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## PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

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### **A pilot study: Evaluation of an online intervention to reduce perfectionism and related symptomology**

#### **Chief Investigator**

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#### **Supervisor**

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#### **Description of the study**

This project aims to investigate whether an online intervention can be used to reduce a person's sense of perfectionism and to improve mental wellbeing. In particular, this study is interested in reducing eating disorder symptoms such as dieting, binge eating, purging, and concerns about appearance, which are linked with having high perfectionism.

In order to participate, all interested persons will complete a pre-program survey to assess eligibility. Participants will complete an online program over the course of 4-6 weeks. After each session there will be a survey where participants have the opportunity to provide feedback on the program. This project is being conducted as part of a PhD candidature and is supported by Flinders University (South Australia), College of Education, Psychology, and Social Work.

#### **Purpose of the study**

This project aims to find out whether this intervention, which focuses on perfectionism, can effectively reduce symptoms related to eating disorders, depression, and anxiety, is suitable to be used in a larger intervention. The idea behind this approach is that perfectionism is a key component or 'building block' which helps develop and maintain these issues. By tackling a person's perfectionism, you can reduce behaviours and thought patterns which can contribute to mental health disorders.

#### **Benefits of the study**

By participating in these online sessions, you are expected to gain knowledge and insight into your own ways of thinking, behaving, and how you motivate yourself to achieve goals. The sessions are based on the self-help book *Overcoming Perfectionism* by Shafran, Egan, and Wade and can be completed without needing access to a therapist or psychologist. These programs have been designed to help you develop

skills in goal setting and self-management. If you are able to implement the changes provided in-session, the expectation is that by the end of the program you will see improvements in your quality of life and mental wellbeing.

### **Participant involvement and potential risks**

If you agree to participate in the research study, you will be asked to:

- Complete a pre-program survey to assess eligibility.
- Complete eight online sessions: each session will take about 20 minutes to complete.
- Complete all surveys which will be provided either via email or as a link at the end of the sessions. Each survey will take about 10 minutes to complete. You will be asked questions about perfectionism (e.g. [I believe] If I fail at work/school, I am a failure as a person.) and eating (e.g. When was the last time you went on a diet?).

It is possible you may experience a mild amount of distress by answering questions about your psychological health or by taking part as sessions topics include self-worth, self-criticism, and procrastination. If you require additional support you can contact the following free services:

- Lifeline – 13 11 14, [www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au)
- Beyond Blue – 1300 22 4636, [www.beyondblue.org.au](http://www.beyondblue.org.au)
- Butterfly foundation – 1800 33 4673, <https://butterfly.org.au/>
- Headspace - <https://headspace.org.au/>

### **Withdrawal**

You may, without any penalty, decline to take part in this research, or withdraw at any during the trial without providing an explanation. To withdraw, you can email the Chief Investigator or you may just cease using the online program. If you are unsure as to whether you wish to remain involved in the study, you may keep your enrolment in the program and continue where you've left off at a later date, given the study is still running. If you wish for your data/input to be removed from the study, please email the Chief Investigator with your request, you do not need to provide an explanation.

### **Confidentiality and Privacy**

Only researchers listed on this form have access to the individual information provided by you. Privacy and confidentiality will be assured at all times. The research outcomes across the group of participants may be presented at conferences, written up for publication, or used for future research purposes. However, the privacy and confidentiality of individuals will be protected at all times. You will not be named, and your individual information will not be identifiable in any research products without your explicit consent.

### **Data Storage**

The information collected may be stored securely on a password protected computer and/or Flinders University server throughout the study. Any identifiable data will be destroyed after de-identified data has been entered for analysis. All data will be securely stored at Flinders University and may be subject to future analysis after the conclusion of this study, unless you do not consent to the future use of your collected data.

### **Recognition of Contribution**

You will not receive compensation for your time and commitment to the program.

### **Ethics Committee Approval**

The project has been approved by Flinders University's Human Research Ethics Committee (Project ID: 2475).

**Queries and Concerns**

Queries or concerns regarding the research can be directed to the research team via [focusedmindsprogram@gmail.com](mailto:focusedmindsprogram@gmail.com). If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this study, you may contact the Flinders University's Research Ethics & Compliance Office team via telephone 08 8201 3116 or email [human.researchethics@flinders.edu.au](mailto:human.researchethics@flinders.edu.au).

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet. We look forward to having you involved in our research.

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