

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.

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 minimize 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:

- 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.
- 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.

SELF CARE AFTER RAPE



- 5** Affirm your worth
When you're feeling happy about yourself and your life, try writing positive 'affirmations' on paper and keeping this on you. Write down what a good friend might say about you, or the kind of things you might say to a good friend who's been through something similar. This can help regulate your 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. If nothing else, this can help to remind you that you're not alone.

Other organizations that can help- 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'd like to speak to a member of SHUK team please email:

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