|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Image result for open university logo high resolution  **An evaluation of Paired**  **Informational sheet** |  |

We would like you to take part in our study on adult couple relationships, but before you decide to do so it is important for you to know why the study is being done, and what it involves.

***What is the study about?***

Regular relationship maintenance behaviours are pivotal to healthy partnerships. Paired uses a range of content (quizzes, text, daily tips, courses) on key topics such as communication, managing conflict, sex and intimacy, home and work balance, friends and family, to promote positive relationship maintenance behaviours.

The Paired evaluation study will explore Paired users’ relationship quality and the factors that are impacting upon their partnerships. It will examine the effectiveness of Paired in prompting routine/daily relationship interactions and how users’ engagement with the app affects their relationship quality.

***What does it involve?***

Paired users can be involved in the study in various ways. There is a monthly 5 statement in-app quiz that will track the scoring of key relationship areas (focusing on communication and managing conflict) and explore how engagement with the app (frequency and intensity) can accomplish positive changes in relationship behaviours and enhance relationship satisfaction.

An online survey designed by The Open University and University of Brighton will examine how people are currently experiencing their couple relationships, and how the Paired app is impacting upon relationship quality. The survey has four sections and will take 10-15 minutes to complete.

Paired users can put themselves forward for an in-depth interview at the end of the survey. Interviewees will be selected on the basis of gender, age, parenthood and relationship duration to generate a diverse purposive sample.

Interviews will be conducted in January 2021, either online or via telephone, by project researchers Professor Jacqui Gabb (The Open University) and Dr Catherine Aicken (University of Brighton). They will take about 30-45 minutes. Interviewees will be asked questions on the key relationship growth areas that feature in Paired: Communication, Conflict, Money and Finances, Home and Work, Sex and Intimacy, Meaning and Growth, Connection, Fun and Excitement, Family and Friends.

***What do I get for helping?***

If you complete the online survey you can enter a prize draw with the chance to win a gift voucher for £100 (or equivalent currency value). Interviewees will be given a gift voucher of £20 (or equivalent currency value) as a gesture of our appreciation.

People who take part in relationship research typically report that the experience has been positive and that it has also been beneficial to their relationship because it has provoked further thinking on relationship maintenance behaviours.

***How will we keep things private?***

All names and personally identifying information will be removed from the data in analysis. Emails will be stored separately to survey and interview materials. In the project Summary Report and any following publications no names or personally revealing information will be included. The research team will use secure and encrypted storage, adhere to national and university ethical codes of research conduct, and data management processes.

***What if I change my mind about taking part?***

Only completed in-app quiz and the online survey will be used as research data. If you change your mind after taking part, you can contact us within one month and we will remove your survey and/or interview from the project dataset.

***Who is running this study?***

The study is being led by Jacqui Gabb, Professor of Sociology and Intimacy at The Open University in collaboration with Dr Catherine Aicken (University of Brighton), Dr Mathijs Lucassen (The Open University), and Kevin Shanahan (Paired). Paired/Better Half own and are responsible for securely storing the in-app quiz because this includes app usage information. The Open University owns and will securely store the survey data.

***How long will my data and interview materials be retained?***

All personal data will be immediately separated from the completed surveys and destroyed once the prize draw is completed. Contact details for participants wanting to take part in follow-on interviews will be retained until these are completed All online interviews will be digitally recorded but once transcribed these files will be deleted. Only anonymised text-based transcripts will be retained for a 10-years period.

***What if I have questions about the project or want to withdraw from the study?***

In the first instance please contact Professor Jacqui Gabb by email at [jacqui.gabb@open.ac.uk](mailto:jacqui.gabb@open.ac.uk) or by phone on 01908 655592.

Participants can withdraw from the study without giving any reason, up to 31st January 2021.

Frequently Asked Questions including details of contacts outside of the project are on the project website: <http://www.open.ac.uk/researchprojects/enduringlove/>. For further information on Paired, please visit: <https://www.getpaired.com/>

The Paired evaluation project has been reviewed and approved by The Open University Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC/3797/Gabb). Researchers completing the interviews have been DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checked.

**Thank you for reading this participant informational sheet.**