**PART 1**

**Page 1**

**Thank you for agreeing to take part in this study.**

This questionnaire is the first part of a two-part study. Once you have completed it, I will be in contact to arrange a time and date for you to complete the second part, which consists of a few simple tasks.

Once you have completed both parts, you will be awarded course credits.

Please read the instructions carefully and answer the questions in the order they appear on the page.

You will not be able to return to a page once you have clicked the continue button.

If you wish to take part, please complete the consent form below.

Please note, this study has been reviewed by the School Cluster based Ethical Review Committee (C-REC) for Sciences and Technology ([crecscitec@admin.sussex.ac.uk](mailto:crecscitec@admin.sussex.ac.uk)) and has been approved.

**Electronic consent form**

By clicking ‘Continue’ at the bottom of this page, you indicate that you understand:

* That you are under no obligation to participate and you can withdraw from the study at any time without having to give a reason
* That your data will be kept confidential in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. Once the final phase of the study has been completed, all names and email addresses will be removed from any questionnaires and all answers will be stored anonymously from that point onwards.
* That there are no undue risks (i.e. risks you would not normally take in everyday life) involved in this study.

( ) Continue**Page 2**

**Background information**

1. Please enter today’s date.   
\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2. Please enter your email address so we can contact you to take part in the second part of the study.   
\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

3. Please write your name. Please note all names and email addresses will be removed from all files as soon as the final phase of the study has been completed, and your answers will be stored anonymously from that point.  
\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

4. Are you male or female?  
( ) Male  
( ) Female

5. Please enter your age.   
\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

6. What is your current occupation?  
( ) Student  
( ) Employed  
( ) Unemployed  
( ) Other; please specify: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

7. If you answered student in Question 6, what subject are you studying?  
\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

8. If you answered student in Question 6, what year are you in?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

9. Which of the following best describes your ethnicity? Please tick one of the following.  
( ) White  
( ) Mixed  
( ) Asian or Asian British  
( ) Black or Black British  
( ) Chinese  
( ) Other ethnic group  
( ) Prefer not to say

10. Please enter your nationality.  
\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Page 3**

On the following pages, we would like to ask you some questions about your thoughts and feelings.

Please be as honest and accurate as you can throughout. There are no "correct" or “incorrect" answers.

Try not to let your response to one statement influence your responses to other statements.

Using the scale provided, please indicate how much each of the following statements reflects how you typically are.

Please answer the questions by clicking the response that is most relevant to you.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Not at all | |  | Very much |
| I am good at resisting temptation. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| I have a hard time breaking bad habits. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| I am lazy. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| I say inappropriate things. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| I never allow myself to lose control. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| I do certain things that are bad for me, if they are fun. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| People can count on me to keep on schedule. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| Getting up in the morning is hard for me. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| I have trouble saying no. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| I change my mind fairly often. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| I blurt out whatever is on my mind. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| People would describe me as impulsive. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| I refuse things that are bad for me. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| I spend too much money. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| I keep everything neat. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| I am self-indulgent at times. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| I wish I had more self-discipline. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| I am reliable. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| I get carried away by my feelings. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| I do many things on the spur of the moment. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| I don’t keep secrets very well. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| People would say that I have iron self- discipline. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| I have worked or studied all night at the last minute. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| I’m not easily discouraged. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| I’d be better off if I stopped to think before acting. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| I engage in healthy practices. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| I eat healthy foods. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| Pleasure and fun sometimes keep me from getting work done. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| I have trouble concentrating. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| I am able to work effectively toward long-term goals. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| Sometimes I can’t stop myself from doing something, even if I know it is wrong. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| I often act without thinking through all the alternatives. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| I lose my temper too easily. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| I often interrupt people. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| I sometimes drink or use drugs to excess. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| I am always on time. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |

**Page 4**

Please record the appropriate answer for each item, depending on whether you

Strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with it.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Strongly disagree | | Disagree | Agree | Strongly agree | |
| I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others. | | 1-------2------3-------4 | | | |
| I feel that I have a number of good qualities.. | | 1-------2------3-------4 | | | |
| All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure. | | 1-------2------3-------4 | | | |
| I am able to do things as well as most other people. | | 1-------2------3-------4 | | | |
| I feel I do not have much to be proud of. | | 1-------2------3-------4 | | | |
| I take a positive attitude toward myself. | | 1-------2------3-------4 | | | |
| On the whole, I am satisfied with myself. | | 1-------2------3-------4 | | | |
| I wish I could have more respect for myself. | | 1-------2------3-------4 | | | |
| I certainly feel useless at times. | | 1-------2------3-------4 | | | |
| At times I think I am no good at all. | | 1-------2------3-------4 | | | |

**Page 5**

How accurately does each of these traits describe you as you typically are, compared to other people of the same age and sex?

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Not at all accurate | |  | Extremely accurate |
| Lively | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| Full of energy | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| Tense | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| Happy | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| Pleased | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| Cheerful | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| At-ease | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| Calm | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| Relaxed | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| Sad | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| Depressed | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| Unhappy | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| On-edge | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| Nervous | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| Energetic | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| Hostile | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| Resentful | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| Angry | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |

**Page 6**

Please indicate your agreement with the statements below by clicking the appropriate response next to the statement using the following scale.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Strongly Disagree | |  | Disagree |  | Agree |  | Strongly Agree | |
| I have the ability and skills to deal with whatever comes my way. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5-------6-------7 | | | | | | |
| I feel that I’m basically a moral person. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5-------6-------7 | | | | | | |
| On the whole, I am a capable person. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5-------6-------7 | | | | | | |
| I am a good person. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5-------6-------7 | | | | | | |
| When I think about the future, I’m confident that I can meet the challenges that I will face. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5-------6-------7 | | | | | | |
| I try to do the right thing. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5-------6-------7 | | | | | | |
| Even though there is always room for self-improvement, I feel a sense of completeness about who I fundamentally am. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5-------6-------7 | | | | | | |
| I am comfortable with who I am. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5-------6-------7 | | | | | | |

**Page 7**

Please answer the questions by clicking the response that is most relevant to you.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Not at all true | | Hardly true | Moderately true | Exactly true |
| I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough. | | 1-------2-------3-------4 | | | |
| If someone opposes me, I can find the means and ways to get what I want. | | 1-------2-------3-------4 | | | |
| It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals. | | 1-------2-------3-------4 | | | |
| I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events. | | 1-------2-------3-------4 | | | |
| Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations. | | 1-------2-------3-------4 | | | |
| I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort. | | 1-------2-------3-------4 | | | |
| I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities. | | 1-------2-------3-------4 | | | |
| When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions. | | 1-------2-------3-------4 | | | |
| If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution. | | 1-------2-------3-------4 | | | |
| I can usually handle whatever comes my way. | | 1-------2-------3-------4 | | | |

**Page 8**

Please read each statement carefully before answering. Indicate how often you behave in the stated manner by clicking the appropriate response.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Almost never | |  | Almost always | |
| I try to be understanding and patient towards those aspects of my personality I don't like. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| I'm kind to myself when I'm experiencing suffering. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| When I'm going through a very hard time, I give myself the caring and tenderness I need. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| I'm tolerant of my own flaws and inadequacies. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| I try to be loving towards myself when I'm feeling emotional pain. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| When I see aspects of myself that I don't like, I get down on myself. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| When times are really difficult, I tend to be tough on myself. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| I can be a bit cold-hearted towards myself when I'm experiencing suffering. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| I'm disapproving and judgemental about my own flaws and inadequacies. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| I'm intolerant and impatient towards those aspects of my personality I don't like. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| When I feel inadequate in some way, I try to remind myself that feelings of inadequacy are shared by most people. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| I try to see my failings as part of the human condition. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| When I'm down and out, I remind myself that there are lots of other people in the world feeling like I am. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| When things are going badly for me, I see the difficulties as part of life that everyone gets through. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| When I fail at something that's important to me I tend to feel alone in my failure. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| When I think about my inadequacies it tends to make me feel more separate and cut off from the rest of the world. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| When I'm feeling down I tend to feel like most other people are probably happier than I am. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| When I'm really struggling I tend to feel like other people must be having an easier time of it. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| When something upsets me I try to keep my emotions in balance. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| When I'm feeling down I try to approach my feelings with curiosity and openness. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| When something painful happens I try to take a balanced view of the situation. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| When I fail at something important to me I try to keep things in perspective. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| When something upsets me I get carried away with my feelings. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| When I'm feeling down I tend to obsess and fixate on everything that's wrong. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| When something painful happens I tend to blow the incident out of proportion. | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |
| When I fail at something important to me I become consumed by feelings of inadequacy | | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 | | |

**Page 9**

Please indicate the extent to which the following statements describe you by clicking the appropriate response.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Does not describe me well | |  | Does describe me well | |
| I often have tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate than me. | | 1-------2-------3-------4 | | |
| Sometimes I don't feel very sorry for other people when they are having problems. | | 1-------2-------3-------4 | | |
| When I see someone being taken advantage of, I feel kind of protective towards them. | | 1-------2-------3-------4 | | |
| Other people's misfortunes do not usually disturb me a great deal. | | 1-------2-------3-------4 | | |
| When I see someone being treated unfairly, I sometimes don't feel very much pity for them. | | 1-------2-------3-------4 | | |
| I am often quite touched by things that I see happen. | | 1-------2-------3-------4 | | |
| I would describe myself as a pretty soft-hearted person. | | 1-------2-------3-------4 | | |

**Page 10**

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements by clicking the appropriate response.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| After I encounter information about a topic, I am likely to stop and think about it. | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 |
| If I need to act on a topic, the more viewpoints I get the better. | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 |
| After thinking about a topic, I have a broader understanding. | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 |
| When I encounter information about a topic, I read or listen to most of it, even though I may not agree with its perspective. | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 |
| It is important for me to interpret information about a topic in a way that applies directly to my life. | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 |
| When I encounter information about a topic, I focus on only a few key points. | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 |
| There is far more information on a topic than I personally need. | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 |
| When I see or hear information about a topic, I rarely spend much time thinking about it. | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 |
| If I need to act on information about a topic, the advice of one expert is enough for me. | 1-------2-------3-------4-------5 |

**Page 11**

**Thank you!**

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

Please now follow the link below to choose a time slot where it’s convenient for you to come to the lab and complete the second part of the study, which requires you to do some simple tasks and fill out a few more questionnaires.

Link – youcanbook.me

If you don’t choose a time slot now, I will be in contact later using the email address you provided at the start of the questionnaire to arrange a convenient time for you.

If you have any questions about the study at this stage, please don’t hesitate to email me (Philine Stein) straightaway: [philine@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:philine@sussex.ac.uk)

For advice on any of the topics touched upon in this questionnaire, you can contact student support: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/studentsupport/>

For more information on general mood, as well as on stress, anxiety and depression, visit the NHS Choices Moodzone:   
<http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/Pages/low-mood-stress-anxiety.aspx>

**PART 2**

**Email: invitation to lab session (if participants did not use the youcanbook.me link)**

Dear … (if name was given)/ Hi there (no name),

You have recently completed the first part of my study looking at personality traits and how they relate to cognitive skills, which was an online questionnaire about your feelings and attitudes.

I now therefore like to invite you to meet me in person to complete the second part, where you will fill out a few more questionnaires about your feelings and attitudes and do two very simple memory tasks.

Please let me know what time would suit you. I can offer you the following time slots:

…

Once you have completed the second part of the study, you will be awarded 3 course credits.

Best wishes,  
Philine

**STUDENT VALUES QUESTIONNAIRE**

In the present study we are interested in investigating students’ values. By values we mean the moral principles and standards by which people try to live their lives. For example, honesty might be a core value for some students. That is, they may try to be honest in all they do – whether in dealing with other people or when studying or working outside university. Following are some personal values that other students have described as important to them.

Conscientious

Friendliness

Spirituality / Religiousness

Compassion

Intelligence

Generosity

Trustworthiness

Kindness

Creativity

Spontaneity

Hedonism (the pursuit of pleasure/happiness)

You are going to be asked to choose a value and write a short statement about it

**Self-affirmation manipulation**

Please select the value that is **most** important to you, and write it in the space provided. (This value does not have to appear on list on the previous page.) If more than one value is equally important to you then please select just one to write about.

Value:…………………………………………..

On the sheet provided please write a short statement (around 2-3 paragraphs) about why this principle or standard is important to **you.** Take a couple of minutes to think about this value and how this value has influenced your past behaviours or attitudes. Please write about how you use this value in your everyday life – at University, at home, amongst friends or in dealing with strangers. If you can, try to recall and write about specific occasions on which this value determined what you did.

**Self-affirmation manipulation – control task**

Please select the value that is **least** important to you, and write it in the space provided. (This value does not have to appear on list on the previous page.)

Value:……………………………………………..

On the sheet provided please write a short statement (around 2-3 paragraphs) about why this principle or standard could be important to **another student**. Take a couple of minutes to think about how this value may influence their behaviours or attitudes. Please write about how they may use this value in their everyday life – at University, at home, amongst friends or in dealing with strangers. Only think about why this value might be important to another person, and **not** why it is unimportant to you.

Please write as much as you can about the value you have selected (a minimum of two or three paragraphs is required).

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**Debrief and thank you**

**Thank you very much for your time!**

The aim of my research is to explore whether writing about valued aspects of the self makes people more positive and more confident in their abilities and therefore increases their executive functions – such as impulse control, attention regulation and ultimately memory.

To test this, I am asking some of you to write about a value that is important to you and how you use this value in your everyday life, and some of you to write about an unimportant value. All of you answer the same questionnaires about your feelings and attitudes and complete the same two tasks designed to measure working memory and selective attention.

If you would like to withdraw your answers now that you know the purpose of the study, or if you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to contact me – philine@sussex.ac.uk

Many thanks for your participation.

For advice on any of the topics touched upon in this questionnaire, you can contact student support: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/studentsupport/>

For more information on general mood, as well as on stress, anxiety and depression, visit the NHS Choices Moodzone:   
<http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/Pages/low-mood-stress-anxiety.aspx>