

## **Participant Information Letter**

My name is Sasha Strong, and I'm a doctoral candidate in East-West Psychology at the California Institute of Integral Studies in San Francisco, CA. I am conducting a qualitative study on "How people use mindfulness meditation and Buddhist philosophy and psychology to recover from bipolar disorder" as part of my doctoral dissertation. This study is one step in the process of developing a new treatment approach for bipolar disorder that incorporates mindfulness meditation and Buddhist philosophy and psychology to help people stay well and get better. If you or someone you know might be interested in participating in this study, please have them contact me at 971-279-7261 or [sasha@brilliancyresearch.com](mailto:sasha@brilliancyresearch.com).

All participant information will be held as strictly confidential, and identifying details will be changed to ensure your privacy. Once the study is finished, I plan to publish the research report in a peer-reviewed academic journal, where your anonymity will be protected.

### **An Interview, In-Person or via Teleconference**

After a brief phone screening, we will set up an initial 90-minute interview where you and I will meet in person or use a secure teleconferencing platform (Zoom, which is like Skype, but more private) and I will ask you about your experience using mindfulness meditation and Buddhist psychology and philosophy in your recovery from bipolar disorder. I will record this interview and a transcription will be made. I will send you a copy of the transcript to check for errors. If there are any errors or I have questions about the transcript, or if you want to add information, we'll set up a 15-30 minute follow-up interview by phone. This last interview will be taken into account in the final transcript and research report.

### **Participant Qualifications**

Qualifying participants for this study:

- Are at least 18 years of age
- Were originally diagnosed with bipolar (I) or (II) at least 12 months ago
- Have not experienced major depression, mania, or psychotic features in the six months leading up to the study
- Have used mindfulness meditation and Buddhist psychology and philosophy in their recovery
  - Learned mindfulness meditation in-person from an experienced mindfulness teacher
  - Practiced sitting mindfulness meditation for at least approximately 45 minutes a week, for at least 6 months, in the 2 years leading up to the study
  - Learned about Buddhist psychology and philosophy in-person or through books, online, or via any other mode of communication
  - Learned about Buddhist ideas as taught by contemporary lineage holders (teachers)

- Have experienced significant improvement for at least one year in at least one of these dimensions of recovery:
  - quality of life
  - symptom reduction
  - disease remission
  - psychosocial rehabilitation (learning to live with bipolar disorder)
  - social empowerment (a meaningful role in your community)
- Will furnish a letter from a psychiatrist attesting that they are stable enough to participate in this study. (The screening psychiatrist will have the opportunity to review the research proposal. While the study questions are not designed to be emotionally provocative, this is just a step for extra protection of participants.) If you do not currently have a psychiatrist, the study may be able to provide for a screening session so that you can participate.

**If you or someone you know may be interested**

If you are interested in participating, please fill in the [screening and information form](http://www.brilliancyresearch.com/screening-and-information-form) at <http://www.brilliancyresearch.com/apply-to-participate/> as soon as possible. You're also welcome to contact me directly, and I will be happy to answer any questions you may have concerning this study. I can be reached at [sasha@brilliancyresearch.com](mailto:sasha@brilliancyresearch.com) or 971-279-7261.

Thank you for your interest in this study.