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| **PLAIN LANGUAGE STATEMENT AND CONSENT FORM** |  |

TO: All Participants

**Plain Language Statement**

Date: 15/05/2023

Full Project Title: Evaluation of a brief body image digital intervention for people with problem eating

**Principal Researcher(s):** Dr Mariel Messer andDr Jake Linardon

**Associate Researcher(s):** ProfessorMatthew Fuller-Tyszkiewicz and Associate Professor Elizabeth Westrupp

**Student Researcher:** Louise Palmer

Dear participant,

You are invited to participate in a research study that is exploring the effectiveness of a brief online body image intervention for binge eating. This Plain Language Statement contains detailed information about this research project. Its purpose is to explain to you, the participant, as openly as possible all the procedures that are involved in this project so that you can make an informed decision regarding whether you would like to participate.

Please read this Plain Language Statement carefully. If you would like to participate, please click the ‘I agree’ option at the bottom of this page to give consent to participate.

* **Purpose**   
  The purpose of this project is to trial a **free**, innovative brief online intervention to improve binge eating. The intervention teaches you how to implement a range of body image strategies to improve your eating behaviours. Key concepts, tutorials, and practical examples will be delivered via a password-protected web browser. This study aims to recruit at least 72 participants (36 per condition) who have experienced at least one binge eating episode, on average, per fortnight over the past three months, are aged 18 years or over, who have access to the internet, and who are wanting to improve their binge eating behaviour.
* **Methods**   
  There are several aspects to this research. First, participants will begin by completing a brief baseline questionnaire battery that will ask you questions about your demographic profile (e.g., age, sex, ethnicity), body image, eating and dietary patterns, and your mood. After completing all of these questions, participants will then be allocated at random to the immediate intervention group or the delayed intervention group. Those allocated to the immediate intervention group will have access to the <1-hour online intervention during a 4-week period. Those in the delayed intervention group will have access to the intervention after the 8-week period. At 4 weeks post and at 8 weeks post-intervention, all participants will complete the baseline questionnaire again.
* **Demands**   
  Overall, the total participation time is approximately 2-3 hours, including completing the <1-hour intervention and the three online questionnaires.
* **Risks and potential benefits to participants**   
  Access to, and use of, the intervention resources are expected to improve your body image and binge eating. Moreover, these techniques may be useful for other negative thoughts (or low mood experiences) in your life and may thus be more useful than just for body image or problem eating behaviours. There are no anticipated risks outside the normal day-to-day activities. However, given that the questionnaires will include questions regarding issues such as your eating behaviours, body image and mood, there is a slight possibility that you may experience some concern about your responses. All participants will receive $50 in vouchers for their time ($25 per post-intervention survey).   
    
  If you do participate and find that you are uncomfortable or overly worried about your responses to any of the questionnaire items, or if you find participation in the project distressing, you should contact Mariel Messer, the Principal Investigator at [mariel.messer@deakin.edu.au](mailto:mariel.messer@deakin.edu.au).  
    
  You may also like to contact a government or community organisation specialising in dealing with distress. You can contact your GP. Alternatively, for free services, contact Lifeline on 13 11 14 or visit https://thebutterflyfoundation.org.au/ a website that provides reputable psychoeducation, and provides a range of techniques to alleviate mental health problems.
* **Benefits to the wider community**   
  Should the intervention prove effective; this intervention could be made available to the general population.
* **Privacy and confidentiality**   
  All data are confidential, accessible only to authorised researchers, and will be stored on a secure, password-protected computer within the School of Psychology at Deakin University for a minimum of seven years. Participants will be asked to provide an email address so that they can be made aware of which condition they have been allocated to, and instructions for how to access the intervention will be provided with the study questionnaires. Your email address will not be shared with anyone. Once all data have been collected, your email address will be deleted, and your data will be unidentifiable. All results will be reported using group data and no identifiable information will be published.
* **Form of dissemination of the research results**   
  A summary of the findings will be available for any interested participants to read at the completion of the study. Findings may be published in peer-review journals and may be used as part of conference presentations. Please contact mariel.messer@deakin.edu.au if you would like to receive a copy of this report or be forwarded details of where to find the publications.
* **How the research will be monitored**   
  The project will not only be monitored by Dr Mariel Messer, Dr Jake Linardon, Professor Matthew Fuller-Tyszkiewicz and Associate Professor Elizabeth Westrupp, but also by the Deakin University School of Psychology, to ensure the research practices comply with Deakin University ethics guidelines.
* **Any payment to participants?**   
  We will reimburse participants with gift vouchers for completing the post-assessments at 4-weeks ($25) and 8-weeks ($25).
* **Funding for this project**   
  This project is being funded by the Deakin University School of Psychology.
* **Financial or other relevant declarations of interests of researchers, sponsors and institutions**The research team have no declarations of interest to report.
* **Participation is voluntary**   
  Participation in any research project is voluntary. If you do not wish to take part, you are not obliged to. If you decide to take part and later change your mind, you are free to withdraw from the project at any stage. However, as the information is de-identified, we will not be able to retrieve and remove the data prior to analyses. Your decision whether to take part or not to take part, or to take part and then withdraw, will not affect your relationship with Deakin University in any way. Before you make your decision, a member of the research team will be available to answer any questions you have about the research project (if desired). You can ask for any information you want.
* **Ethical guidelines**   
  This project will be carried out according to the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007) produced by the National Health and Medical Research Council of Australia. This statement has been developed to protect the interests of people who agree to participate in human research studies. The ethics aspects of this research project have been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of Deakin University.
* **Further Information**   
  Should you have any concerns or questions about this research project, please contact:

Dr Mariel Messer of   
Deakin University, School of Psychology  
Email: mariel.messer@deakin.edu.au

* **Complaints**   
  If you have any complaints about any aspect of the project, the way it is being conducted or any questions about your rights as a research participant, then you may contact:

The Human Research Ethics Office, Deakin University, 221 Burwood Highway, Burwood Victoria 3125, Telephone: 03 9251 7129, [research-ethics@deakin.edu.au](mailto:research-ethics@deakin.edu.au)

Please quote project number 2023-XXX.

*Do you need further support?*

*Do you need assistance with any concerns associated with participating in this study?*

If so, please contact your **health care practitioner** or one of the following services to discuss your concerns:

**The Eating Disorders Foundation of Victoria:** A source of support, information, community education and advocacy for people with eating disorders and their families in Victoria.

Phone: 1300 550 236 or (03) 9885 0318 Email: [help@eatingdisorders.org.au](mailto:help@eatingdisorders.org.au)

**Dietitians Australia:** Find an expert on nutrition advice and/or practical and up-to-date information on food and nutrition:

Website: dietitiansaustralia.org.au

**Beyondblue:** A national, independent, not-for-profit organisation working to address issues associated with depression, anxiety, and related disorders in Australia.

Phone: 1300 22 4636

Email: [infoline@beyondblue.org.au](mailto:infoline@beyondblue.org.au)

**Lifeline (24 Hours):** Offers generalist counselling that does not discriminate. Lifeline counsellors are ready to talk and listen no matter how big or how small the problem might seem.

Phone: 13 11 14

**Nurse-on-Call:** A phone service that provides immediate, expert health advice from a registered nurse, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Phone: 1300 60 60 24

**Australian Psychological Society**: The community information section of this site allows you to find a psychologist in your local area.

Phone: (03) 8662 3300 or Toll free: 1800 333 497

**Appendix B: Consent Form**

**CONSENT FORM**

**TO: Participant**

**Consent Form**

**Date: 16/01/2023**

**Full Project Title:** Evaluation of a brief body image digital intervention for people with problem eating

**Reference Number: 2023-XXX**

I have read and I understand the attached Plain Language Statement*.*

I freely agree to participate in this project according to the conditions in the Plain Language Statement.

I agree to non-identifiable data being shared on public data repositories.

I have been given a copy of the Plain Language Statement and Consent Form to keep.

The researcher has agreed not to reveal my identity and personal details, including where information about this project is published, or presented in any public form.

Participant’s Name (printed) ……………………………………………………………………

Signature ……………………………………………………… Date  …………………………

**Appendix C: Withdrawal of Consent Form**

**WITHDRAWAL OF CONSENT FORM**

**TO: Participant**

**Withdrawal of Consent Form**

**Date: 16/01/2023**

**Full Project Title:**  Evaluation of a brief body image digital intervention for people with problem eating

**Reference Number: 2023-XXX**

I wish to withdraw my consent to participate in the study and understand that my withdrawal **will not** affect my relationship with Deakin University or their researchers.

Please note that if you are choosing to withdraw from the study after data collection has occurred, the research team may be unable to identify and remove your data due to the deletion of personal information for the purpose of de-identification (to protect participant confidentiality).

Participant’s Name (printed) ……………………………………………………………………

Signature ……………………………………………………… Date  …………………………

**Please email this form to:**

Mariel Messer

[mariel.messer@deakin.edu.au](mailto:mariel.messer@deakin.edu.au)