

Plain Language Statement



Project: Self-Compassion in the Performing Artists (Part 2)

Responsible Researcher:

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Introduction

Thank you for your interest in participating in this research project. The following section will provide you with further information about the project, so that you can decide if you would like to take part in this research. Please take the time to read this information carefully. You may contact the responsible researcher (details above) about anything you don't understand or want to know more about.

Your participation is completely voluntary. If you don't wish to take part, you don't have to. If you begin participating, you can also stop at any time.

What is the research about?

Performing artists can be exposed to a range of stressors and pressures which are in many ways specific to this industry. Many of these have also been made worse by the Covid-19 pandemic. There is some evidence that these stressors may contribute negatively to mental health and well-being for performing artists. Building self-compassion has been explored widely as an effective way to respond to stressors and maintain better mental health. However, no work to date has explored how self-compassion can be improved among performance artists. In this study, we are investigating performing artists' experiences of using a brief meditation which aims to increase self-compassion. Therefore, this study involves using a brief daily 10-minute meditation over three weeks, with a number of questionnaires completed before and after this intervention period.

Who can take part?

We are interested in performing artists, over the age of 18, who live and work in Australia. While we acknowledge the broad and diverse types of performing arts that exist, to allow for meaningful categorisation of participants into groups for analysis, we consider performing artists to include those who devote a large portion of their time (as

students or professionals) to performing across different types of dance, music, or theatre. Therefore, participation requires that you:

1. Are 18 years of age or above, and
2. Have studied or been employed (including casual, contract, part time) within a performing discipline (music, acting, dance) in the last 6 months, within Australia.

What will I be asked to do?

Should you agree to participate, you will first be asked to complete an online survey containing a variety of questions which relate to self-compassion and mental health. It is anticipated that this survey will take approximately 25 minutes.

Once this is completed, you will be provided access to the meditation audio file. We ask that you aim to listen to the 10-minute audio file daily over the 21-day period, though understand that this may not always be possible. We will ask you to monitor daily use of the meditation online (roughly 2 minutes a week). To help you remember, we will send automatic texts from a third-party website (see SMSbroadcast.com.au for further detail) every three days to prompt you to use this. This is a completely optional part of the project, and you are in no way obligated to provide your phone number for these texts.

Following this 21-day period, you will be asked to complete another online survey to examine your experiences of using the meditation in addition to the survey questions you were asked at the start. It is anticipated that this survey will take approximately 35 minutes. You will also be invited to complete an **optional** interview (over zoom), to speak in more detail about your experiences of using the meditation. This is completely voluntary, and we will only complete these with a subset of participants (roughly the first half of participants who indicate interest, accounting for a balance of actors, dancers, and musicians). This will be described in further detail at the end of the study, and you can decide if you would like to take part then.

The total time commitment involved is expected to be around 5 hours (~3.5 hours completing the daily meditations; and approximately an hour to complete the pre/post assessments).

What are the possible benefits?

This training is a world-first, designed to improve self-compassion among performing artists. Your participation in this initial brief research trial will help us to understand the acceptability, feasibility and potential efficacy of the training, such that it can be further tailored and expanded into a future intervention program.

Will I be paid for my time?

By completing this study, you can receive a \$50 flexible e-voucher. Participants who also take part in an interview at the completion of the study will be eligible to receive a second \$50 flexible e-voucher.

What are the possible risks?

Some of the questions within this survey ask about mental health and well-being, including suicidal thoughts/behaviours. Therefore, there is the possibility that you may feel uncomfortable or distressed while answering some of the questions. If you feel that your mood has been negatively affected at any time, we invite you to contact Dr Courtney Walton or any of the other researchers listed, who are registered psychologists and they will be able to assist you. There are also psychology counselling services available at the University of Melbourne Psychology Clinic, on +61 (03) 90355180 or via email: clinic@psych.unimelb.edu.au. If you need to talk to someone urgently, we encourage you to call LifeLine (131114). Lifeline is a free, 24-hour, 7 days-per-week telephone crisis counselling service.

This study is an *initial exploration* into the acceptability, feasibility, and potential effectiveness of a brief meditation. Taking part in this study in no way replaces the need for clinical care. If you are experiencing significant psychological distress, please reach out to your General Practitioner, a registered mental health professional, or contact one of the numbers above for more urgent care.

Do I have to take part?

No. Participation is completely voluntary. If you decide not to participate, there won't be any negative consequences. You may discontinue the survey at any time, and your data will be deleted if you do so before completing all of the questions. If any relationship with the research team exists, withdrawing from the project will not affect your relationship with the researchers or University in any way.

Will I hear about the results of this project?

Yes, the results will be written into a summary research report and submitted to a peer-reviewed journal for publication. At the end of survey, you may opt in to have a copy of the summary report sent to your email. As the data collected through the survey is completely anonymous, you won't be able to know your individual results.

What will happen to information about me?

Your individual data on the questionnaires is collected anonymously. During data collection, all data will be stored securely on the University of Melbourne's online Qualtrics repository and will only be available to the responsible researcher. Once all the data has been collected, the responsible researcher will download the data to a secure, password-protected university-based cloud server, accessible only to the research team. The data from the questionnaires, including the demographic questions and performance experience questions, will be summarised and presented in the results section of the research report. No individual data will be reported. Therefore, the data will be completely anonymous at all stages of the project.

Who is funding this project?

Part of this research has been funded by a \$15,000 seed grant from the Creativity and Wellbeing Research Initiative (CAWRI) at the University of Melbourne.

Where can I get further information?

If you would like more information about the project, please contact the responsible researcher listed above.

Who can I contact if I have any concerns about the project?

This project has human research ethics approval from The University of Melbourne (ID: 22353). If you have any concerns or complaints about the conduct of this research project, which you do not wish to discuss with the research team, you should contact the Research Integrity Administrator, Office of Research Ethics and Integrity, University of Melbourne, VIC 3010. Tel: +61 8344 1376 or Email: research-integrity@unimelb.edu.au. All complaints will be treated confidentially. In any correspondence please provide the name of the research team and/or the name or ethics ID number of the research project.

How do I agree to participate?

If you wish to participate and are over 18 years of age, please read and indicate your consent at the start of the online survey.

Thank you for taking the time to consider being part of this study.