

A Proposal for Resisting Darkness

Self-Care Guide

What is *A Proposal for Resisting Darkness*?

A Proposal for Resisting Darkness a which was originally created with a group of women at HMP Downview and playwright Yasmin Joseph during a series of workshops at the prison. It has now been adapted into an audio drama and is available to listen to for free on Clean Break's Knowledge Hub.

In the play, the malevolent beast Darkness has taken the voices of all women on earth, but a group of magical women in the clouds create their own proposal for resisting Darkness's power. Will they succeed or will Darkness silence them for good?

What does 'Self-Care' mean?

The concept of self-care comes from the Black Feminist movement. Self-care is important because it's about recognising that we experience discrimination and oppression because of how others react to who we are, or what we've experienced. Self-care is a choice to listen to our needs and look after ourselves, so we are able to keep going and live our best lives, despite the difficulties we experience in life and how they make us feel.

"Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare." - Audre Lorde, a Black Feminist and pioneer of self-care.

Contents

This guide includes:

1. Content Notices
2. Self-Care Suggestions
3. Helplines and Support
5. Further reading and resources about self-care

Content Notices

A Proposal for Resisting Darkness is overall, an uplifting play, however there are some themes which some people might not want to engage with, so we have listed these below:

- Depression
- Misogyny and sexism in society
- Doctors / health
- Sounds of thunder and lightning

Self-Care Suggestions

Listen with someone

If you listening on your own doesn't feel right, ask a friend or someone you trust to listen with you.

Talk to someone

If you find the themes of the play affect you, try talking to someone you trust or contacting one of the organisations we listed below.

Check the content notices

This will help you prepare for what to expect.

Breathe

Breathing is a great way to help you feel calm. Try breathing in for four seconds, holding your breath for four seconds, exhaling for four seconds and holding again. Repeat this for as long as you need.

Try a Grounding Exercise

Grounding exercises are things you can do to bring yourself into contact with the present moment to relieve distress. There are many ways you can do this:

1. Notice five things you can see, four things you can feel, three things you can hear, two things you can smell and one thing you can taste.
2. Sit with your feet on the floor and back against your chair and either gently tap each leg or cross your arms and tap your shoulders.
3. Wash your hands, have a shower or drink some water.

Find some nature

Look out of the window or go for a walk if you can, experiencing nature can be beneficial to our wellbeing and help us feel grounded.

Know if you need to step away

There is nothing wrong with deciding this isn't for you. Walk away or turn it off, do what feels right for you.

Helplines and Support

Samaritans - provides emotional support to anyone in emotional distress, struggling to cope, or at risk of suicide. [samaritans.org](https://www.samaritans.org) | 08457 90 90 90

Unlock - provides a voice and support for people who are facing stigma and obstacles because of their criminal record. [unlock.org.uk](https://www.unlock.org.uk)

Women in Prison - supports women affected by the criminal justice system and campaigns to end the harm caused to women, their families and our communities by imprisonment. [womeninprison.org.uk](https://www.womeninprison.org.uk) | 020 7359 6674

Further reading and resources about self-care

This guide takes inspiration from [20 Stories High](#) and [The Survivor's Trust](#).

[London Survivors Gateway self care guide](#) - this guide has been written for people who have experienced sexual violence, but it includes lots of helpful self-care tips which could be useful for anyone.

[Anna Freud Self Help Hub](#) - this resource hub has been created for young people, but it contains lots of self-help tips and suggestions which anyone could find useful.