



TIPS FOR EMOTIONAL CARE

Pause - Breathe - Move - Share

Urgent Action Fund for Latin America and the Caribbean



In times of crisis it is important to **PAUSE. To feel and connect to what is happening within and around ourselves.** This way, we can support and strengthen each other.

Taking a pause is the first step to taking care of ourselves. We will be able to deal with what is happening and affecting us from a place of **calm**, and to continue smoothly.

Let's look for **small groups or support networks**, to be able to share our experience, to be able to talk about our feelings, concerns and challenges. It is important for them to be **safe and trustworthy spaces**, where we can unburden ourselves without feeling judged, where we can show our fragility and vulnerability in the company of others and regain our strength together.

There are many ways and resources to help ourselves and others at this moment: manuals, guides, etc. Such materials can be useful if we feel that they can really help us in our specific context. It is key to look at what **practices can help us at this time.** It is important to **recognize what makes us feel good, what gives us calm and tranquility.** Each of us knows what is good for ourselves. Reviewing care practices allows us to connect with the wisdom of our people, communities or families. We can ask our grandmothers, grandfathers, mothers, fathers, or other wise people around us. It is important to maintain the conversations alive; it is part of **recovering memory.** And, when you feel the need, to **make room for silence.**

The most important thing is that when we are going to accompany / support other people, we should be calm. *Calm feeds calm.*

If we know people who have expertise in therapeutic support, they can be an important resource to help us sustain these networks, or to respond to situations where specialized assistance is needed.

Those who provide accompaniment should also have spaces to process the emotions and the burden they might feel as a result of the support they are giving to others.

It is important to **rotate the leadership** of those who accompany people or organizations, to avoid overload.

We can also look for support closer to us, in trusted friends. A partner or friend with whom we can talk, to whom we can tell how we feel, what bothers us, what hurts us and the fears or worries we may have.

It is very important to start from **TRUST.**

PROPOSED EXERCISES FOR EMOTIONALLY CRITICAL MOMENTS

Deep breathing

It is very important to become aware of breathing again. To make contact with the breath of life.

Take a deep breath: bring air into the lower abdomen, hold it for a moment and exhale slowly (make the exhalation longer than the inhalation). It is recommended to repeat at least five times, letting thoughts pass by. We can play relaxing music at 432Hz, which can be found on Youtube.

You can also put the song Respira by Natalia Doco:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tv-zDkhkivo>

Self Massage

All these massages help us feeling calm and lower anxiety, generating nerve impulses to the organs, helping them to relax.

1. Sea of calm

In order to feel, you need to connect with the heart.

This exercise helps release anxiety, strengthens the immune system, and relieves stress and tension.

Place the **thumb** of the **right hand** in the **center of the chest and press**. en el **centro del pecho** Do a pulsating massage, pressing and releasing. It is suggested to do it nine times or as many times as you feel necessary. This **is a part of the body that usually hurts**, especially when there is sadness or pain.



This exercise can cause you to cry, **don't worry**. These are times to express emotions: pain, anxiety, anger, etc.

After this exercise, do another deep breathing cycle.

In these moments when we are **allowing ourselves to feel** it is key to **be present to support, welcome and embrace ourselves**, it is vital.

2. Inner door

This exercise helps regulate the heart, liver and stomach. It helps to treat chest congestion, anxiety, heart pain, neck tension, and irritability.

Open your **left hand** with the **palm facing upward** and measure the width of **three fingers** from the top of your left wrist. Place your **right thumb** on your forearm, **three fingers away from the top of your wrist**, and place your right **index finger** on the opposite side of your left arm, as if it were a clamp. Press as if trying to bring both fingers together and doing a pulsating massage, pressing and releasing.



3. Heart balance point

This exercise helps to reduce stress and improve emotional state.

With the palm of the hand upwards, measure three fingers from the wrist and at the inner side of the forearm, in the direction of the little finger, place the thumb and rub in the direction of the little finger. Repeat this action until the area turns red.

Do all the exercises paying attention to our deep breathing from the lower abdomen.

It is about being able to do it alone or with others. Not only in times of crisis, but when you are well; to **strengthen a calm and assertive response** when necessary.

It is important **to drink water, to connect with the flow of life**. Drink teas that calm you down so that your **sleep is restful**, even if you only sleep for a few hours. If you can't sleep well, look into homeopathic medicines, massages, drinks, and relaxing teas.

For these moments, it is good to dance, to do some physical movement that helps stimulate the body and bring oxygen to your head and thoughts.

Eating healthily and taking breaks during the day is crucial.

Finding someone to relieve you is important, consider different ages and that each person is in their own life cycle and each body has its own rhythm.

At these times the body produces a high adrenaline load as a chemical reaction to stress. Under the current circumstances, sometimes, that primary impulse can make us believe that we can deal with it all – but this has a limit, our reserves run out and affect our nervous system.

TAKE CARE!

These are difficult times and it is important to learn to **support each other**.





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