



Self-Care Toolkit

1. Introduction

Like the majority of Britain, we too are appalled by the recent heinous expressions of racism, Islamophobia and Antisemitism around the UK and fully aware that these events may be having a big impact on you personally, within your family, social network & your community.

We extend our love and solidarity to each and every one of you and in addition, we have created a self-care toolkit and within it a variety of tips on how to take care of yourself. It's not an exclusive list, but a few ideas that we want to share to support you to navigate your life experiences at this challenging time.

We encourage you to have a look & share with anyone else you think could also benefit.

However, we are also open to hear if you feel there may be some information that is missing or if you feel there is more we can do as an organisation. We can't promise that we will be able to do everything suggested but we welcome your suggestions, we are always going to try & be a part of creating solutions with you.

Our strength lies in our collective action, we stand with you.

2. Self-care Definition by Carol Cumberbatch

A definition of Self Care by Carol Cumberbatch, Artist, Drama therapist, Creative Clinical Supervisor, Wellness, Cultural & Diversity Consultant;

Self-Care can be a myriad of things/activities that bring you joy, peace & or contentment without harming you or anyone else. Self-care is an internal focus & a life-long daily ritual that can develop our emotional & psychological strength. Just like brushing our teeth twice daily contributes to good oral health, investing in self-care for ourselves throughout our days can contribute to improved emotional & psychological strength, which in turn can support us to navigate challenging situations & experiences.

Self-care is synonymous with self-compassion & self-soothing & all refer to finding ways to direct care, attention, kindness & patience towards oneself, which can alleviate distress & safely activate happy hormones; endorphins, dopamine, serotonin & oxytocin. Self-care is as unique as you are, so getting to know yourself & what brings you joy is an important first step in creating your own self-care go to activities. It could be a walk in the park, reading a book/s, a movie marathon that makes you laugh, listening to music or uplifting podcasts, a warm bubble bath or a cold shower, a run, being creative, having a lay in, etc...

Whatever you choose, the aim is to enjoy yourself without guilt or judgement, by gifting yourself with time to relax & recharge in different ways.

3. Tips for Self-care (from MIND)

Self-care can be a powerful way to reject negative messages about your identity or your worth. It's something you can control – even if you don't have much time or money. You can decide when and how you show yourself kindness. And it can help build up your energy and strength.

When you feel able, here are some self-care ideas to try:

Remember your breath: If you become triggered, breathing is a great way to bring yourself back into a state of calm, lower your heart rate and create space in your brain to start thinking things through at an easier pace. Try breathing in for four seconds, holding your breath for four seconds, exhaling for four seconds and holding again. Repeat this for as long as you need until your breath feels in control again. Lots of mobiles and smart watches offer apps which can help you with this. [See our pages on other relaxation for tips](#)

Talk to someone you trust: Speaking to someone who understands racism can be helpful. It may be that having someone listen to you and show they care can help in itself. You may want to speak to someone you know. Or you might feel more comfortable speaking to someone you don't know.

Find ways to build your self-esteem: Try and take time to praise yourself and think about what you're proud of. For example, you could think about your character traits, skills or things you've done.

Take time to celebrate all parts of your identity: You could spend time thinking about what makes you happy and what you value in life. You may also find it helpful to connect with people who share your racial identity, to enjoy and celebrate your culture.

Try mindfulness: Mindfulness is a technique you can learn. It involves making a special effort to notice what's happening in the present moment – without judging anything. It aims to help you feel calmer, manage your thoughts, and be kinder towards yourself. [See our pages on mindfulness for more information](#)

Get creative: Getting creative can help you express thoughts and feelings that are weighing on your mind. You could use dancing, making music, painting, poetry, writing or any other creative activity. [See our page on arts and creative therapies](#)

Try to look after your physical health: Experiencing racism can affect our body as well as our mind. Physical health and mental health are connected, so looking after one can boost both. Being active doesn't have to mean doing sports or going to the gym a lot – although that works well for some people. But there are plenty of things you could try on any budget – and at any level of fitness or ability. You may also find that [spending time in nature](#) helps improve your physical health and your mood.

Take care with news and social media: Seeing news stories or social media content about racism might sometimes make you feel anxious or overwhelmed. In this case, you could think about switching off or limiting what you look at for a while. If a particular person on your social media is upsetting you, think about blocking them to give yourself space. Remember: racist abuse or bullying online could be a hate crime. If you see racist abuse happen online:

You can report hate crimes to the police using the [True Vision website](#).

If you don't want to go to the police, you might be able to report it through [Stop Hate UK](#).

Treat yourself with compassion and patience: You may find that examining your experiences is helpful at some times, but not at others. It can be good to spend a while sitting with your experiences. But it's also ok to try and take a break from thinking about them when this feels useful. Try to treat yourself the way you would treat a friend. And give yourself space when you need it.

Connect with others: Connecting and sharing with others who have similar experiences can be very helpful. You might want to meet people who share your experiences of mental health problems, or racism, or both. Some groups run in person, while others are online.

- Our [finding peer support](#) page lists lots of options, including our peer support directory.
- [Hub of Hope](#) lets you search for local services near you, including support groups. You can filter results using the 'BAME Support' tag.
- Rethink's [online support group directory](#) shows any groups they have in your area. Some of these groups are designed for specific communities.
- [Side by Side](#) is Mind's supportive online community where you can feel at home talking about your mental health. We welcome people from all backgrounds. It's anonymous, and moderated to keep it safe.
- Our [Student life](#) pages include options for students.

Whether you can join a support group may depend on what's available in your area.

There is also a signposting section at the end of this document for helplines and organisations who can help.

4. Signposting

BLACK MINDS MATTER UK

Connecting Black individuals and families with free professional mental health services
www.blackmindsmatteruk.com

ISLAMOPHOBIA RESPONSE UNIT

Reporting incidents of Islamophobia or referrals to support services
www.theiru.org.uk

STOP HATE UK

Reporting a hate crime after an incident (not directly to the police) or support following a hate crime

0800 138 1625
www.stophateuk.org

CST

Protecting our Jewish Community – support services

Emergency no: 0800 032 3263
Support Helpline: 0800 032 8477
www.cst.org.uk

ANTHONY WALKER FOUNDATION

Victim support services: Racism, hate crime, discrimination

0151 237 3974
support@anthonywalker.com

TELL MAMA

Counselling and wellbeing support to victims of anti-Muslim hate or Islamophobia

counselling@tellmamauk.org
www.tellmamauk.org

MIND

A support line where advisors are trained to listen to you and help you find specialist support if you need it.

0300 102 1234

www.mind.org.uk

YOUNG MINDS

Providing mental health and wellbeing support for young people up to the age of 19

Text 'SHOUT' to 85258

www.youngminds.org.uk

SAMARITANS

A listening ear, to support your general mental health and wellbeing, any time of the day

116 123

www.samaritans.org

HUB OF HOPE

Finding the right support for you, in your area

www.hubofhope.co.uk

5. Well-being Apps

HEADSPACE AND CALM

Widely available in the UK, these apps offer mindfulness and meditation exercises.

MEETWO

A UK-based mental health app that offers a safe space for teenagers to discuss issues affecting their well-being, including race related stress.

6. Community Organisations and Advocacy Groups

STAND UP TO RACISM

A UK organisation campaigning against racism and supporting communities in building a united movement.

www.standuptoracism.org.uk

HopeNotHate

Works to challenge and combat racism and fascism in the UK through education and advocacy.

www.hopenothate.org.uk

SOLIDARITY

AND

LOVE

