

## Information sheet

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Hi

My name is Raginie and I am a postgraduate, doctoral student in the School of Psychology at the University of Leeds. I am also a trained and experienced school counsellor and am passionate about supporting young people in reaching their full potential. A central challenge of early adulthood (about 18-28 years) is 'finding one's place in the world'. This often involves, for example, looking for a life partner, settling on an occupation, and discovering 'who one is' (interests, skills, preferences etc.). For many reasons, some people find this phase of life more difficult than others. This study seeks to understand the experiences of young people who have overcome, or are currently coping successfully with, substantial challenges in 'finding their place in the world'. If you feel this describes you, and you meeting the criteria, I would like to invite you to take part in my study. If you are interested, please read the following information which explains why the research is being carried out and what it involves. Thank you.

### **What is the purpose of the study?**

I am doing this research for the qualification of PhD (doctorate) but aim to communicate my findings widely, for example through presentations and publications, and to inform educational and support services for young people. The purpose of the study is to understand how young people overcome substantial trials and tribulations in early adulthood.

### **Why have I been invited?**

I am contacting you because I understand that you might fit the study inclusion criteria: (1) a British national (Assamese for the Indian sample); (2) aged 22-30 years; (3) self-define as having overcome, or are currently coping successfully with, substantial challenges in 'finding your place in the world'; (4) have never sought professional support or intervention for mental health difficulties. I'm sorry, but if you are feeling very troubled by things at the moment, it would be ethically inappropriate for me to accept you into this study. A free source of support is offered at the end of this sheet.

### **Do I have to take part?**

No – it is completely up to you to decide. If you are interested in participating in the study, I will go through this information sheet with you again before to ensure you fully understand what the interview will involve. You can ask me any questions you have about the study before you decide – my e-mail address is at the top of this sheet.

### **What does the study involve?**

If you appear to fit the criteria and might be interested taking part in the study, I will invite you to have an initial, face-to-face meeting with me. This initial meeting will allow us to discuss the study further and if you are happy to proceed, I will ask you to complete two screening questionnaires: a short questionnaire about yourself and a standard, well-known personality questionnaire called the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire. After this, if you are still interested in taking part, I will let you know as soon as possible after this meeting if you are

suitable to continue to the interview stage (based on the screening questions). I am looking for a sample of people with a wide range of different backgrounds, experience, and personality, so please do not feel bad if you are not selected for interview!

If you meet the criteria, and accept an invitation to take part in the audio- and video- recorded research interview, please do not worry about the video-recording. It is unlikely that your face will be on the video and, if it is, we will obscure your identity (e.g., blurring your face) if ever showing clips or using stills in reports of the research, and only if we have your consent for this use of the video. I will ask you to bring photos that are relevant to your crisis and how you coped with it, or in some way represent aspects of the challenges you have met. These photos could be pictures taken from the past or new ones that you take just for this research. These need not always include images of yourself. It could be anything related to the crisis and coping represented in time, space or objects (metaphorical, significant people or otherwise). This will help us focus on what is really meaningful to you and maybe help bring back important memories.

You will be given 1-2 weeks to generate or gather the photos and to e-mail them to me so that I can print them out before the interview. I will give you more detailed information about this in a separate sheet. I will ask you to place your photos on a timeline of events we will create and discuss in the interview. It is this time-line and our pointing to different photos that I will be video-recording in case I forget. At the end of the interview, I will take a photocopy of your timeline and keep a copy of the photos, with your consent. I will also ask you to complete a consent form before the interview starts, which includes consent for audio- and video-recording. I expect the interview will last between 60-90 minutes – but will ask you to keep about 2 hours free so we don't have to rush - and hope it will feel like a conversation with someone who is a very good listener. I will ask you to tell me about your period of crisis 'finding your place in the world', what helped and what hindered its resolution, and incorporate discussion of the photos you brought with you.

#### **Where will the research be done?**

Our initial meeting can take place in a public place, such as a café or at the University. My preference is that the interview will take place in a quiet, private room in the School of Psychology at the University of Leeds. However, we can discuss the possibility of conducting the interview elsewhere if the location is reasonably quiet and private and my supervisors approve it. We will agree mutually convenient times to meet.

#### **What about anonymity and confidentiality?**

In order to protect your identity, the interview transcripts, the photos, video, and the photocopy of your timeline will be anonymised. This means that all identifying details will be changed, e.g. names of places, people and details of very specific events. I will be asking you to take verbal consent from people who are identifiable in photos you want to use, and I will blur faces in the photograph I use in reports in order to anonymise them. However, you should avoid taking photos of children under age 16 for the purpose of this study since it is not possible to obtain appropriate consent from them. The copyright of the images will remain with you since they are photos that you have generated. The background questionnaire and Eysenck Personality Questionnaire data will not contain your name but will be labelled with a numerical identifier allowing the matching of questionnaire data with transcripts. Audio and video recordings from the interview will be kept on a university computer and locked with a username and password. Moreover, the video-recording are unlikely to reveal your face as the video-recorder will be placed behind us in order to record our pointing to the photos, but we will blur your face if you are identifiable. Consent forms will be stored safely in the Institute of Psychological Sciences and separately from the research data. My supervisors may become aware of the names of who is taking part but will keep this information confidential.

I must make you aware that there are some limits to confidentiality in research. If you reveal to me any criminal activity you have been involved in, or any intention to harm yourself or others, I will be obliged to contact my supervisors to discuss what to do, which could mean informing relevant authorities. However, I can reassure you that my interview does not actively seek such information.

**Are there any risks in taking part?**

I do not expect there to be any significant risks in taking part. Some of the topics we may discuss could be upsetting since we will be talking about some challenges you have experienced, but you can choose not to answer any particular line of inquiry and you are free to leave the interview at any time and without giving a reason. As well as the challenges you have faced, I am interested to hear about your successes and your strengths and will seek to close the interview on a positive note.

**Are there any benefits in taking part?**

We hope this research will help schools better prepare older teenagers for possible developmental challenges ahead and align with the SEAL (Social & Emotional Aspects of Learning) curriculum. Study outcomes will have relevance to the UK's Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services and other mental health charities which offer support and services to young people with mental health difficulties (e.g., Mental Health Foundation). On a personal level, I hope you will find it a sympathetic and supportive meeting.

**Ethics**

If you decide to take part, you will be given a consent form and asked to sign to show you agree to take part – first in the screening phase and then separately in the interview phase. However, even after you agree to take part in the study you are free to: (a) withdraw before the screening and/or before the interview; (b) stop the screening and /or interview at any time; and / or (c) withdraw your screening and / or interview data from the study even after completion - this will be possible up until one month after your screening and / or interview date as then, analysis will have begun on your data. You do not have to give any reason for withdrawing and can let me know in person or via email.

The ethical guidelines for this research have been set out by the British Psychological Society code of ethics. These guidelines include ethical principles such as making sure you know what will happen and are happy to take part, explaining that you can stop the interview at any time, and protecting your identity. If you have any complaints about my contacting you, or anything that happens during our meetings, please contact my supervisor, Dr. Anna Madill, who will be happy to discuss what action to take.

I hope you have enough information about my study, but if you would like to ask any questions please just send me an email.

Thank you very much,  
Raginie Duara

**Free source of support:**  
Leeds Nightline 0113 380 1381

Mental Health Helpline (for India) 1860 266 2345

# Instruction sheet for the photos

## **INFORMATION ABOUT BRINGING PHOTOGRAPHS**

### ***Why do I need to bring photos???***

I'm inviting you to bring photos so that we can have a look at things that are/were significant to you in relation to your crisis and coping. We can discuss what images you've brought and why, during the interview.

### ***What will happen to the photos after the interview???***

I will ask your consent to keep a copy of the photographs and will store them securely. I will also ask your consent to use the photographs in research reports. I will blur the faces of people, if any, in the photos before using photos in the reports.

### ***I'm confused. What should I click???***

You can click anything you want while you try to keep it relevant to your crisis and the coping strategies that you use/d. If there are clear images of other people in your photos, you need to take verbal consent from them.



***You can click anything related to the research as long as:***

- It does not have close-ups of people from whom you can't get consent.
- It does not have photos of children under the age of 16
- It does not have images of something illegal.

### ***How many photos should I bring???***

You can bring as many as you want to represent your crisis and coping. However, I suggest that you bring around 5-20 photos.

### ***How much time do I get to take the photos???***

After our first meeting, you get one to two weeks to take the photos and to e-mail them to me so that I can print them out.

### ***Can I use my own camera???***

You can use your own camera or camera-phone as long as you can e-mail the photos to me.

### ***Can I use photos taken from the past???***

You can use any photos, recent or from past or click new photos. I will ask for your consent to keep a photocopy of any old photos you bring so that I can use them for my research.

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