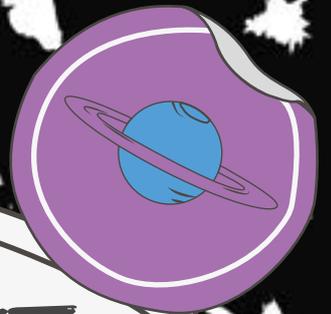


VOLUME  
2



# STAYING RESILIENT WHILE TRYING TO SAVE THE WORLD

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A well-being workbook for youth activists



# STAYING RESILIENT WHILE TRYING TO SAVE THE WORLD

## A Well-being Workbook for Youth Activists



This well-being workbook belongs to ....

**Amnesty International** would like to thank the many youth activists across the globe who have contributed to writing the content of this workbook. We are very grateful for the expertise and personal experiences you shared as part of this journey. Additionally, we would like to acknowledge the design contributions of Bárbara Vil and the technical review of the content completed by psychologist Chloë Gough. The stickers on the front cover were designed by Karin Watson.

**Amnesty International is a global movement of people who take injustice personally.** We are campaigning for a world where human rights are enjoyed by all. We investigate and expose the facts, whenever and wherever abuses happen. We lobby governments, and other powerful groups such as companies, to make sure they keep their promises and respect international law. We support people to claim their rights through education and training and by telling the powerful stories of the people we work with, we mobilise millions of supporters around the world to campaign for change and to stand in defence of activists on the frontline.

# INTRODUCING YOUR WORKBOOK

Many of us are trying to save the world. Everyone will have their own reasons for doing this. As you are reading this workbook, you probably want to save the world too!

Fighting for the world to be a better place, together with others who have the same dreams, can be lots of fun! At the same time, it can have an impact on your well-being. Sometimes this happens because you are exposed to human rights violations. Sometimes this happens because you have to combine activism with school or work. Sometimes this happens because as a youth activist you are faced with ageism. There can be lots of reasons.



**Happiness and your activism can co-exist.  
You deserve to be as nice to yourself as you are to other people.**

Fighting for a just world is not something you need to do alone - it's a fight we can do together! When we care for each other, we can sustain our activism and balance it with our happiness.

We hope this workbook will support your journey to strengthen your self-care and make us all recognise the need to look after each other as we stand up for human rights.

**Before you dive in... we would like you to keep these points in mind while using this workbook:**

• This workbook is part of the **'Staying Resilient While Trying to Save the World'** series originated by young people in the Americas who developed and designed Vol. 1 of the series **Fanzine for activists and volunteers**. Throughout this workbook there are stories and images that were originally published as part of the Volume 1 'Fanzine for activists and volunteers'.

• This is a workbook, but we hope it will not feel like work. For easy reading, we will stop striking through the word work from here and let you focus on enjoying the read.

• The workbook was informed by realities faced by Amnesty International youth activists across the globe, which they shared through workshops and surveys in 2019 and 2020. We have also based theory chapters on materials developed by others; you can find those in the reference list.

• We have developed this workbook for Amnesty International youth activists. The content might still be relevant to youth activists from other movements.

• In the workbook you will find different exercises. Some might work for you and others might not. That is fine! What works for you depends on your personal context and realities. Most of the exercises are ones you can do by yourself, but there are also some you could do in a group. There is also the Well-being Library at the end of the workbook, which refers to many other tools you can try too.

• We would like to acknowledge that Amnesty International is by no means perfect. As a movement, we have sometimes fallen short on creating spaces where people of marginalized communities are welcomed and heard. This workbook is part of a longer process to hold ourselves accountable.

• The stories in this workbook are reflective of our collective experiences. While based on real experiences, the characters and names portrayed are fictional.

• When discussing oppression, this workbook primarily focuses on race, age and gender identity. We recognise that there are many additional diversity dimensions and intersecting identities, but we are not able to cover all of them in this workbook.

• In the workbook we will discuss sensitive issues that could trigger negative emotions. Use the guide on the next page to navigate the topics of each chapter, so you can decide if there is anything you would prefer to skip.

• This workbook does not equate to professional psychological support. At the end of the workbook a list of helplines is included that you can refer to.

• Stories have three kinds of bubbles. Here is an example:

thought

speech

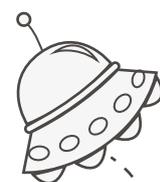
key point



# NAVIGATING YOUR WORKBOOK

This workbook covers a range of topics. We understand talking about mental health, well-being, self-care, and burnout is complex. There is no one-size-fits-all solution and we do not attempt to offer one here. Instead, we will provide you with ideas, tools and exercises. We hope this will inspire you to reflect on well-being as part of your activism.

You can use the workbook from start to finish or you can just pick up a specific topic when you feel the time is right. The workbook includes three types of chapters:



You can choose which type of content works best for you!  
In your workbook you will find...

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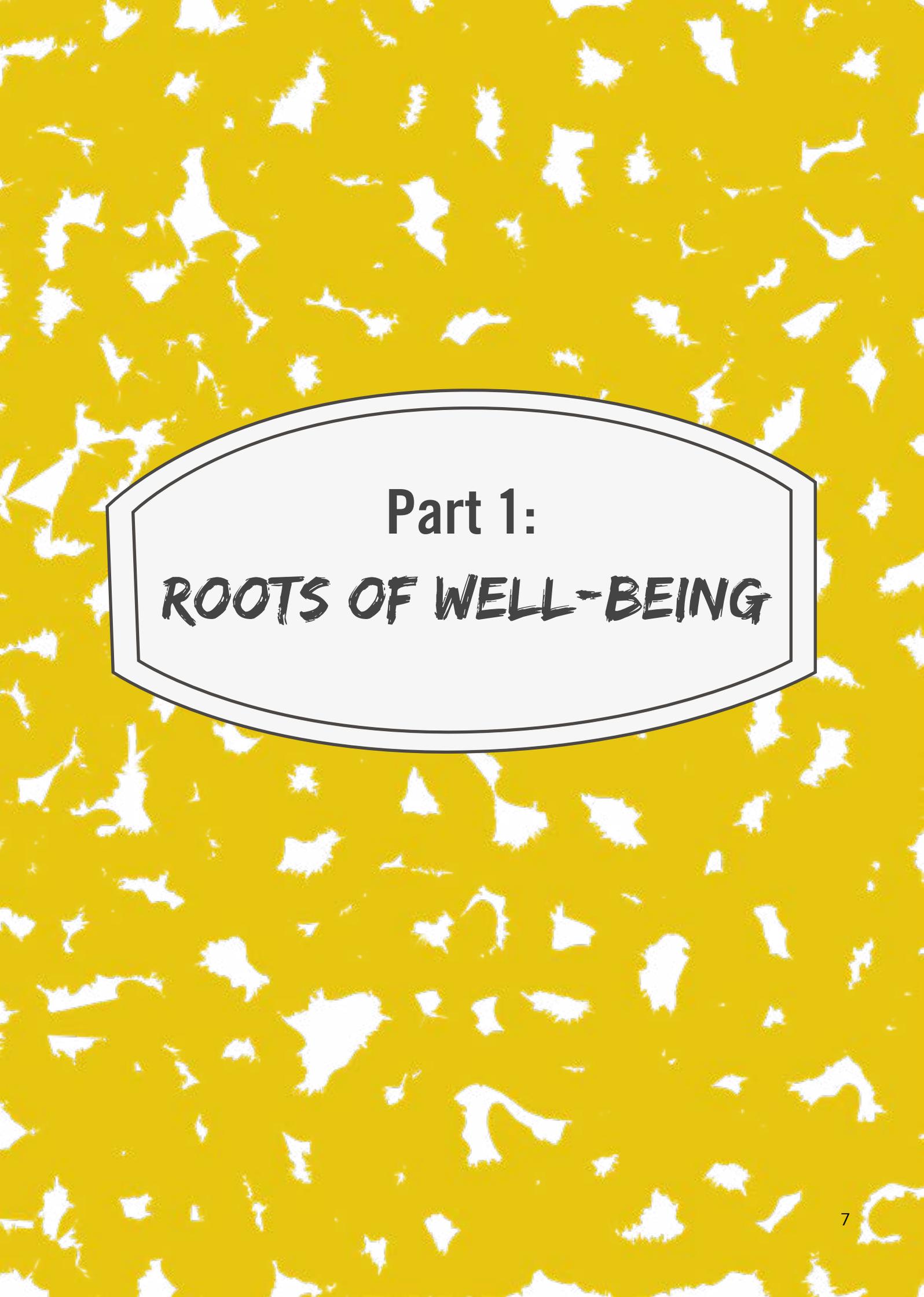
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**Part 1:**  
**ROOTS OF WELL-BEING**



# STOP IMAGINING MYSELF AS SUPERWOMAN



My name is **Su-wei**. Let me share some experiences that you and I may both have been through.

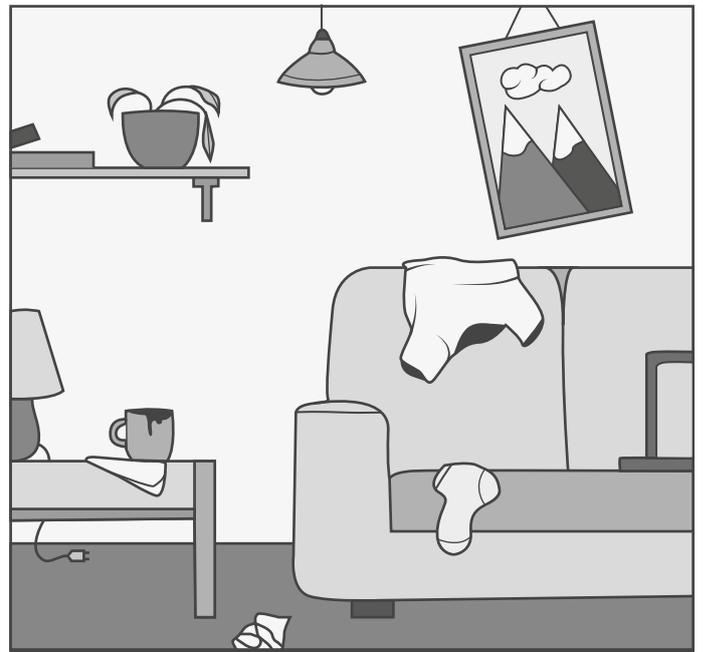
I wake up from the same nightmare in the middle of the night, sweating, breathing heavily. I dream of my activism again. I dream that I fail at my job as a youth activist, and the wave of fear and guilt strikes me, forcing me to open my eyes, with panic and frustration.



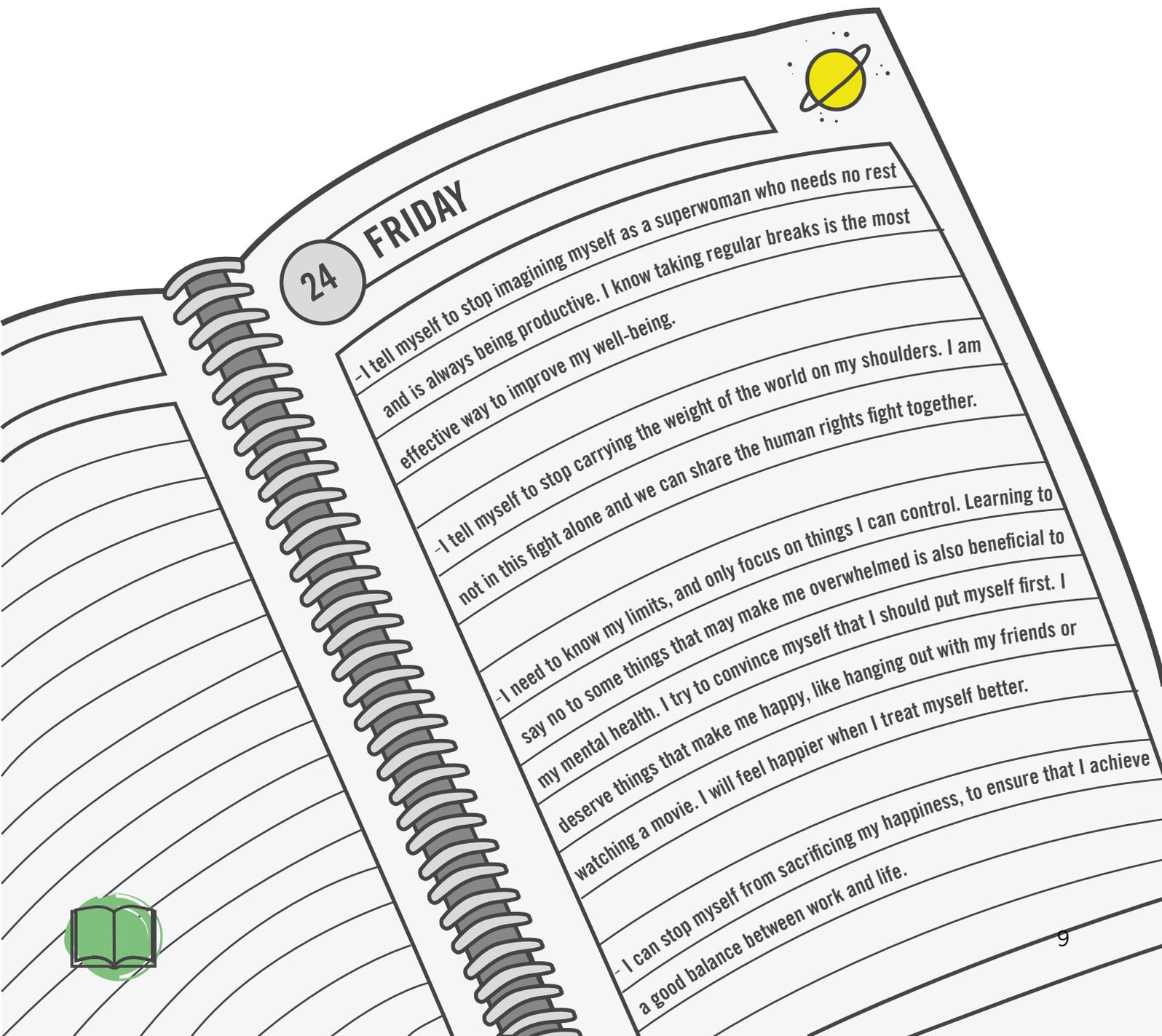
As one of the very few youth representatives in my organisation, the heavy load on my shoulders is something that I can barely handle anymore. From the bottom of my heart, I understand how important and meaningful my work is, but I feel anxious and nervous all the time. Even during my sleep, I can't stop worrying about the meetings which I haven't prepared for, or the tons of messages which I haven't replied to.



If I think about taking some rest, there will be a voice in my head blaming me for being sluggish or irresponsible. I feel like I'm failing my colleagues. I am afraid of slowing down the progress we've made so far on youth representation or on human rights issues. Because of that, I have not taken a break to take care of myself in a while. If I stop, no other young person will be there to continue the work I'm doing to tackle adultcentrism. **This worries me.** I see I am constantly neglecting my own needs and I'm realising that I have to make some changes.



**So I take a moment to write in my journal...**



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FRIDAY



-I tell myself to stop imagining myself as a superwoman who needs no rest and is always being productive. I know taking regular breaks is the most effective way to improve my well-being.

-I tell myself to stop carrying the weight of the world on my shoulders. I am not in this fight alone and we can share the human rights fight together.

-I need to know my limits, and only focus on things I can control. Learning to say no to some things that may make me overwhelmed is also beneficial to my mental health. I try to convince myself that I should put myself first. I deserve things that make me happy, like hanging out with my friends or watching a movie. I will feel happier when I treat myself better.

-I can stop myself from sacrificing my happiness, to ensure that I achieve a good balance between work and life.





# UNDERSTANDING ACTIVISM CULTURES

Being exposed to human rights abuses as part of our activism can be draining. If you don't take enough time to heal or don't prioritise your own feelings this can create stress.

Sometimes, activists like Su-Wei can take on the weight of the world and struggle to take time off to rest until the problems of the world have been solved, like a form of self-sacrifice for the greater good. These standards can be self-imposed or embedded in group dynamics.



**What kind of activism cultures do such attitudes create? For example, do we accept periods of low motivation, while respecting people for admitting that they need a break to recharge their batteries? Do we respect activists who say no to something if they do not have the time or energy?**

Research suggests that social justice and human rights activists are especially susceptible to **burnout**. Social science professors Cher Weixia Chen and Paul Gorski have spoken with many activists and concluded that even with this evidence, a culture of guilt shapes activism movements, which discourages conversations about burnout and self-care (Chen and Gorski, 2015).



Changing the world is a marathon, not a sprint, so our activism is often part of a lifelong journey. **Not being able to balance our well-being with our passion to drive change forward can lead to anxiety, stress and burnout.** This might have a detrimental effect on our activism over time.

We have to keep in mind that each person has different limits when it comes to activism. Our activism can be beautiful if it is built on a space of understanding and empathy. As individuals, we have to prioritise ourselves and our well-being. So it's important to remember that it's okay to not be busy all the time and to have some time for yourself. After all, social transformation begins with oneself.



**Human rights are about making humans' lives better, including ourselves.**

Taking care of ourselves only strengthens our movement. We sometimes forget that.

**“No one should give up their physical and mental health while working for human rights. We should practise what we advocate. For our own sake, now it's time to start to take good care of ourselves.”**

(Su Wei, Amnesty International youth activist)





# PRACTICING CARE: YOUR ACTIVISM PLANNER

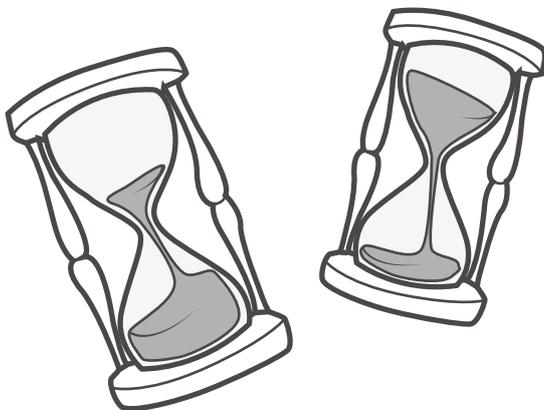
Your activism will have lots of different elements to it. It is important to keep track of what you are committing yourself to and how it's balanced with your well-being.

**Do I have the time for this?  
Do I think I am being realistic?**



**Do I know what my role will be  
and what is expected?**

**Do I know how much time this  
could take?**



**Will the time commitment will  
increase or decrease over time?**

Make sure you look at what is currently on your plate and what might be coming up! This can be useful to have a look at before you commit to something new. Remember that it is always OK to say NO. Ensure that you also leave some free time for activities that unexpectedly come up.





# OPPRESSION WITHIN AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Okay... Why are we talking about oppression and privilege in a well-being workbook?  
How does that relate to people's well-being?

Oppression is the systemic and institutional abuse of power by one group at the expense of others. Oppression denies us the opportunity to be our full selves. As activists, working to dismantle systems of oppression is stressful and can affect our well-being.

Activists can experience oppression both inside and outside human rights movements. We know there have been times that we have not gotten it right within Amnesty International. While this story is set in an Amnesty International workshop, it is a composite of several different experiences and lots of learnings can be taken from it.



This was **Xiona's** first official workshop with Amnesty International. She was very excited to be surrounded by activists, educators, and like-minded people around whom she could let her guard down.

She was a bit disappointed - though not surprised - after realizing she was the only Black person in the space. As a Black woman with a certain degree of class privilege, she was used to being the only Black person in most international academic and professional spaces that she participated in.

Before she entered these spaces she tended to prepare herself for how to respond and deal with these behaviors. She even had different “scripted” versions of how to react when they would happen, depending on how safe she assessed it was for her to say something.

But that day Xiona thought she would be safer than usual. Xiona hadn’t expected that she would have to manage her response to microaggressions while at a workshop run by and for human rights activists in Amnesty.

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During the workshop on prejudice and stereotypes, an activity was presented to the group with three pictures of different people. The participants were asked to answer questions about them in small groups:

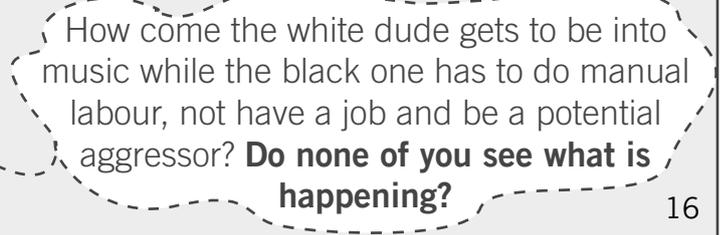
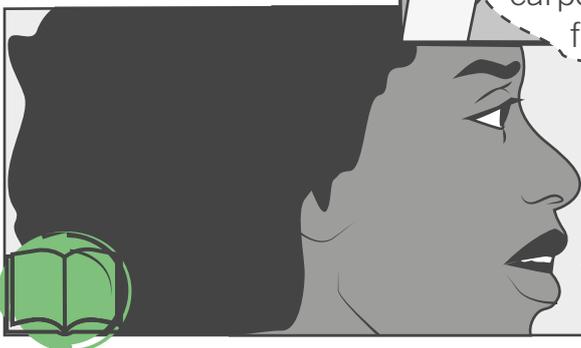
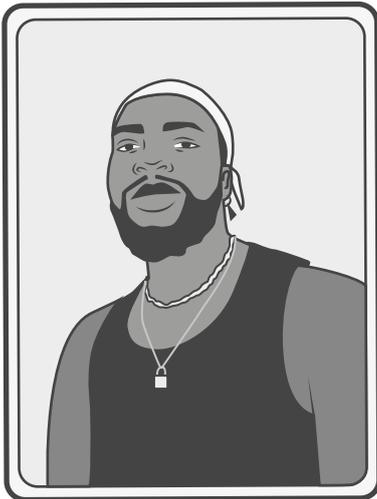


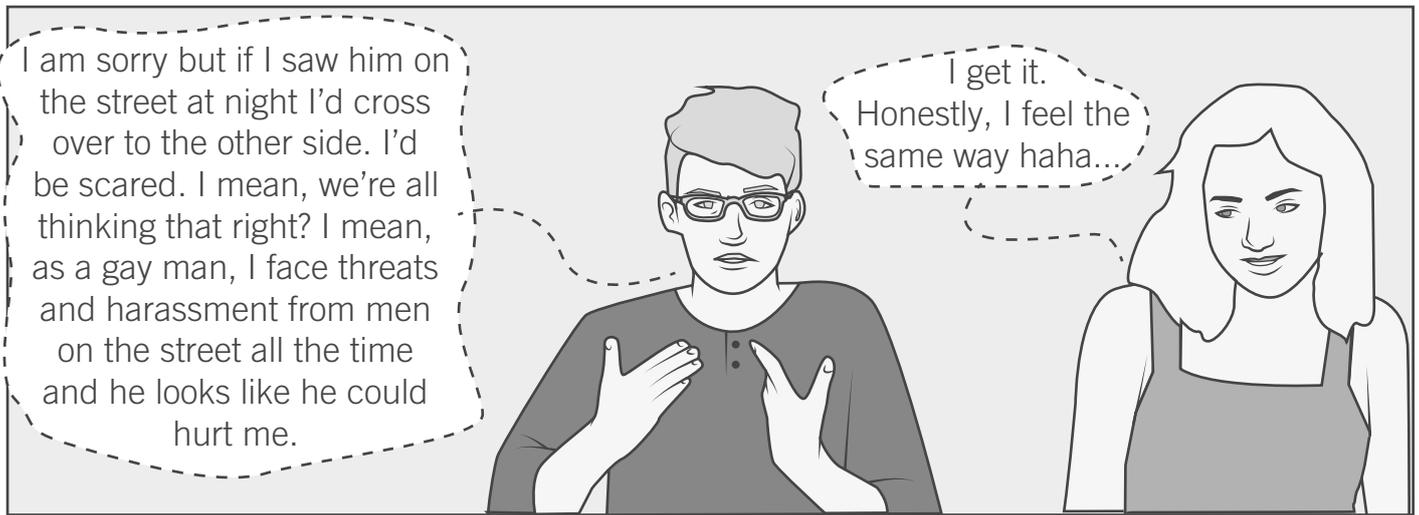
The facilitator asked the small groups to discuss the following questions about each picture:

- **What do you think about this person?**
- **What do you think is something they enjoy doing?**
- **Do you think this person has a job?**
- **What would you think if you ran into them on the street at night?**



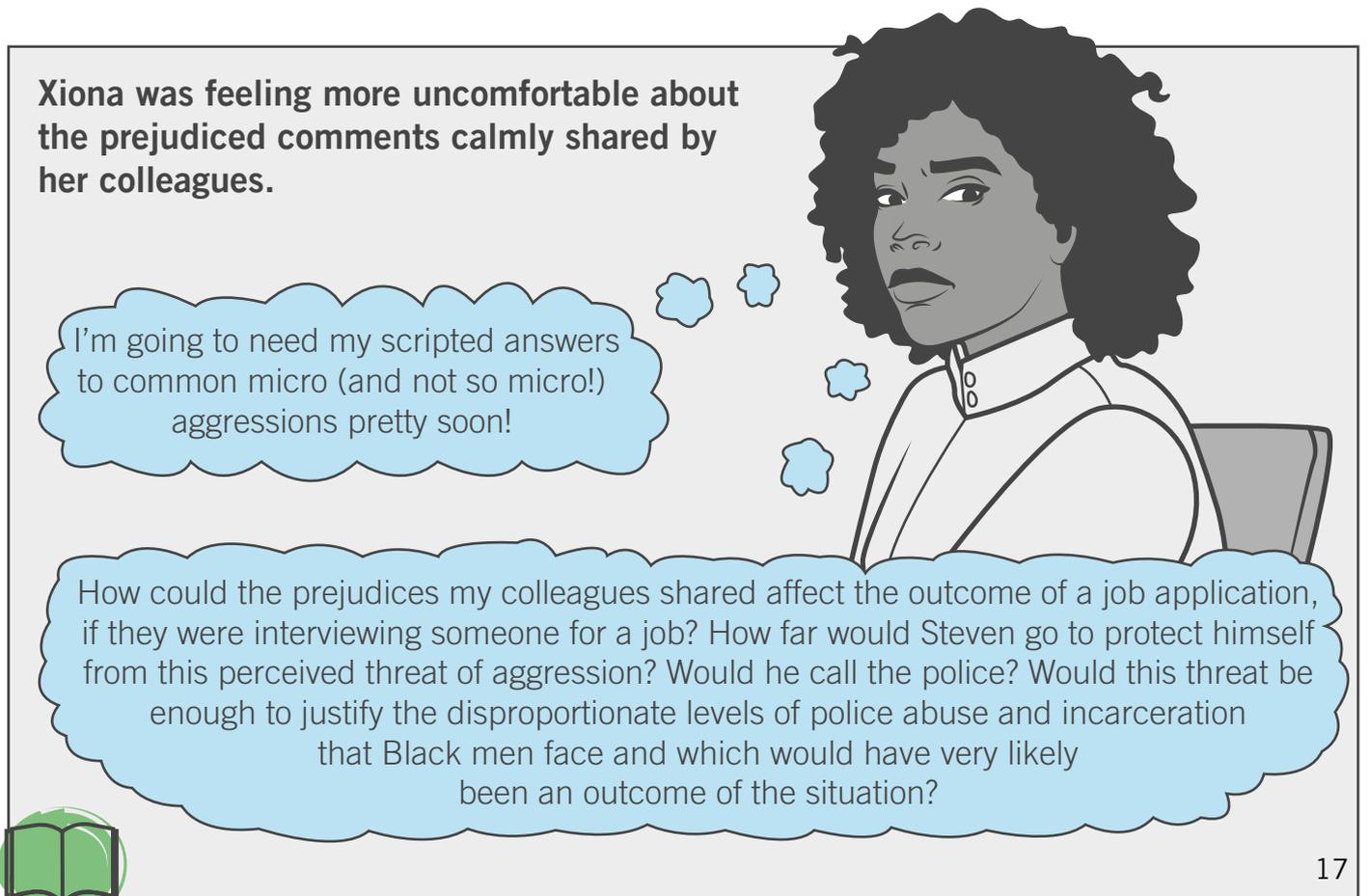
The conversations in the small groups went something like this:





After answering the questions, a short video was played that showed who these people were and how they lived their lives. The idea was that the conversation in small groups would expose the group to their own prejudices and how they could lead them to make false assumptions about others. This is something important to consider when facilitating human rights education and campaigning spaces. It turned out person #1 was really into electronic dance music parties, person #2 was a kindergarten teacher and person #3 had an office job where they worked with computers.

While people were talking about the pictures, using prejudiced and discriminatory language casually, Xiona realised she had been wrong to let her guard down.





Should I say something?  
Will it go wrong (again)?  
This is exhausting... Why am I the only person in Amnesty International who is not allowed to "take injustice personally"?  
Maybe I'm reading too much into the situation... this is my FIRST official workshop...

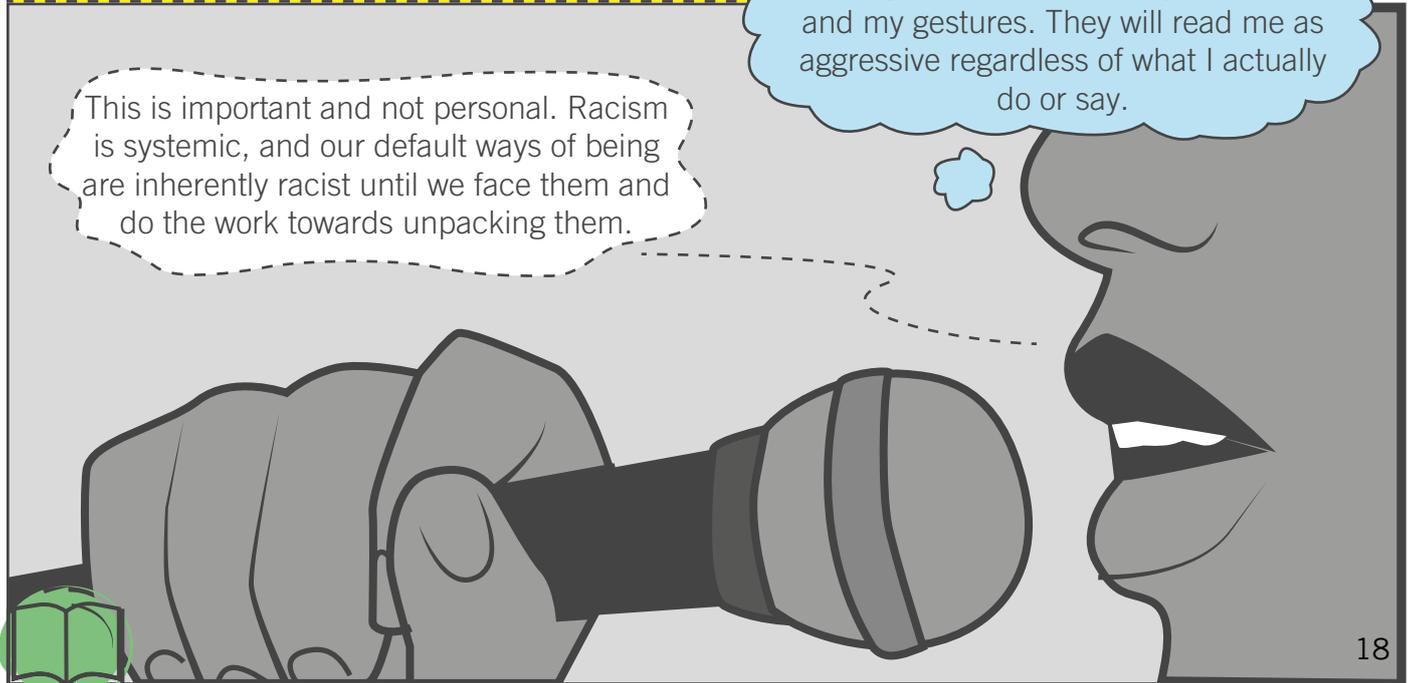


This is really making me uncomfortable, this isn't a joke. These attitudes hurt people. These views have real world consequences and are hurtful.



Phew! It's not just me! Safiya showed up for me and this is so helpful, I was tempted to gaslight myself into thinking that I'd got in wrong...it is so emotionally taxing to be the only Black person in a situation that clearly demonstrates how anti Black racism is still considered an "acceptable" kind of prejudice among white progressives. Will others see me as an angry Black woman if I say something? Well, it is so awkward now, it might be better to say something about it.

**Xiona took a deep breath, took the microphone and...**



This is important and not personal. Racism is systemic, and our default ways of being are inherently racist until we face them and do the work towards unpacking them.

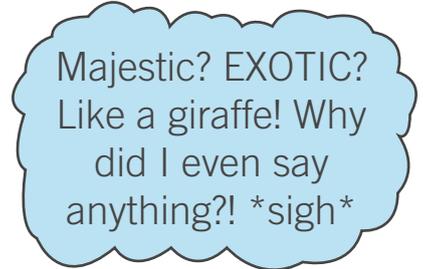
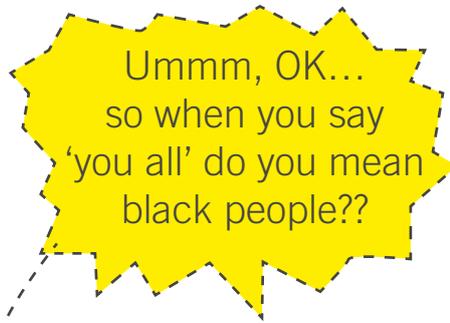
Watch my breath....watch my tone of voice and my gestures. They will read me as aggressive regardless of what I actually do or say.



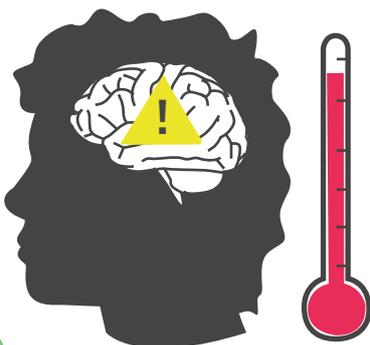


**Afterwards... While Xiona was accustomed to deflection, rejection, denial and distortion when discussing racism, it was still surprising and upsetting to experience the response from the workshop participants.**





Workshop participants responses included denial (“Why is it even a thing?”) and trivialising systemic racism (“You’re all such great dancers...”). Instead of engaging with Xiona or acknowledging what Xiona and Safiya had raised, participants relied on distortion (“I’ve been a victim of racism too”) to avoid confronting the situation.



Unfortunately for? Xiona, this is one of many similar experiences. Imagine the impact on her mental health – constantly on alert, having to monitor every word, gesture, and her tone, and not being acknowledged or listened to.





# UNDERSTANDING OPPRESSION AND PRIVILEGE

Activists from marginalised communities have to navigate the world with a level of fear and anxiety. They worry about what might happen to them and their communities. This stress can take a serious toll on activists.

It may be hard to understand for those who don't experience the same level of discrimination and oppression.

**Oppression** is the systematic subjugation of one social group by a more powerful social group for the social, economic, and political benefit of the more powerful social group. The [Racial Equity Tools Glossary](#) explains that oppression exists when the following four conditions are found:

- The oppressor group has the power to define reality for themselves and others.
- The target groups take in and internalise the negative messages about them and end up cooperating with the oppressors (thinking and acting like them).
- Genocide, harassment, and discrimination are systematic and institutionalised, so that individuals are not necessary to keep it going.
- Members of both the oppressor and target groups are socialised to play their roles as normal and correct.
- Oppression = Power + Prejudice.

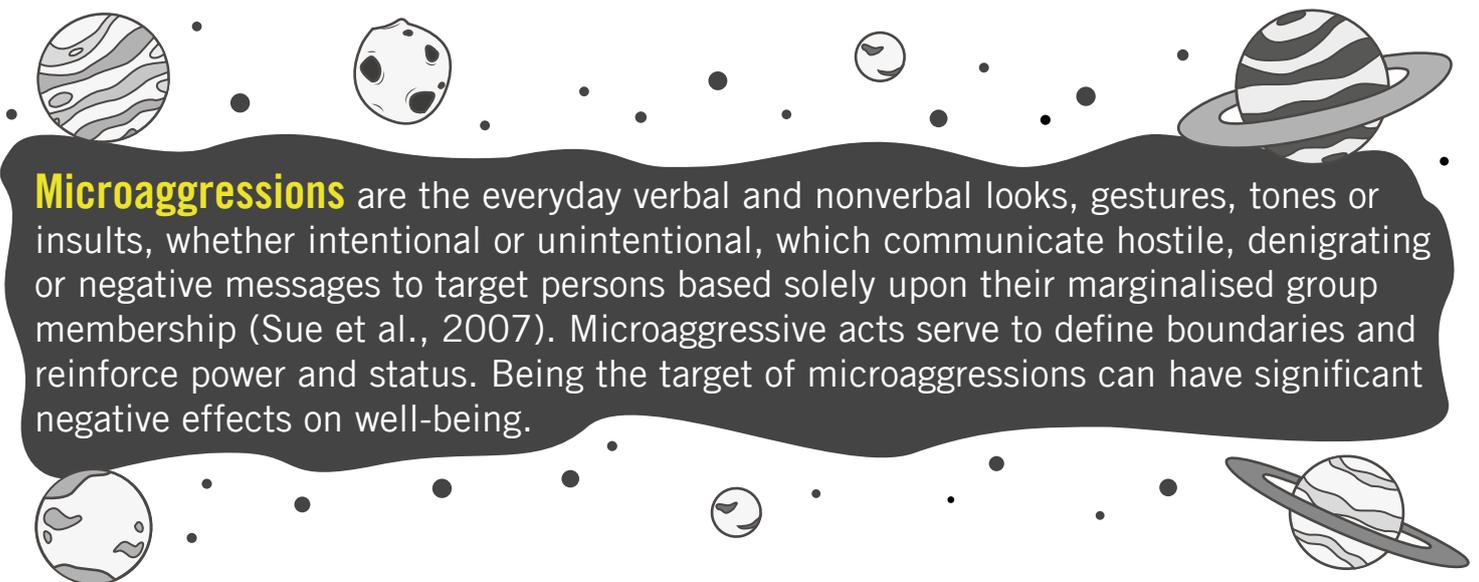
**Privilege** is unearned social power accorded by the formal and informal institutions of society to ALL members of a dominant group (e.g. white privilege; male privilege). Privilege is usually invisible to those who have it because they are taught not to see it, but nevertheless it puts them at an advantage over those who do not have it ([Racial Equity Tools Glossary](#)).

Self-care, collective care and working towards systemic change go hand-in-hand. We have to work in solidarity with others to address systemic racism and discrimination. We must make small, tangible steps towards a more just and inclusive environment. In doing so, we will address the roots of oppression and help to create a more constructive space for everyone. **Those who have privilege have an important role to play in educating themselves.**

Confronting oppression in all its forms can be uncomfortable. For example, addressing racism and working on being anti-racist can be challenging for white people. Yet it doesn't compare to the pain and discomfort of people who experience oppression. It is time for those who are privileged to share the pain and lean into discomfort. This is a critical part of allyship and solidarity to create a more just world for all of us.



Fully unpacking concepts like oppression and privilege would require another workbook. Instead, we will highlight a few key concepts and speak to how they connect with Xiona's experiences in the story.



**Microaggressions** are the everyday verbal and nonverbal looks, gestures, tones or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, denigrating or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalised group membership (Sue et al., 2007). Microaggressive acts serve to define boundaries and reinforce power and status. Being the target of microaggressions can have significant negative effects on well-being.

Microaggressions may be subtle and the sender may not realise they displayed the behavior. Sometimes the receiver might not be able to specify the exact behavior they experienced but are left feeling a certain way. Let us have a look at some examples and unpack them (Amnesty USA, 2019).



Theme	Examples	Possible underlying assumptions, messages and impact
<b>Assumed foreignness</b>	“Where were you born? Where are you really from?”	Not considered to belong, and having to prove your legitimacy.
<b>Ignored difference</b>	“I don’t see race; I just see you.”	Erasure of identity and history/context of systemic oppression.
<b>Denial by reference</b>	“I care about social justice, so I don’t discriminate.”	Absolving one’s own responsibility.
<b>Exception to the norm</b>	“You sound white.” “You’re so articulate.” “You’re very smart for your age.”	Group the person is part of is believed to be inherently less intelligent, and they are an exception.
<b>Generalisation</b>	“Millennials care more about social media than face-to-face.”	Stereotyping and blanket statements, association of one characteristic with the entire group.
<b>Value deviation</b>	“You are too loud and animated; calm down.”	The dominant values are considered the standard and the only “right” way.
<b>Myth of meritocracy</b>	“Anyone can succeed, as long as you are willing to work hard.”	Ignoring historical context and systemic oppression as a factor in people’s lived experience, quality of work and level of success.
<b>Less-than</b>	Asking/expecting women to get refreshments for the group during a meeting or to clean up afterwards.	Not recognizing people as equal professionals, reinforcing stereotypes.
<b>General</b>	Unsolicited touching of the hair of people who look different than you.	Diminishing people, objectifying them, invading their space and ignoring potential harmful associations/impact with language and behaviors.

The cumulative effect of being the target of microaggressions on an individual may, over time, harm their welfare. In fact, one study links racial microaggressions with higher levels of suicidal ideation in the target group (O’Keefe et al., 2014). Even unintentional or seemingly minor actions can have a serious impact on an individual’s well-being. Reflecting back on the story, recall that Xiona frequently experiences microaggressions in her daily life. The comments in the workshop then contribute to a cumulative feeling of exhaustion and frustration.



**Implicit biases** are negative associations that people unknowingly hold. They are expressed automatically, without conscious awareness. Implicit biases can affect individuals' attitudes and actions, creating real-world implications, even though individuals may not even be aware that those biases exist within themselves. Notably, implicit biases have been shown to trump individuals' stated commitments to equality and fairness, thereby producing behavior that diverges from the explicit attitudes that many people profess ([Racial Equity Tools](#)).

An example of an implicit bias in the story is when Steven says that the young Black masculine presenting person wearing a do-rag, sleeveless black shirt and gold accessories probably enjoys work with his hands and when Nayda thinks that he does not have a job. Implicit biases do not mean you are a bad person. Your thoughts and associations are not your behavior.

### **Emotional labour** -- aka you need to smile more!

Emotional labour requires you to show an emotion that you are not feeling and regulate your behaviour accordingly. This is called labour for a good reason - it requires effort like physical labour, and like physical labour is fatiguing.

Psychologist Alicia Grandey, who studies emotional labour, has found modifying feelings and changing behaviour is exhausting and is disproportionately expected of people of colour, especially in domains such as the workplace and university (Grandey, 2019). **This is because they are expected to conform to the unspoken, dominant norm of whiteness.**



In the story, Xiona felt upset and frustrated about comments made by workshop participants but did not feel she could show those emotions due to the risk of being labelled angry or aggressive. Instead, Xiona worked very hard to control her breathing and monitored her tone of voice and gestures.

Our interpretation of behaviours is contextual and socially constructed. What we each see as appropriate in a given context can differ from one context to another, and also differs with individual identity. If we are primed to see something a certain way (for example, by the media) we will be more likely to see it. In the story, Nadya and Stephen both saw the Black man as “scary”. This perception could, in part, be due to media images of Black men dressed a certain way.

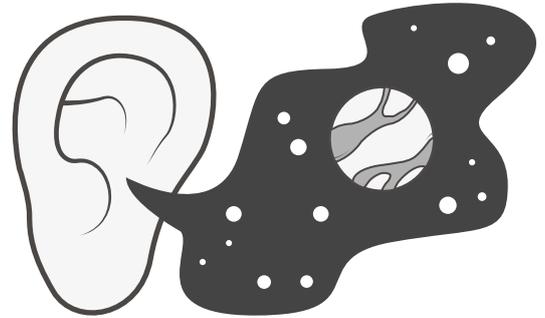


## Taking collective responsibility

As a community within Amnesty International, we know we need to get better at taking collective responsibility. Xiona's experience should not have to be repeated. Here are a few simple things that you could do to make an experience like Xiona less mentally and emotionally taxing:

### Be humble and actively listen:

If you have power and privilege, you can be an ally by challenging the system and oppressive structures. Be humble and listen more than you speak. Be curious.



### Acknowledge and affirm:

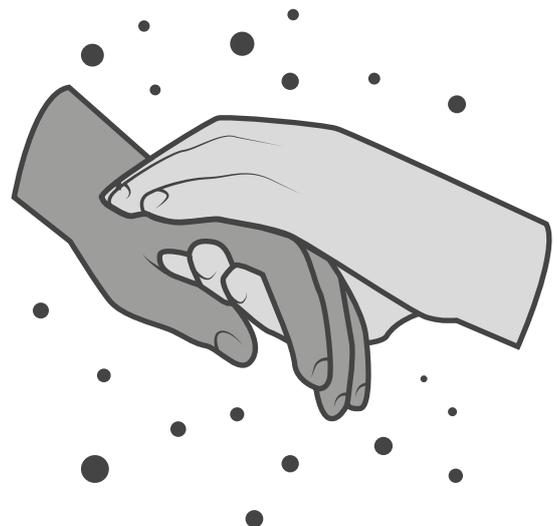
When people speak up about racism do not deflect, distort, deny or otherwise minimise or erase their experience. Thank people for speaking up and sharing their points of view. Acknowledge and affirm. It takes a lot to do this all the time and people who do it run a risk of backlash.

**Every Single Time.**



### Intervene and take responsibility:

As a bystander, you can intervene and speak up, like Safiya. Do not wait or assume someone else will intervene, take responsibility in collective spaces. Accept responsibility for harmful comments made, even if they were not meant in bad faith or they were intended to be humorous. Funny intentions are not an excuse. Apologise and find out how to make amends for the harm caused. Check your language and think about the words you're using and how you are describing groups. Be sensitive to other's experiences.



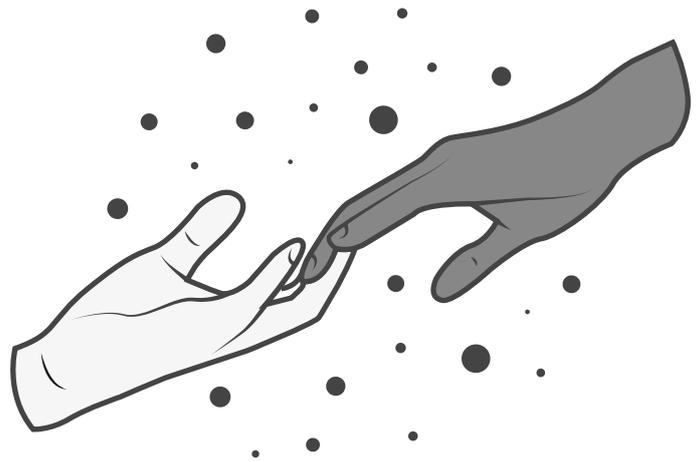
## **Beware of false equivalence:**

A white person may experience marginalisation or racial prejudice, but this is not racism. Whiteness has historically conveyed privilege. Reverse racism does not exist either: racism is racial prejudice plus social and institutional power. Racial Equity Tools defines racism as different from racial prejudice, hatred, or discrimination. Racism involves one group having the power to carry out systematic discrimination through the institutional policies and practices of society, then shaping the cultural beliefs and values that support those racist policies and practices.



## **Take care:**

If you are convening discussions on racism, prejudice and discrimination, take extra care. Reflect beforehand on the objectives and prioritise using methodologies developed by people of colour, including by hiring them as staff. Be mindful who the participants are and how certain activities might be triggering. Some exercises might be counterproductive for historically marginalized communities if you do not belong to them and lack appropriate tools to handle the situation.



## **Educate yourself:**

Take responsibility for learning about racism, how to challenge it and how to support people of colour. Don't rely on people of colour to educate you about racism and injustice. Prepare yourself - you can use some of the resources listed at the end of this workbook to get started.





# PRACTICING CARE: MANAGING AND ADDRESSING MICROAGGRESSIONS

Have you ever felt hurt, offended, unseen, unheard, unvalued, excluded, or been made to feel bad because of something someone else said or did, even though they might not have had the intention to make you feel this way?

Have you ever said or done something that has unintentionally upset someone? Although we all may have been on either side of situations like these, it is important to understand we can do or say things that can contribute to inclusion or exclusion of people based on an aspect or aspects of their identity.

**Despite the everyday nature of microaggressions, they are critical to address in order to achieve an inclusive culture and our goal to become a more human-centered human rights movement.<sup>1</sup>**

## Managing your own behaviour

Managing our own behaviours starts with an awareness of our own perceptions, biases, assumptions, background, identity, and privileges. It's equally important to develop empathy and compassion for others. To remind ourselves of our commitment to inclusion we can use these tips:



### Rethink and rephrase:

Before you say something, consider the impact on others. Examine what your intentions are and whether what you are about to say is likely to be received that way. If not, rephrase.



### Reaction vs. reflection:

Take a moment to check-in with yourself before you react or respond to someone.



### Avoid generalisation:

Rather than making broad-based statements, check for potential stereotyping or other biases and qualify your words with more nuance.



### Curiosity:

Ask questions rather than making assumptions and stay curious about others without judgment.



### Feedback:

Be open to feedback, listen with empathy and learn from it.

<sup>1</sup> This exercise was developed by Amnesty International USA in 2019.

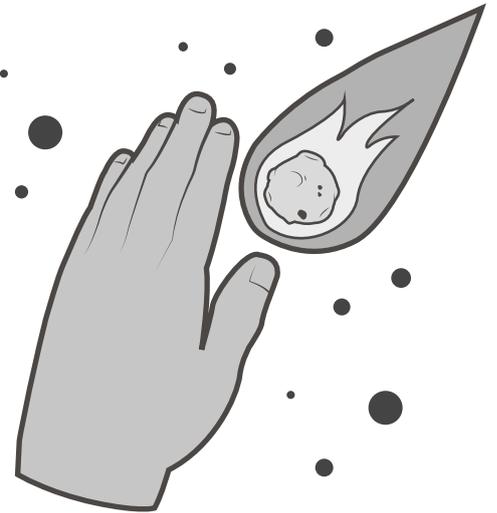
## Responding to microaggressions from others

It is important to develop your own way to handle microaggressions. Consider these steps as a starting point you can use to customise and adapt to your own situation:

**1** If possible, remain calm and take a deep breath. Find a way to pause before making assumptions or reacting right away.



**2** If possible, assume best intent. This doesn't mean you shouldn't explain the impact of their statement or behaviour, but if this is the first time you have experienced this kind of behaviour from this person you could potentially consider it a teaching moment and give some feedback, or give them a chance to self-correct.

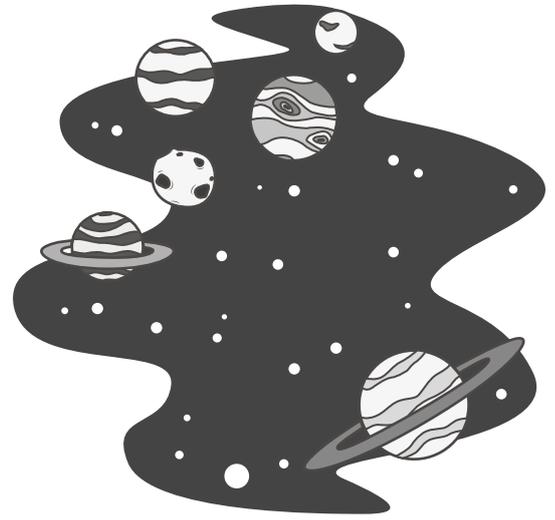


**3** Consider if you want to handle the issue right away or at a different moment. There are some things to consider: Do you feel safe having this conversation with this person? If not, consider getting support from someone you trust. Are you in the right headspace to have this conversation at this moment? If not, consider approaching the person at a different time.



4

Focus on the event, not the person. By directing the conversation to the behaviour or comment you will decrease the likelihood of defensiveness.



5

Clearly share the impact on you:

**Grounding:** Affirm that you are both committed to inclusion and it's within that context that you are sharing the feedback.

**Intent:** State that you assume that the person did not have any negative intent.

**Observe:** Describe clearly and succinctly what the behaviour / language / situation was.

**Impact:** Explain why and how it is impacting you and / or others. If you want to, you can state what you are asking the person to do or say differently.

**Affirm:** Affirm your shared commitment to inclusive behaviours.

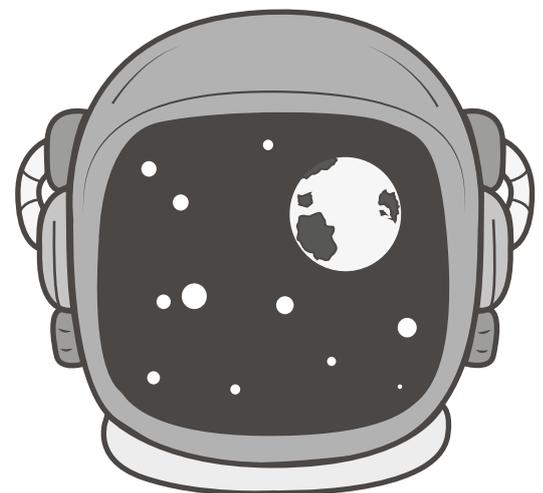


6

If the response is not satisfactory take a breath, pause and determine:

If you want to continue to engage, you can walk through the steps again.

If you do not want to further engage in the exchange you can: Have the feedback conversation again, request assistance, or take another course of action.



## Non-confrontational intervention strategies

Depending on the situation, you may determine that a non-confrontational intervention method is the best strategy. If so, you could consider these approaches:

**Enquire:** Ask questions to understand the intended statement or sentiment of what was said. Give the speaker a chance to notice, self-correct or elaborate.

### Example

“I noticed you mentioned that this person is too young to take on a leadership role. Can you tell me more about what you mean by that?”



**Request:** Make a request to use different language or different approaches. Consider saying “we” rather than “you” to make the request general rather than personal. Use “I” language to share the impact on you as a reason for the request.

### Example

“Rather than saying “old members”, can we say “elders” instead? I’ve sometimes experienced it being used in a way that felt disrespectful, and “elders” feels more respectful and inclusive.”



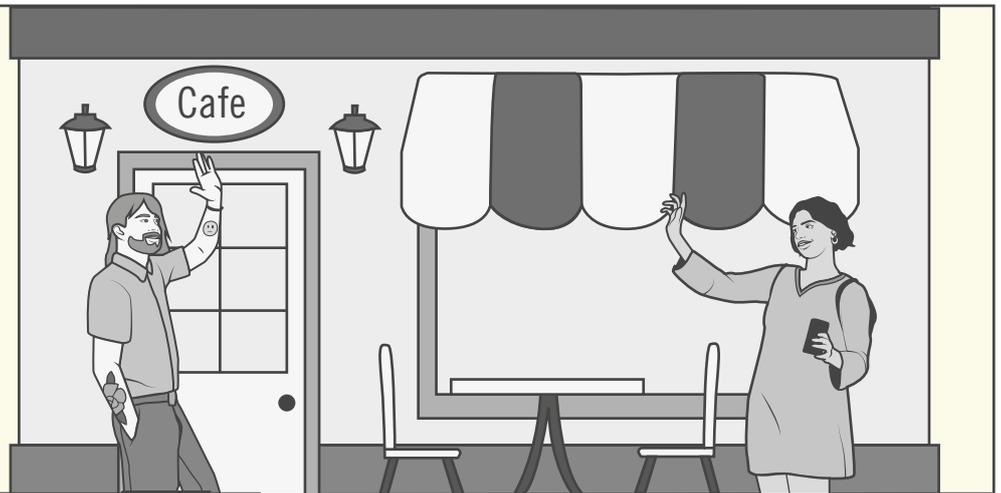


# YOU ALWAYS TALK ABOUT PALESTINE

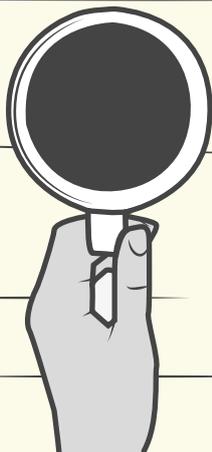
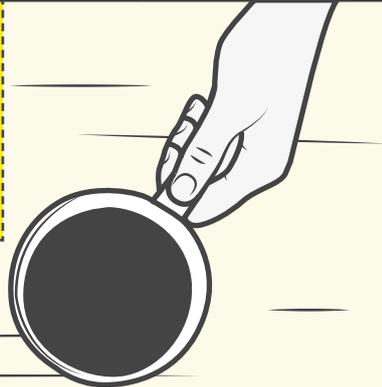


Lina is a young Palestinian woman who has lived in a refugee camp in Gaza. Lina now studies Politics and Law and works with different human rights organisations. Benjamin is one of her friends, who also studies Politics and Law at the same school.

This afternoon, Lina and Benjamin are meeting up at a cafe to work on an International Law assignment.

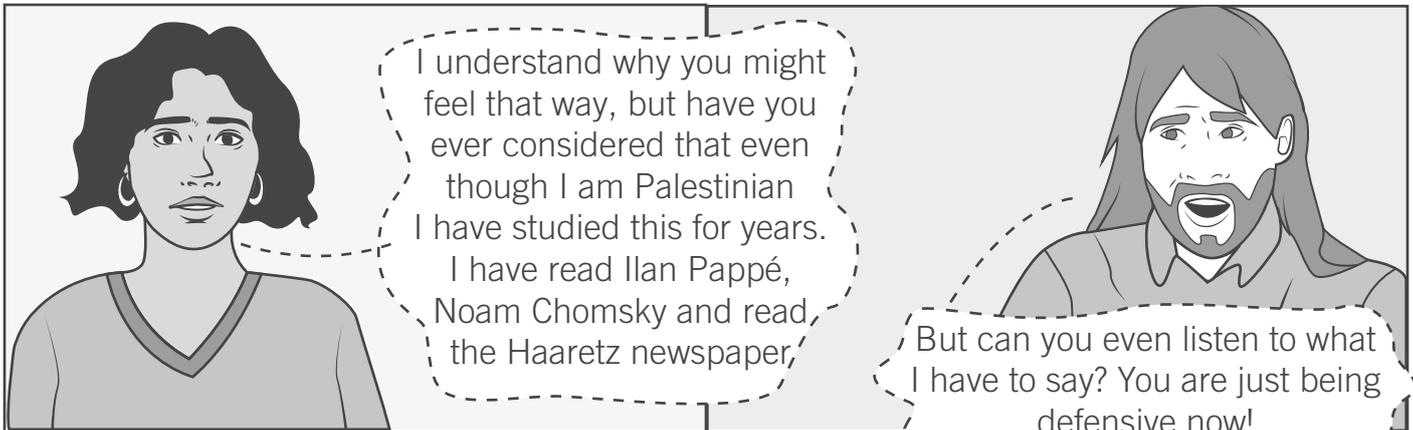


The topic of the assignment is about the Palestinian Israeli conflict.



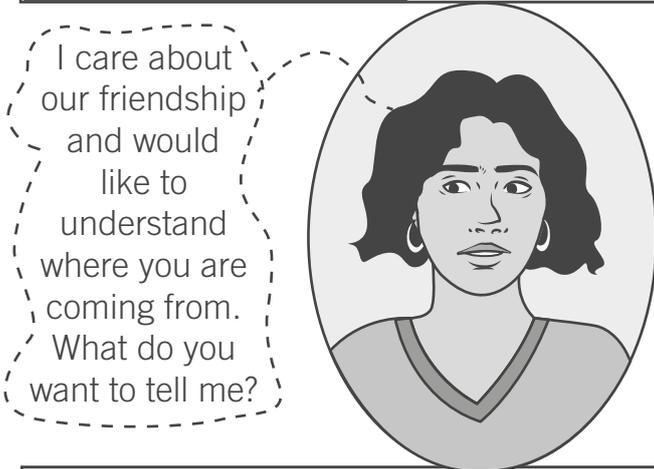
But the only thing you talk about is Palestine!! This is completely biased, you are ignoring the other side of the conflict!





I understand why you might feel that way, but have you ever considered that even though I am Palestinian I have studied this for years. I have read Ilan Pappé, Noam Chomsky and read the Haaretz newspaper.

But can you even listen to what I have to say? You are just being defensive now!

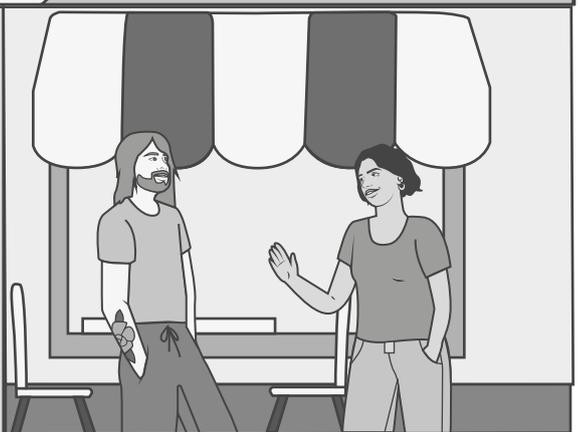


I care about our friendship and would like to understand where you are coming from. What do you want to tell me?

Lina then listens carefully and pays attention to every point even though she disagrees with them.



Maybe I should share more about my experiences with Benjamin



What you said before has been sitting with me and I would like to talk to you about it. I am talking about the Palestinian Israeli conflict from first hand experience. I grew up in a refugee camp where I saw people dying in front of my eyes. I lived through three wars by the age of 14. I have not seen my family for years and cannot go home. Do you see how personal this is to me? That is why I talk about it a lot because I want to change the situation. I want to make the world a better place. And I hope that you can join me in doing so.



Thank you Lina for explaining this to me. I cannot put myself in your shoes, but I will try to better understand.





# UNDERSTANDING HOW TO RESPOND TO RESISTANCE

As activists, we can face resistance against our campaigns, our viewpoints, or simply a broader resistance to change. This resistance can affect our work and well-being. Resistance can happen in our activism spaces, our movements or amongst family and peers. Sometimes this means having to choose between your own values and those of your family and peers.

In this section, you will find a few tips and tricks to help you navigate resistance and better respond to it all while protecting your well-being.



## What is resistance?

The American Psychological Association defines resistance as “generally, any action in opposition to, defying, or withstanding something or someone”. When people resist something, it can be helpful to think about where they are coming from. Many reasons can motivate resistance and resistance can take different forms. Resisters can fear change because of uncertainty. A lot of what we do challenges what has been the norm for a very long time.

**As activists we are also resisting. We might not resist change but resist systems as they are now.**

## What might resistance look like?

Resistance comes in many forms. When people are resistant, they can be confrontational, undermining, aggressive and offensive. They can become emotional, stubborn and difficult to speak with. In contrast, resisters can also react in a very subtle way making it seem as if they are not resisting at all. It can simply be an unwillingness to collaborate or to work.

## Overt resistance

Overt resistance is an obvious opposition towards change. Here are a few examples of what it can look like:

- An open argument or debate.
- An attack using confrontational language or behaviour.
- A simple “no”, disagreement or refusal of change.

## Covert Resistance

Covert resistance is much more subtle and harder to identify than overt resistance. It is often done in a way that makes it seem as though there is no resistance at all. It can be conscious or unconscious. For example:

- Saying yes or agreeing to something in a meeting but whispering discontent in informal conversations afterwards.
- Sharing information that goes against what you are trying to achieve or withholding important information.
- Hindering or delaying the implementation of change.

## How to respond to resistance?

A lot of the time it can seem and feel as though resistance is directed towards you. This makes it hard not to take it personally. But in reality, it's directed towards the intangible notions you are fighting for. If you want to respond to resistance, here are some guiding principles to help you get through the conversation.



# Conversational Framework

Guiding principles: Fairness, dignity, respect and mutual understanding

## To keep in mind

## To do or use

Use a measured tone and keep an open mind



*"What you said before has been sitting with me and I would like to talk to you about it."*

Try to understand where people are coming from. Ask yourself some questions...

- Why is the person or group of people being resistant?
- Where might this resistance be coming from?
- What past experiences might have contributed in shaping this viewpoint?



*"Can I ask why you feel that way?"*

*"That's an interesting point, can I ask some more questions about that?"*

*"I'm not quite sure I understood what you meant. Can you please clarify \_\_\_?"*

Give people the respect of listening to their views. If you don't, then there is little chance that they'll do the same for you.



*"I understand why you might feel that way, but have you ever considered..."*

*"I see what you're saying. But what do you think about..."*

If the conversation gets ugly, use empathy to try to overcome the ugliness.



*"I care about our activism together and would like to understand where you are coming from..."*

Use "I" statements to share your experience as it can help others understand their own experiences.



*"I have been feeling really overwhelmed by everything going on..."*



The end goal here is not necessarily to convince people you are right, but to achieve a greater understanding of where the other party has formulated their views from, whilst opening their mind to your ideas too.



# PRACTICING CARE: RESPONDING TO RESISTANCE

Responding to resistance can be emotionally exhausting. Trying to convince people of your point of view can be disheartening and frustrating, but is essential for social transformation. These conversations are part of a larger movement to have healthy discussions and challenge controversial views. **Let's be real - change takes time.**



## Applying The Conversational Framework

Think of a moment when you faced resistance. You can build on the conversational framework and guiding principles: fairness, dignity, respect and mutual understanding.

**What happened?**

**Who was involved?**

**How would you respond now?** (Write what you would say based on the conversational framework)

## Here are a couple of things you can do to protect your well-being while facing resistance:

- For reassurance, discuss encounters with friends or with like-minded people you feel comfortable with.

Hi! ❤️ I need to tell you something that happened today...

Of course! 😊

- Be willing to accept others' points of view.

I see it differently 🤔

Tell me more! 😊

- Accept that some people will not change and you can't always help that.

We just don't agree

Don't worry ❤️

- Read more resources so you can have more informed discussions next time.

Palestinian conflict...



- It is OK if you choose not to respond to resistance. Never feel as though you cannot opt out of a discussion or leave a space you share with someone who is resisting your ideas.

You don't understand, things shouldn't be that way

Ok! I think we're not getting anywhere with this, bye!

### Important to remember!

**Harassment and/or abuse is NOT resistance and is unacceptable. This falls outside of constructive dialogue and should not be tolerated.**





# CO-CREATING ACTIONS ACROSS GENERATIONS

Co-creating an Action!



Welcome everyone! Do you have ideas for the action?

I have an idea, we could do a flashmob! I know some cool dancers that could help us!



Thank you Kaya, that is great - but we need to have signatures on the petitions and we should focus on those to support the release of women human rights defenders.

OK - so maybe instead of a signature we can ask activists to put paint stamps of their hands on the wall of the prison!

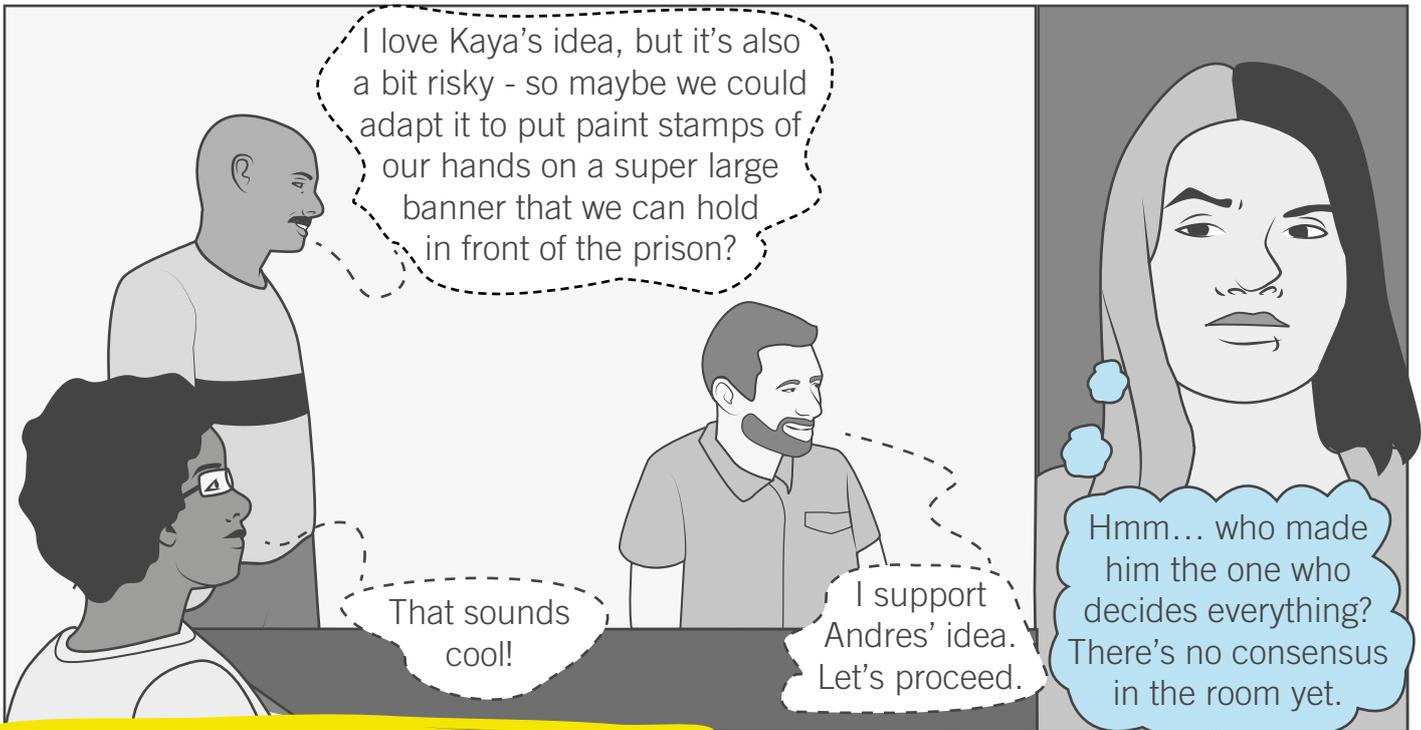
Where does she get all this energy and inspiration?!

That sucks...I thought my idea was really cool!

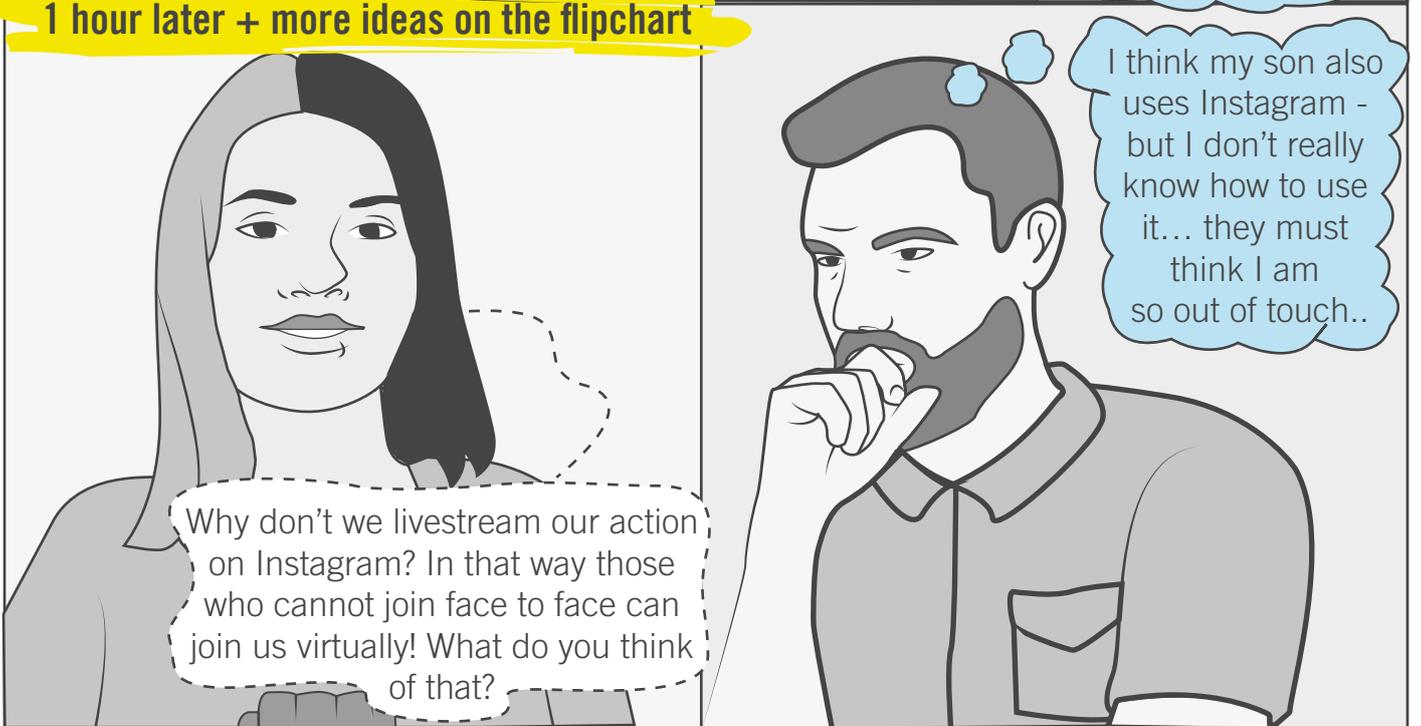


Sorry I am late, I had a Physics exam today and had to take a later bus.

So predictable... young people always being late.



**1 hour later + more ideas on the flipchart**





I know a company that can offer us discounts on the banner - I will give them a call.



I will update other activists on What's App who could not make it on the plans!



I will bring the drinks and snacks for after the action. Great - see you next Saturday!!





# UNDERSTANDING YOUTH TOKENISM, ADULTISM & AGEISM

Youth tokenism, adultism and ageism are common in intergenerational activism spaces. They are so deep-rooted in our society we often don't even see or notice them. Tokenism happens when adults involve young people without any substance, purpose, or power. Tokenism is a form of oppression and unintentional silencing and can have a major impact on youth activist well-being. By portraying young people as unreliable or lacking knowledge, tokenism can reinforce adultism.

Some people might perceive young people as irresponsible. Perceptions are shaped by implicit bias, meaning that people act on the basis of prejudice and stereotypes without intending to do so. Let's go back to the example of Co-Creating an Action from the previous story.



**"...while adults may offer young people access to their social, political, and institutional power and resources, they can also be sources of oppression and unintentional silencing"**

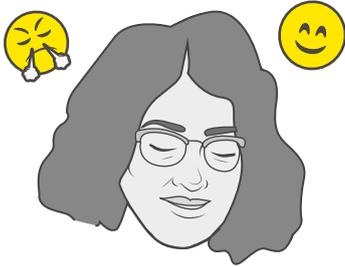
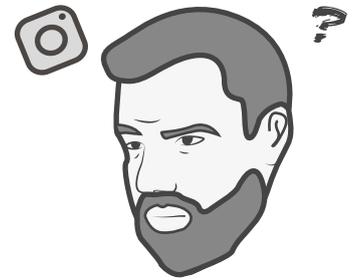
(Taft and Gordon, 2018)

Kaya portrayed Carlos and Martha as not radical enough and undemocratic.



At the same time Martha was thinking about how Kaya had lots of energy and new ideas to bring to the discussion.

Carlos was feeling a bit intimidated as he is not comfortable with Instagram but did not want to show that.

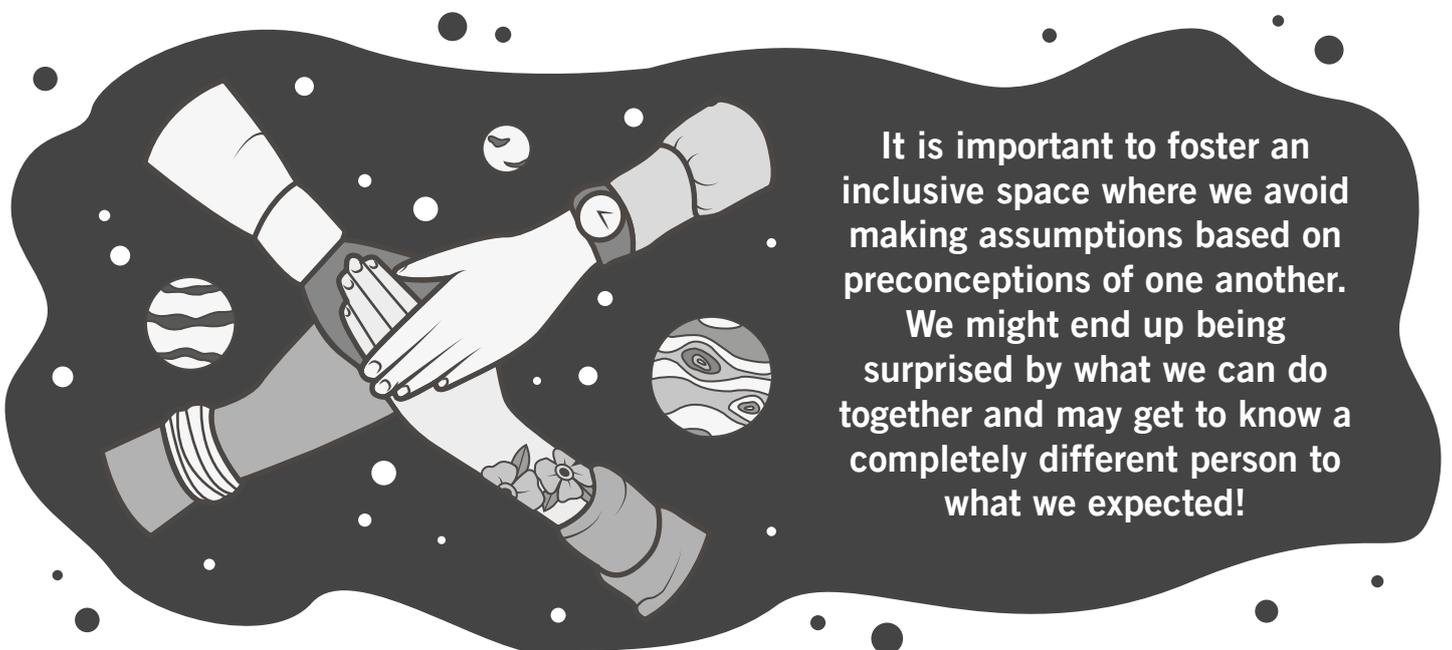


Martha got frustrated because it meant changing patterns and often more time investment. Meanwhile, she appreciated that all team members had different skills and contacts. This combination of skills made the action into a success.

**These are very common patterns in intergenerational collaboration.**

**You might recognise some from your activism experiences.**

Youth activists might think adults are not very inclusive in their ways of working if they do not consider meeting outside of school hours. Meanwhile, adult activists might feel intimidated by the speed youth activists use technology. They might also feel resistance to change the ways of working they are used to.



It is important to foster an inclusive space where we avoid making assumptions based on preconceptions of one another.

We might end up being surprised by what we can do together and may get to know a completely different person to what we expected!

Intergenerational collaboration is possible when voices from all different generations, including young people's voices, are taken seriously. This means truly listening to each other and to being open to potentially changing your own ideas too.





# PRACTICING CARE: CO-CREATING INTERGENERATIONAL SPACES

This is an exercise which you could do together with activists from other generations. In order to collaborate smoothly, it is important to manage each other's expectations. In intergenerational spaces, you may all have different expectations. So, it can be beneficial to start off by establishing how you will care for each other throughout the project. This will help to create a safe space for all to work within. After all, you are all dedicating your passion and time to human rights, so what will help you to keep going?



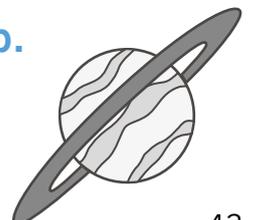
We have a responsibility to look out and care for one another. We also have to recognise that distribution of workloads in activist groups are often gendered, racialised and ageist. This means that young people and in particular women, non-binary people, and people of colour are more prone to burnout. We need to keep this in mind in order to build a community where everyone is treated with dignity and feels supported. Collective care is about surviving day-to-day in our activism whilst enabling others and ourselves to grow. **You can foster this culture by taking time as a group to set caring values.**



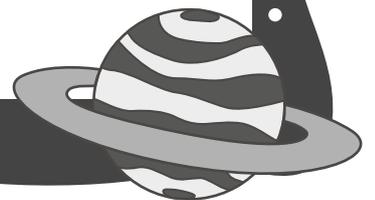
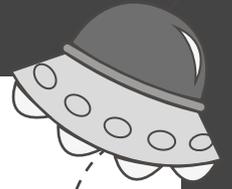
Start with writing some collective caring space values for yourself.

Share them with the group and look for overlap & connections.

Agree on the values you will commit to as a group.



## Our Collective Caring Space Values



We need to recognise that as activism takes over, you might forget your Collective Caring Space Values. To keep your commitments to Collective Caring Space alive, talk about how you will support each other and maintain a caring space when times are rough.



# PRONOUNS: YOU CAN'T AND MUSTN'T GUESS THEM!

Group chat "Amnesty University Group 2020/21" created

**Mario**

Heey 🙌 let's WELCOME our newest member @Alex!! ✓✓

**Kim**



**Alex**

Yay thanks @Mario. Hi everyone, great to be here! my pronouns are they/them. ✓✓

**Mario**

He's one of my former classmates in high school in 🖥️ computer club 🖥️ ✓✓

**Luna**

Hey, @Alex just said their pronouns are they and them! 😬 ✓✓

**Mario**

Oh, right. Sorry about that @Alex 🙌 ✓✓

**Alex**

Thanks @Luna and @Mario 🙏 would love to know everyone's pronouns too! ✓✓

**Stephanie**

Hmm what are pronouns? 🤔 ✓✓

**Luna**

Pronouns are words used to replace nouns in a sentence. For example, they/them, she/her, he/him. ✓✓

**Alex**

They/them is used as a gender inclusive pronoun as it does not associate a gender with the individual who is being discussed. ✓✓ 45

**Mario**

I didn't mean to open up a whole discussion...  
Why were you getting offended?



**Luna**

Well, you referred to Alex as he whereas the pronoun Alex goes by is they/them. By using he/him you don't visibilize an important part of Alex's identity.



**Mario**

Oh my I shouldn't have said that! Sorry, I get it now...



**Alex**

Check out this "How to use pronouns guide" - it might be helpful!

### How to Use Pronouns Guide

**Pronoun**

**How to use it**

**They/Them/Their**

I saw Lauren come to work today and they seemed really happy. I wonder if it has anything to do with their weekend. I hope I see them soon to hear all about it!

**He/Him/His**

I saw Lauren come to work today and he seemed really happy. I wonder if it has anything to do with his weekend. I hope I see him soon to hear all about it!

**She/Her/Hers**

I saw Lauren come to work today and she seemed really happy. I wonder if it has anything to do with her weekend. I hope I see her soon to hear all about it!



**Kim**

We should do a learning session on this no? Would love to have one. Have a lot to learn!



**Mario**

Great idea @Kim. Words do matter and especially in chats...  
this is a good start to the school year! 🎉



**Alex**

Yeah so excited to work with all of you in person!! Wasn't able to catch Luna's pronouns though...?



**Luna**

It's also they/them. I was never comfortable to share that here.. But now that Alex asked about our pronouns I feel much easier about it.

**Thank you for opening up the space for me Alex** 🧡





# INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE: WORDS MATTER

Inclusive language is language that is free from words, phrases or tones that reflect prejudiced, stereotyped or discriminatory views of particular people or groups. It does not deliberately or inadvertently exclude people from feeling accepted.

**When you use inclusive language, you put the person first and do not focus on how society defines them by their characteristics.**



**Words matter**, language shapes realities and can render people invisible. Inclusive language can help to create a culture of mutual respect, dignity, inclusion, belonging and community. In this chapter we will share guiding principles for using inclusive language. In part 1 we focus on general guiding principles and in part 2 we dive deeper into specific guiding principles for inclusive language related to gender identities.

## Part 1: Guiding principles in using inclusive language:

### Recognise the impact of words

**Do not use language that portrays people as passive or directly defined by a condition, diagnosis or social/physical characteristics.**

- For example - avoid referring to someone as challenged or handi-capable. Instead, you can use people living with a disability.

### Ask

**If possible, always ask to find out an individual's word preferences.**

- For example - instead of referring to someone as “a victim of...” ask what alternatives they would like to use such as a person who has experienced... and/or a survivor. People might prefer a term you have not come across yet. By asking you get a chance to learn what they feel comfortable with.

### Choose your words carefully

**Be aware of the discriminatory and derogatory connotation of words. You may think a word is innocent, but it might come from a history of supremacy and oppression.**

- For example - avoid referring to women as girls, ladies and/or gals as all these terms can be potentially felt as patronising or infantilising depending on the context of use.
- The same goes for the minority label. We need to recognise that not all marginalised groups are minorities per se, and that this type of categorisation could be associated with an inferior social position depending on the context of use (and in opposition to those considered as “majorities”). Instead, consider using marginalised groups or underrepresented groups.

**Be aware of word meanings and don't misuse them as adjectives. For example - avoid describing certain acts as 'depressing' or 'OCD' (obsessive compulsive disorder).**

### Examples of inclusive language:

- Older person **instead of** senior or elderly
- Wild **instead of** crazy or insane
- Act in solidarity **instead of** taking a stand with
- Approach **instead of** walk-up/walking over
- Being unaware **instead of** turning a blind eye
- Devastating or catastrophic **instead of** crippling



## Part 2: Guiding principles in using gender inclusive language:

One way of practicing inclusive language is by thinking more critically about the language we use in relation to gender based identities. In this regard, it is especially important to keep in mind that everyone has their own unique relationship to gender identity. Therefore, we should be mindful in our use of pronouns, as they convey gender when used to refer to someone (or something). Here are some guiding principles:

### Normalise Pronouns

- Email signatures - add your pronouns in your email signatures.
- When you introduce yourself, share what pronouns you use.
- If you are hosting a meeting or workshop, have pronoun stickers for people to add to their name-tags. You can [download pronoun stickers here](#) for free in English, French and Spanish.
- If you are participating in a video call or meeting, add your pronouns along with your name.

*This helps prevent people from assuming they can tell someone's pronoun based on the traditional gendering of a name. This also combats the cisnormative idea that only trans people need to share their pronouns (which leaves them alone in carrying this weight).*

### Put people first

- Focus on the person, not their characteristics.

### Ask

- Ask yourself: might somebody feel excluded by my language? Am I assuming their gender?
- Ask everyone their pronouns. Make asking pronouns as natural as asking what someone's name is when you meet. Some people might feel comfortable sharing them, some others might not. Do respect people's choices and wishes.

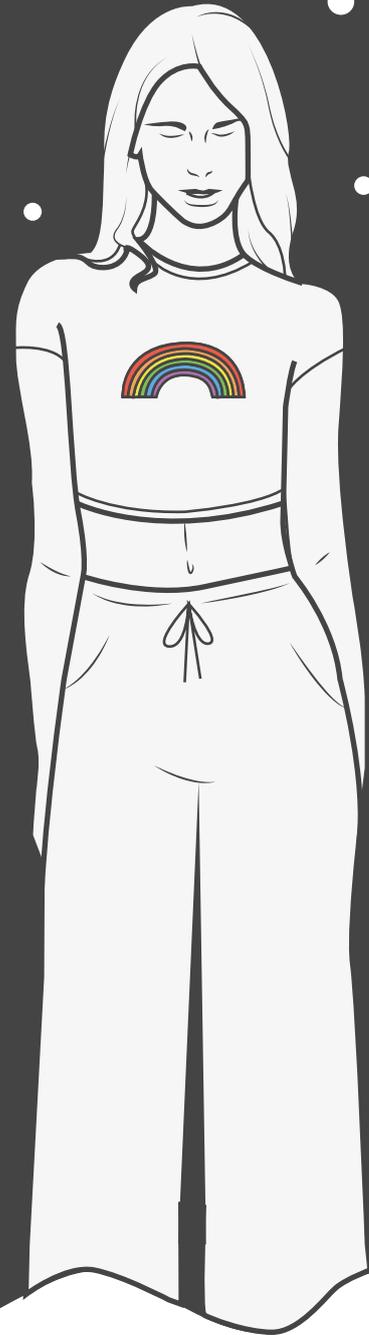
### Practise

- Practise the use of non-binary pronouns like they, them and their.
- Use non-binary pronouns if you don't know their gender identity yet.
- If someone takes the time to let you know their name and pronoun, use it and respect it.
- Don't be afraid to make a mistake, just ask. Sometimes asking is already acknowledging that you want to do it right.
- Read, follow and listen to diverse voices that discuss inclusive language to educate yourself on how you can develop the language you are using to make it more inclusive. It is our responsibility to learn as we go along.



## Examples of gender inclusive and non-binary language:

- Hey folks! **instead of** hey guys!
- Humankind **instead of** mankind
- First-year student **instead of** freshman
- Artificial **instead of** man-made
- Parent **instead of** mother/father
- Child **instead of** son/daughter
- Sibling **instead of** sister/brother
- Flight attendant **instead of** steward/stewardess
- Salesperson or sales representative **instead of** salesman / saleswoman
- Staffing the table **instead of** manning the table
- Partner **instead of** boyfriend/girlfriend



To illustrate how this can happen we would like to show you a before and after example from Amnesty International.

The fight for reproductive justice and ensuring that everyone has fair and equal access to abortions is an essential one! That is why it is so important for us to use inclusive language when campaigning for **the right to choose**. There are many trans individuals who are non-binary. They have reproductive traits, which means that they can get pregnant and need access to reproductive healthcare.



## Before

Can you identify non-inclusive language that is being used? What changes would you make to this text to make it more inclusive?

### 2. It's already hard for many women to get abortions in the US

Take Alabama as an example. In May, Alabama's governor signed into law [a draconian bill](#) that could punish doctors who perform abortions with life in prison. But in practice abortion is already inaccessible for many people in Alabama. The Guttmacher Institute [found that](#) in 2014, 93% of Alabama counties had no clinics that provided abortions. This means many women in Alabama have to travel to other states to access abortions. Even then, many women simply cannot afford to end their pregnancies. This is because Alabama, [like many other states](#), does not include abortion in the list of healthcare services that people with low incomes can access through Medicaid (government-assisted health insurance). Currently all states have to provide public funding for abortions in cases of rape, incest or threat to life – but in many places these exemptions will be irrelevant if harsh new laws come into effect.

## After

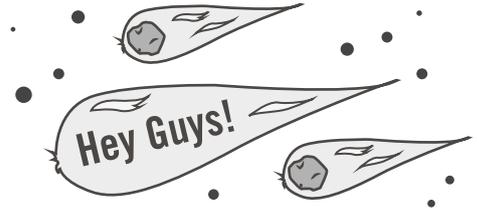
Changes were made to the text to make it more inclusive and include the experiences of Trans and Nonbinary people. You can read the final text that was [published here](#).





# PRACTICING CARE: MAKING YOUR LANGUAGE INCLUSIVE

We often use words or phrases that are non-inclusive. If you have been using these for a long time, they could easily slip into conversations without consideration for their impact.



## Can you identify non-inclusive words you may use and think of alternatives?

Think about what steps you could take to help you to remember to swap the term for a more inclusive term. This can include:

- Keeping track of how often you use it.
- Writing a checklist with a range of inclusive words and ticking them off the list as you test which one feels good for you.
- Keeping track of when you are able to successfully swap it out - celebrate those victories!

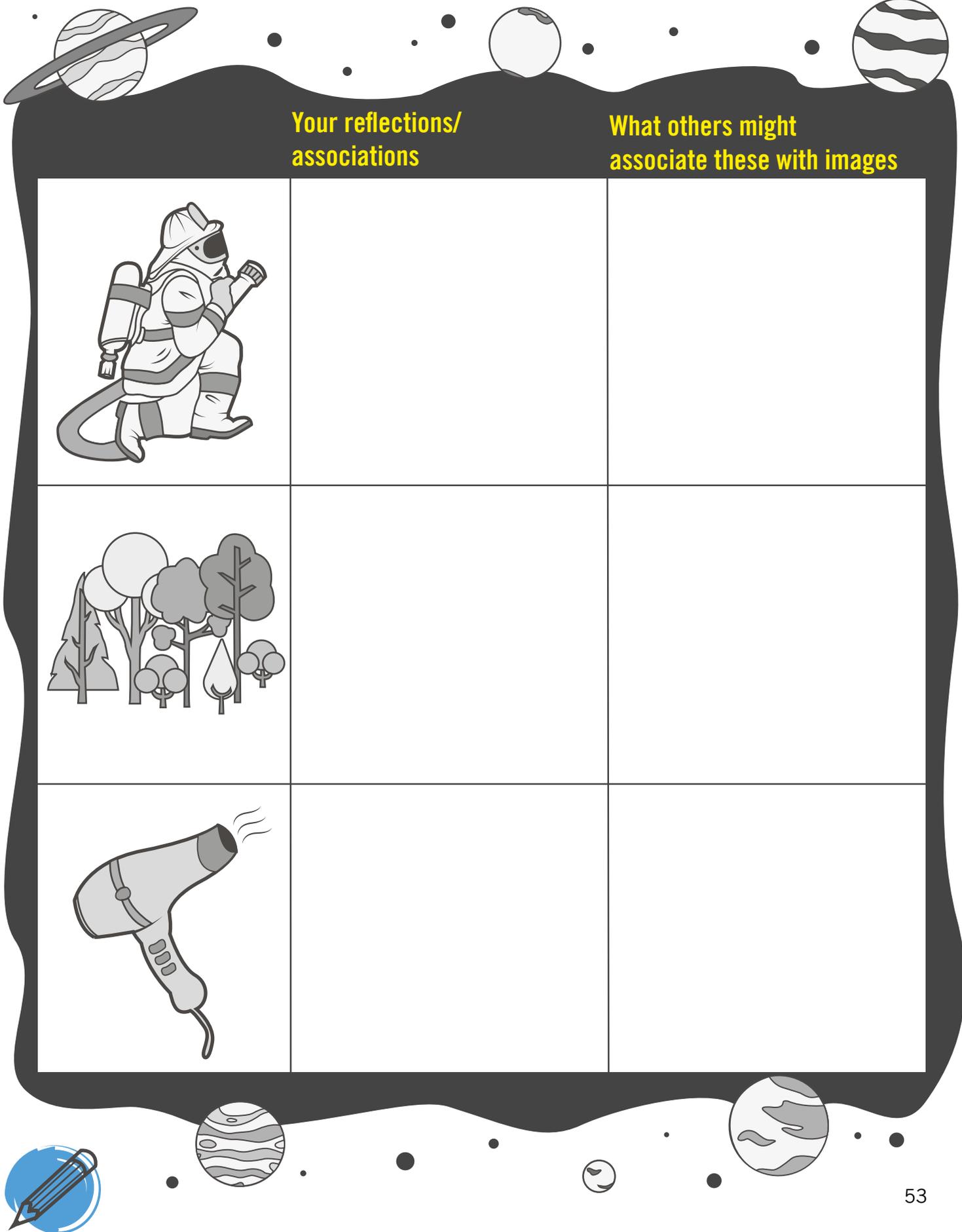
**Word/phrase I would like to swap out**

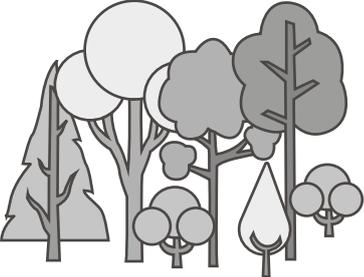
**Word/phrases I will use instead**

**What will I do to remember to swap it?**

Word/phrase I would like to swap out	Word/phrases I will use instead	What will I do to remember to swap it?
Guys	Everyone or people	I will keep track of how often I use it

When we see images there are often words and associations that immediately come to mind. **For the images below, what are the words that come to mind when you see these? What words do you associate with the images?**



<b>Your reflections/ associations</b>	<b>Your reflections/ associations</b>	<b>What others might associate these with images</b>
		
		
		



Let's turn it around. **What image comes to mind when you read the words below?**  
**Please draw it below.**

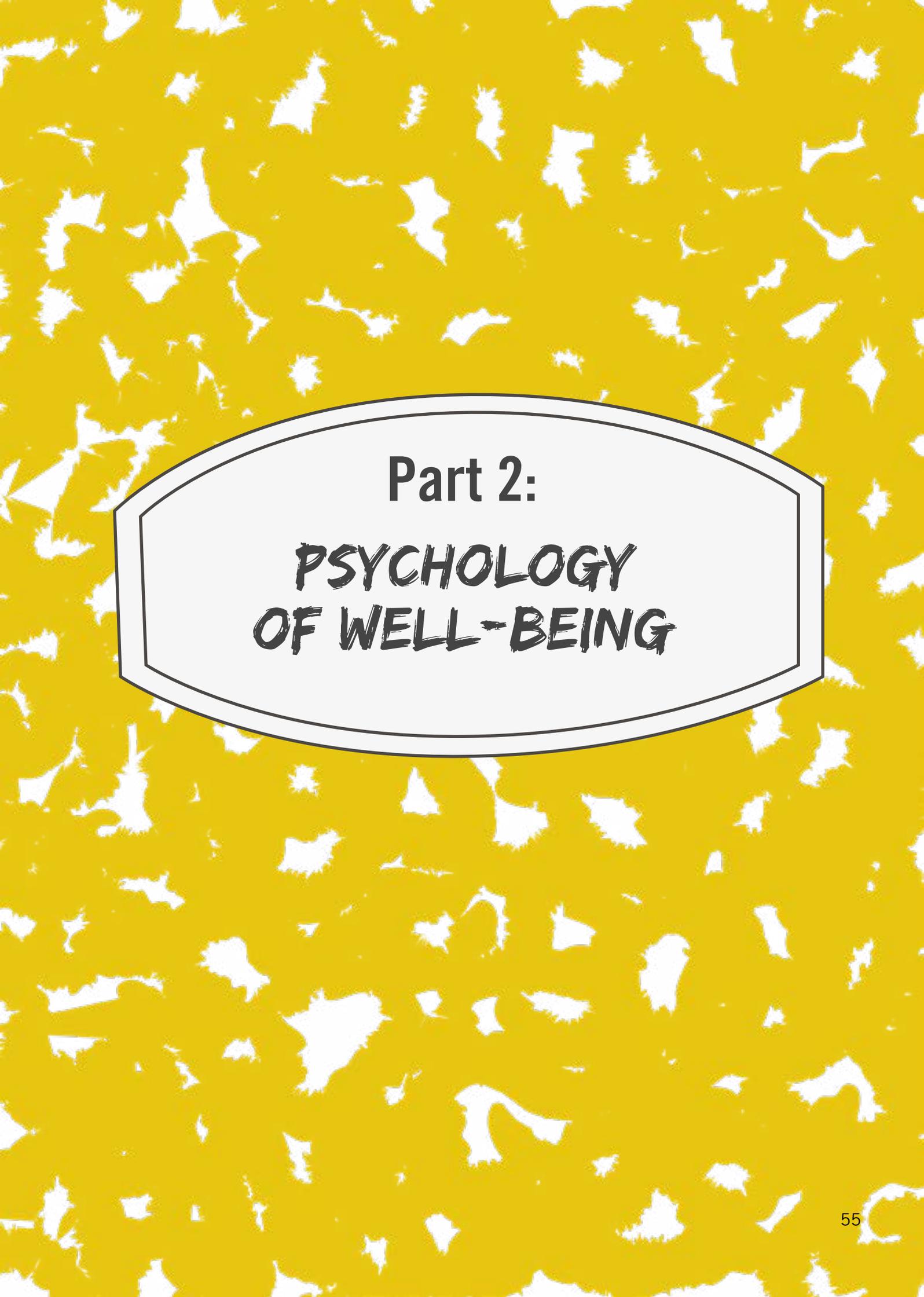
Lawyer	Teacher	Flower



**Let's take a moment to reflect:**

- What were the first images to come to mind when you thought about these words? Did you notice any changes to these images the more you reflected on how to draw them?
- In which way(s) and to what extent do these associations reflect a male centric perspective of the world?
- Did you use examples from your environment/life experience as sources for your image?





**Part 2:**  
**PSYCHOLOGY  
OF WELL-BEING**



# SOMETIMES WE NEED TO TAKE A STEP BACK



**Activist**

Can you organise this action? ✓✓

**Diya**

Yes, that is fine ✓✓

**Activist**

Can you develop an agenda for the workshop? ✓✓

**Diya**

Yes, happy to do that. ✓✓

**Activist**

Can you take minutes? ✓✓

**Diya**

Yes ✓✓

**Three months later...**



**Diya**

No, I can't ✓✓

Hey! Are you joining the meeting today?

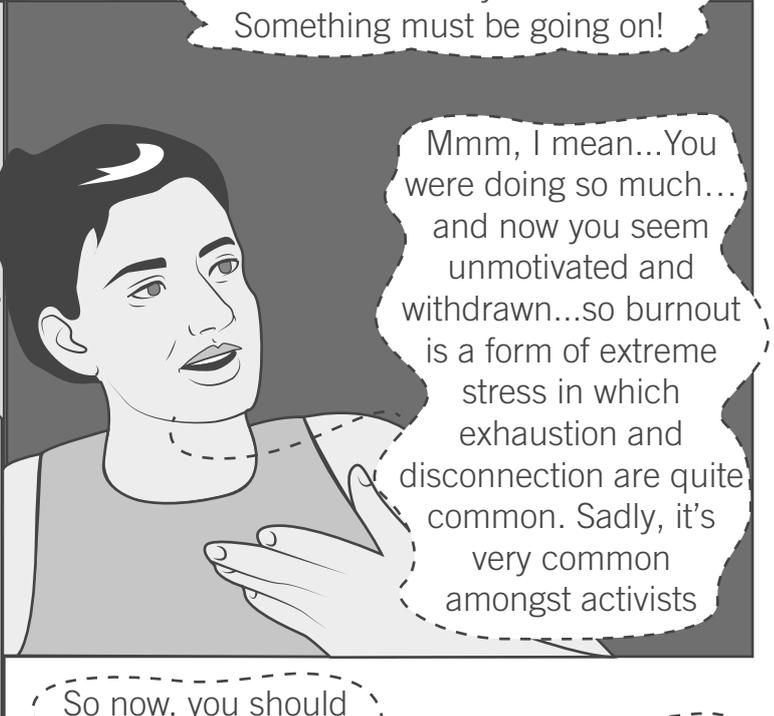
Hey! Are you coming to the workshop?

Mmm, I don't feel good, sorry

Hey! Did you manage to read the email?

Oh noooo I overslept!

Oh, sorry, I couldn't focus

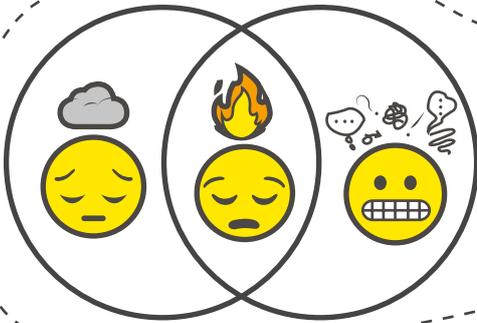
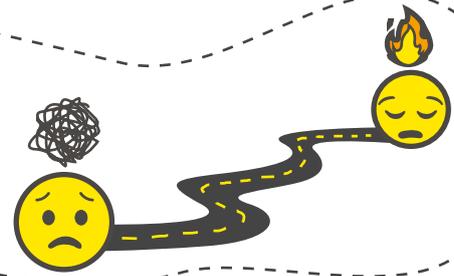




# STRESS, BURNOUT, ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION: PROTECTING YOUR MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

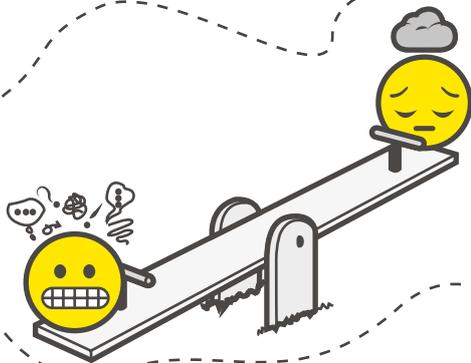
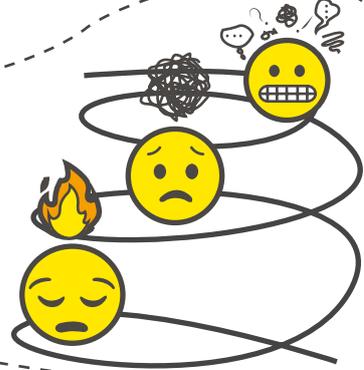
Fighting for human rights and a more just world can put significant strain on our mental health and well-being. This can sometimes mean we experience stress, burnout, depression, or anxiety. These can occur individually, simultaneously or be triggered by one another

**Stress → Burnout**  
(prolonged stress leads to burnout, it doesn't just happen).



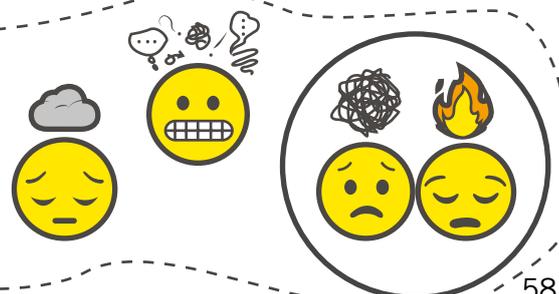
Depression and anxiety can be symptoms of burnout.

When we are anxious or depressed, we are more likely to feel stressed which can lead to burnout.



Depression and anxiety can often trigger each other and be symptoms of one another.

Alternatively, all conditions can occur independently (except burnout and stress).



Despite the complex relationship and differentiations between **stress, burnout, anxiety and depression** – it is important to understand that all are separate conditions. They occur and present themselves differently in each person and there is no singular way to treat them. However, having a general awareness of these can allow us to:

- **Recognise the development of these in ourselves and others, allowing for earlier intervention and greater understanding.**
- **Appreciate the impacts they pose to on our mental health and well-being.**
- **Understand when to seek help.**



This chapter aims to give you an insightful yet concise overview of each condition to help you to help you do just that.



## If you know someone who is struggling with their mental health you can...

- Start a conversation and listen to their story.
- Avoid comparisons (i.e. relating their situation to your own experience).
- Learn about mental health yourself (there are lots of useful resources out there that can help you feel more informed - see our Well-being Library at the end).
- Celebrate their small steps.
- Offer practical support such as cooking a meal or doing groceries.
- Encourage them to seek professional support or call a helpline if needed.
- Encourage them to avoid isolation.
- Give them a call or visit them regularly (in line with what they feel comfortable with).



It is important to understand that you are not responsible for their recovery and there is no expectation upon you to counsel or unpick the intricacies of their experience.

**Professional support should always be recommended.**



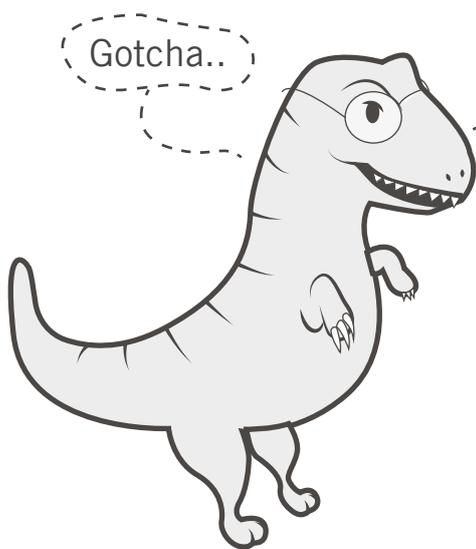


# UNDERSTANDING STRESS

**Our activism work can get super stressful.** Stress is an automatic physiological reaction we have to demands or threats. We feel stressed when there is a build-up of real or perceived pressure above what we believe we can cope with. Being under pressure is not necessarily a bad thing, but if the pressure lasts for a long time, it can negatively affect our physical, psychological and emotional health.

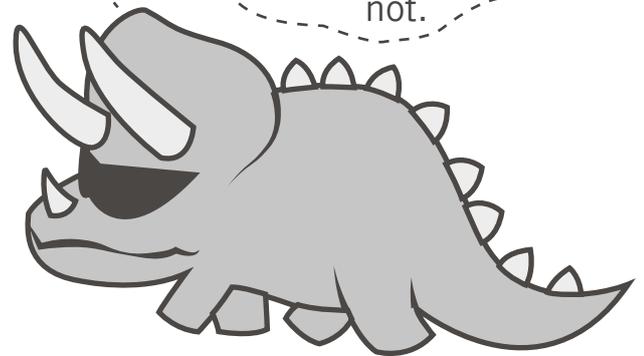


Stress can exist in **positive (eustress)** and **negative (distress)** forms. These emotions have evolutionary functions, meaning they have helped us survive and thrive as a species.



Gotcha..

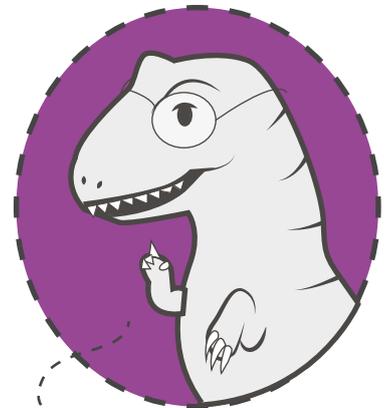
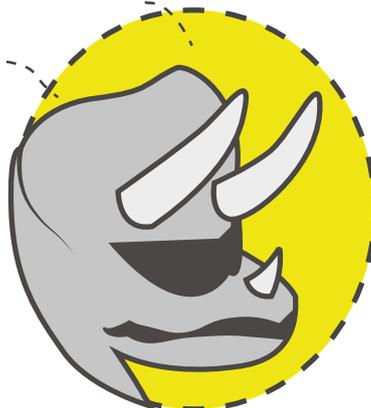
But how do we know whether a situation is distressing or eustressing?



This is really related to whether you think you can handle it or not.

If we think a challenge outbalances our coping resources, then our amygdala will react with a fight-or-flight response. However, if we think that we have the resources to cope, our brain activates healthier stress responses such as challenge or excite-delight responses (Field, 2016).

Now, let's talk about humans' amygdala.



I was just about to ask what in the world is that!!!

## EUSTRESSING

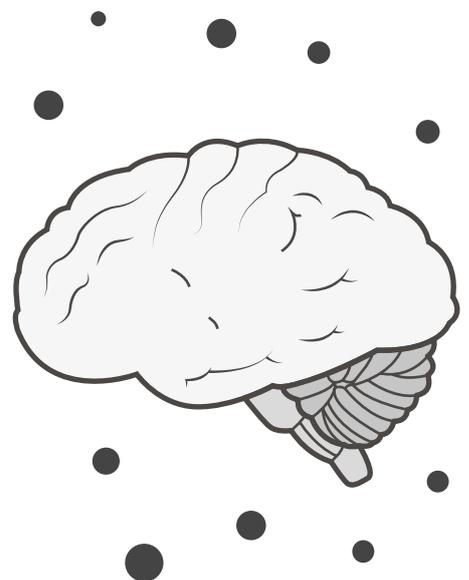


## DISTRESSING



The amygdala is a part of the brain that reacts to potential threats and induces fear responses, such as fight-flight-freeze. The amygdala sends signals to the hypothalamus (another part of the brain) to release bursts of stress hormones, which promote arousal and prompts us to quickly look for safety strategies.

Fear responses are activated whenever we feel vulnerable and our brain feels we might need some 'protection'. Hence a warning is sent to the nervous system. This can be when we burn our finger while cooking, or because of a triggering conversation with a friend over WhatsApp.



These are some examples of symptoms of stress (Gough, 2019; NHS, 2020):

Psychological 	Physical 	Emotional 
 Constant worrying	 Loss of appetite	 Low self-esteem
 Irrational logic (difficulty decision making)	 Headaches/muscle tension	 Irritable/impatient
 Racing thoughts/cynicism	 Lack of sleep/fatigue	 Overwhelmed/inability to cope
 Poor concentration	 Dizziness	 Fearful/anxious

Fear responses can help to keep us safe, but have disadvantages too. At times, if the amygdala senses danger, it can block our critical thinking that usually allows us to respond rapidly to challenges. Recognising and understanding some of the signs and triggers of stress and how they feel can help you to address them and cope better.





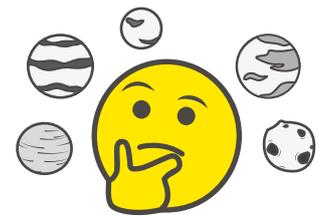
# PRACTICING CARE: GETTING BETTER AT STRESS

Because stress is an inevitable part of life, it can be helpful for us to develop ways to live with it better. In this section you'll find some science-based strategies for coping with stress - you can do one worksheet, or do them all.<sup>2</sup>

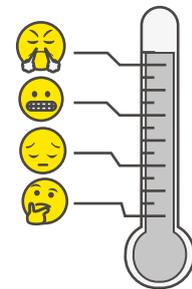
## Name it to tame it

Lack of clarity about our own stress can cause more stress, making it hard to know which resources we could use to help us cope. Here are some guidelines for naming your stress (if you have a pen and paper nearby you may find that writing down the answers helps):

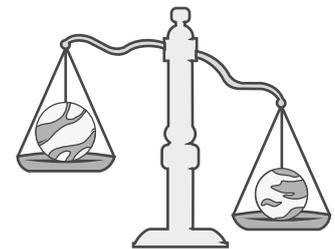
**1. Name the stressor.** The 'future', 'job', or 'relationship' are too vague to be useful. What particular part of your job, your future, your relationship is stressful? Be as specific as possible.



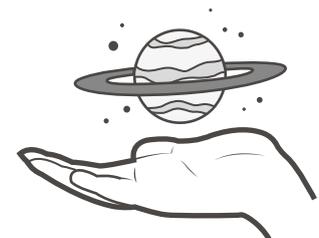
**2. Name your reactions.** What thoughts, emotions, and actions occur when you are in a stressful situation? What do you do that may keep your stress level high? For example, do you tend to procrastinate when you have to do a difficult task?



**3. Name the changeable.** Identify which aspects you are able to change, which ones are challenging but doable, and which ones you can't change.

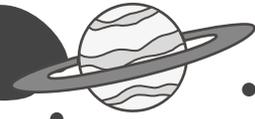


**4. Focus on what you can change.** Choose one thing that you can change, and think about how you can put this into practice next time you are feeling this stress



<sup>2</sup> This chapter is based on the work of Barcelona-based counselling psychologist Dr. Jena Field who has been working with clients all over the world for over 20 years. You can find more about her work at <https://themonkeytherapist.com/>

## Increasing confidence in your ability to cope



- 1. Reflect on a past occasion when you have coped well with a stressful situation.** Which skills and strengths did you use (imagination, resilience, determination, knowledge, compassion)?
- 2. Focus on your skills and what/who you have around you.** Which of your strengths can you use to cope now? What or who do you have around you who can help you cope? (support from friends, family or fellow activists)?
- 3. Learn and prepare.** Stress is often caused by uncertainty. What more can you find out about the situation? The more you know, the more you can prepare for eventualities.
- 4. Imagine that your stress response is helping you cope well with the stressor.** When you change your perception of your stress, your brain chemicals change too. And when the situation is outside your control, positive visualisation can alleviate stress.
- 5. Make and complete small attainable goals every day.** When we set a big, broad goal such as 'Learn Spanish' it can create an image that is unachievable. Then every day that we don't achieve it, we let ourselves down. Instead you can set a goal of taking one Spanish class.



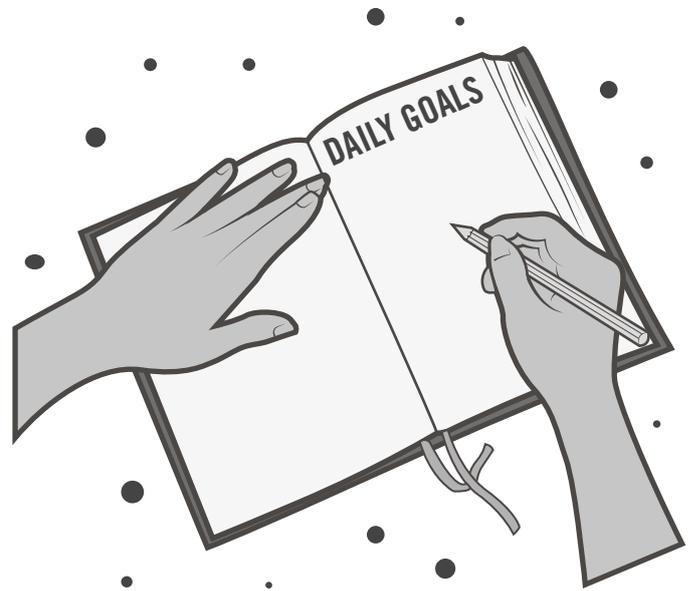
This repeated sense of failure conditions our brains to associate the goal with unpleasant feelings, which means that we are more likely to procrastinate.



Decide what the next step will be, no matter how small. We may make today's attainable goal, 'Sign up for Spanish school'. But if we haven't decided which school or how we are going to choose one from the many schools available, we are likely to put it off. Getting Things Done author David Allen suggests that people have a tendency to procrastinate when faced with making even small decisions.

Your daily attainable goals should be a list of smaller, specific next steps.

For example, Monday: Write down five school criteria that are important to me.  
Tuesday: Look up 10 schools and compare using criteria.



## Change the way you view stress

Changing our attitudes towards stress may not change the stressful situation.

However, when we believe that our stress response is evidence that we are not coping well and that our stress is harming our bodies, we are piling stress on top of stress. Consider the amount of times per day, week, or month that we think about stress and the cumulative effect that negative self-talk has on us.



Changing how we think about stress makes us less fearful of stressful situations.

According to Health Psychologist, Kelly McGonigal, if we believe that stress is inevitable and a normal part of our everyday experience, it is more likely that our brain will react with a healthier stress response.



## Connect with others

**1. Even a brief phone call or physical contact causes our brain to release oxytocin** (the chemical responsible for bonding and pleasure) and has a calming effect.



**2. Help someone.** Research shows that altruistic or compassionate acts are not only helpful to the ones you help; the acts reduce your stress levels as well.



**3. Share your stress-reduction process with others.** One of the quickest ways to learn something new is to explain it to someone else.

Today I rested as I had not rested for a long time 😊 ✓

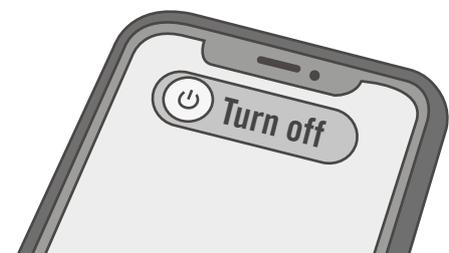
## Play more

We all know that physical exercise, healthy diet, and sleep can rebalance a stressful life. But psychiatrist and play expert, Stuart Brown, says that making these things fun can be that much more effective.

**1. Put time aside to do something that is fun and enjoyable.** Take a cooking class, play Frisbee golf, get a pet (or look after someone else's pet), or schedule a lie-in and breakfast in bed.



**2. Set aside specific times to play. Guilt free.** Turn off your phone and computer.



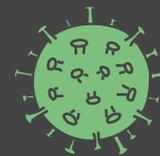


# UNDERSTANDING BURNOUT

Have you ever felt guilty of taking a break because other people might be suffering? Have you ever felt overwhelmed, unmotivated, cynical, emotionally drained and detached from your activism? If you feel like this more often than not, you might be facing burnout.



**Burnout** evolves gradually when you are faced with stress for long periods of time (Maslach, Schaufeli and Leiter, 2001). It can impair mental, physical and social functioning thus affecting your physical and mental health. There are a range of symptoms that can help you recognise burnout.

-  **Low mood**
-  **Headaches migraine**
-  **Exhaustion**
-  **Weakened immune response**
-  **Lack of sleep/insomnia**
-  **Depression**
-  **Reduced rationality**
-  **High BP**
-  **Increased Heart Rate**
-  **Anxiety**
-  **Fatigue**
-  **Cynical attitude**
-  **Emotional Detachment**
-  **Reduced cognitive performance**
-  **Social withdrawal**
-  **Sense of an inability to cope**

Experts recognise that activist burnout is one of the biggest barriers hindering sustainability of social justice movements (Gorski and Chen, 2015).



**Please remember, you deserve a break to keep up the good human rights fight.**

## **It's OK to ask for professional help!**

If you are reading this and recognise many of the symptoms above in yourself, you might benefit from seeking professional help and support. This workbook does not equate to professional psychological support. If you need this - please speak to someone in your community (friends, family, peer activists, colleagues or others) and check out which services are available in your country. You can also check out the list of helplines at the end of this workbook.



## Burnout in people of colour and gender non-conforming activists

Research suggests that queer gender non-conforming activists and people of colour are more at risk of facing burnout (Gorski, 2019).

Sometimes activists are navigating the world with a level of fear for themselves, while also working to dismantle systems of oppression. This can take a serious toll due to:

- Activists feeling drained and feeling that there are few safe spaces free from oppression.
- Interactions with other activists who do not acknowledge systems of oppression.
- Backlash in workspaces and environments. For example, activists we spoke with in Paraguay said they often feel that their LGBTI activism could put their jobs at risk.
- Trans and non-binary people can face frequent backlash in the form of physical violence, or through more subtle microaggressions.



### Are you an ally?

It is crucial that you become self-aware of your own privileges. And while you're at it - **LISTEN**. Empathy is key. If you've been sharing too much, **MAKE SPACE** and pass the mic to someone else who hasn't had a chance to shine yet. If you haven't been participating very much or at all and you want to speak, then **TAKE SPACE** and claim the stage.





# PRACTICING CARE: SPOTTING BURNOUT

We can support ourselves and our activist peers when we know how to spot signs of burnout.

My name is Diya and at the moment I feel exhausted. We are preparing our actions for Human Rights Day, but I am doubtful we will have any impact on the world... It's all messed up! What the hell is the point?! I was trying to explain this to my friend yesterday, but could not think clearly anymore. Last week I was really tired but could not sleep... I am coughing and have a sore throat. I'm not sure I can do this for much longer.

My name is Nathan and I have been very busy with my activism and school. We will have our final exams at school next week, I am nervous about those and worry whether I will pass this year. I am a member of our Amnesty International Board and have lots on my mind about what I should do, but at the moment I have a headache so I will try to do that later.



- What do you think is affecting these individuals?
- What are the tell-tale signs?
- If Diya and Nathan were part of your activist community, what actions can you take to help them?
- What services are available within your organisation or movement to help Diya?
- If they asked you, what advice would you give Diya and Nathan to help them cope?



# PRACTICING CARE: STRESS CONTAINER EXERCISE

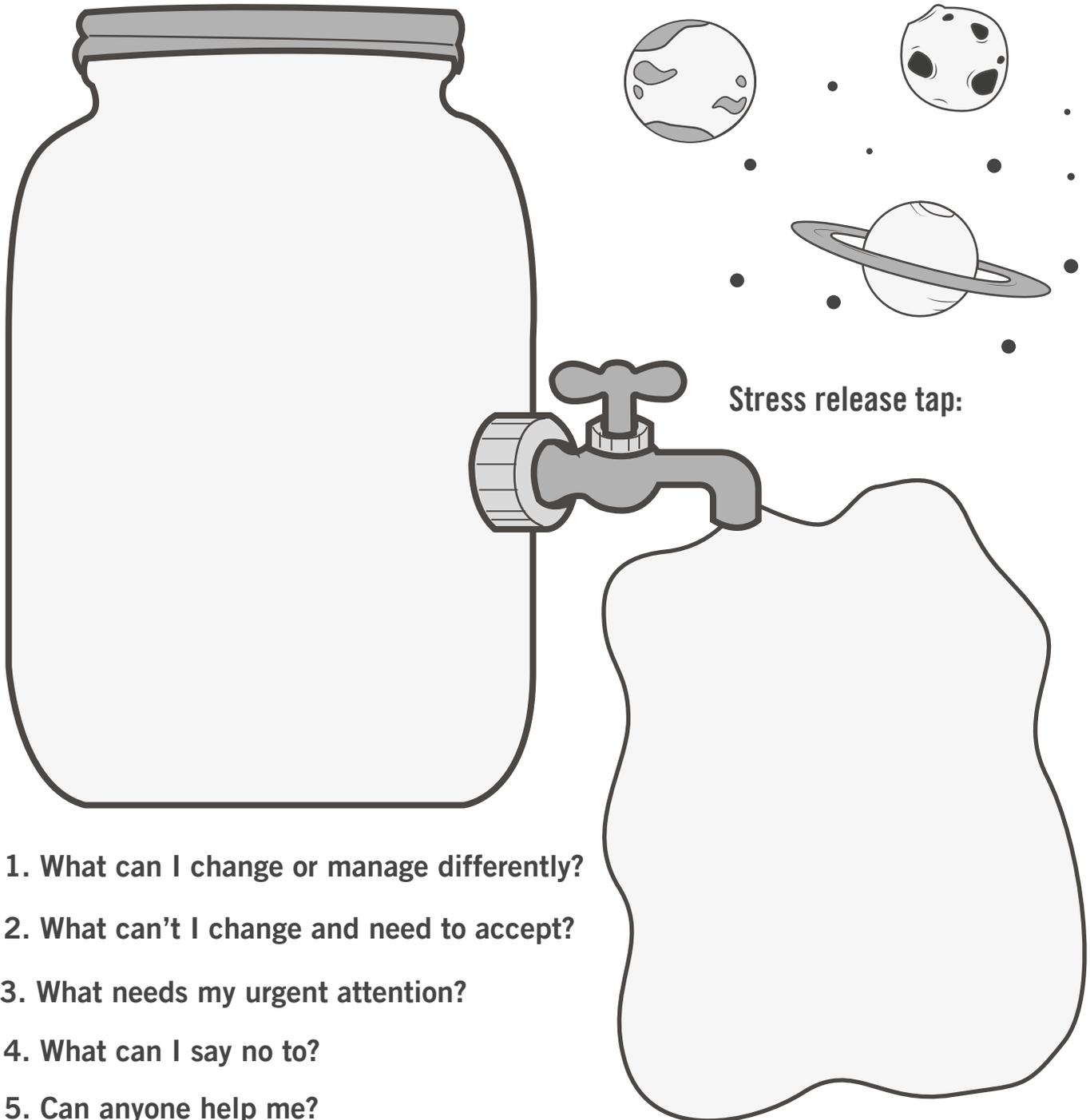
**Burnout** is caused by prolonged stress. So to prevent it, we can learn techniques to help us better manage some of the stressors we face. It can be good to think about things that are causing you stress and how you can manage these. This can assist you to work out the things you can change and the things that are beyond your control.

The '**Stress Container**' is one way of thinking about it. Some days your container may have room for plenty of pressure, but others your container may be small and fill up quickly.



Think of this as your stress container. Write inside it all the things in your life that put you under pressure - in work, at home, everywhere. Look at how you can 'open the tap' (these represent your coping mechanisms) to release some of the pressures, rather than let the container overflow.

**Now ask yourself the following questions to turn the tap to empty the container a bit**



1. What can I change or manage differently?
2. What can't I change and need to accept?
3. What needs my urgent attention?
4. What can I say no to?
5. Can anyone help me?
6. What are some of my unhelpful ways that I use to try to cope?
7. What are some of the useful ways that I use to try to cope? What else could I do?





# UNDERSTANDING ANXIETY

Working on human rights issues, being exposed to human rights violations and the experiences that come with it (push backs, attacks) puts our activists at greater risk of experiencing anxiety. Therefore, it's really important we are aware of what it is, how it is triggered and when to seek help to manage it.

## What is anxiety?

Anxiety is an automatic physiological response that is triggered when there is a perceived risk of danger, loss, or failure, which can be either real or imagined. When we are anxious, we experience a series of physiological reactions (such as: increased heart rate, quickened breathing, muscular contractions, sweating, increased focus etc.) that heighten our arousal and ability to deal with the perceived threat.

We will all feel anxious at some point, and this can be perfectly healthy; before exams or job interviews, due to health or relationship issues, or when we perceive safety threats. **But for some, feelings of anxiety can become overwhelming, constant, hard to control and easily triggered.**

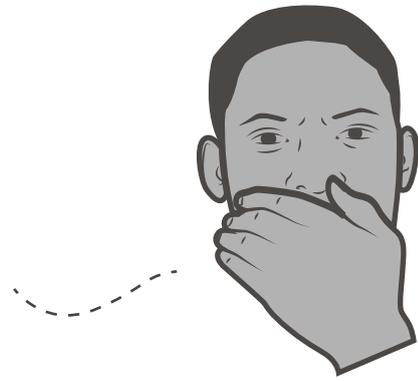


## Some youth activists have told us about things that cause anxiety for them:

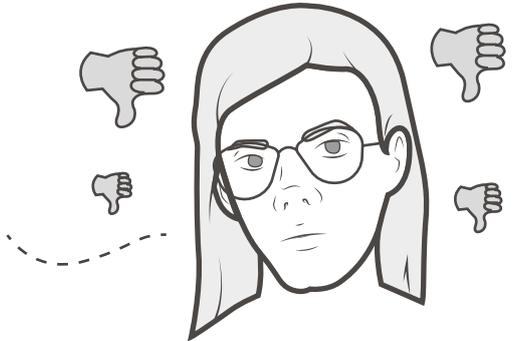
**Annya (Taiwan):** “My family is against their children being part of social movements or political activity. They showed a negative attitude when I told them I work as a youth activist in a human rights organization, and this keeps holding me back.”



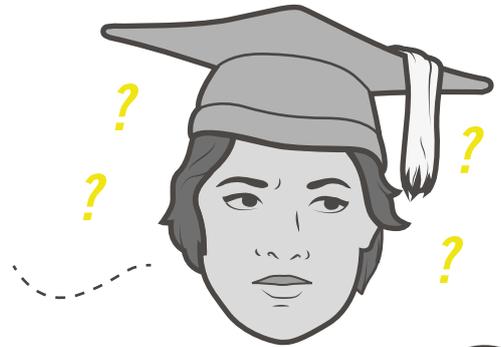
**Mpho (South Africa):** “Lots of people say “Youth are the leaders/future of tomorrow”. Sometimes I feel like there’s too much pressure to say or do something revolutionary so you can be taken seriously. As a result, I just keep quiet instead of saying something 'average'.”



**Alex (Canada):** “I’d say that what causes me anxiety is that I try to be perfect and I’m always trying to prove my worth to people and show that I deserve to be there. I’m extremely scared of letting people down.”



**Souhaila (Morocco):** “Now that I have finally graduated, I’ve never been more anxious and worried about my future. As a young job seeker living in a country where activists are considered as threats and rebellious, I just feel like a cat on a hot tin roof.”

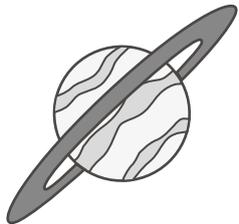


## How can you recognise anxiety?

Anxiety is an individualised condition, meaning symptoms vary on a case by case basis. This can make it difficult to identify. Sometimes it can arise without explanation and we may notice it through physical sensations in the body. Sometimes, we may not even realise the sensations we are experiencing are being caused by anxiety. Despite this, there are some symptoms that tend to be more typical than others.

**These are listed in the next page.**





Feeling depressed or numb

Inability to concentrate

Less pleasure in daily activities

Irritability or emotions

Rumination or repeating the same thoughts in the same way

### EMOTIONS

### THINKING

Hopelessness or helplessness

Hypersensitivity

Racing disturbing thoughts

Worry that is unresponsive to logic

## COMMON ANXIETY SYMPTOMS

Catastrophic thinking the worst is going to happen

Numbness or tingling

Negative self-talk: I am going crazy

Difficulty sleeping

Shallow breathing

Reassurance seeking

### PHYSICAL

### BEHAVIOUR

Heart racing or skipping a beat

Tense muscles

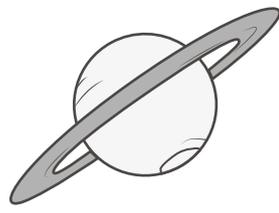
Over-checking or avoiding anxiety-provoking situations

Chest tightening

Restlessness, fidgeting or pacing

Stomach knots or tightening

Overreacting and over apologising



## When should you seek help?

Although having periodic feelings of anxiety is completely normal, it can significantly impact your quality of life if these become more frequent, prolonged and severe (Anxiety UK, 2020).

### For example, if:

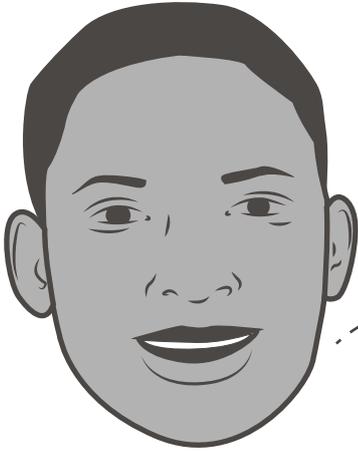
- Worries become more relentless, unrealistic, disproportionate and unresponsive to logic.
- Physical symptoms escalate and cause panic attacks.
- You become withdrawn or detached from your usual activities and people around you.
- You're on edge and alert to everything around you.

**Then you might need to seek professional help. You can find a list of helplines at the end of this workbook.**

Some people living with anxiety may be concerned about being identified as being anxious. This could be because they don't want to be defined by their anxiety, or they may be concerned about the stigma that they perceive to be attached to it. However, it is much easier to treat and manage anxiety if you reach out to others and seek help early. You are not alone. There are lots of ways to do this. Some helplines are included at the end of this workbook.

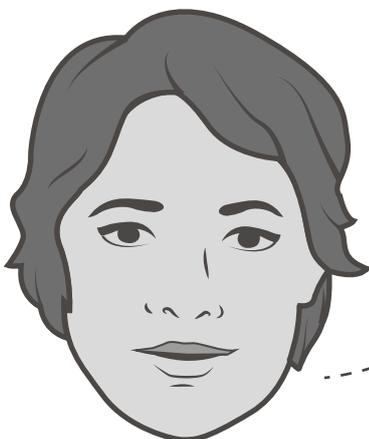


Here are some of the ways some youth activists have learnt to manage their anxiety:



**Mpho** (South Africa): “What has helped me cope is seeing other people’s confidence with saying exactly how they feel about certain topics regardless of how ‘average’ it may be because everything said always adds value. I have also learnt to take a step back when I feel overwhelmed with some topics and to be content with knowing that I cannot always be involved in everything.”

**Alex** (Canada): “Realising that my value has nothing to do with my productivity. I’m an amazing person regardless of the outcomes and this is something that I have to repeat to myself every day.”



**Souhaila** (Morocco): “I’m just trying to speak up on my social media, perhaps my words can change something or someone’s mind (a recruiter’s mind, especially).”





# PRACTICING CARE: REDUCING ANXIETY

Despite anxiety being your body's natural response to stressful situations, we can sometimes get anxious when we least expect it. There are a range of techniques which you can do by yourself to reduce anxiety symptoms.

**Check out two exercises here that you can try out!** Take a moment to practise these at a time that you feel relaxed. Find out which technique works best for you so you can use them when you feel anxious in the future. If these don't work for you, check out the Well-being Library at the end of the workbook for other tools.

## Emotional Freedom Technique Tapping<sup>3</sup>

**Why?** Emotional Freedom Technique Tapping for anxiety is an effective way to reduce anxiety symptoms such as excessive worry, irritability, sleeping difficulties and difficulty concentrating. Tapping on the meridian points while concentrating on accepting the negative emotion or concern helps re-balance the body's energy.

### Step 1

Find a quiet place and make yourself comfortable. Identify what is causing anxiety.

### Step 2

Rate your current stress level on a scale of 0 to 10, with zero being baseline and ten being the highest level of stress.

### Step 3

Formulate a statement to focus on what is causing anxiety. The statement should consist of two parts:

**Part 1:** Acknowledge the problem you wish to address.

**Part 2:** Focuses on self-acceptance.

For example: "even though I feel anxious, I profoundly and fully accept myself."

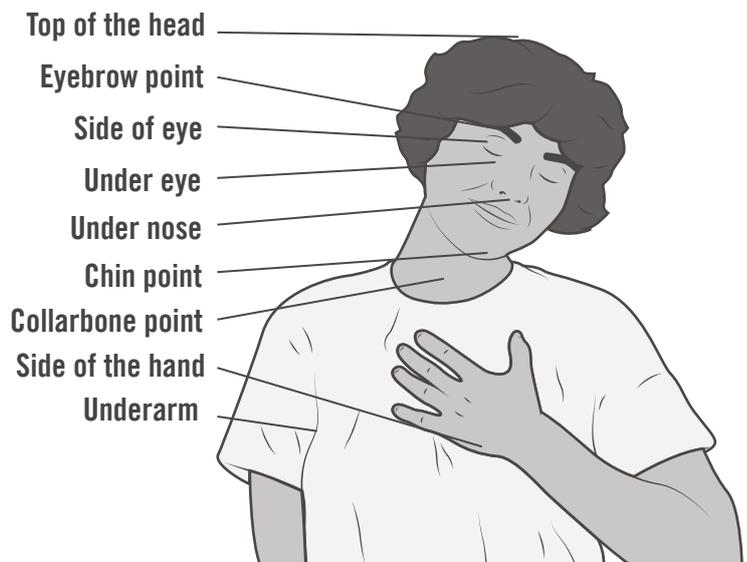
## Step 4

Now you start tapping while repeating the statement from Step 3. For example:

- With four fingers on one hand, tap the side of the hand on the other hand five to seven times.
- Repeat your statement from Step 3 three times while simultaneously tapping.

## Step 5

Repeat the tapping until you feel your stress levels are down to zero or one on the scale you had identified in step 1.



## Breathing with 4-7-8 Technique <sup>4</sup>

**Why?** Deep breathing increases the supply of oxygen to your brain and stimulates the parasympathetic nervous system, which promotes a state of calmness. Breathing exercises can help us wind down and remain calm.

## Step 1

Find a quiet place and make yourself comfortable. Loosen any clothes that restrict your breathing. Whatever position you're in, place your feet roughly hip-width apart.

- If you're lying down, place your arms a little bit away from your sides, with the palms up. Let your legs be straight, or bend your knees so your feet are flat on the floor.
- If you're sitting, let your arms rest on the chair arms.
- If you're sitting or standing, place both feet flat on the ground.



4

This worksheet was inspired by and adapted from [The Stress Management Society](#) and the [UK National Health Service](#).

## Step 2

Let your breath flow as deep down into your belly as is comfortable, without forcing it.



## Step 3

Breathe in quietly through the nose for 4 seconds and then hold the breath for a count of 7 seconds.



## Step 4

Exhale forcefully through the mouth, pursing the lips and making a “whoosh” sound, for 8 seconds.



## Step 5

Repeat the cycle up to 4 times.





# UNDERSTANDING DEPRESSION

We all have ups and downs – mood fluctuation is a normal part of our existence. Sometimes we can feel down for many reasons. However, feeling down is not necessarily depression.

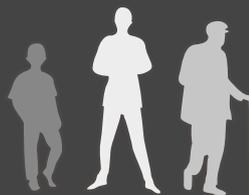
Depression is a **persistent, prolonged**, low-mood disorder that can significantly impact quality of life. It can vary in severity from mild to severe and can be treated using many methods ranging from medicine to therapy and many more.

## Depression is:

A widely recognised and researched mental health condition



A very common condition that **can** affect anyone at any age



Treatable



## Depression is NOT:

A sign of weakness



Something that affects everyone



Something you can just “snap out of” or “get over”



Something that lasts forever



Depression presents itself differently in each individual. However, research has collated data overtime to deduce some of the more common symptoms:

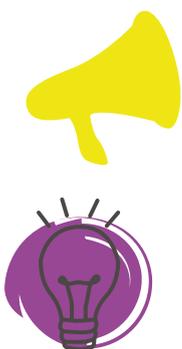
The infographic is set against a dark grey, wavy-edged background. It features ten distinct icons, each paired with a text label describing a symptom of depression. The symptoms are arranged in a roughly circular pattern. The icons include: a head with a brain and rain clouds, a sad face, a yellow warning triangle, a sad face with a green leaf on its forehead, a balance scale with a question mark on one side and a knife and fork on the other, a person sitting with their head in their hands, a sad face with a question mark and a male symbol, a battery icon, a broken red heart, a white bag with a knife and fork, and a wide-eyed, toothy smile.

- Low mood (feeling sad, tired, irritable or angry)
- loss of interest or enjoyment in things previously enjoyed
- engaging in high risk activity
- changes in sleeping pattern
- changes in appetite and weight
- lower self-esteem
- poor concentration
- low energy
- feeling less pleasure from things
- feeling helpless
- anxiety

(Fried, 2017; Kanter et al., 2008; RMI, 2020)

## Causes:

Given its inherent nature, the cause of depression can vary depending on the individual. However, literature suggests it is most commonly caused by a combination of **biological** and **lifestyle** factors.



Depression can be in an incredibly debilitating condition that should be taken seriously.

With the right treatment, its impact can be lessened and individuals living with it can regain a good quality and healthy life.

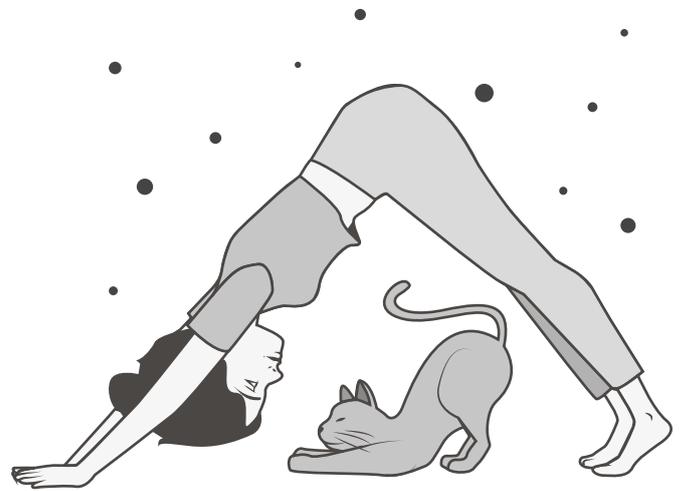


# PRACTICING CARE: MANAGING DEPRESSION

If you think you may be depressed, it is important to seek professional help. Alongside this, depression can be better managed by exploring some of these approaches. While these are not substitutes for professional help, you might find one that speaks to you and can help alleviate the strain symptoms of depression can cause.

## Exercise

This doesn't have to be running marathons. It can be anything from signing up to a sport that you've wanted to try for ages, going out for long walks or even trying progressive distance running through online initiatives. If you don't feel like leaving the house, there are plenty of alternatives you can do indoors. Such as circuits, yoga, pilates or online workouts. There are lots of free, accessible and inclusive workouts you can do online - some are in the Well-being Library.



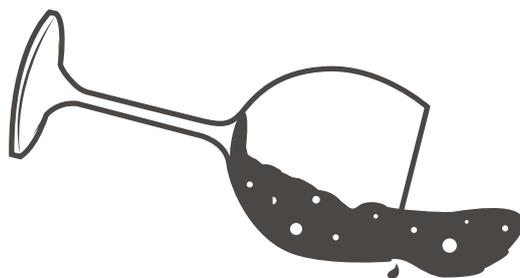
## Practicing mindfulness

This involves sitting quietly and still for small periods of time and focussing on being present in the moment, allowing thoughts to come and go and keeping conscious of the breath. The process allows us to be more accepting of thoughts as they occur and encourages relaxation and a fresher perspective. Research has shown, when combined with other methods (i.e. exercise), mindfulness can help to reduce symptoms of depression in clinically diagnosed individuals (Teasedale et al., 2000; Deyo et al., 2009). There are lots of apps (i.e. Headspace) and resources online that provide guided mindfulness and meditation sessions to help you master the technique.



## Managing impact of alcohol

Making slight changes to your drinking by choosing alternatives such as low alcohol beverages (0.5%), or mocktails can help to reduce drunkenness and hangovers, which can often worsen symptoms of depression.



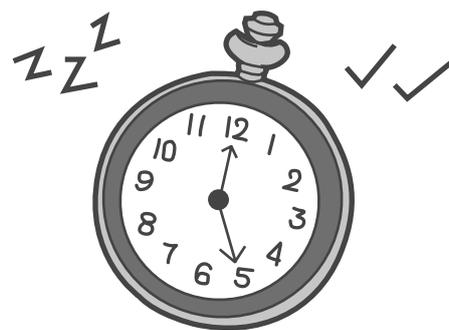
## Journaling

This can be a really good way of helping you to untangle some of the thoughts and feelings you may be experiencing. The process of externalising these onto paper can be cathartic and help to alleviate some of the burden depressive symptoms can cause.



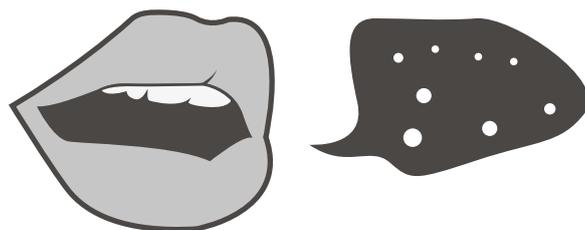
## Keeping a healthy routine

Setting tasks, organising time, disciplined bedtimes – regulating your days can help you to maintain focus and feel more accomplished and productive.



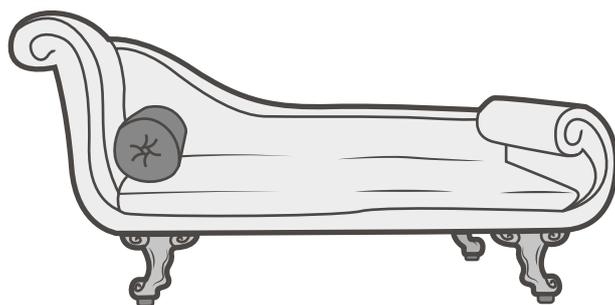
## Talking to others

It can be easy to isolate and not speak to anyone – but it is really important to keep in touch and speak to people, even if it's not necessarily about how you feel.



## Talking therapy

Counselling/talking therapies are widely acknowledged as being very effective for helping people living with depression to alleviate, process and take control of some of the thoughts and feelings they may be experiencing.

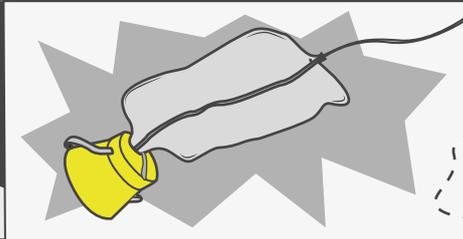




**Part 3:**  
**CREATING COMMUNITIES  
OF CARE**



# THOU SHALT GET YOUR OXYGEN MASK ON



Basically, when you're on an airplane before takeoff, flight attendants explain the oxygen mask principle.

Basically, if there is a shortage in oxygen on the flight, oxygen masks drop from above your seat.

The first thing you should do is put your mask on first before helping others put on theirs. This is because if you don't have oxygen, you'll pass out and won't be able to help others anyway.

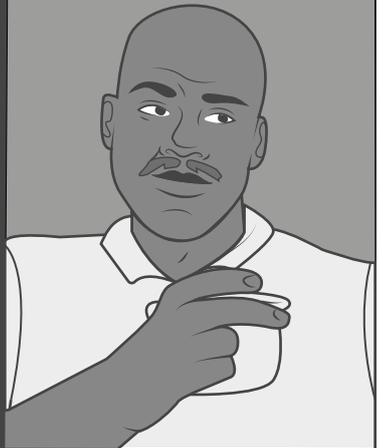


Mmm, interesting, this basically applies to everything in life, doesn't it?

Yeah, I sometimes feel **guilty**

**True dat.**

But I remind myself that **I can't help the world become a better place if I'm not okay.**





# UNDERSTANDING SELFCARE BASICS

Self-care practices are very important. You might find that these days social media bombards you with all kinds of messaging on 'self-care'. We looked, and we saw that on Instagram alone the hashtag has over 30 million posts (July 2020).

We noticed that a lot of the content features face masks, massages, or bubble baths. Self-care differs from person to person. Some people might recharge their energy with a massage, but for others it means having a good meal, watching several movies, hanging out with friends or going for a walk. There are endless ways that we practise self-care and it's different for everyone.

Audre Lorde, a Black lesbian author, civil rights activist and feminist, was fighting a very aggressive liver cancer, and highlighted that self-care in itself is political -

*"caring for yourself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation and it can take every form you feel that works for you!"*



## Self-Care 101 for Activists

### Listening to your body:

You've probably heard it before, "the body keeps score and it always wins". Really listening to your body entails getting enough sleep, moving and exercising, eating a diet that nurtures you, and doing what feels good to you.



## Digital Breaks:

In this super connected world, it can feel hard to disconnect. So many things are happening at once. When was the last time you had a no-social media and no-screens day? A day for and to yourself? Take a day to recharge; draw, sing, read, write, dance, visit a friend, visit your local park or simply do nothing. We promise you, you're going to love it. Less FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) and more JOMO (Joy of Missing Out).



## Tapping yourself on the back:

Are you having one of those days, weeks or months? Please remember that you deserve all the love, kindness, and support that you give to fellow activists (and that we love <3 you and are rooting for you).



## Building communities of collective care:

Collective care is as important as self-care. Take time to create safe spaces for you and others in your community where you nurture and take care of each other. This can include spaces to talk about issues you might be facing or wellness practices.



## Creating healthy boundaries:

Collective care is as important as self-care. Take time to create safe spaces for you and others in your community where you nurture and take care of each other. This can include spaces to talk about issues you might be facing or wellness practices.





# PRACTICING CARE: MY SELF-CARE ROUTINE

Everyone's self-care practices are different. It might be useful to reflect on what your self-care practices are, or what you would like them to be. By identifying your self-care practices, you can build them into a routine and fall back on them when you need them. Here are some examples of self-care practices that you may like to use as inspiration.<sup>5</sup>

Physical	Emotional	Mental	Growth
<b>Exercise</b> 	<b>Saying no</b> 	<b>Journaling</b> 	<b>Hobbies</b> 
<b>Breathing exercise</b> 	<b>Affirmation</b> 	<b>New Skills</b> 	<b>Meditation</b> 
<b>Regular sleeping pattern</b> 	<b>Therapy</b> 	<b>Mindfulness</b> 	<b>Socialising</b> 
<b>Balanced diet</b> 	<b>Reflection</b> 	<b>Kindness</b> 	<b>Goal Setting</b> 

# Now it's your turn!

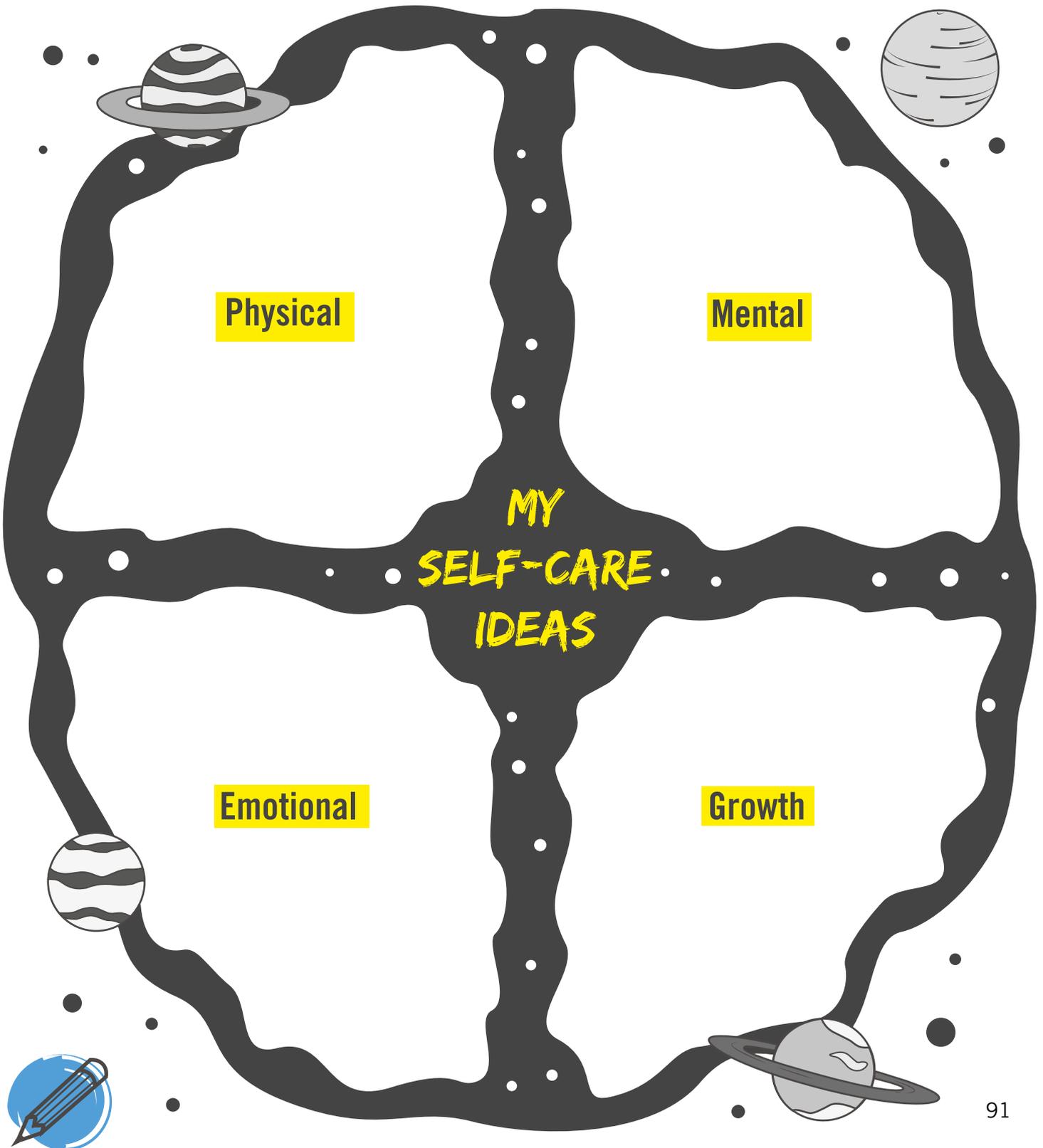
Fill the box below with ideas for your self-care routine. If you're still having trouble coming up with activities, try completing the following sentences:

I feel inspired when I...

I get irritated when I don't have time to...

I feel confident when I...

I feel bad about myself when I put off doing...



Use your ideas to create your own self-care routine. Go through each idea and ask if it is realistic to be done daily, weekly, or monthly and list it under the corresponding heading in the box below. For ideas that are not realistic, cross them off your list - that is fine too!

**MY SELF-CARE ROUTINE**

Daily	Weekly	Monthly

You now have your personalised self-care routine!

Keep it somewhere safe where you can check it every now and then to see if it feels like you are putting your routine into practice, and where you can fall back on it when you need it. Enjoy!





# IT IS OK TO SAY NO

At a meeting



So now we need to divide tasks



I'm gonna call our press contacts

I'm gonna invite the other groups

I'm gonna design the poster

I will ask for permissions



Hey, what happened?

It's just... I'm really sorry I can't do much this week... I don't want to disappoint you all...



**OMG!**  
But don't worry! This is volunteer work. We all understand if sometimes you can't do something - and we're here to support each other!



Really? It's okay?



Of course it's okay!

Yes, nobody has to stress because of this!

And next time, when someone else can't, maybe you'll be able to do so!

OMG, thank you! I was so afraid to say no, but now I get it! Thanks for having my back





# UNDERSTANDING OUR DIVERSE ROLES AND REALITIES

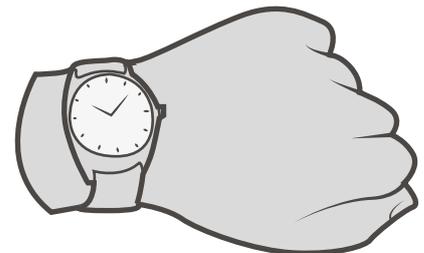
As an organisation, Amnesty International relies on collaboration and teamwork between paid staff and volunteer activists to achieve our human rights goals. While this work can look similar and involve similar tasks, it is important to recognise that these roles are different on a number of levels. Although essentially, one is paid labour and one is unpaid labour.

## Working with Amnesty International staff members: what to keep in mind as an activist?

As an activist you are dedicating your free time to Amnesty International's mission. That is amazing and because of your commitment, Amnesty International is what it is today! As an activist, you will probably come across many people who work for Amnesty International. Whether they work part-time or full-time, they also have a life outside of Amnesty International. They will have other interests and might volunteer for other organisations on the side. **There are different things you can do and be aware of as an activist while working with Amnesty International staff members:**

### Be considerate of office hours:

While you might be doing most of your activism during the weekend, staff members usually work from Monday to Friday. The weekends are their moments to rest and relax. If you reach out to them on the weekends, do not expect a response right away or assume the person you are trying to contact is working on the weekend.



### Agree on communication channels:

Some staff may prefer to use their official work emails, whereas others may be happy using their social media channels. Clarifying which is their preferred method to use will help ensure clear and open communication lines and avoid unnecessary frustration.



## It is OK to say NO

For some of us, saying no to work related to a great cause doesn't come easily and can often trigger feelings of guilt. But it is important to remember that sometimes being able to say no can have a positive impact on your well-being.

## When you want to say yes or no - take a moment to reflect on these points:

- You have the power to identify what is a priority in your life and your time - you know you best.
- Take the time to decide. If you are not sure you want or can take on the task/work, say that you will get back with an answer in (xxx amount of time).
- And remember, you do not need to explain.



Whether you are a staff member or an activist, it is important to remember that when you are working in situations where people are being asked if they would like to participate in a task, it is always made clear that saying no is an option. To present it in an accessible way you can give people the option to confirm later once they have had a chance to reflect and consider the implications of saying 'yes'.

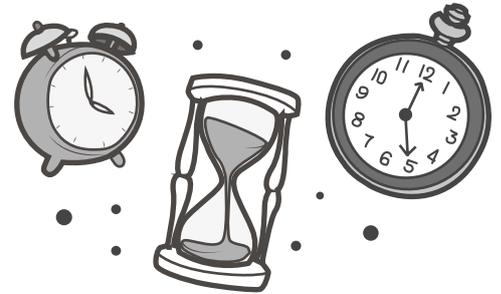


## What to keep in mind as a member of staff?

As a staff member you are paid to work for Amnesty International either part-time or full-time. Therefore, you need to recognise the power and privileges you hold in this position. This power can play out in a way that may cause a decrease in well-being for activists who you work with and are often not paid. There are different things you should consider as a member of staff:

### Respect time constraints and work-volunteer-life balance:

It's important to understand and be respectful of the varying amounts of time and availability the activists that you work with have.



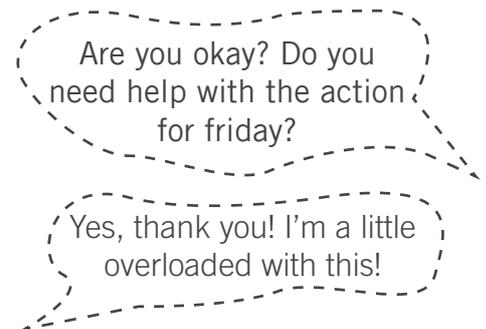
### Create check-ins/evaluations that are mutual:

Have check-ins where both the staff and activist's work plan is looked at. Look at what is on each other's plate and create space for sharing changes that may have occurred in workload and availability. It is good practice to ensure the sharing of this information is a two-way street as it can make it more comfortable to raise issues and concerns.



### Share expectations:

Be clear about expectations, time commitment and timelines for all projects and work. Do regular check-ins to see if adjustments in commitments and timelines need to be made.



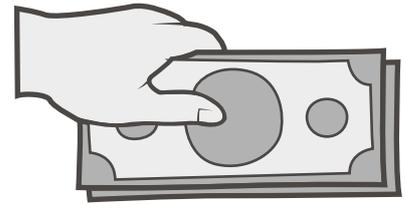
### Keep an eye on your communication style:

Be flexible with how you communicate and don't assume that how you communicate with staff members will work for activists. This includes preferred methods of communication and time expectations on replies, including when they are available to reply. For example, they might not be able to communicate with you during the day.



## Don't forget you are paid and activists are not:

It is worth recognising that this can create a power dynamic between yourselves and the activists, especially as in some cases the day-to-day work you do might be very similar to work done by activists.



## Creating a space for activists to say NO:

It is important to recognise that activists may be experiencing difficulty in saying no to volunteer work or roles. This can be a response to power dynamics but also a response to not wanting to turn down an opportunity. It's important to create spaces in which you explicitly mention that it is OK to say NO. You can add that if someone does not have time for it right now, another opportunity will arise in the future. Taking off the pressure of an individual task and looking at the broader spectrum of ways someone can be involved can help as well.



## Prioritise well-being of activists:

Balancing activism with other parts of life can be stressful and for some activists this could lead to burnout. You need to be aware of how to support activists in balancing their activism with their well-being. Keep vigilant for signs of burnout and try and familiarise yourself with professional services in your country that you could refer someone to for support. Check out our chapter on burnout for more information on what the signs are.



## What can you do when there is conflict?

Conflict is not always a bad thing. It can be productive and surface different views, opinions and ways of working. But it can also be very exhausting and damaging if not managed properly. Your organisation might have policies and processes to help activists and staff navigate tense and difficult relationships. These should provide options for informal and formal methods. If you do not know where to start, reach out to someone you have a trusted relationship with and who knows your organisation well.





**Part 4:**  
***MORE INFO***

# HELPLINES

This workbook does not equate to professional psychological support. If you need help, please speak to someone in your community and check out which services are available in your country. The list below includes mental health organisations and helplines for countries across the globe. While Amnesty International has not worked with most of these organisations, we hope this list can provide a starting point when you need help.

<b>Global</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Befrienders</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">I'm Alive</a></li> </ul>		
<b>Algeria</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Syndicat National Algerien Des Psychologues</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Association SARP</a></li> </ul>	<b>Brazil</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">CVV - Centro de Valorização da Vida</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">CAPS - Centros de Atenção Psicossocial (CAPS)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">UBS - Unidade Básica de Saúde</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">CRAS - Centro de Referência da Assistência Social</a></li> </ul>
<b>Argentina</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Centro de Asistencia al Suicida</a></li> <li>• Helpline for girls and boys: 102</li> <li>• Helpline for gender based violence: 144</li> <li>• Helpline for substance use situations: 141</li> <li>• <a href="#">Hablemos de todo</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Helplines for mental health support in quarantine</a></li> </ul>	<b>Burkina Faso</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Clinique Assinan</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Service de Psychiatrie CHU-YO</a></li> </ul>
<b>Australia</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Kids Helpline</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Lifeline</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Headspace</a></li> </ul>	<b>Canada</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Canadian Mental Health Association</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Bell Let's Talk</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Kids Help Phone</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Crisis Services Canada</a></li> </ul>
<b>Austria</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Rat auf Draht</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Telefonseelsorge</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Jugendberatungsstellen</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Soforthilfet</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Psychologische Studierendenberatung Wien</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">ÖH Helpline</a></li> </ul>	<b>Czech Republic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Centrum sociálních služeb Praha (CSSP)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Linka Bezpečí</a></li> </ul>
<b>Belgium</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Centre de Prévention du Suicide</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Zelfmoord</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Jongeren Advies Centrum</a></li> </ul>	<b>Denmark</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Livslinien</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">UngtilUng</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Ungpålinje/Ungonline</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Headspace</a></li> </ul>

<b>Finland</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Mental Health Finland</a></li> <li>• Crisis help line in Finnish: 0925250111</li> <li>• Crisis Help in Swedish: 0925250112</li> <li>• Crisis Help in Arabic and English: 0925250113</li> </ul>	<b>Kenya</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Befrienders Kenya</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Kamili Organization</a></li> </ul>
<b>France</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Suicide Ecoute</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">SOS Help</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">SOS Amitié</a></li> </ul>	<b>Korea</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Youth Cyber Counseling Center 1388</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">LGBTQ Youth Crisis Support Center</a></li> <li>*DDing Dong</li> </ul>
<b>Germany</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Telefonseelsorge</a></li> </ul>	<b>Luxembourg</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Kanner a Jugendtelefon</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">SOS Détresse</a></li> </ul>
<b>Ghana</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Mental Health Authority Ghana</a></li> </ul>	<b>Malaysia</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Befrienders</a></li> </ul>
<b>Greece</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Suicide Help</a></li> </ul>	<b>Mexico</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">SAPTEL</a></li> </ul>
<b>Hong Kong</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">The Samaritans Hong Kong</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">The Samaritan Befrienders Hong Kong</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Suicide Prevention Services (Lifeline)</a></li> </ul>	<b>Moldova</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Altruism Association Moldova</a></li> </ul>
<b>Hungary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">LESZ</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">The Kék Vonal Child Crisis Foundation</a></li> </ul>	<b>Morocco</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Sourire de Reda (Befrienders Casablanca)</a></li> </ul>
<b>Iceland</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Rauði krossinn á Íslandi (Red Cross Iceland)</a></li> </ul>	<b>Nepal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Patan Hospital Helpline for Suicide Prevention: 9813476123</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Transcultural Psychosocial Organization-Nepal Crisis Hotline: 16600102005</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">TUTH Suicide Hotline: 9840021600</a></li> </ul>
<b>India</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">AASRA</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Sneha India</a></li> </ul>	<b>Netherlands</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Jongeren Hulp Online</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">113 Zelfmoordpreventie</a></li> </ul>
<b>Ireland</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Samaritans</a></li> </ul>	<b>New Zealand</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Lifeline New Zealand</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Youthline</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">1737, need to talk?</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Rainbow Youth</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Intersex Youth Association</a></li> </ul>
<b>Italy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Samaritans Italia</a></li> </ul>	<b>Nigeria</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Mentally Aware Nigeria Initiative</a></li> </ul>
<b>Japan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Befrienders Japan Life Link</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Tokyo Mental Health Square</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Bond Project</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Childline</a></li> </ul>	<b>Norway</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Mental Helse</a></li> </ul>

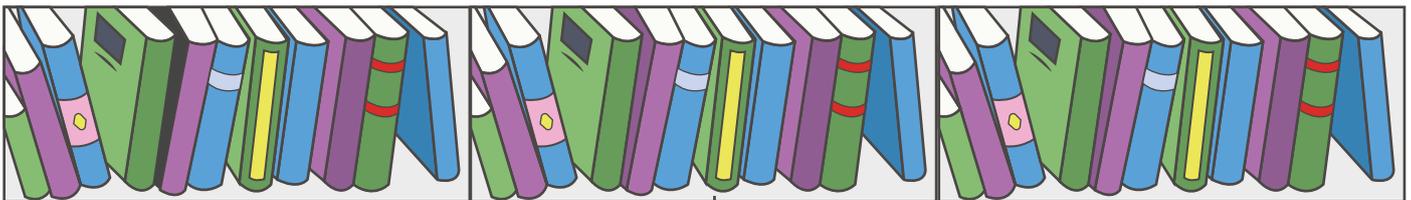
<b>Perú</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Más Igualdad</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Empatía LGTB</a></li> </ul>	<b>Taiwan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Kaohsiung Life Line (Taiwan Lifeline International)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Teacher Chang</a></li> </ul>
<b>Philippines</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">The Natasha Goulbourn Foundation</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">In Touch</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">MentalHealthPH</a></li> </ul>	<b>Thailand</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Full Yin Women Well-being Center F</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Occa</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Peace Academy Thailand</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Backyard Politics</a></li> </ul>
<b>Poland</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Olsztynski Telefon Zaufania 'Anonimowy Przw</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Instytut Psychologii Zdrowia</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Fundacja Itaka</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Ośrodek Interwencji Kryzysowe</a></li> </ul>	<b>Turkey</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">SPOD</a></li> </ul>
<b>Portugal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Voz de Apoio</a></li> </ul>	<b>UK</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Samaritans</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Mind</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">HopeLine UK</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Childline</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Papyrus</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Stonewall</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">NHS local mental health crisis teams</a></li> </ul>
<b>Slovakia</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Liga za duševné zdravie – Linka dôvery Nezábudka</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">IPčko – Krízová linka pomoci</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Národná linka pre ženy zažívajúce násilie</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Linka detskej istoty</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Linka detskej dôvery</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Centrum Slniečko</a></li> </ul>	<b>Ukraine</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Insight LGBTQ NGO</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Teenergizer</a></li> </ul>
<b>Slovenia</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Zaupni telefon Samarijan in Sopotnik</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Ženska svetovalnica – krizni center</a></li> </ul>	<b>USA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">HopeLine</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">National Alliance on Mental Illness</a></li> </ul>
<b>South Africa</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">LifeLine South Africa</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">SA Federation for Mental Health</a></li> </ul>		
<b>Spain</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Teléfono de la Esperanza</a></li> </ul>		
<b>Sweden</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Nagon Att Tala Med Samaritans</a></li> </ul>		
<b>Switzerland</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">The Dargebotene Hand</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">La Main Tendue</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Telefono Amicoa</a></li> </ul>		

# GLOSSARY

Word	Definition
<b>Adulthood</b>	Behaviors and attitudes based on the assumption that adults are superior to young people.
<b>Ageism</b>	The individual, cultural, and institutional beliefs and discrimination that systematically oppress young and older people.
<b>Anxiety</b>	Anxiety is an automatic response triggered by our autonomic nervous system when there is a perceived risk of danger, loss, or failure, which can be either real or imagined. Anxiety is not always easy to recognise as it can cause a variety of symptoms unique to each individual.
<b>Unconscious Bias</b>	Unconscious bias (or implicit bias) refers to attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions and decisions in an unconscious way, making them difficult to control and affecting fair judgement.
<b>Burnout</b>	Burnout occurs when you are faced with stress for long periods of time (Maslach, Schaufeli and Leiter, 2001). Burnout can impair mental, physical and social functioning thus affecting your physical and mental health
<b>Discrimination</b>	Consciously or unconsciously treating someone else unfairly or holding them to different standards on the basis of conscious or unconscious prejudiced beliefs and not on the basis of individual merit
<b>Heteronormativity</b>	The belief or attitude that heterosexuality is the only expression of sexuality.
<b>Microaggressions</b>	Subtle intentional or unintentional behavior - verbal or non-verbal that has a harmful effect.
<b>Oppression</b>	Oppression is the systemic and institutional abuse of power by one group at the expense of others. An oppressive system is built around the ideology of superiority of some groups and inferiority of others.
<b>Prejudice</b>	Judging or having an idea about someone or a group of people before you actually know them. Prejudice is often directed toward people in a certain identity group (race, religion, gender, etc.).
<b>Privilege</b>	A special right, advantage, or immunity granted or available only to a particular person or group of people, and/or a set of unearned benefits given to people who fit into a specific social group
<b>Racism</b>	Prejudice and/or discrimination against people because of their racial group.v
<b>Sexism</b>	Prejudice or discrimination based on a person's sex or gender.
<b>Stress</b>	Stress is an automatic, physiological response to demands or threats. It occurs when there is a build-up of real or perceived pressure above what we believe we can cope with. Whilst being under pressure is not necessarily a bad thing, if stress is sustained it can begin to negatively affect physical, psychological and emotional health.
<b>Youth Tokenism</b>	When youth involvement is used to hide lack of real change or impact. This involvement often lacks substance, purpose or power.

# WELL-BEING LIBRARY

We hope that this workbook has given you some tools to support your self and collective care journeys as a youth activist. But as mentioned at the start, there is no one-size-fits-all solution and we did not attempt to come up with one here. There is a wealth of information, toolkits are resources out there which might be a better fit for you or you might want to mix them up! This is a simple library of existing materials that you might want to have a look at as well. Enjoy!



## Self-Care & Collective Care

**Article:** [Caring For Yourself So You Can Keep Defending Human Rights](#)

**Article:** [FRIDA Happiness Manifesto](#)

**Article:** [The Unspoken Complexity of Self-care](#)

**Article:** [Steps you can take now to alleviate anxiety symptoms](#)

**Article:** [How to form a pandemic pod?](#)

**Video:** [MobLab Conversation on Self Care and Collective Well-being](#)

**Toolkit:** [Communication Guidelines for a Brave Space](#)

**Podcast:** [Science-based insights for a meaningful life](#)

**Letter:** [A love letter to the overcommitted](#)

**Book:** [Good vibes, Good Life by Vex King](#)

**Video:** [Yoga with Adrienne](#)

## Anxiety & Stress

**Article:** [LGBTIQ Mental Health Issues](#)

**Podcast:** [How to practice emotional first aid](#)

**Toolkit:** [Free Anxiety Resources](#)

**Toolkit:** [Rethinking Stress Toolkit \(incl. videos\)](#)

**Toolkit:** [Black Emotional and Mental Health Collective Toolkit](#)

**Exercises:** [Stress Worksheet](#)

**Exercises:** [Emotion Sensation Wheel](#)

**Exercises:** [Journal Prompts for Wellness & Affirmations](#)

**Podcast:** [Hilarious World of Depression](#)

**Podcasts:** [15 Mental Health Podcasts for People of Color](#)

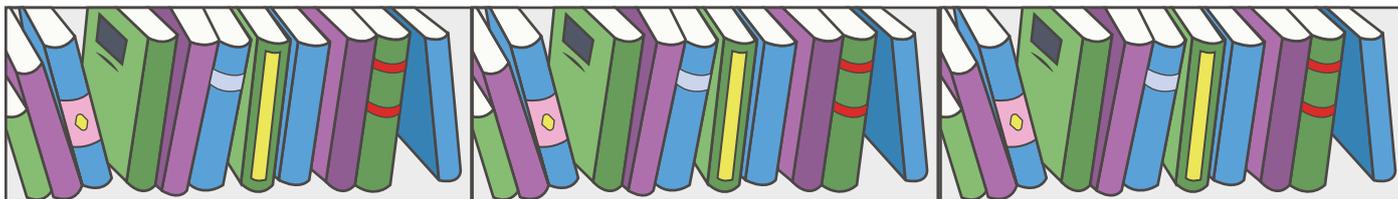
**Video:** [Practical tips for dealing with anxiety](#)

**Video & Sound:** [Indigenous Whispers](#)

**Video:** [Breathing Exercise](#)

**App:** [Headspace](#)

**App:** [Calm](#)



## Oppression & Anti Racism

**Art:** [Niti Marcelle Mueth is a multidisciplinary visual artist](#)

**Article:** [7 Reasons Why 'Colour-blindness' Contributes to Racism Instead of Solves It](#) by Jon Greenberg via [Everyday Feminism](#)

**Article:** [For our White Friends Desiring to be Allies by Sojourners](#)

**Article:** [Why you Need to Stop Saying 'All Lives Matter'](#) by Rachel Cargle

**Article:** [Healing Justice](#)

**Book:** [Me and White Supremacy](#) by Layla F. Saad

**Book:** [Why I'm no Longer Talking to White People about Race](#) by Reni Eddo-Lodge

**Book:** [My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies](#) by Resmaa Menakem

**Tools:** [List of Anti Racism Resources](#)

**Toolkit:** [Taking action against hate speech through counter and alternative narratives](#)

**Podcast:** [About Race with Anna Holmes, Baratunde Thurston, Raquel Cepeda and Tanner Colby](#)

**Podcast:** [Seeing White by Scene on Radio with John Biewen feat. Dr. Chenjerai Kumanyika](#)

**Podcast:** [Intersectionality Matters!](#) by Kimberlé Crenshaw

**Book:** [How to argue with a racist](#) by Adam Rutherford

**Book:** [Don't touch my hair](#) by Emma Dabiri

**Exercises:** [Oppression Tree tool](#)

**Tools:** [Glossary by Racial Equity Tools](#)

**Article:** ["Problem" Woman of color](#) (also in [video](#))

## Activism & Organising

**Article:** [Welcome to the Anti-Racism Movement – Here's What You've Missed](#) by Ijeoma Oluo

**Article:** [Are you tokenizing youth? Check-list](#)

**Book:** [Psychosocial Support for Humanitarian Aid Workers: A Roadmap of Trauma and Critical Incident Care](#)

**Exercises:** [Creating Safe Spaces](#)

**Exercises:** [Short Guide to Active Listening](#)

**Exercises:** [Quick Consensus Decision Making](#)

**Toolkit:** [Fanzine: Staying Resilient While Trying to Save the World](#)

**Toolkit:** [Self-Care & Self-Defense Manual for Feminist Activists](#)

**Toolkit:** [Handbook for Goal Setting](#)

**Toolkit:** [Working with Conflict in our Groups](#)

**Toolkit:** [Woop Mental Strategy & Planning Tool](#)

**Toolkit:** [A guide to ally-ship from Black Lives Matter](#)

**Podcast:** [Instagram, Activism & White Privilege with Rachel Cargle on Ctrl+Alt+Delete](#) by Emma Gannon

**Podcast:** [Irresistible Podcast](#)

**Video:** [Changing the way we change the world](#) (subtitles in ENG, ESP, FRAN)

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