Exercise:

POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER THERAPY

IMPORTANT

If you are suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) then it is important to seek professional help. Please see our resource section for links to organizations that can support you.

ABOUT THIS EXERCISE

This exercise is designed to help journalists suffering from PTSD to establish a functional routine in their everyday life, which is often difficult for those suffering from PTSD. It is not a substitute for long-term psychological support.

PTSD occurs as the result of a life-altering event someone is unable to overcome, which subsequently results in trauma. If the impact of that trauma is not treated, the person will develop severe stress, and in three weeks to three months, they will develop PTSD. A trained psychotherapist will be able to provide you with the tools you need to work through the trauma.

If you are currently unable to access a psychotherapist and are looking for a short-term solution to treat the symptoms of PTSD you can use the exercise below as well as other exercises in this guide, including **acute stress management** and **insomnia management**.

⬥ HOW TO DO THE EXERCISE

The aim of this exercise is to help you sustain a functional everyday life. This requires a balance between the needs of your body, your mind, your emotions, and your social and financial needs. Routines are especially important in times of crisis.

Establishing a routine

1. After you get up in the morning, allow yourself a quiet moment to relax while you're having breakfast. By getting up 20 minutes earlier than usual, you'll feel less stressed throughout the day because you started the day calmly. You can also start the day by listening to music that puts you in a good mood or by dancing.
2. Start working at the same time every day. If you work from home, set a work schedule.
3. Remember that your brain, especially when you're working on a computer, can focus for a maximum of two hours, so take a ten to 15 minute break every two hours. We often don't take breaks because we feel like we're wasting time and we're afraid we won't be able to finish pending tasks. However, taking breaks will actually make you more productive.
4. Respect mealtimes and drink enough water, as hunger and dehydration produces stress and anxiety.
5. After you finish work, spend at least 30 to 45 minutes doing something you enjoy, such as listening to music, watching TV (something that's not violent or connected to your work), or playing with your children or pets.
6. Get enough sleep.
7. Don't use cell phones or tablets at least one hour before going to bed. If you're expecting an important message from work, activate notification sounds for important messages only. That will stop you from constantly checking your phone.
8. If possible, try to include physical exercise in your routine.