

## Looking after yourself and others Some Tips

# CAMPAIGN BOOTCAMP

As people who want to change the world for the better we often forget to look after ourselves.

As campaigners, all too often, we focus on the change we want to achieve at the expense of our own mental health. We set ourselves unrealistically high standards which we cannot meet.

What we must try to remember is that we will be most effective in trying to achieve our goals if we take specific steps to make sure we are looking after ourselves and each other.



"Caring for myself is not self indulgent  
it is self preservation and that is an  
act of political warfare"

Audre Lorde.

## Looking after yourself and others

### Some Tips

# CAMPAIGN BOOTCAMP

Many believe the most effective way of transforming our society for the better is to make sure that we transform ourselves and part of that is about looking after ourselves and our own mental health.

In addressing this it is important to both work out what our own plan is for self-care and also to decide what our group should do to make sure we look after ourselves and each other. If we are a healthy organisation we are much more likely to attract others to join us.



### What a group can do to make sure everyone looks after each other?

1. Make sure we have fun as a group.
2. Put 'looking after ourselves and each other' on the agenda for every meeting we have.
3. Assign everybody a 'buddy' to meet with regularly to check how things are going.
4. Make sure we relax as a group.
5. Set aside time to talk about how the group and its members are doing after particular events (try to work through questions such as 'how did that affect you personally?')
6. Make sure we socialise as a group.
7. Develop a group culture that values people looking after themselves rather than people overworking.
8. Start every meeting with a 'How is everyone doing?'. Ask the group to talk about something positive that happened that week
9. If there are problems with how some in the group are getting on with each other it is talked about openly (sometimes with the help of a facilitator from outside the group).
10. We talk about how some people can feel oppressed by how others act or what they say or do.
11. Try to come up with a positive vision of what you want to achieve rather than making endless lists of problems.
12. Respect (and welcome) people who say that they need a break to recharge their batteries.
13. Don't forget to debrief. Use that space to talk about anything you think should be aired.

## Looking after yourself and others Some Tips

# CAMPAIGN BOOTCAMP

Everyone will have their own ideas of the steps they can take to make sure they look after themselves. These are deeply personal decisions.

The following is a list of what has worked for some people and is meant purely as a way of triggering some ideas of what may work for you.



### What we as individuals can do to make sure we look after ourselves?

1. Set aside time when you will definitely not be working and stick to it (this means not checking emails or answering phone calls or responding to texts).
2. Make time to do things you really like doing.
3. Try to identify the situations that you find most difficult and talk to someone else to try and work out how you can best deal with them.
4. Decide who is the best person to talk to about some of the things that you find difficult; what is your support network?
5. Set aside time to do things that take your mind off your work (sport, recreation, being in nature)
6. Get plenty of sleep.
7. Eat a healthy balanced diet and don't skip meals.
8. Get regular exercise.
9. Celebrate the things that are going well in your life.
10. Do some simple breathing exercises. It has been proved that the regular practice of breathing exercises can reduce stress and anxiety, lower blood pressure, increase energy and concentration, create a deeper connection to body and the emotions, etc.
11. Trust others in the team, take the risk to share some of your workload and remember no one is indispensable.

# Useful Resources and Organisations

# CAMPAIGN BOOTCAMP

Below is a list of useful resources and organisations as suggested by Karen Larbi  
<https://goo.gl/iXFjiV>

**Black and Asian Therapists Network**  
[www.baatn.org.uk/](http://www.baatn.org.uk/)

**The Free Psychotherapy Network**  
[www.freepsychotherapynetwork.com/](http://www.freepsychotherapynetwork.com/)

**Counselling for Social Change**  
[www.counsellingforsocialchange.org.uk](http://www.counsellingforsocialchange.org.uk)

**Psychotherapists and Counsellors for Social Responsibility**  
[www.pcsr.org.uk](http://www.pcsr.org.uk)

**Improving Access to Psychological Therapies**  
<https://www.england.nhs.uk/mental-health/adults/iapt/>

**Mind**  
[www.mind.org.uk/](http://www.mind.org.uk/)

**Rethink Mental Illness**  
[www.rethink.org](http://www.rethink.org)

**Sounds True**  
[www.soundstrue.com](http://www.soundstrue.com)

**“Class Struggle and Mental Health” (book)**

**Psychologists For Social Change**  
[www.psychchange.org/](http://www.psychchange.org/)

**Action for Happiness**  
[www.actionforhappiness.org](http://www.actionforhappiness.org)

**Bipolar UK**  
<https://www.bipolaruk.org>

**OCD UK**  
[www.ocduk.org](http://www.ocduk.org)

**BPD World**  
<https://www.bpdworld.org>

**Blurt Foundation**  
<https://www.blurtitout.org>

**Anxiety UK (free ‘lifestyle app’ Headspace with membership)**  
[www.anxietyuk.org.uk](http://www.anxietyuk.org.uk)

**Samaritans (now free to phone)**  
[www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

**Papyrus**  
[www.papyrus-uk.org](http://www.papyrus-uk.org)

**Hearing Voices Network**  
<https://www.hearing-voices.org>

**CALM**  
<https://www.calm.com/>

**MeetUp**  
[www.Meetup.com](http://www.Meetup.com)

Also, search online for the ‘Self Care Wheel’, a set of ideas on how to take action to look after yourself in different parts of your life’ or the poster ‘50 ways to take a break