Information Sheet
Text Messaging
and Facebook

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Study Title: The utilization of Facebook and Text Messaging as an effort to increase mindful eating.

Introduction
You are invited to participate in a research study being done by the University of Connecticut. This is a research study being conducted to explore the relationship between mindful/mindless eating and technological interventions. Participants will have access to messages about mindful eating via Facebook.

Why is this study being done?
This study is being done to evaluate the effect of social media and technological communication on mindful eating patterns and behaviors and to see whether virtual communication can have an impact on an individual's eating habits. The overall goal is to improve health behaviors and the ability to maintain or lose body weight.

What are the study procedures? What will I be asked to do?
Participants must view an orientation video prior to the beginning of the study, which details the requirements of the program and topics presented each week. This orientation must be completed before agreeing to the consent. When consent is given, a pre-survey will be available on Qualtrics to fill out prior to beginning the program in November. A WebEx orientation will be available if participants have questions related to the study or material from the orientation video. A post-survey will be given at the end of the program.

If you agree to be a part of this project, you will be asked to complete the following:
● Complete a pre-screening survey (approximately 1 minute). If able to participate, you will be sent a link to complete the demographics questionnaire (approximately 5 minutes).
● In October, you will be sent a link to complete a:
  ● Food Liking Survey and Physical Activity Survey (approximately 10 minutes)
  ● Mindful Eating Survey (MEQ) (approximately 10 minutes)
***For ease of use, these surveys will all be presented to participants in one combined Qualtrics survey.
● Have access to a personal Facebook account OR a personal cell phone capable of sending and receiving messages.
● For the 12-week duration of the study: View posts PR text messages daily, respond to poll questions weekly and read supplemental material (M-F).
● We encourage communication in the Facebook group regarding the posts for the topic of the week. Engagement includes writing comments and questions on the posts or marking the posts with an emoji or thumbs up. Also engagement with other participants in the Facebook group will be counted.

● For the text message group, we encourage engagement for the topic of the week. Engagement includes writing comments and questions to your student investigators and replying to the posts with an emoji or thumbs up.

● ***Note: Engagement will be tracked on a daily basis. Engagement will only be counted for up to 24 hours after a post is uploaded that day.

● At the conclusion of the 12-week program, you will be sent a link to complete:
  ● Abbreviated Demographic Survey (approximately 5 minutes)
  ● Food Liking Survey and Physical Activity Survey (approximately 10 minutes)
  ● Mindful Eating Questionnaire (MEQ) (approximately 10 minutes)
  ● Follow-Up Survey Questions (approximately 5 minutes)

What are the risks or inconveniences of the study?
You may not benefit directly from being in this study. A risk of being in this study is that your personal information could be lost or exposed. To minimize this risk, we will do everything we can to make sure that your information is protected. For the Facebook group, we highly encourage you to review Facebook’s privacy settings along with the terms and conditions established by Facebook. For the text messaging group, we do not believe there are any additional risks for being in the study.

Researchers working on the study use computers with password protection. Only the researchers will have access to participant data. Less than an hour may be required to complete the pre- and post-survey questionnaires. A few minutes five days a week will be needed to read and respond to the Facebook posts and polls, as well as read the supplemental material.

What are the benefits of the study?
This study will help us understand the helpfulness of text messaging and social media on mindful eating behaviors. You may benefit with healthier and more mindful eating patterns, as well as a better understanding of the way you eat.

Will I receive payment for participation? Are there costs to participate?
You will not receive any payment for participating in the study. There are no costs to participate in the study. We will provide five small UConn cheese boards to participants who demonstrate the most engagement (comments/questions and use of emoji and thumbs up as described above under What are the study procedures? What will I be asked to do?).

How will my personal information be protected?
The following procedures will be used to protect the confidentiality of your data. The
researchers will keep all study records (including any codes to your data) online in password-protected folders and data analysis software. Names will be used while the project is ongoing. Once the study is completed, the data will be entered into a spreadsheet and coded as indicated above. The Excel spreadsheet will be on a password protected computer. The data will be kept for 2 years after the study ends. After 2 years it will be destroyed.
Study records may be kept indefinitely and will be stripped of all identifiable data. All electronic files (e.g., database, spreadsheet, etc.) containing identifiable information will be password protected. Any computer hosting such files will also have password protection to prevent access by unauthorized users. Only the members of the research staff will have access to the passwords. Data that will be shared with others will be coded as described above to help protect your identity. At the conclusion of this study, the researchers may publish their findings. Information will be presented in summary format and you will not be identified in any publications or presentations.

The Mindful Eating page on Facebook will have privacy settings set to “secret”, meaning that individuals can only join if they are invited by the research staff and posts in the group are viewable to only invited members. Your Facebook friends will not be able to see that you are a member of this group. Posts and comments/questions you make on the page, will not show up in your Facebook friends’ newsfeed.

Phone numbers will be kept confidential by turning off group messaging when texts are sent. This will allow each member of the group to receive a text message from only the sender (student investigators). Participants will not be able to see other numbers that received the message. We will do our best to protect the confidentiality of the information we gather from you, but we cannot guarantee 100% confidentiality.

Can I stop being in the study and what are my rights?
It is your decision whether you want to participate in this study. If you agree to be in this study, but later change your mind, you may drop out at any time. There are no penalties or consequences of any kind if you decide that you do not want to participate.

Whom do I contact if I have questions about the study?
We will be happy to answer any questions you have about this study. If you have further questions about this project or if you have a research-related problem, you may contact the student investigator(s) Jessica Tucker (Jessica.tucker@uconn.edu) or Hannah Waxler (Hannah.Waxler@uconn.edu) or the Principal Investigator, Ellen Shanley (860-486-0016). If you have any questions concerning your rights as a research subject, you may contact the University of Connecticut Institutional Review Board (IRB) at 860-486-8802.

Documentation of Information Sheet:
I have read this form and decided that I will participate in the project described above. Its general purposes, the particulars of involvement and possible hazards and inconveniences have been explained to my satisfaction. I understand that I can withdraw at any time.