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**Participant Information Sheet**

*Ph.D Researcher: Rachael Haynes*

**When daydreams become harmful:**

**Emerging themes from an Australian Maladaptive Daydreaming Population**

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by a Ph.D Candidate, from Charles Sturt University. You must be 18 years or over to participate in this study. Your participation is voluntary. Please take as much time as you need to read this information sheet. You may also decide to discuss it with your family and friends. You will be given a copy of this information sheet.

**Section 1: Purpose of the study:**

We are asking you to take part in the research study, because we are trying to learn more about Australian people’s experience of Maladaptive Daydreaming.

**Section 2: Justification for the research:**

There has been some previous research into Maladaptive Daydreaming by Professor Eli Somer, with participants in Israel in 2003, and more recently, in 2016, with online participants from around the World. But, there has not yet been an Australian Maladaptive Daydreaming study. Maladaptive Daydreaming is a newly defined disorder, which has limited scientific research within Australia. It is important to further expand upon the research which has already been carried out around the World. There are some conflicting ideas about Maladaptive Daydreaming, in terms of whether it is a mental health condition and how it might develop, for a person who experiences it. Your involvement in this study will enable further exploration to be carried out, to learn more about Maladaptive Daydreaming, how it develops and hopefully, to provide some ideas for treatment of Maladaptive Daydreaming.

**Section 3: Eligibility and Exclusion Criteria:**

**Eligibility:** To be eligible to take part in the research study, you must be over 18 years of age. The Maladaptive Daydreaming Scale (MDS-16), and a newly developed Structured Clinical Interview for Maladaptive Daydreaming (SCIMD), created by Eli Somer, (2017), will also be used to establish your eligibility to take part in this study. To be eligible to participate, your scores on the MDS-16 and SCIMD, will be required to be at a clinical level, which will confirm your experience of Maladaptive Daydreaming.

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**Exclusion Criteria:** A number of circumstances would require your exclusion from this research study. These circumstances would include a fluctuation/episode of a pre-existing mental health condition, including; Dementia, Delirium, Psychotic Disorders, Mania and intoxication with illicit substances or alcohol. If you are experiencing a fluctuation of your mental health, this would exclude you from the research study and you would be assisted to access appropriate mental health/community/psychiatric/welfare services, as needed.

A further exclusion criteria, would be the supply of false information at the assessment phase. If false information has been identified to have been provided, the data provided would be eliminated from the study by the researcher, and you would be unable to participate in the study.

The exclusion criteria will be assessed during the maladaptive daydreaming assessment (SCIMD) phase, by the assessor, and monitored by the researcher during the online forum phase.

**Section 4: Procedures – Maladaptive Daydreaming Assessment (SCIMD):**

You will be asked to attend a skype/online maladaptive daydreaming assessment, with an assessor. The maladaptive daydreaming assessment (SCIMD) has been developed by Somer, (2017) and is a Clinical Structured Interview, specifically used to assess Maladaptive Daydreaming. There is no fee for this assessment. This maladaptive daydreaming assessment will take around 1 to 2 hours, and you will be able to choose a convenient date and time. You will be asked some questions about your past and current wellbeing. You will also be asked to complete the Maladaptive Daydreaming Scale (MDS-16), which has 16 questions and provides further information to the assessor.

**Section 5: Procedures (Online Forum):**

If you are eligible for the study, you will be provided with a secret group invitation to join the study on Facebook from the researcher. Secret groups on Facebook ensure that your participation in the study will be confidential, with only invited participants having access. Participation will not appear on Facebook, Google or any other internet searches. The online forum will involve up to 30 other Australian Maladaptive Daydreamers, and you will be free to share your experiences of maladaptive daydreaming on the forum. There may be times when the researcher might post questions of interest, to encourage further exploration. You can choose to participate as often or as little as you wish during this six week period. The online forum will be closed after the six week period, but an alternative Maladaptive Daydreaming facebook group will be offered, to ensure that you are able to continue to gain support.

**Section 6: Potential risks and discomforts:**

There are no potential risks to your participation. If you do feel some level of discomfort at responding to some of the questions/comments on the forum, you can choose to participate as often or as little as you wish. If you do become distressed at any point of the study, the researcher will be available by private chat/email, and will be happy to assist you with any problems associated with the online forum. You will have already been provided you with a list of support services and the researcher will be happy to support you in accessing these if you need.

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**Section 7: Potential benefits to participation and/or to Society:**

You may find some benefit from participating in this research i.e. you might learn about the phenomenon of Maladaptive Daydreaming, you might experience some pride from taking part in the research and for your contribution towards the research into Maladaptive Daydreaming. The overall goal is to explore Maladaptive Daydreaming in the Australian population, aiming to identify and understand the main themes in Maladaptive Daydreaming.

**Section 8: Payment/compensation for participation:**

In acknowledgment of your contribution, if you do choose to participate in the research study, and as an extension of gratitude, you will be compensated with a $50 Myer gift voucher. This voucher is yours to keep, whether or not you choose to participate until the end of the study, or whether you choose to withdraw, for whatever reason. You can choose to have this gift voucher posted or emailed to you.

**Section 9: Potential conflicts of interest:**

The researcher of this study does not have any financial interests associated with the study. The researcher is an Australian Registered Psychologist, but she will not be providing therapy/treatment in the study, instead her role will be as a Researcher.

**Section 10: Confidentiality:**

Any information (data) that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified to you, will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Identifying information will be changed, so that your identity will not be revealed. The information collected about you will be coded using a pseudonym (fake name) or initials and numbers, for example, 123-abc, etc. The information will be stored electronically, with double password access, only known by the researcher.

The data will be stored for five years after the study has been completed and then destroyed. Your signed consent will be collected by email/mail by the researcher, prior to the maladaptive daydreaming assessment. The researcher will transcribe comments/status updates from the online forum, and will provide you with a copy of these if you wish. You have the right to review and edit the transcription. When the results of the research are published, or disclosed in conferences, no information will be included that would reveal your identity.

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**Section 11: Participation and withdrawal:**

You can choose whether to be part of this study or not. If you do choose to volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind.

If you do choose to withdraw your participation in the study, you can email the researcher at any stage, informing them of your withdrawal. You do not have to provide a reason for your withdrawal. Data that has been collected, including emails, Facebook comments from the online forum, signed consent forms, assessment information and screen shots will be immediately destroyed by the researcher. This will involve the researcher deleting any relevant data stored electronically, including files, information stored in the inbox, sent box and trash area.

The researcher may withdraw you at any stage from this research in line with the exclusion criteria outlined at Section 3 in this information sheet. If you are withdrawn from the study by the researcher, you will be contacted immediately by the researcher by email or telephone. The researcher will provide you with the reason for exclusion and withdrawal, and you will be able to discuss these reasons with the researcher. If needed, you will be assisted to access appropriate mental health/community/psychiatric/welfare services, as needed. If you are withdrawn from the study, the data that has been collected, including emails, interviews, signed consent forms, assessment information and typed transcripts will be immediately destroyed by the researcher. This will involve the researcher deleting any relevant data stored electronically, including files, information stored in the inbox, sent box and trash area.

**Section 12: Alternatives to participation:**

Your alternative to participation is to choose not to participate.

**Section 13: Outcomes of the study**

You can choose whether or not, you would like to be informed of the outcomes of the study. It is the aim of the researcher to generate a theory from the information that you provide from your participation in the study. If you do decide to be informed of the outcomes of the study, you will be provided with a summary document, with an option to contact the researcher at a later stage, if you choose. Alternatively, you can choose not to be informed of the outcomes of the study.

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**Section 14: Future activities**

Foreseeable future activities, may incorporate the publication of the research findings of this study in journal articles, at conferences, at academic workshops/training events, in a book or in another written format. Any information collected will be de-identified.

**Section 15: Rights of research participants (Consent):**

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue your participation. You are not waiving any legal rights because of your participation in this research study.

Note: Charles Sturt University’s Human Research Ethics Committee has approved this project. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this project, you may contact the Committee through the Executive Officer:

Executive Officer

Human Research Ethics Committee

Office of Governance and Corporate Affairs

Charles Sturt University

Private Bag 29

Panorama Avenue

Bathurst NSW 2795

Tel: (02) 6338 4628

Email: [ethics@csu.edu.au](mailto:ethics@csu.edu.au)

Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully and you will be informed of the outcome.

*Completion of the attached ‘consent sheet’ and return of the consent sheet to the researcher will constitute consent to participation in this research study.*

**Identification of researchers:**

*Ph.D Candidate:* Rachael Haynes, [rhaynes@csu.edu.au](mailto:rhaynes@csu.edu.au), BSc (Psych) Hons, MSc (Forensic Psych), The School of Psychology, Faculty of Business, Justice & Behavioural Sciences, Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga.

*Principal Supervisor:* Dr Gene Hodgins, [ghodgins@csu.edu.au](mailto:ghodgins@csu.edu.au), BPsych (Honours), DClinPsy, Three Rivers University Department of Rural Health, Faculty of Science, Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga.

*Co-Supervisor:* Dr Charini Gunaratne, [Charini.Gunaratne@acap.edu.au](mailto:Charini.Gunaratne@acap.edu.au), Bachelor of Arts (Psychology, Astrophysics), Ph.D, The School of Psychological Sciences, The Australian College of Applied Psychology, Melbourne.

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