PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Study Title:
The cognitive architecture of blame biases

Chief Investigator:
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This information serves to invite you to participate in a clinical research study. The aim of this study is to investigate the mechanisms by which we evaluate our own and others’ social behaviour and how these evaluations make us feel.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may withdraw from the study at any time without giving personal reasons and without any penalty or loss of benefits for your further medical care.

This sheet explains what the study is about and what it would involve. Please take time to read the contents carefully and feel free to ask us if there is anything you do not understand or if you would like more information.

Why are we doing this research?
During every-day life we constantly have to evaluate our own and others’ social behaviour and this affects how we feel about ourselves and other people. The way we deal with this information is poorly understood and very relevant for our mental health. Therefore, there is an urgent need to understand this better in order to develop better treatments for mental health problems such as depression or anxiety.

Why have I been invited to take part in this study?
You have either insufficiently responded to treatment of your major depression or panic disorder for at least 6 weeks and
continue to experience significant or major symptoms or you are a volunteer with no personal or family history of mood or anxiety disorders.

What will I be asked to do?

1. You will have contacted us after reading our adverts or having received our adverts from your doctor. First one of the researchers will or will have contacted you by phone. This is necessary to see whether some conditions rule out your inclusion in the study. You will have been asked some questions about your mental and physical symptoms, treatments, and whether such symptoms occurred in the family. After this screening we will have sent this information sheet to you and asked you to consent to the study, you can sign the consent form on the first day of the study.

2. If you are interested in taking part in the study and the information we have collected at the screening indicates that we can include you in the study, we would then make an appointment for the study to take place. During this first session, you will be asked to take part in an evaluation of your mental health, a series of diagnostic interviews and some cognitive function tests some of which will involve the use of a computer. This part of the study will last about 2 hours. If the evaluation of your mental health confirms the results of the conclusions we reached during our phone interview, we will invite you to further participate in the second session of the study, which you may want to do on the same day.

3. Further participation in the study will mean that you will be invited to complete computerised task which will involve emotional contents. The completion of this task may take between 1.5 - 2 hours.

If you agree, we may want to take a video or audio recording of the assessment which will only be looked at by members of our research team or experts on the use of some of the study instruments whose strictly confidential advice we may seek to check the quality of our interviews. If you do not agree to that, we do not have to do this.

What expenses or payments will you receive?

You will receive lump sum compensation for travel costs and the time taken to participate in the study in form of High Street gift
vouchers or Shopping vouchers worth £10 for the first session (only if you have not done this as part of another study) and £20 for the second.

What can I do if I feel distressed during or after taking part in the study?
The testing materials used may evoke feelings such as guilt or anger. In case that you feel distressed during or after taking part in the study, please tell the research team who will contact Dr Zahn or another psychiatrist/psychologist involved in the research project to arrange for further counselling.

What if you no longer want to take part?
If you no longer want to take part that is fine, all you need to do is tell one of the research team. You are free to choose not to take part or withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason: this will not affect future medical care.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?
There are no documented direct benefits for participants. It is the participant who will benefit the progress of medical research. Participants make an important contribution to a better understanding of depression by taking part in our research project. If you wish, we can send a short report on the results of the diagnostic interviews that we have carried out to you, which you may want to share with your GP/responsible clinician.

What will happen if relevant new information on a psychiatric or neurological disorder is detected that was not known before?
During our assessments, we may detect new relevant information which points to the presence of a mental health or neurological problem that you were not aware of before the study. In this case if the mental health or neurological problem is deemed relevant to your health and well-being we would inform your general practitioner with your permission. If you have told us that you are feeling unwell first before seeing your doctor, we may get in touch with your doctor to make sure that you receive help, because unfortunately we are not able to provide treatment. In this case, we may write a more detailed letter tailored to your individual circumstances which may include treatment suggestions. In a life-threatening situation such as when you report about acute suicidal wishes that you cannot control, we have the duty of care to refer you for further help and may have
to give information on your health to other health professionals without your consent.

**Will personal details be kept confidential?**
Your name will not appear on any records made by us, whether paper or electronically. A code will be used to identify records stored in a password protected file which can only be accessed by the investigators of the study. The code file and signed consent forms (stored in a locked cabinet) will be kept for 5 years after publication of the research results by Dr Zahn and then destroyed. Confidentiality could only be broken in a life threatening situation in which we would have the duty of care to refer you for further help.

**Participation in future studies**
We would also like to ask for your permission to contact you again in order to ask whether you would be interested in participating in a future study.

**What will happen to the results of this study?**
The results of this study will be presented on scientific conferences and published in international journals and as part of an academic dissertation.

**Who is funding this study?**
This study is funded by the Medical Research Council and King’s College London

**Who has reviewed this study?**
The research to be carried out has been approved by the NRES Committee London – Camberwell St Giles. This does not imply any endorsement.

Please do contact either of us at the address below if you have any questions about the study.
We very much appreciate you taking the time to read this and thank you for considering this request.

**Contact for further information:**
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