

Self-Care Guide

Mental Health as Resistance: Trauma Literacy, Crisis Planning, and Care Without Permission





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Safe-care is what we build when self-care fails. When capitalist “wellness” tells us to cope in silence while the world burns, this guide teaches us to respond with rage rooms, pod check-ins, and crisis zines. It reclaims care from state psychiatry, from isolation, and from shame.

This document meets you in your burnout, in your panic attack, in your grief stack and hands you a plan.

You’ll find practices that don’t require money or neurotypicality. You’ll learn how to build sensory kits, create WRAP plans, hold scream circles, and form trauma-literate care webs. This guide is full of texture, ritual, and tools for the parts of you that don’t feel functional but *are still alive*.

This isn’t about healing into productivity. It’s about surviving into power.



Why This Matters

Survival is more than staying alive. **It’s staying human.** And that’s the part they never want us to remember.

In a collapsing world soaked in state violence, weaponized neglect, and systemic abandonment, survival often gets flattened into biology: eat, breathe, keep moving. But **mere existence isn’t the same as living**. Staying alive without staying human turns us into machines, ghosts, or shadows. That’s how the system wins, not just by killing us, but by turning us into shells of ourselves.

This guide is our refusal.

We refuse numbness as a survival plan. We reject the idea that being exhausted, hypervigilant, and emotionally shut down is a reasonable way to live. We know it’s not enough to just keep breathing while our minds fragment and our bodies shut down under pressure. **We want more.**

In this world, to care for yourself and others with intention, tenderness, and consistency is not self-indulgence. **It’s rebellion.** It’s what Audre Lorde meant when she said that self-care is an act of political warfare. In the face of fascism, ableism, and neglect, care becomes sabotage. Burnout becomes betrayal, not of the cause, but of the self. We must resist that too.



Why This Guide Exists:

- Because **we deserve care without permission**. We shouldn't have to prove our usefulness, our productivity, or our coherence to deserve time, space, and rest.
- Because **state systems are not designed to keep us well**. From healthcare deserts to overpoliced psych wards, the institutions meant to keep us "safe" are often the ones doing the harm.
- Because **we are each other's infrastructure**. Mutual aid isn't just about food and bail funds, it's about **holding space, building capacity, and loving each other through the worst**.
- Because **collapse is uneven**, and it hits the marginalized first. Neurodivergent folks, disabled folks, poor folks, trans folks, Black and brown folks, we're not just on the frontlines. **We are the frontline.**

What This Guide Offers:

This guide is about building a **sustainable internal resistance**: the rituals, tools, knowledge, and care strategies that keep us soft and sharp, grounded and dangerous.

It doesn't preach resilience as martyrdom. It honors your fragility *and* your power. It says:

You are not a problem to be fixed. You are a person to be supported. And your survival doesn't have to look heroic to matter.

We made this guide because we know the truth: **When systems collapse, only communities survive. And when the world turns hostile, care is the only counterspell.**

You deserve to live. Not just survive. Not just cope. Not just endure.

You deserve to feel human, even now. Especially now.

We keep each other alive.

Mental Health Under Fascism

Systemic Pressures

- Weaponization of psychiatric institutions against trans and disabled people
- Overmedicalization and denial of trauma-informed care
- Collapse of community mental health resources

Emotional Fallout

- Chronic burnout, CPTSD, eco-anxiety, grief cycles
- Rage fatigue: emotional exhaustion from constant injustice
- Crisis stacking: Compounded stress from identity, class, and political instability

Safe-Care vs Self-Care

Self-care is what capitalism sells: bubble baths and shopping. **Safe-care** is what we *build* when systems fail.

Safe-Care Principles

- Accessible, trauma-informed, and non-performative
- Centered in boundaries, not productivity
- Focused on interdependence, not independence

Core Practices

Daily Routines

- Anchor your day: rituals like tea, walks, prayer, art, or checking in with a pod
- Set digital boundaries: app limits, screen breaks, focused check-ins
- Regulate: breathwork, stretching, hydration, food that nourishes your needs

Crisis Tools

- Create a “crisis card” with signs, needs, contacts
- Build sensory kits (textures, smells, stim objects, calming images)
- Make a WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Plan) or crisis zine
- Identify safe spaces (quiet zones, pod contacts, online sanctuaries)

Mutual Mental Aid

- Form peer pods: small groups that regularly check on each other
- Host rage rooms, scream circles, or vent threads with ground rules
- Learn peer support skills: reflective listening, validation, non-coercive crisis help

Mental Health Go-Kit

- Grounding objects: crystals, clay, worry stones, favorite fabric
- Emergency media: affirmations, memes, playlists, voice notes from friends
- Health info: med lists, allergies, trauma history, emergency plan
- Distraction & joy: books, zines, puzzles, small creative tools

Resources

- **Apps:** Insight Timer, Finch, Rootd, Moodpath, Daylio
- **Books:** “Care Work” (Leah Lakshmi), “Burnout” (Nagoski sisters), “Undoing Drugs” (Maia Szalavitz), “No Bad Parts” (IFS)
- **Communities:** Mad Pride, peer respite networks, Icarus Project, Trans Lifeline



Conclusion

**You are not too much. You are not too broken. Your rage is holy. Your grief is valid.
Your joy is survival.**

This guide reminds us that being functional was never the goal — being real was.

Rest is not weakness. Withdrawal is not failure. Sobbing is sacred.

Together we haunt every system that called us disposable.

We don't just heal.

We outlive, outcry, and outlast.

Legal Disclaimer

This document is for educational and cultural purposes only. It does not provide medical or mental health advice and should not replace trauma-informed or peer-based support. Always consult a trusted healthcare provider or community-based peer network when in distress.

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