**Participant Information Sheet**

**Study Title**: Exploring the Transcultural Applicability of a Brief Compassionate Mind Training: A study comparing the UK and Sri Lankan Communities

**Researcher**: Lasara Kariyawasam

**ERGO number: 57128**

You are being invited to take part in the above research study. To help you decide whether you would like to take part or not, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the information below carefully and ask questions if anything is not clear or you would like more information before you decide to take part in this research. You may like to discuss it with others but it is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you are happy to participate, you will be asked to confirm that you consent to participate in the study by checking the consent box below.

**What is the research about?**

I am a doctoral student currently undertaking a PhD in Psychology at the University of Southampton. This research is part of my doctoral thesis attempting to apply a brief 2-week Compassionate Mind Training (CMT practices) to increase compassion and wellbeing among UK and Sri Lankan nationals. Compassion focused therapeutic activities have shown significant results in improving participant and patient wellbeing. Most of these interventions have been limited to western countries and researchers still question how culturally appropriate these Western practices would be in the Asian context. Furthermore, cross-cultural studies conducting these tasks remain scarce indicating the void to conduct research. Therefore,primary aim of this study is to conduct a brief compassionate mind task with the aim to reduce levels of depression and anxiety and increase the wellbeing among UK and Sri Lankan nationals. We aim to conduct this study between UK and Sri Lankans to test if there are any significant differences between the levels of compassion, depression and anxiety among these populations in the first instance, and to monitor if CMT intervention would bring any significant differences to these levels. Findings of this study will also improve our understanding on whether CMT practices would be transcultural and transdiagnostic.

A randomised control trial design will be conducted including a brief two-week online CMT based intervention and a wait-list control group. University students and general populations in UK and Sri Lanka will be invited to voluntarily participate. There will be four groups: Sri Lankan Intervention Group, Sri Lankan Control Group, UK Intervention Group, UK Control Group. Data will be collected pre- and post-intervention and at a two week follow-up after the intervention. The study will last four weeks in total and quantitative analyses will be conducted. The wait-list control group will be given access to the intervention at the end of their participation. The results will be disseminated in an appropriate format to the services involved and also for peer reviewed academic publication and conferences.

**Why have I been asked to participate?**

This study is targeted towards Sri Lankan and UK nationals as cross-cultural research exploring the three flows of compassion (compassion towards others, from others and towards the self) remain unexploited while compassion related studies have not yet been conducted among Sri Lankans. You have been asked to participate because you responded to an advertisement regarding participation in this study and you may meet the full eligibility criteria outlined below.

**Eligibility Criteria**

***Inclusion Criteria:***

You are eligible to participate in this study if you are a Sri Lankan national or a UK national and are above 18 years of age. You will also need to have internet access to access the online questionnaires/CMT practices; this is also mobile friendly. You will also need to have a good level of English to be able to access the online questionnaires/CMT practices; if you are able to read through this information sheet and understand the consent statements below, your English is considered sufficient.

***Exclusion Criteria:***

Unfortunately, if you are currently participating in a compassion focused intervention for yourself at the time of this study, you will not be eligible to participate in the study as this could affect the conclusions made about this intervention in this study. However, you will be able to access the CMT practices, without the questionnaires included, until the end of the study period. You will also not be eligible to participate in this study if you have difficulties with understanding or speaking English. This is because this study is an online-based study and the study materials will be presented in English, without translation or the use of interpreters being possible. However, if you have been able to read to this point, you will be considered to have sufficient English to be eligible to provide informed consent to participate in this study.

**What will happen to me if I take part?**

This study integrates a series of questionnaires and an online intervention. You also have the option to consent to be entered into a prize draw to win a £25 Amazon gift (if you are a UK participant), or earn 38 credits for your course (if you are a UK psychology undergraduate student), or earn a £5 Amazon gift voucher (if you are one of the first 40 Sri Lankan participants) as a thank you for your participation.

If you decide to take part in this study, you will be asked some demographic questions and will complete some questionnaires that will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. You will then be asked to participate in an online intervention, with your informed consent. If you decide to participate in the intervention part of the study, you will be randomly allocated to one of the two groups: group A or group B. If you are allocated to group A, you would be able to enter a 2-week long compassionate-mind training. Once you complete the training, you would be required to complete the same set of questionnaires you completed before, and do nothing for another 2-week period. Once this 2-week waiting period has passed, you would be invited to complete the same questionnaires once again for the third and final time.

If you are allocated to group B, you would be required to wait for a period of 2-weeks and complete the same set of questionnaires for a second time. Once you have completed the questionnaires, you would be able to access the compassionate mind training and engage in the CMT tasks for a period of 2-weeks. You will then be required to complete the same set of questionnaires for a third and final time.

The CMT training will include approximately a 30-minute long psychoeducational video, introducing you to the CMT practices on two occasions. You will then be asked to listen to brief audio-recorded CMT practice(s) each day two weeks; these will last no longer than 20minutes. An automatic reminder email to practice the CMT practices will be sent to you via the email address you provide daily. The CMT practices will be based online so you will be able to listen to the audio-recordings at a convenient time for you; these will be accessible via mobile phones also.

**Are there any benefits in my taking part?**

You will have access to a brief intervention that you may find beneficial for your psychological wellbeing. Your participation will also help improve our current understanding of the impact on this intervention on Depression, Anxiety and compassion as well as any differences among these cross culturally. Your participation will also improve the interventions aimed at reducing Depression and Anxiety and increasing compassion among the UK and Sri Lankan populations.

If you are a University of Southampton Psychology undergraduate student, you will receive 38 credits as course credits when you complete the study. If you are a Sri Lankan participant, you will receive a £5 Amazon gift voucher as a'thank you’ for participating in this study. Please note that only 40 participants from the Sri Lankan sample will receive the voucher on a first come first serve basis.

**Are there any risks involved?**

There are no major risks of participating in this study, although some of the questions in the questionnaires and the intervention may temporarily increase some temporary emotional discomfort and a heightened awareness of uncomfortable feelings (i.e. Depression). Any discomfort should be temporary, however, if you become too uncomfortable while participating, you are able to withdraw from the study at any point.

However, if you feel distressed, please watch the following video for a short breathing exercise that will help you calm down.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4_nioG63OSs&index=6&list=PLFbeQlTqQPGTLAmNgKs0srX9Vau7mctFf>

If you wish to seek any assistance, the following website provides a list of self-help strategies to deal with difficult situations.

<https://web.ntw.nhs.uk/selfhelp/>

Additionally, the below will be available to assist you with any concerns:

* National Institute of Mental Health <http://www.ncmh.lk/ncmh_Counselling.htm> (For Sri Lankan participants)
* Sumithrayo Organization <http://sumithrayo.org/> (For Sri Lankan participants)
* Samaritans – 116 123 (call any time: For UK participants)

**What data will be collected?**

Demographic information such as your age, gender, religion and nationality will be collected. You will also be asked for your email address to send study reminders to, maintain contact during the study, and to match you to your data across the time points for the analyses.

Your participation in this study, data and the information we collect about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. Only members of the research team (my research supervisors) and responsible members of the University of Southampton may be given access to data about you for monitoring purposes and/or to carry out an audit of the study to ensure that the research is complying with applicable regulations. Individuals from regulatory authorities (people who check that we are carrying out the study correctly) may require access to your data. All of these people have a duty to keep your information, as a research participant, strictly confidential.

All data will be stored securely on a password protected document in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (2018) and the University of Southampton policy and will be destroyed after 10 years. Details provided for the prize draw will be destroyed once the draw has taken place.

**Will my participation be confidential?**

Your participation and the information we collect about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. At no point your names will be collected or used for the purpose of this study or for any other study that we conduct. Furthermore, we will only keep your contact details (your email address) until this study has been completed. We will not use or store your contact details after the completion of this study for any other reason.

Only members of the research team and responsible members of the University of Southampton may be given access to data about you for monitoring purposes and/or to carry out an audit of the study to ensure that the research is complying with applicable regulations. Individuals from regulatory authorities (people who check that we are carrying out the study correctly) may require access to your data. All of these people have a duty to keep your information, as a research participant, strictly confidential.

**Do I have to take part?**

No, it is entirely up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you decide you want to take part, you will need to check the consent box at the bottom of this form to show you have agreed to take part. It is also up to you whether you want to be entered into the prize draw.

**What happens if I change my mind?**

Your participation is voluntary and you have the right to change your mind and withdraw at any time without giving a reason during the study. However, it may not be possible to remove your data after the data has been analysed, as your data will not be identifiable at this stage. If you wish to withdraw before this stage, please email the Chief Investigator, using the email below, with your unique ID and your data will be removed from the dataset.

**What will happen to the results of the research?**

Your personal details will remain strictly confidential. It is possible that the results of this research will be published in a peer-reviewed academic journal, disseminated in staff newsletters/social media accounts of participating Trusts/organisations and presented at conferences. The research findings made available in any reports, publications or presentations will not include any information that can directly identify you. As per the University of Southampton policy, the data will be stored for a period of 10 years, and it will be permanently destroyed after this time.

**Where can I get more information?**

If you have any questions or require further information after reading this information sheet, please do not hesitate to contact the Chief Investigator at [lkk1n17@soton.ac.uk](mailto:lkk1n17@soton.ac.uk)

**Contact details of the research team**

Primary Research Supervisor

Dr Margo Ononaiye, [m.s.ononaiye@soton.ac.uk](mailto:m.s.ononaiye@soton.ac.uk)

**What happens if there is a problem?**

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you should speak to the Chief Investigator or the research team who will do their best to answer your questions. If you remain unhappy or have a complaint about any aspect of this study, please contact the University of Southampton Research Integrity and Governance Manager (023 8059 5058, [rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk](mailto:rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk)).

***Thank you for taking the time to read the participant information sheet and considering taking part in this research.***

If you wish to participate in this study, please check the consent box below. By checking the box you are consenting that:

1. You have read and understood the above information and have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.
2. You agree to take part in this research project and agree for your data to be used for the purpose of this study.
3. You understand your participation is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time during the data collection period without your legal rights being affected.
4. You understand that should you withdraw from the study then the demographic information collected about you may still be used for the purposes analysing any group differences in those participating and withdrawing from the study.
5. You understand you will not be directly identified in any reports of the research

Please check this box to indicate that you consent to participating in Part A of the study.

Please check this box to indicate that you consent to be entered into a prize draw to win

an Amazon gift voucher at the end of your participation; this is optional.

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Our privacy notice for research participants provides more information on how the University of Southampton collects and uses your personal data when you take part in one of our research projects and can be found at <http://www.southampton.ac.uk/assets/sharepoint/intranet/ls/Public/Research%20and%20Integrity%20Privacy%20Notice/Privacy%20Notice%20for%20Research%20Participants.pdf>

Any personal data we collect in this study will be used only for the purposes of carrying out our research and will be handled according to the University’s policies in line with data protection law. If any personal data is used from which you can be identified directly, it will not be disclosed to anyone else without your consent unless the University of Southampton is required by law to disclose it.

Data protection law requires us to have a valid legal reason (‘lawful basis’) to process and use your Personal data. The lawful basis for processing personal information in this research study is for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest. Personal data collected for research will not be used for any other purpose.

For the purposes of data protection law, the University of Southampton is the ‘Data Controller’ for this study, which means that we are responsible for looking after your information and using it properly. The University of Southampton will keep identifiable information about you for 10 years after the study has finished after which time any link between you and your information will be removed.

To safeguard your rights, we will use the minimum personal data necessary to achieve our research study objectives. Your data protection rights – such as to access, change, or transfer such information - may be limited, however, in order for the research output to be reliable and accurate. The University will not do anything with your personal data that you would not reasonably expect.

If you have any questions about how your personal data is used, or wish to exercise any of your rights, please consult the University’s data protection webpage (https://www.southampton.ac.uk/legalservices/what-we-do/data-protection-and-foi.page) where you can make a request using our online form. If you need further assistance, please contact the University’s Data Protection Officer ([data.protection@soton.ac.uk](mailto:data.protection@soton.ac.uk)).

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**Data Protection Privacy Notice**

The University of Southampton conducts research to the highest standards of research integrity. As a publicly-funded organisation, the University has to ensure that it is in the public interest when we use personally-identifiable information about people who have agreed to take part in research. This means that when you agree to take part in a research study, we will use information about you in the ways needed, and for the purposes specified, to conduct and complete the research project. Under data protection law, ‘Personal data’ means any information that relates to and is capable of identifying a living individual. The University’s data protection policy governing the use of personal data by the University can be found on its website (<https://www.southampton.ac.uk/legalservices/what-we-do/data-protection-and-foi.page>).

This Participant Information Sheet tells you what data will be collected for this project and whether this includes any personal data. Please ask the research team if you have any questions or are unclear what data is being collected about you.

Our privacy notice for research participants provides more information on how the University of Southampton collects and uses your personal data when you take part in one of our research projects and can be found at <http://www.southampton.ac.uk/assets/sharepoint/intranet/ls/Public/Research%20and%20Integrity%20Privacy%20Notice/Privacy%20Notice%20for%20Research%20Participants.pdf>

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