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Participant Information Letter

Project title: Everyday self-care: Being a “Citizen Wellbeing Scientist”

Approval Number: 2024-05180-LEMON

Chief Investigator: Professor Narelle LEMON (n.lemon@ecu.edu.au)

An invitation to participate in research

Self-care is all about making yourself a priority and taking proactive steps to nurture your overall health and wellbeing. It sounds simple enough - taking care of yourself - but in reality, true self-care is a complex process that requires deliberate effort, change, time, and self-reflection. Self-care isn't just one big action, but rather a repertoire of small practices and habits that collectively help you develop, protect, maintain, and improve your physical, mental, and emotional wellness.

Practicing true self-care means treating yourself with the same compassion you would show a close friend. It involves cultivating self-awareness to recognize your needs, empowering yourself to make choices that serve you, setting aside time dedicated to your wellbeing, and building positive habits. Self-care requires ongoing attention in key areas like self-love, self-awareness, self-compassion, self-knowledge, personal empowerment, time management, and sustainable habits - aspects that are often overlooked amidst our daily responsibilities and societal pressures. Committing to a self-care practice is an act of prioritizing your own needs and wellbeing, but also acknowledging it is relational as one care for one in order to care for others, and relies on others for motivation, inspiration support and/or action.

This project is interested everyday acts of self-care. What do these look like?

Please read this information carefully. Ask questions about anything that you do not understand or want to know more about. Before deciding whether or not to take part, you might want to talk about it with a relative or friend.

If you decide you want to take part in the research project, we presume that your sharing of a photo, video, or audio means you are telling us that you:

- Understand what you have read;
- Consent to take part in the research project;
- Consent to be involved in the research described;
- Consent to the use of your personal information as described.

What is this project about?

You are invited to be a "Citizen Wellbeing Scientist" and share your strategies and practices through a photo, video, or audio to help us to understand further what self-care is and can be.

This project aims to make self-care practices accessible for daily life by establishing "Citizen Wellbeing Scientists" who document their real-world self-care through diverse media formats. It explores how sharing self-care experiences can cultivate empowerment, wellbeing literacy, and positive qualities for care of self. The goal is to provide an inclusive understanding of practical self-care that can foster a sense of empowerment and agency.

What does my participation involve?

You must be 18 years of age or older. Time commitment will be from 5 minutes to 30 minutes depending on the choice of photos, videos, or audio recordings, and how many everyday acts of self-care you wish to share. Steps involve:

1. Reflect on the self-care practices you currently engage in or would like to try. This could include activities like meditation, exercise, journaling, etc.
2. Using your preferred tools like a camera, smartphone, or other multimedia devices, document and capture your self-care practices through photos, videos, or audio recordings.
3. When you're ready, anonymously upload your multimedia documentation to our online space here: <https://padlet.com/hello2690/everyday-self-care-project-bx7tr6sdzv6h0ru2>

Do I have to take part in this research project?

Participation is voluntary.

If you decide to take part and later change your mind, the data already collected will remain part of the study.

Your privacy

No personal information will be collected.

In accordance with relevant Australian and/or Western Australian privacy and other relevant laws, you have the right to request access to the information about you that is collected and stored by the research team. You also have the right to request that any information with which you disagree be corrected. Please inform the research team member named at the end of this letter if you would like to access your information.

All data collected will be kept in accordance with ECU's Data Management Policy. Electronic data will be stored on a secure Microsoft SharePoint site provisioned by ECU's IT Services and physical records will be stored as required in ECU's Records Management Policy. The data will be retained for *7 years* and destroyed, if appropriate at the end of the retention period. Data will be *de-identified* when stored and at the end of the retention period, the data will be destroyed, if appropriate under the State Records Act.

Possible Benefits

We cannot guarantee or promise that you will receive any benefits from this research, however possible benefits may include:

- Increased self-awareness and personal growth
- Feeling empowered and in control of your wellbeing
- Helping make self-care more accepted and understood
- Becoming a Citizen Wellbeing Scientist contributing to the knowledge of diverse ways self-care in mainlined, grown and protected
- Contributing to important research on self-care practices
- Raising awareness about the value of self-care
- Expressing yourself creatively through different multi-modal methods

Possible Risks and Risk Management Plan

While sharing your self-care experiences anonymously, there's a small chance you may feel some emotional discomfort or privacy concerns. Reflecting deeply on your wellbeing could uncover underlying challenges or worries about revealing too much information, even anonymously.

You may also experience internal conflicts, doubts or judgments about your self-care practices differing from societal norms or expectations. This is understandable and okay.

To address these potential risks:

- We provide guidelines to protect your emotional safety during this process.
- All uploads are completely anonymous and handled securely.
- All uploads do not reveal your identity or identity of others.
- You can access support resources or someone to talk to if you need it.
- We promote self-acceptance within a compassionate, inclusive environment.

What happens when this research study stops?

We will advise you of the outcomes via a project summary which will be emailed, should you provide your email address for this purpose. We also intend to publish our results in an exhibition, online social media campaign, research journals and present them at research conferences locally, nationally and internationally. Your name or any other identifying information will not be included in any of the publications or presentations.

Has this research been approved?

This research project has received the approval of Edith Cowan University's Human Research Ethics Committee, in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council's *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2023)*. The approval number is **2024-05180-LEMON**.

This project is supported by the Department of Communities (WA), (WA), Women's Grants for a Stronger Future program.

Contacts

If you would like to discuss any aspect of this project, please contact the following people.

Chief Investigator

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Vice-Chancellor Professoriate Research Fellow

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If you have any concerns or complaints about the research project and wish to talk to an independent person, you may contact:

Independent Person

Research Ethics Advisor

Edith Cowan University

P: 6304 2423

E: research.ethics@ecu.edu.au

Sincerely,



Professor Narelle Lemon, Chief Investigator