

**INFORMED CONSENT**  
**The University of South Dakota**

**TITLE:** Meaning & Life

**PROJECT DIRECTOR:** Christopher R. Berghoff, Ph.D.

**PHONE #:** 605-658-3710

**DEPARTMENT:** Psychology

**WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY?**

You are invited to participate in a research study that examines the relationship of quality of life, emotions, and behaviors. You were selected as a possible participant because you are a USD student 18 years of age or older.

The purpose of this research study is to identify how quality of life relates to emotion and behavior.

**HOW MANY PEOPLE WILL PARTICIPATE?**

Approximately 700 individuals may complete this study.

**HOW LONG WILL I BE IN THIS STUDY?**

Your participation in the study will last approximately 15 minutes.

**WHAT WILL HAPPEN DURING THIS STUDY?**

All parts of the study are presented online at the secure study website, [www.MyMindfulDays.com](http://www.MyMindfulDays.com). First, you will be asked to review the Informed Consent document (this form) and provide your consent to participate in the study. If you consent, you will complete a 15-minute online survey that will ask about your personal characteristics (e.g., age, relationship status), quality of life, behavior, and emotions. Upon completion of the study, you may be eligible to receive SONA credit.

**WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF THE STUDY?**

There may be some risk from being in this study. You may experience frustration that is often experienced when completing surveys. Some questions may be of a sensitive nature, and therefore you may become upset as a result. However, these risks are not viewed as being in excess of “minimal risk”.

Nonetheless, if you become upset, you may stop at any time or choose not to answer a question. If you would like to talk to someone about your feelings regarding this study, you are encouraged to contact The University of South Dakota’s Student Counseling Center at 605-658-3580, which provides counseling services to students at no charge, or The University of South Dakota’s Psychological Services Center at 605-658-3720, which provides counseling services at a discounted rate to students and community members.

**WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THIS STUDY?**

You may not benefit personally from being in this study. However, in the future, other people might benefit from this study, as the information found may inform the development of more effective behavioral therapies.

### **WHAT ARE THE ALTERNATIVES TO PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY?**

If you choose not to participate in this study, you may earn course/extra credit in alternate ways. Please consult your instructor, who will provide you with comparable assignments that you may choose to complete (e.g., writing assignments, participation in other research experiments, etc.).

### **WILL IT COST ME ANYTHING TO BE IN THIS STUDY?**

You will not have any costs for being in this research study.

### **WILL I BE PAID FOR PARTICIPATING?**

You will not be paid for participating in this study. However, USD students who complete the online survey may earn 2 SONA research credits.

### **WHO IS FUNDING THE STUDY?**

The University of South Dakota and the research team are receiving no payments from other agencies, organizations, or companies to conduct this research study.

### **ARE MY RECORDS CONFIDENTIAL?**

The records of this study will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law. In any report about this study that might be published, you will not be identified. Your study record may be reviewed by government agencies, Office of Human Subjects Protection and The University of South Dakota-Institutional Review Boards.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Confidentiality will be maintained through several means. First, survey responses are collected through a fully secure, encrypted system on the study website and are stored in a password protected database accessible only to Dr. Christopher R. Berghoff and his research staff. Second, there is never a direct link created between your responses and personally identifiable information. This means there will be no way of connecting your personal information and survey responses at the conclusion of the research study. Third, study data will be password protected, stored on secure servers provided by The University of South Dakota, and accessible by Dr. Christopher R. Berghoff and his personnel only.

If we write a report or article about this study, we will describe the study results in a summarized manner so that you cannot be identified.

### **IS THIS STUDY VOLUNTARY?**

Your participation is voluntary. You may choose not to participate or you may discontinue your participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may also choose to not respond to a survey item. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with The University of South Dakota.

## WHOM MAY I CONTACT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS?

You may ask any questions you have now or later.

The researchers conducting this study are:

Principal Investigator:

Christopher R. Berghoff, Ph.D.  
605-658-3710 during the day.

- You may call this number if you have questions, concerns, or complaints about the research.

If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, you may contact The University of South Dakota- Office of Human Subjects Protection at **(605) 658-3743**.

- You may also call this number about any problems, complaints, or concerns you have about this research study.
- You may also call this number if you cannot reach research staff, or you wish to talk with someone who is independent of the research team.

## Statement of Consent

\*By selecting "Yes" below, you indicate that you have read the information provided above, that your questions have been answered, and that you agree to take part in this study.

- YES, I agree to participate in this research study
- NO, I do not want to participate in this research study