



PLAIN LANGUAGE STATEMENT AND CONSENT FORM

TO: Participant

Plain Language Statement

Date: 5th July 2016

Full Project Title: Relationship Processes Over time

Principal Researcher: Dr. Gery Karantzas

Student Researcher: Bengianni Pizzirani

1. Your Consent

You are invited to take part in this research project. This Plain Language Statement contains detailed information about the research project. Its purpose is to explain to you as openly and clearly as possible all of the procedures involved in this project so that you can make a fully informed decision whether you are going to participate. Please read this Plain Language Statement carefully. Feel free to ask questions about any information in the document. You may also wish to discuss the project with a relative or friend or your local health worker.

Once you understand what the project is about and if you agree to take part in it, you can continue with the study.

You should print off a copy of the online Plain Language Statement to keep as a record.

2. Purpose and Background

The purpose of this study is to examine how different relationship factors change over time to influence the way we treat others and feel we are treated in romantic relationships (e.g., any ongoing heterosexual, homosexual, or transgender relationship that includes emotional and/or sexual intimacy).

A total of 70 couples will participate in this project. You are invited to participate in this research project because we are interested in hearing from a large number of individuals with diverse relationship experiences. The results of this research may be used to help the researchers in understanding the psychological processes that shape how relationships work and to assist Bengianni Pizzirani to achieve his PhD in psychology.

3. Funding

This project is funded by Deakin University.

4. Procedures

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to fill in 4 questionnaires about your relationship experiences across a 12-month period (baseline, 3 months, 6 months, and 12 months). Statements include: "Generally my partner treats me in a superficial way", "When my partner seems to want or need a hug, I'm glad to provide it", "Generally I treat my partner as if they are immature", and "How satisfied are you in your relationship?"

Completion of these questionnaires should take approximately 25-30 minutes.

In recognition of your time, after you complete the study, each member of the couple is eligible to receive a \$10 Coles voucher. This voucher, along with URL links for the subsequent questionnaires will be sent to your nominated email address. This email address is stored separately from the rest of your data and is retained only for the purpose of sending the gift voucher and the URL links for the subsequent questionnaires at each time point. Once the last question and gift voucher has been sent your email address will be deleted from our records.

To participate in this research, you and your romantic partner must be over 18 years of age, and must both have access to a separate email address.

5. Possible Benefits

Possible benefits of the study include the opportunity to reflect and develop insight into your own relationships. More specifically, the research will assist in understanding the way in which the relationship behaviours and interactions influence relationship quality. This may have significant future clinical and practical implications for the way couples and families support one another. We cannot guarantee or promise that you will receive any benefits from this project.

6. Possible Risks

It is not expected that you will be exposed to any physical risk or psychological distress by participating in this project, beyond the feelings that may be aroused due to consciously evaluating the motivations that drive your behaviours within relationships, and across stressful contexts. However, participants are directed to contact the appropriate services, Lifeline on 13 11 14 or Relationships Australia on 1300 364 277, if you experience any emotional discomfort. In the unlikely event that your participation results in distress, the contact numbers of the researchers involved have also been provided. Feel free to contact them at any time.

Should anxiety or distress occur at any stage, participants are advised to withdraw from participating in the project. Participants will not incur any risk from withdrawing from the study.

7. Privacy, Confidentiality, and Disclosure of Information.

Data collected as part of the project will not be associated with any identifying information. When you complete the first questionnaire, you are assigned a randomly generated ID. This generated ID is completely anonymous and we have no way of knowing to whom a specific ID belongs. Each time you receive a new questionnaire, you are required to enter only your ID. No other identifying information is collected with your responses.

All information gathered from participants will be kept securely. Electronic data will be password protected and stored on a secure server within the School of Psychology at Deakin University. None of the electronic files will include any identifying information. Only the research staff directly linked with the project will have access to the data. After the completion of the project, the data collected will be securely stored for six years at Deakin University, as set out in the University regulations, after which all the data will be destroyed.

In any publication, information will be provided in such a way that you cannot be identified. Only group data will be disseminated. As a result, no one person's data will be presented, nor will any identifiable information be relevant or disclosed in the reporting of results.

8. Results of the Project

Upon completion of this research, feedback regarding the results of the project will be accessible to you via the Science of Adult Relationships (SoAR) Lab website: <http://www.deakin.edu.au/psychology/psychology-research/soar-laboratory>

As the data will contain no identifying personal information only group results will be available to report. The results of the project will be reported as a part of a PhD thesis. It is also likely that the group findings will be disseminated in peer-reviewed journals and conference presentations.

9. 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. If you do wish to withdraw from the study, contact the researcher via email or phone advising that you wish to withdraw from the study. This communication must contain your anonymous ID code. Upon this request, any data associated with that ID would be deleted from our records.

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.

10. 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. Deakin University's Human Research Ethics Committee has approved this research project.

11. 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 Manager, Deakin Research Integrity, Deakin University, 221 Burwood Highway, Burwood Victoria 3125, Telephone: 9251 7129, Facsimile: 9244 6581; research-ethics@deakin.edu.au

Please quote project number [129_2015](#).

12. Reimbursement for your Participation

Participants that complete a minimum 75% of the assessments in this study are entitled to claim a \$10 Coles voucher.

13. Further Information, Queries, or Any Problems.

If you require further information or have any problems please can contact any of the researchers involved.

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