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**Community Recruitment Announcement**

**Who we are recruiting**

The “Emotion, resilience, and post-traumatic growth in domestic abuse survivors” study investigates the outcome of being in an abusive romantic relationship.

*We are looking for participants (aged over 18) who identify as being in a prior heterosexual abusive romantic relationship.*

Abusive experiences may include verbal/ emotional abuse (i.e., bullying, manipulation), coercion (i.e., intimidation, threats, control of finances, isolation), lying and deceit (i.e., infidelities), and sexual assault. Particularly we are looking for people who identify as being abused by a romantic a partner who displays **psychopathic or narcissistic characteristics**. These may include:

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| --- | --- |
| * *Pathological lying (i.e., use of aliases)* * *Engaging in infidelities* * *Failure to take responsibility for their actions* * *Lacks empathy, guilt, and ability to feel deep emotions* * *Manipulative and exploitative of others* | * *Sense of entitlement, grandiose sense of self-worth, or feelings of superiority* * *Involvement in criminal activities* * *Impulsive and irresponsible* * *Engages in risk taking behaviours (e.g., drug use)* * *Being superficially charming* |

**What your participation will involve**

If you are interested in participating in the study please follow the link [www.cuaftermath.com](http://www.cuaftermath.com), which is a secure website where you will be asked to make an account with a username and password (no personal or identifying information will be asked, such as your name or address). The study will take approximately 1.5 hours to complete. The website is not compatible with mobile devices or Ipads, please use a computer or laptop device.

On the secure website, you will be asked to complete a few questionnaires, a card game where you will select decks to gain as many points as possible, and a task where you will be presented a series of images of male faces and asked what emotion they are expressing.

The questionnaires will include questions on your experiences of anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress, experiences of positive growth, and perceptions of interactions with other people (i.e., social support). There will also be questions addressing experiences in the abusive relationship (e.g., onset, type, severity, and length of abuse), and traits of the abuser, such as:

*Does he or she think it is fun to push people until they get upset?*

*Has been convicted of a serious crime?*

*Does he or she think they can get what they want by telling people what they want to hear?*

**Please do not participate if…**

* 1. You identify as CURRENTLY in an abusive relationship. For your safety, we recommend that individuals currently in a relationship not participate in the current study. We worry for participants’ safety if they complete this study while in close physical proximity to their abuser.
  2. We ask if you are currently undergoing or have undergone treatment for a gambling problem that you do not participate because the card game is similar to a gambling game.

Some of the questionnaires may address stressful topics. If you wish to withdraw at any time (even skipping a few questions on the questionnaires), you may do so as the study is entirely voluntary and anonymous. There will be no penalization if you decide to withdraw, no matter at what point in the study. You do not have to complete all of the study at one time; you can stop and complete the study at your convenience. There is the possibility that participation in the study may trigger or exacerbate distress.

**Incentive**

Participation in the current study is strictly voluntary (there will be no incentive or cash given for participation).

This study has been approved by the Carleton University Research Ethics Board-A (CUREB-A) (**103670**).

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**Consent Form**

**Title**: Emotion, resilience, and post-traumatic growth in domestic abuse survivors

**Funding Source**: Aftermath: Surviving Psychopathy Research Grant (http://www.aftermath-surviving-psychopathy.org/). The researcher does not receive a personal stipend from the foundation’s grant, nor will the foundation have access to the study’s database.

**Date of ethics clearance**: January 12th 2016

**Ethics Clearance for the Collection of Data Expires**: May 28th 2016

This study aims to examine the interplay between emotion, resilience, post traumatic growth, and relationships in survivors of domestic abuse. **The researcher for this study is Courtney Humeny, a fifth year PhD student in the Institute of Cognitive Science, Carleton University.**

She is working under the supervision of Dr. John Logan in the Institute of Cognitive Science, Carleton University.

The duration of your participation in this study should take at most 1.5 hours and will take place on this secure website <www.cuaftermath.com> upon your consent to participate.

Your participation in this study will include questionnaires and two tasks on the secure website. One task will be a card game asking you to gain as many points as possible by making selections from four decks. The second task will ask you to categorize images of faces by their emotional expressions.

The questionnaires will include questions on:

* Experiences of anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress, and positive changes following your abusive relationship
* General interactions with other people, such as if you perceive others around you to be helpful
* Experiences of domestic abuse that address traits of the abuser (e.g., prior involvement in criminal activity) and experiences of the abusive relationship (e.g., onset, type, severity, and length of abuse).

Please consider your emotional safety before participation. We ask that you take some time to reflect on whether you are in a safe place, both emotionally and physically. The subject matter of the study and questions in the surveys may cause emotional distress that may contribute to negative self-talk, insomnia, etc.

Participation is voluntary: you have the right to end your participation in the study at any time, for any reason, up until May 28th, 2016 (when data collection is anticipated to be completed).

The secure website allows each participate to create an account. Participants will be identified with an alias name and no identifiable information will be collected (i.e., name, address). The account allows participants to carry out the follow:

1. **Quick Exit**- The data collection website will provide a quick exit button, which will be located on the top right corner of the webpage as a red button labeled as “Hide”. This button will immediately load an alternative webpage and will not provide you with the debriefing form for the study.
2. **Withdraw from Study**: The Withdraw from study button will be labeled “Withdraw” on the website. If you withdraw from the study it will mark the termination of your participation in the study and all information you have provided will be immediately destroyed. In addition, you will be provided a Debriefing form, which will provide resources for mental health and domestic abuse survivor support. **You have the right to withdraw from the experiment at any time, without penalty, regardless of the amount of the study you have completed**.
3. **Logout from study**: There is also an option to Logut of the study, that way you do not have to complete the full study in one sitting; you can logout of your account and resume at your convenience. Due to the voluntary nature of the study, you have the option of not answering certain questions or not participating in all parts of the study.

The website will ask participants to create a username and password for an account. No IP addresses are tracked. The database that collects participant responses is password-protected, but is not encrypted. Only the website programmer and principal researcher will have access to this database. The web programmer will sign a confidentiality agreement which will require that they not access the website after data collection begins. The survey data will be stored in a password-protected Google Drive folder, which is a separate database from where the participant account information and task responses are stored. Data stored in the Google Drive folder may be subject to the US Patriot Act and could be accessed by US officials.

**Breaches to confidentiality**: If a participant contacts the principal researcher expressing suicidal thoughts, for safety reasons the participant will be asked to provide their name and they will be referred to their local ER. We are aware that this step involves breaking confidentiality, but the welfare of the participant takes priority (APA and CPA and Tri-Council guideline 3.1). The situation is documented, and the supervisor and ethics chair are contacted.

Once the project is completed, all research data will be kept for five years and potentially used for other research projects on this same topic. At the end of five years, all research data will be securely destroyed. (Electronic data will be erased and hard copies will be shredded.) Data from this study will only be analyzed at the group-level (no individual data will be used).

Only group data will be used for conferences and publication. If you would like a copy of the finished research project, you are invited to contact the researcher to request an electronic copy which will be provided to you.

The ethics protocol for this project was reviewed by the Carleton University Research Ethics Board, which provided clearance to carry out the research. Should you have questions or concerns related to your involvement in this research, please contact:

**CUREB-A contact information:**

Professor Louise Heslop, Chair (CUREB-A)

Professor Andy Adler, Vice-Chair

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Do you provide your consent to participate in the study?:

Please click Yes or No

* Yes
* No

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