**Participant Information Sheet**

**Study Title**: Evaluating the Effectiveness of a Brief ‘Compassionate Mind Training’ on Levels of Internalised Homophobia, Shame, and Help-Seeking Intentions in Gay Men: A Randomised Controlled Trial

**Researcher**: Philip Pampoulov

**ERGO number: 79267**

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 sign a consent form.

**What is the research about?**

My name is Philand I am a Trainee Clinical Psychologist completing my Doctorate in Clinical Psychology degree at the University of Southampton in the United Kingdom. As part of my doctoral degree, I am doing a piece of research.

I am inviting you to participate in a study regarding the effect of a brief online training on a range of psychological outcomes in adult gay men.

This study was approved by the Faculty Research Ethics Committee (FREC) at the University of Southampton (Ethics/ERGO Number: 79267).

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

You have been asked to take part because you responded to an advertisement regarding participation in this study and you may meet the full eligibility criteria outlined below.

You are eligible to participate in this study if you are an adult (18+ years of age) and identify as a gay man. You will need to have a good level of English to be able to access the online questionnaires. If you are able to read through this information sheet and understand the consent statements below, your English is probably sufficient.

Unfortunately, you would not be eligible to take part in this study if you under the age of 18, do not identify as a gay man, and/or do not have a good level of English.

I am aiming to recruit around 150 participants for this study.

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

If you decide to take part in this study, you will first be asked to complete a set of online questionnaires, which should take approximately 25-30 minutes to complete. You will be able to save your answers and return to them later if you prefer not to complete all the questionnaires in one sitting.

You will then be asked to provide an email address and will be randomly allocated to either a two-week training group or a waitlist control group. Your email address will be collected to use only for the purposes of this study.

If you are in the training group, you will be emailed a link for online practices to complete each day. After the two-week period, you will be emailed a link to repeat the same set of questionnaires again. After another two weeks, you will receive another email asking you to complete the same measures a third time. You will also be asked to complete some questions about your experiences of the training. You will then be sent a debriefing statement.

If you are in the waitlist control group, you will be emailed an invite to repeat the measures, two weeks and four weeks after the first time you completed them. After you have completed the measures the third time (four weeks after the beginning), you will see a debriefing statement explaining the study, and be emailed a link to access the online training in case you wish to try the practices.

If you complete the questionnaires at all three timepoints, you will be asked if you wish to opt in to enter a prize draw for one of ten £20 Amazon vouchers and the same email address will be used to contact you if you are successful at winning the prize. If you have not heard from us by June 2024, please assume that you have not won a prize.

Please note that you can complete this study only once and any duplicates of your information or further attempts at entering the study will be disregarded but may still be recorded.

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

If you decide to take part in this study, you will be given the option to take part in a prize draw of ten £20 Amazon vouchers. Please note that the prize draw option will only be available to participants **on completion of the study**, i.e. after returning the follow-up questionnaires two weeks after the training. Your participation will also contribute to knowledge in this area of research.

**Are there any risks involved?**

It is expected that taking part in this study will not cause you any psychological discomfort and/or distress, however, should you feel uncomfortable you can leave the survey at any time or contact the following resources for support:

* Switchboard LGBT: available on 0300 330 0630 and through their website <https://switchboard.lgbt>
* Samaritans: available via phone on 116 123 and email on [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)
* Your GP

**What data will be collected?**

The questions in the survey ask for information in relation to a number of psychological outcomes as well as brief demographic information such as age, gender, sexual orientation, and nationality.

You do not have to answer all the questions if you do not wish to do so.

**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.

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.

If you are happy to take part in this study, you will need to tick (check) the box at the bottom of the consent form to show your consent. You will then be asked to provide your email address – this will be confidential and will only be used for the research process (to send you questionnaires and links, and to match your answers across different time points), and if you opt in to enter the prize draw.

**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 sign a consent form to show you have agreed to take part.

If you are happy to take part in this study, you will need to tick (check) the box at the bottom of the consent form to show your consent.

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

You have the right to change your mind and withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without your participant rights being affected.

If you withdraw from the study, we will keep the information about you that we have already obtained for the purposes of achieving the objectives of the study only.

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

Your personal details will remain strictly confidential. Research findings made available in any reports or publications will not include information that can directly identify you without your specific consent.

All information collected for this study will be stored securely on a password protected computer and backed up on a secure server. In addition, all data will be pooled and only compiled into data summaries or summary reports. Only the researcher and their supervisor will have access to this information while it is being analysed. Any de-identified relevant datasets to support research outputs will be deposited in the University of Southampton institutional repository with appropriate levels of access and licences for re-use.

The information collected will be analysed, written up as part of the researcher’s dissertation and will likely be published in a journal and presented at conferences.

The University of Southampton conducts research to the highest standards of ethics and research integrity. In accordance with our Research Data Management Policy, data will be held for 10 years after the study has finished when it will be securely destroyed.

**Where can I get more information?**

If you have any other questions, feel free to contact the researcher, Philip Pampoulov, on [P.D.Pampoulov@soton.ac.uk](mailto:P.D.Pampoulov@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 researchers who will do their best to answer your questions – please see below for their contact details.

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)).

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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>

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)).

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