PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Project title
Digital Cleanse” - Exploring the effects of limiting social media on wellbeing.

Research team

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principal Investigator</th>
<th>Masters Student Researcher</th>
<th>Head of Department</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr Karolina Stasiak</td>
<td>Charlie Whitfield</td>
<td>Prof Trecia Wouldes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Psychological Medicine</td>
<td><a href="mailto:cwhi934@aucklanduni.ac.nz">cwhi934@aucklanduni.ac.nz</a></td>
<td>Department of Psychological Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:k.stasiak@auckland.ac.nz">k.stasiak@auckland.ac.nz</a></td>
<td></td>
<td>University of Auckland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:t.wouldes@auckland.ac.nz">t.wouldes@auckland.ac.nz</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Charles (Charlie) Whitfield is a student at the University of Auckland, School of Psychology studying toward a Master of Science. His research is supervised by Dr. Karolina Stasiak from the Dept of Psychological Medicine, University of Auckland.

You’re invited to take part in our study

We are inviting young adults aged between 16-25 who wish to limit their social media use (we call it a “Digital Cleanse”) for a period of two weeks to see if it impacts their wellbeing. Your participation is voluntary, and you may decline this invitation at any point without giving reason. All participants who complete the study will be in with a chance to win one of ten $50 Westfield vouchers.

What does the study involve?

This study is a trial to see if limiting social media to 15 minutes a day for 2 weeks impacts on your wellbeing. We want to invite people to limit their ‘passive social media’. This study is an experiment and has the following steps:

1) If you’re interested, you will meet with the researcher (Charlie) via Zoom to go through the pre-study briefing. This will take 10-15 min. During this time, you will be
sent a link to a Google Form where you will be asked for consent to participate in the study.

2) You will then be asked about your social media use and you can either send us a screenshot of your screen time or estimate your use.

3) You will then fill out an online questionnaire about your wellbeing. This takes about 10 minutes.

4) Next, you will be randomly assigned to either start the Digital Cleanse right away or to wait for 2 weeks.

5) Halfway through the Digital Cleanse, the researcher will contact you by email to ask you about your social media use (you can send a screenshot or estimate your use).

6) For people in the Digital Cleanse, we will contact you after 2 weeks to fill out the online questionnaire again, which should once again only take around 10 minutes. For people who were asked to wait for 2 weeks, you are then invited to start their Digital Cleanse. You will once again take your questionnaire, and then take a final one after your digital cleanse is complete.

7) About a third of the participants will be invited for a brief (in person or Zoom) interview to talk about how the Digital Cleanse went for you and what you took out of it. This is optional.

What am I being asked to limit?

“Passive social media” is where you’re absorbing information but not directly engaging with it. This includes activities such as (but not limited to) watching Instagram/Facebook/Snapchat stories, scrolling social media news feeds, and watching videos on YouTube/TikTok. We ask that you limit these sorts of activities to 15 minutes per day for the entire 2 weeks. We know that most people access social media on their phones, but for the purpose of this study we ask that you limit passive social media across ALL devices including laptops, computers, iPad’s, tablets etc.

What social media can I use?

We know that it’s important to stay connected with family, whānau, and friends so you’re free to do that through apps such as Messenger, WhatsApp, email, and text as much as you like during the 2 weeks. There is no limit on this whatsoever. If you would like to post
content (Instagram/Facebook stories, Facebook status, snapchat’s etc.) then you are also free to do this and reply to any direct messages on these apps as much as you’d like.

The main objective of the Digital Cleanse is to spend no more than 15 minutes per day scrolling, reading, watching, and checking social media.

Why are we doing this study?

Social media is playing an increasing role in our day to day lives. As of January 2021, 4.2 billion people were using social media globally. Research on how social media affects our well-being is mixed, with both positive and negative impact. Our study aims to look at how limiting certain aspects social media may affect the well-being in a sample of young New Zealanders.

Are there any risks? And what about benefits?

We don’t believe there are any risks associated with this study. There may be some benefits for your wellbeing from taking part in Digital Cleanse – and we are doing this research to investigate it. You will also be helping us understand the impact of passive social media use on health and wellbeing, which is an increasingly important topic.

Data Storage, Retention, Destruction and Future Use:

All data obtained in this study (including survey, audio recording files, electronic transcripts of interview data) will be stored in a password protected within the University of Auckland storage system (which is backed up and secure) for a minimum of six years. Data will be accessible by the Master student researcher and the supervisor for the purpose of analysis. If you take part in the Zoom interview at the end of the study, recordings of it will be made with your permission and saved on the local and secure drive.

Your rights as a participant

Participation is voluntary

You have the right to withdraw from participation at any time without providing reason. You can request withdrawal of your data from the study within 14 days of your participation.
Confidentiality and anonymity:
The preservation of confidentiality is paramount. Any identifying information will be stored separately to the study data, and no identifying information will be used in any reports or publications arising from this study.

What will happen after the study?
The participants will be identified only by a participant ID number on all trial documents and any electronic database. All documents will be stored securely and only accessible by study staff and authorized personnel.

What else do I need to know?

- You are free to withdraw from the study at any point, no questions asked.
- You get to keep your phone and all of your devices.
- How you limit your social media is up to you. You don’t have to delete any apps or close your accounts.
- The study results will be reported in a Master’s thesis.
- If you are a student of the researchers we give our assurance that your participation or non-participation in this study will have no effect on your grades or relationship with the University and that you may contact your academic head should you feel that this assurance has not been met.
- If anything during this study causes you to become upset, talk to your family doctor, Student Health & Counselling (if you’re UoA student: call 0800 782 999) or someone you trust. There are free phone/text counselling options too:
  - Need to talk? Call/text 1737
  - Youthline – 0800 376 633 or text 234
  - Lifeline - 0800 543 354 or text 4357

Extra Information

- If you require Māori cultural support, talk to your whānau in the first instance. Alternatively, you may contact the administrator for He Kamaka Waiora (Māori Health Team) by telephoning 09 486 8324 ext. 2324. If you have any questions or complaints about the study, you may contact the Auckland and Waitematā District Health Boards Māori Research Committee or Māori Research Advisor by phoning 09
486 8920 ext. 3204. Additional Maori or Pasifika support can be found by following the links below:

http://www.mahitahi.co.nz/

- AHREC Chair contact details: For concerns of an ethical nature, you can contact the Chair of the Auckland Health Research Ethics Committee at ahrec@auckland.ac.nz or at 373 7599 ext. 83711, or at Auckland Health Research Ethics Committee, The University of Auckland, Private Bag 92019, Auckland 1142.

- Approved by the Auckland Health Research Ethics Committee on 16/07/2021 for three years. Reference number AH22545