



Exercise:

# DEPRESSION MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

## ○ IMPORTANT

- If you are suffering from depression it's important to seek professional help. Please see our [resource section](#) at the end of this guide for links to organizations that can support you.
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## ABOUT THIS EXERCISE

These exercises are designed as a short-term aid for certain aspects of depression linked to online violence, but they are not a substitute for long-term psychological support. Journalists who are concerned about depression should contact a mental-health specialist.

Before starting the exercises it is important to understand that all psycho-emotional problems are caused by both a genetic predisposition to a chemical imbalance in our brain, meaning that our neurons are not communicating properly, which causes us to lose interest in the world. This genetic predisposition is then triggered by an unsolved grieving process.

Psychiatrist Elizabeth Kübler-Ross explains grief as a five-stage process: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance<sup>2</sup>. We can add a sixth stage, rebuilding your life in order to adapt to your new circumstances.

When a journalist is abused online, they often work through the five stages of grief, including anger. The following exercise is designed to help you understand this anger, remove it, and start the process of accepting that life is not as it was before.

## ◆ HOW TO DO THE EXERCISE

### Exercise: A grieving ritual

It's important to grieve in order to accept loss. A grieving ritual can remind you that life continues and that this is just a phase that will pass. We suggest that you make your own ritual about what has changed, what has gone, but also what is still there.

Your grieving ritual must be symbolic, meaningful to you, and provide you with comfort. Below are some examples:

### Grieving ritual one: Creating a place of sanctuary

Chose a place and create a sanctuary for yourself

- Put candles and/or incense
- Place objects that represent what you have lost
- Place objects that represent what you still have
- Write a piece of text in which you describe saying goodbye, acknowledging what still exists, what you are learning from this experience, and how you want to reconstruct your life



## Grieving ritual two: Sanctuary in nature



Go to an open outside space, such as a beach, a park, or a forest

- Look at the immensity of life
- Think about how this attack changed your life, including the good and bad
- Reflect on the ways you can manage the bad so that it becomes a way in which you can build a new life
- Realize that there is help around you
- Understand that you are strong and that you are not alone
- With help understand that you can become stronger and happier

### **Exercise: Comforting yourself**

Depression is extremely complex and affects us all differently. Each one will need different times to be able to process a loss. Many times it is very difficult for us to be able to admit or process depression, since the people around us do not have the tools to be able to comfort us, so it is important to learn how to soothe yourself. When we grieve we often think about what we have lost and not about what we have gained. However, with each loss comes a learning experience. This exercise will help you reflect on this and give you strategies for self-soothing.

The first step in the process is to breathe. This will help you to calm you and increase oxygen to your brain.

Then, answer the following questions:

1. What did I learn from this person or experience?
2. How can I show appreciation for what I've learned?
3. How will that reflection and gratitude make me a stronger person?
4. What tools did I learn as a result of this loss?
5. How can I rebuild my life based on this experience?