

Participant Information Sheet

Project title: *Can mobile apps reduce anxiety?*

Investigator: *Chris Worfolk*

Project supervisor: *Dr Zoe Kolokotroni*

Invitation to participate

People who suffer from anxiety are being invited to take part in a study on using mobile apps to reduce anxiety symptoms. To be eligible you must:

- Be aged 18 or over
- Be suffering from generalised anxiety
- Have an Android or Apple-based smartphone
- Not currently be in counselling therapy for anxiety
- Not currently using any mindfulness-based phone apps on a regular basis (more than once per week over the past 3 months)
- Not currently experiencing suicidal ideation or have previously experienced it

Taking part is voluntary. It is important that you understand what the research is about and what it will involve, so please take time to read the following information carefully. If anything is unclear, or you would like more information, please ask.

What is the project about?

The purpose of the study is to determine whether mobile apps can reduce symptoms of anxiety. This research forms part of my MSc at Leeds Beckett University.

What will I be asked to do?

First, you will be asked to take part in an initial screening process, where you will be asked to complete some brief questionnaires about yourself (e.g. age and gender) and your anxiety levels and mood. If eligible you will then be randomly assigned to a group who will receive different types of apps or be put on a waiting list to receive the app in 4 weeks time.

Before engaging with the app you will be asked questions regarding your mental health and whether you have ever received or are currently receiving medication or therapy to manage your anxiety.

Here is an example of a question you will be asked:

“In the last 2 weeks have you been troubled by thoughts of feeling afraid as if something awful might happen?”

You will be asked to download an app and use it for 4-weeks, starting on 6 June. We will ask you to use it for 10 minutes each day, but this is not a strict minimum requirement. You will be asked to re-complete the questionnaires at certain intervals during the four week period and will be alerted via the app. You will receive email reminders to use the app and complete the questionnaires.

If you are allocated to the waiting list group you will also be asked to complete questionnaires regarding your mood whilst you are on the waiting list for the four week period. You will receive email reminders to complete these questionnaires. At the end of the four weeks you will then be given access to the mobile app.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of taking part?

By taking part, you will potentially gain access to an app that may reduce your anxiety symptoms. You will also be contributing to knowledge on how such apps can benefit other people with anxiety and therefore help us improve everyone's mental health. You will also be given the opportunity to see the results of the study on the effectiveness of mobile apps at reducing anxiety.

There are no anticipated disadvantages from taking part. Some of the questions on the questionnaire may be uncomfortable to answer, although you are likely to have seen them before if you have ever engaged in therapy for mental health issues in the past and sources of support will be available including the emergency services, Samaritans and local anxiety groups.

If you are an undergraduate at Leeds Beckett University, you will receive 10 SONA points for taking part.

How will my information be used?

The people who might read this in an official capacity are my project supervisor, other members of the psychology staff and external examiners. Additionally, the information may be published, presented at conferences and used in teaching. Although the information may be used for these purposes, you will not be identifiable in any way through these activities as all data will be related to an anonymous participant ID, and not any personal information.

Will my information be confidential?

All the information you provide will be treated in confidence. This means that your name will not be passed on to anyone else and your personal information will be used solely for the research or teaching purposes of the university. All of your information will be stored securely and only my project supervisor and I will have access to each person's individual information.

Can I change my mind?

Yes, you can stop taking part in the study at any time. You can also ask for part or all of your data to be destroyed. You can do this without any negative consequences and you do not need to provide a reason.

If you would like to withdraw your data, please email C.Worfolk4549@student.leedsbeckett.ac.uk quoting the participant number that was emailed to you no later than 30 July 2018.

Who can I contact for further information?

My contact details:

Chris Worfolk
C.Worfolk4549@student.leedsbeckett.ac.uk

My supervisor's contact details:

Dr Zoe Kolokotroni
Z.Kolokotroni@leedsbeckett.ac.uk
0113 81 23271

If you wish to talk to an independent representative within the university and someone who is outside of this research study, please contact Dr Andrew Wilson on 0113 81 25581 or A.D.Wilson@leedsbeckett.ac.uk.

What if I need support with my anxiety?

If you need help with your anxiety, you can find sources of support available here: <https://research.renaissus.com/support>. These include:

- NHS: 112 for emergencies, or 111 to access urgent care
- If you need someone to talk to, Samaritan's can be reached on 116 123

What happens next?

Please think carefully about whether or not you wish to take part in the study. If you do wish to take part, please complete the attached consent form.

Thank you for considering participating.