Dear Participant,

You are invited to apply to participate in a study conducted by Michael de Manincor (PhD candidate) at the Centre for Complementary Medicine Research (CompleMED), at the University of Western Sydney (UWS).

The research is titled “Evaluation of yoga-based interventions for depression, anxiety and subjective well-being.”

What is this research project about?
This research project is part of a PhD degree, under the supervision of Prof Alan Bensoussan. The purpose of this study is to investigate the benefits of yoga in the reduction of depression and anxiety, and associated increases in well-being.

Why is the project needed?
Over 45% of people in Australia report a mental health concern at some time in their lives. Nearly 15% of Australians currently suffer from anxiety, and 7% suffer from depression. The World Health Organisation predicts that mental illness will significantly increase in the next 10 years, causing significant impact on the lives of many sufferers and their families. Current treatments for depression and anxiety are known to have limitations and unwanted side-effects. Many people who practice yoga report significant benefits in mental health. However, there is little scientific evidence to support these claims. This research is important because it will help to provide a better understanding of different approaches to mental health, in conjunction with current treatments.

What do I need to do?
The study involves attending an initial intake session, four (4) individual yoga lessons, and a follow-up session. Some participants with higher scores on depression or anxiety scales may also require a letter of confirmation from a medical doctor or clinical psychologist, and a midway review of their participation.

The individual yoga lessons are generally 1 hour. At these sessions, a qualified yoga teacher will design, teach and review a suitable personalised yoga practice for participants to do at home each day. The yoga practice may take between 15 minutes and up to 1 hour per day, depending on the circumstances of each participant. We will also call you by phone between yoga sessions in case you have any questions.

There will also be a number of questionnaires to complete. Completion of questionnaires will take between 10 and 30 minutes at each of the sessions, and again after a 6-week follow-up period.

Will the study benefit me?
Participants will gain the benefit of receiving individual yoga lessons and a personalised yoga practice at no cost. Participants will also benefit from the knowledge that the findings may be of benefit to many people with mental health concerns, such as depression or anxiety.

Will the study involve any discomfort for me?
Individual yoga practices will be designed and taught according to the needs and abilities of each participant. If done according to instruction, the yoga is unlikely to cause any discomfort. It is possible that mild and temporary muscle soreness may be experienced from physical activity.
How is the study being paid for?
The study is being conducted as part of a PhD research project by the Centre for Complementary Medicine Research, at the University of Western Sydney. There is no external funding for this study.

Will anyone else know the results? How will the results be disseminated?
A report of the results of this study may be submitted for publication. Individual participants will not be identified in such reports. All other aspects of the study, will be confidential and only the researchers will have access to information on participants, which will be securely stored. You will be sent a letter at the end of the whole study outlining the trial results.

Can I withdraw from the study?
Participation is entirely voluntary. You are not obliged to be involved. If you do participate, you can withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without any consequences.

Can I tell other people about the study?
Yes, you can tell other people about the study and provide them with the principal investigator's contact details. They can contact the principal investigator to discuss their participation in the research project and obtain an information sheet.

What if I am not eligible for the study now?
If you are not eligible for the study now, and your circumstances change in the future, you are welcome to contact us again.

What if I require further information?
When you have read this information, Michael de Manincor or a designated yoga teacher will discuss it with you further and answer any questions you may have. If you would like to know more at any stage, please feel free to contact the principal researcher.

Michael de Manincor  
(Principal Researcher)  
or Research Assistant  
0404 587 643  
email m.demanincor@uws.edu.au

or Prof Alan Bensoussan,  
Director, CompleMED  
(02) 4620 3284  
a.bensoussan@uws.edu.au

What if I have a complaint?
This study has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee. The Approval number is H9529
If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the UWS Ethics Committee through the Office of Research Services on (02) 4736 0229 or email humanethics@uws.edu.au.
Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

If you agree and are eligible to participate in this study, you will be asked to sign the Participant Consent Form.

Thank you for your interest in this study.