

Participant Information Sheet

Date: 1st April, 2017

Full Project Title: Couples Observational Study

Researchers: Gery Karantzas, Sue Chesterman, James Aloni and Bengianni Pizzirani, Science of Adult Relationships, Deakin University



We are seeking heterosexual couples who are over 18 years of age and are currently in a romantic relationship of at least 6 months. If you have any questions about the study, please feel free to contact one of the researchers. Additionally, you may wish to print off this statement for your records.

Procedure

If you decide to participate, by [clicking the link below](#), you will be taken to an automated booking service, which will allow you to select a suitable session time for you and your partner to attend the Deakin University Burwood Campus.

You are invited to participate in this study and have received this information by following a link on social media. This information is provided to give you a clear indication of the requirements of the study, allowing you to make an informed choice about whether or not you wish to participate.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to investigate how people's attitudes and behaviors predict their interactions in romantic relationships.

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 understand the psychological processes that shape how individuals evaluate their partners and relationships.

On arrival at Deakin University, you and your partner will be asked to independently complete an online questionnaire about romantic relationships.

For example, you will be asked to rate how strongly you agree or disagree with statements such as:

"I generally treat my partner as if they embarrass me", "Despite my partner's flaws, I love them unconditionally", and "When my partner is rude to me I ignore the whole thing"

Completion of these questionnaires should take approximately 45 minutes.

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Following this, you and your romantic partner will participate in a communication discussion task for approximately 10 minutes.

Finally, couples will complete some additional surveys and another communication task which together should take approximately 20 minutes. The communication tasks will be video recorded.

All couples will then receive a short debrief about the study and a relationship enrichment pack which includes useful resources on sustaining positive relationships as well as a \$50 Coles/Myer gift certificate. Participation in the study should take approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes.

Voluntary Participation and Consent

Please note that participation by you and your partner is entirely voluntary – you are under no obligation to be involved. Booking a session at Deakin University to complete the study will be taken as your consent to participate, as the completion of the online questionnaires and participation in the observational study will not involve collection of personal information such as your name and address.

If you take part in the study and later change your mind, you and your partner are free to withdraw from the study at any stage (during or after study participation). You may withdraw from the study by contacting the researcher and providing your couple identification number (you will be supplied with this number when attending the session at Deakin University).

This is required as your data will not be linked to any personal information, ensuring the researchers cannot identify you.

Benefits

Possible benefits of participating in the study may include the opportunity to reflect on and develop insight into your own relationship.

Wider community benefits may come from this research contributing to knowledge of the factors that promote and prevent the development of healthy and satisfying romantic relationships.

It may also inform relationship educators and therapists on how to better assist people that are experiencing relationship difficulties.

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Possible Risks

It is not expected that you will be exposed to any physical risk or psychological discomfort by participating in this project, beyond feelings which may be aroused when reflecting on aspects of your relationship and being involved in a filmed discussion with your partner. In the unlikely event that you and/or your partner experience any emotional discomfort, you can contact Relationships Australia on 1300 364 277.

Funding

This project is being funded by Deakin University.

Payments to Participants

Couples that complete this study will receive a \$50 Coles/Myer gift certificate as a token of appreciation for the time involvement in participating in this research project.

Complaints

If you have any complaints about any aspect of the study, 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, 3125, Telephone: 9251 7129; Email research-ethics@deakin.edu.au. Please quote reference number HEAG-H 2016_61.

Privacy, Confidentiality and Disclosure of Information

Your responses are strictly confidential and we will not disclose your responses to your romantic partner who is taking part in the study with you.

All electronic data (online responses and video recorded discussion tasks) will be stored on a secure Deakin University server, password protected and only accessible by the researchers working on this project.

All couples will receive a randomly generated identification number which will ensure that no identifying information such as name or address needs to be associated with the data.

At the conclusion of the study, the data will be stored for at least 5 years from the date of publication of the research under University guidelines, after which it will be destroyed.

On completion of the study, findings will be placed onto the Deakin University School of Psychology website:

<http://www.deakin.edu.au/psychology/our-research/science-of-adult-relationships-laboratory>

The results may be used in conferences or published in peer reviewed journals. However, any reported results will be in the form of overall findings, not individual or couple responses.

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To Participate in the Study

If you and your partner have read the above information and have decided to participate in the study, [please click on the link below](#) which will take you to an automated booking service where you can select to attend a session at Deakin University Burwood Campus that is convenient for you both.

Once you have booked on-line, you will receive a confirmation email from the researchers with a detailed map and car parking options available at Deakin University.

To book a time to attend and participate in the Deakin University Couple Study:

[CLICK HERE](#)

As principal researcher, Associate Professor Gery Karantzas will be monitoring this study. If you have any queries regarding this research, please contact him at:

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