on UEL's online Repository. Findings will also be disseminated to a range of audiences (e.g., academics, clinicians, public, etc.) through journal articles, conference presentations, talks, magazine articles, blogs or books. In all material produced, your identity will remain anonymous, in that, it will not be possible to identify you personally. The individual scores and ratings will be stored with anonymised numbers without personal information.

You will be given the option to receive a summary of the research findings once the study has been completed for which relevant contact details will need to be provided.

Anonymised research data will be securely stored by Jemma Harris and me for a maximum of 3 years, following which all data will be deleted.

Who has reviewed the research?

My research has been approved by the School of Psychology Ethics Committee. This means that the Committee's evaluation of this ethics application has been guided by the standards of research ethics set by the British Psychological Society.

Who can I contact if I have any questions/concerns?

If you would like further information about my research or have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL

Mayuka Abe

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If you have any questions or concerns about how the research has been conducted, please contact my research supervisor Jemma Harris. School of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ,
Email: J.Harris@uel.ac.uk

or

Chair of School Ethics Committee: Dr Trishna Patel, School of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ.
(Email: t.patel@uel.ac.uk)

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet