

Self-care techniques

Other places you might find inspiration, ideas, and resources for self-care include:

Women & Girls Network - Affirmation cards:

www.wgn.org.uk/resources/affirmation-cards

SARSAS - Self-help guides:

www.sarsas.org.uk/self-help-guides

Pinterest - For non-specialist general inspiration, and affirmation:

www.pinterest.com

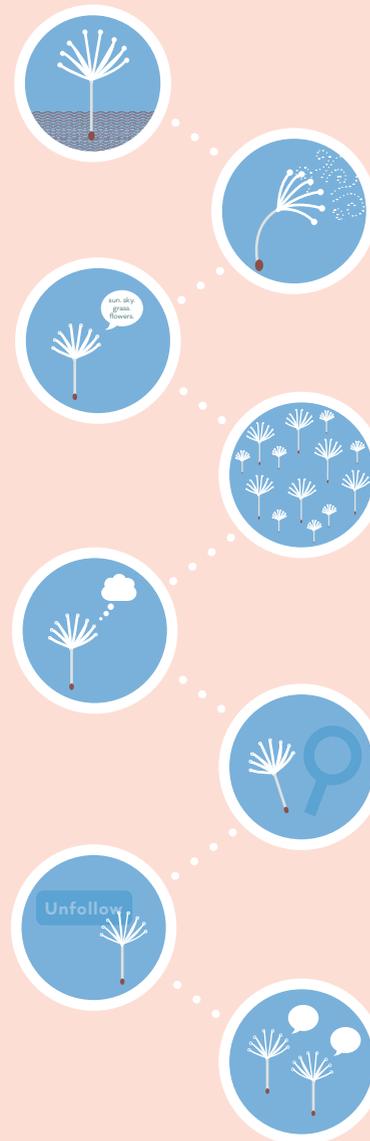
If you've experienced rape or sexual violence and want to talk to someone, Rape Crisis are on hand every day of the year. You can call them on 0808 802 9999 from 12 noon-2.30pm and 7-9.30pm. Also, you can find information on where your nearest Rape Crisis Centre is.

If you are worried that your relationship, or that of a friend or family member, is controlling or unsafe, visit Women's Aid or call the Freephone 24/7 National Domestic Violence Helpline, run by Women's Aid in partnership with Refuge, on 0808 2000 247.

Self-care techniques for women impacted by exposure to sexual violence media coverage

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This information was correct on the 6th March 2018



Sexual harassment, violence and abuse is everywhere in the media. In today's hyperconnected world, it can be difficult to take a healthy 'time out' when we need to. Overhearing or being included in casual conversations initiated by media coverage can be equally difficult to navigate.

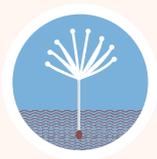
It's not uncommon for abuse to feel remote to people reading about it who have not experienced it themselves. People can often forget that there are survivors all around us still living with the life-changing impact of what has happened.

If you are a survivor of sexual harassment, violence and abuse, all of this can have a negative impact on your mental health. To help minimise this impact there are a number of things you can try to put your wellbeing first.

Give yourself permission to take time out and focus on your own self-care, with our eight simple tips. They're holistic, practical and open to all:

Turn the page to read

1



Get grounded

Focus on your feet - do they feel hot or cold? How does the ground feel beneath them? Hard or spongy? Describe this to yourself in your head.

This can help to divert your thoughts and relax your brain.

2



Take a breath

Take a deep breath in, then breathe out slowly, making the out breath last a little longer than the 'in'.

This can help to refocus your mind while also relaxing your body.

3



Say what you see

Take in the things around you and name them in your mind - table, lamp, chair, shoes, pen etc. Be as descriptive as you like.

This can help you focus your brain on other things.

4



Set your anger free

Write down your thoughts and feelings on a piece of paper, and then rip the paper into small pieces.

This can help regulate feelings of anger and rage that may understandably come up for you.

5



Affirm your worth

At times when you're feeling happy about yourself and your life, try writing sentences of positive 'affirmation' on a piece of paper and keeping this on you. For ideas of the kind of things you might write down, think about what a good friend might say about you, or the kinds of things you might say to a good friend who's been through something similar.

This can help you regulate feelings when you are low.

6



Educate and empower

Reminding ourselves of the myths that exist in our society around rape and sexual violence and abuse, and how to challenge them, can feel empowering and positive. You can visit: rapecrisis.org.uk and search 'myths and realities'.

This can help you to feel empowered and challenge victim-blaming myths.

7

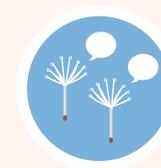


Sort your social media

Regularly assess your social media activity like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Tune in with yourself and ask if they need to be adjusted. Are there particular accounts or people that trigger certain unpleasant emotions or feelings for you, and would it be worth unfollowing them for a while?

This can help to give you some headspace and control over the content you see online.

8



Talk and share

When you're ready and feel safe to, talking to someone you trust about what's happened/ing to you and the way you're feeling can really help. It might be a friend or family member, or a specialist, confidential service (details below).

If nothing else, this can help to remind you that you're not alone.

Rape Crisis: 0808 802 9999 from 12 noon-2.30pm and 7-9.30pm.

Freephone 24/7 National Domestic Violence Helpline: 0808 2000 247