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Research Project: Transformative Gamification Services for Mental Well-being: A Mental well-being booster game for university students

Information Sheet for EmotionTune Gaming Experience Participants

I am Afshin Tanouri, a PhD student in marketing at the University of Canterbury, New Zealand. I would like to invite you to take part in my research which is focused on evaluating the effectiveness of mobile games in promoting mental well-being for university students.

The aim of this research is to identify how and to what extent game-based interventions can promote mental well-being for university students by helping them regulate their emotions. Thereby, I would like to ask you to install the fun mobile game I have designed (EmotionTune) and play it for a while. This game is available on both Google Play and App Store to download.

There are a number of negative coping strategies that most people use unconsciously when facing with a negative/stressful event in their lives. The game will help you discover your negative coping strategies and will help you substitute those with positive and healthy ones in a fun and playful manner. If you decide to take part in this study, your participation will involve playing the game for four weeks. Please be advised that:

- You need to play all the five stories of this game, each story takes 3-5 minutes to play.
- You can play the game at any time and for as much as you wish; there would be no maximum limit for interaction with the game.
- The app will not record and store any personal information and it will not require access to your phone gallery.
- The aim of this study is to help university students improve their mental well-being, therefore, you don't need to be a serious gamer or have any sorts of gaming experience to be eligible to take part in this study. You are eligible as long as you are a university student and have a smartphone.
- You will be asked to fill two short surveys in this study. One at the beginning of the research and one after playing five stories. In order to be able to login to the game you need an access code which you will be given upon signing the consent form and taking the first survey.
- In case of feeling any sort of emotional distress, you can withdraw from the research at anytime without any consequences. If you wish to withdraw, your information will be permanently deleted and will not be used in the research.

- Although the app will be running on Apple and Google servers, your responses to the survey questions will only be saved on University of Canterbury Qualtrics Survey and security and confidentiality of the information will be guaranteed in line with the University of Canterbury Human Ethics Committee regulations.
- Upon completing the participation in this research you can opt-in to receive a 25NZD voucher. Please note that you are under **no obligation** to receive the voucher. However, if you wish to receive the voucher, you will be asked to submit your contact information to receive the voucher. Your contact information will be kept as **confidential** and the information you submit to enter the prize draw will not be linked to your responses to the survey questions; as such, the survey answers will remain **anonymous**.

Please be advised that your participation in this study is **voluntary**. You have the right to **withdraw** from the project at **anytime** without giving any reasons and **without consequences** of any kind. If you withdraw, any kind of individual information you have provided not be used in the analysis. Not completing the surveys will be counted as withdrawal and all the uncompleted responses will be deleted 30 days after the first response being recorded.

The results of this study will be published and presented in different forms such as the researcher's PhD thesis (which is a public document and will be available through UC Library), journal and conference papers. However your name and information will not be identified in any of the publications, that is, **anonymity** and **confidentiality is guaranteed**. All of the data collected through the game will be stored on password encrypted UC servers for 10 years and will be deleted afterwards.

This project is being carried out in partial requirement of studies towards a degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) by *Afshin Tanouri* (afshin.tanouri@pg.canterbury.ac.nz) under the supervision of *Associate Professor Ann-Marie Kennedy* (ann-marie.kennedy@canterbury.ac.nz) and *Professor Ekant Veer* (ekant.veer@canterbury.ac.nz). You can contact us via email and we will be pleased to discuss any concerns you might have about participating in this workshop. This project has been reviewed and approved by the University of Canterbury Human Ethics Committee (HEC REF 2020/114), and participants should address any complaints to The Chair, Human Ethics Committee, University of Canterbury, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch (human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz).

If you wish to participate in this research, please install the app and sign the consent form through the link that you will be provided with in the app and start playing the game.

Thank you very much for considering to participate in this research

Afshin Tanouri