



Faculty of Business Administration

## Informed Consent Form (Trainees)

### Title: Improv, Well-being and Interpersonal Behaviour

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#### Researchers:

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You are invited to take part in a research project entitled “Improv, Well-being and Interpersonal Behaviour”.

This form is part of the process of **informed consent**. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. It also describes your right to withdraw from the study. In order to decide whether you wish to participate in this research study, you should understand enough about its risks and benefits to be able to make an informed decision. This is the informed consent process. Take time to read this carefully and to understand the information given to you. Please contact the primary researcher, Kara Arnold, if you have any questions about the study or would like more information before you consent.

It is entirely up to you to decide whether to take part in this research. If you choose not to take part in this research or if you decide to withdraw from the research once it has started, there will be no negative consequences for you, now or in the future. Whether you take part or not will in no way affect your standing in your academic program.

**Introduction:** We are an international team of researchers and doctoral students studying how well-being is associated with interpersonal behaviours and how Improv training might affect these relationships.

**Purpose of study:** The purpose of this study is to understand how well-being is associated with interpersonal behaviours in university settings, and how Improv training might affect these relationships. This study will help to build theory on the role of well-being for students, and will help the researchers to identify future training opportunities that might benefit workplaces.

**What you will do in this study and length of time required:**

The full study will take part over the course of 8 weeks, and your overall time commitment will be approximately one hour per week. You will be taking part in a four-week Improv training program offered by The Making Box (<https://www.themakingbox.ca/improv-for-business>). The training program is held in an online classroom where you will be able to interact virtually with other students and the instructor(s) for **one hour a week for 4 weeks**. We will be offering this training at two times:

- Thursday October 7<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, and 28<sup>th</sup>, noon-1 pm MT (Alberta, Canada) / 15.30-16.30 pm AT (St. John's, NL, Canada) / 8-9 pm CET (Germany)
- Wednesday November 10<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup>, and December 1<sup>st</sup>, 9-10 am MT (Alberta, Canada) / 12.30-11.30 pm AT (St. John's, NL, Canada) / 5-6 pm CET (Germany)

The first training group will be completing surveys just before, during, and one month after they go through the training. The second training group will complete the first survey *at the same time as the first group*, but will do the actual training starting after the first group completes it.

The surveys at the beginning of the first training group (**September 30 for all participants of both training groups**) and end (1 month after the first training group finishes) of the 8-week study period are 30 minutes long, and the surveys once per week (4x) during the training are 10 minutes long. You will complete all surveys online (this can be done on a computer or mobile device with internet access).

The surveys ask questions about well-being, communication, mindfulness, leadership and other aspects related to interpersonal behaviour.

To increase the quality of this research, we would like to collect information from three of your peers in the same academic program you are enrolled in who are familiar with you. In order to invite your peers, we will ask you to input their names and email addresses into the survey software program after you register for the study at the beginning of the first survey. Please tell them that you plan to invite them to take part and that they will receive an email invitation. You can let them know that their participation is voluntary and would be helpful to the project.

The survey software program (SoSci Survey) will send them this email on behalf of the researchers without saving their personal information. Their information will only be saved on the survey platform if they choose to take part (see 'Storage of data' below for more details). If the peers you send this invitation to are interested in taking part, they will simply click on the link that the software program sends them to opt in. Your participation does not depend on theirs – you can still access the training and take part in this study even if none of your peers respond.

The software program assigns you and each of your peers an identification (ID) number. However, it does not save email addresses linked to the ID number, so your data are anonymous.

Note that you may be taking part in this study as both a trainee and a peer – the requests for each are different.

**Withdrawal from the study:**

If at any point during the study you change your mind and decide to opt out of taking part altogether, you may indicate this in the survey platform and we will stop sending emails regarding future surveys that are part of the study. You can also choose to withdraw from any one of the surveys that are part of the study at any point by simply closing your browser. And with each survey you can choose not to answer any specific questions that you feel uncomfortable with by simply pressing 'next' in the survey. However, once you have submitted a survey, it will not be possible to withdraw this data from the study, as the survey software program does not save your data with your email address. Therefore, we will not be able to tell which responses are yours.

### **Possible benefits:**

Because this is a strong research design, the scientific/scholarly community will benefit from your involvement, by furthering evidence-based recommendations about student well-being and interpersonal behaviours. Improv training is also relatively new in terms of its use in the workplace context, and your participation will allow an evaluation of its effectiveness. You may also benefit by deriving a sense of satisfaction or enjoyment from contributing to academic research.

Further you will have the opportunity to take part in an exciting and useful Improv training opportunity. This training, facilitated by leading experts, is provided to you for free. You may also choose to view an Executive Summary of the findings of our study at a group level. To do this you may email the researcher(s) or check on the lead researcher's website (<https://karaarnold.com>).

### **Possible risks:**

There is a small risk of mild psychological distress based on questions about well-being and school-related behaviours. Should this occur, you may contact:

- At the University of Alberta you can contact Counselling & Clinical Services at 780-492-5205 from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday; or if you are in crisis phone [ACCESS 24/7](#) at 780-424-2424, ext 2, or the [24 Hour Distress Line](#) at 780-482-4357.
- At Memorial University – Grenfell Campus: see <https://grenfell.mun.ca/current-students/Pages/counselling.aspx>; St. John's Campus: see <https://www.mun.ca/studentwellness/>; or you may call the 24-hour mental health crisis line: (709) 737-4668 (St. John's) or 1-888-737-4668 (province-wide) in Newfoundland and Labrador.
- At Leuphana University you can contact the Psychotherapeutic Counselling Centre (Psychotherapeutische Beratungsstelle PBS) via e-mail at [pbs.lg@stw-on.de](mailto:pbs.lg@stw-on.de), visit the open consultation hours (Tuesdays 12 -14 h) without prior appointment; or if you are in crisis contact the Telefonseelsorge 24/7 per phone at 0800-1110111 or per chat at [online.telefonseelsorge.de](https://www.telefonseelsorge.de) or the English International Helpline Berlin at +49(0)30-44010607.
- Alternatively, you can contact your local healthcare provider.

### **Confidentiality vs. Anonymity**

There is a difference between confidentiality and anonymity: Confidentiality is ensuring that identities of participants are accessible only to those authorized to have access. Anonymity is a result of not disclosing participant's identifying characteristics (such as name or description of physical appearance).

#### **Confidentiality:**

Only the researchers, the project manager, and research assistants authorized by the researchers will have access to the raw data. Although the data from this research project will be published in journals and presented at conferences, the data will be reported in aggregate (group) form, so that it will not be possible to identify individuals.

Your identity will not be confidential as the trainers and other students will know that you took part. However, we will ask all trainers and participants to keep the identities of other participants confidential and we will never divulge to anyone at your university that you took part. If you do take part in the research study, while your peers will know you decided to take part, they will never know how you responded. This will ensure that we can keep their identities confidential as well.

**Anonymity:**

Your identity will not be anonymous as the trainers and other students will know that you took part. However, the data that is part of the study will be anonymous. In other words, nobody will know which of the survey responses are yours. You will not be identified individually in any reports, presentations, or publications.

The survey software we are using assigns each trainee (you) and each peer (those people you invite who decide to take part) an ID number. These ID numbers link your responses over time, and link peer responses to your responses. While the survey software program does have your email address saved in order to contact you for each survey and send you reminders, your email is never linked to your survey responses and the researchers do not have access to your email. In addition, we assure you that researchers who are teaching classes will not be involved in training sessions that include their students and will not know if their students participated in the training session.

**Storage of data:**

Data will be kept for a minimum of five years, as required by Memorial University's policy on Integrity in Scholarly research. Data will be stored on a password-protected computer and/or USB stick and any hard copies will be kept in a locked filing cabinet. Only the researchers, the project manager, and research assistants authorized by the researchers will have access to the data.

The Making Box will have access to your name and email in order to communicate with you about the training and to conduct the training as this will be done virtually. Once the training is completed, they will delete this information from their database. Should you wish to be notified of other training opportunities through The Making Box you may sign up for this via their website (<https://www.themakingbox.ca/>) at any point during or after the training.

We are using an online survey platform called SoSci Survey ([www.soscisurvey.de](http://www.soscisurvey.de)) to collect the data for this study. SoSci Survey has its headquarters and servers that store the data in Munich (Germany). In an international comparison, Germany offers a very high level of data protection - both with regard to the obligations of companies as well as with regard to governmental/agency access and interference. The data that you provide via the surveys will be held securely, and only used for the purposes for which we have described. Once data collection is completed, the survey data and your contact email will be deleted from the SoSci Survey platform. The data will then be stored on password protected computer or USB stick; your email is then permanently deleted. Note that while your email is stored on SoSci Survey's server, the researchers do not have access to it. In addition, any personal data that is collected is subject to the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). You may access more detailed information about SoSci Survey's privacy policy here: <https://www.soscisurvey.de/en/privacy>

**Reporting & sharing of results:**

The data used for this project may be published in academic journals and conferences. Data will be reported only in an aggregated (group level) form.

The universities with students taking part will be provided with an Executive Summary of the results at the group level.

You may email the researcher(s) in order to have a copy of the Executive Summary emailed directly to you. This Executive Summary will also be posted on the lead researcher's website once data analysis is completed (<https://karaarnold.com>).

You are welcome to ask questions at any time before, during, or after your participation in this research. If you would like more information about this study, please contact Kara Arnold.

The proposal for this research has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University's ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research, such as the way you have been treated or your rights as a participant, you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at [icehr@mun.ca](mailto:icehr@mun.ca) or by telephone at 709-864-2861. This study has also been reviewed by the McMaster University Research Ethics Board and received ethics clearance. You may also contact them by telephone at 905-525-9140 ext. 23142 or by email at [ethicsoffice@mcmaster.ca](mailto:ethicsoffice@mcmaster.ca). This study has also been reviewed by the University of Alberta Research Ethics Office as file # Pro00097980; please contact them at 780-492-2615 should you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant.

**Consent:**

By agreeing to take part you agree that:

- You have read the information about the research.
- You have been advised that you may ask questions about this study and receive answers prior to continuing.
- You are satisfied that any questions you had have been addressed.
- You understand what the study is about and what you will be doing.
- You understand that you are free to withdraw participation at any time, without having to give a reason and that doing so will not affect you now or in the future, and will not affect your standing in your academic program.
- You understand that once you submit a survey, that data will not be able to be deleted as it will be anonymous in the survey program.

By consenting to take part in this study, you do not give up your legal rights and do not release the researchers from their professional responsibilities.